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Dynamics of Human Rights in a Federal Polity: The Indian Experience

V.K. Tyagi

Human right is the equal right of all humans to define their individual and collective identities. The promotion and protection of human rights in contemporary Indian plural society cannot be simply reduced to the universal principle of human rights. The contemporary views on human rights are viewed in widely accepted Western modern traditions and liberal democracy which accord primacy to universality of rights, principle of equality and individual as the claimant of rights.¹ These serious concerns of the western human rights opinions negate or atleast reduce the possibilities of expression and articulation of cultural pluralism, the contesting idea of group differentiated rights and community as the focus of rights and justice. The principle of universal applicability of rights and its prime concern for individual freedom and liberty is restricted by the demands of cultural plurality and specificity of community.

The idea of individual liberty and the principle of equality have been important in many respects, but in its ultimate analysis they contradict the interests of the community and claims of rights of the groups. Therefore, the promotion and protection of human rights along the western line and liberal democracy appears as a complex problem. The redressal of the minority specific problems, their specific cultural identity and rights and their accommodation in a just manner call for a shift from reductionist conception of rights to the group and community sensitive approach to human rights.² At the same time, it, however, does not mean negation of the certain basic human rights of individuals such as right to life and liberty, equality and right to nondiscrimination which have been conceptualized and advanced through different human rights declarations, conventions and covenants.

A positive approach towards human rights necessitates constructive reconciliation between individual and community, universality and specificity, and nondiscrimination principle of equality and social justice. With this background the paper studies problem in its theoretical context and in its empirical explication. The empirical ground has been located in the Indian situation. In this regard, pluralism and federal idea have been relied upon as appropriate and authentic bases of promoting and protecting human rights in a plural society on the one hand, and as the basis of pursuing a model of nation and state building on the other. Since pluralism and federal idea provide adequate space for expression, articulation and interplay of the basic principle of human rights, it is therefore premised here that multiculturalism and federal idea must be considered as a prelude to human rights.

Human Rights Discourse

Harold J. Laski in his classic *A Grammar of Politics*, observed that every state is known by the rights that it maintains.³ When read together with Rawlsian principle of justice as fairness⁴, right essentially means a claim of the people on the state for capacity endowment to improve their life. This demonstrates that the human rights discourse is primarily embedded in the Western idea of liberal democracy. The basic concern of this discourse is individual as the claimant of rights. Common bond of citizenship and all embracing conception of citizen's rights define the extent of human rights. In this framework, guaranteeing of civil and political rights to all individuals, irrespective of ethnic and cultural membership, is considered to be the protector of community⁵ as the state stands above all the forms of ethnic and cultural group membership. This value neutral conception of state under the dispensation of common citizenship rights announces disjunction between state and community. This disjunction considers state as morally superior. However, this supposed disjunction and proclaimed neutrality of the state do not necessarily protect the interests of the ethnic and cultural minority groups.

In practice, this kind of assumption may advance the majority interests, for the value neutral rules and laws applicable to all citizens are largely derived from the majority context. Infact, in a multicultural society, laws of the state may embody values which contradict practices of some communities, while being closer to the practices of other communities. Consequently, laws may be perceived differently by means of different communities; and these laws are likely to affect the life of different communities in different ways.⁶ Such a state in its basic design and orientation favours majority culture which is reflected in terms of language policy, land rights, the extent of autonomy to

ethnic groups, and also in the decision-making process. This inequality reinforces and creates new forms of inequality to which minority groups are subjected to. The logic of apparent equality espoused through the principle of nondiscrimination cannot be sustained in the long run. Seen from the minority perspective, it is in fact a source of legitimacy to inequality.

Considering the dynamics of the problem, the recent variants of political liberalism have introduced the minority concern in the agenda of human rights. There are emerging trends towards recognition of minority rights. Will Kymlicka unequivocally pleads for group differentiated rights. He maintains, ...group-differentiated self-government rights compensate for unequal circumstances which put the members of minority cultures at a systemic disadvantage in the cultural market-place, regardless of their personal choices in life. This is one of the many areas in which true equality requires not identical treatment but rather differential treatment in order to accommodate differential needs.⁷ The recognition of minority and community along with citizenship rights of individual is a major shift in the agenda of human rights.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights could not address the problem of minority in vocal terms. But the assertion and demands of the minority in vocal terms have resulted into greater degree of recognition both at the national and international levels. The adoption of the Declaration on the Rights of National Minorities in 1991 by the organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe, adoption of Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, 10 November 1994, and the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Persons belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (18 December, 1992), and the Draft Declaration on Indigenous Rights concluded in 1993 by the UN Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities (a formal adoption of the UN General Assembly is still awaited till the completion of this paper) are some of the cases which exemplify the enlarging ambit of human rights.⁸ These emerging concerns for minority rights and recognition to community explicitly endorses the principle of multiculturalism and federal idea as the basis of promoting human rights in a plural society.

Human Rights in Pluralist Federal Polity

Pluralism and federal idea constructively reconcile the demands of citizenship rights and community rights. Therefore, these need special consideration and treatment while addressing the agenda on human rights. Negatively defined, pluralism is against homogeneity, uniformity and the standardization of cultural forms. It is diametrically opposed to monocultural construction of identity and its subscribed forms of expression

and articulation. It is essentially critical of and resistant to the reductive imperatives of monocultural assimilation. It, therefore, neither approves the thesis of melting pot nor is subjected to homogenizing format of nation state. Pluralism is committed to the protection, promotion and maintenance of ethnocultural diversity which, in turn, provides opportunities to the minorities to preserve, maintain and express their distinct cultural form life style and rights.

As a matter of principle pluralism stands for heterogeneity, diversity and multiplicity of forms and structures, plurality of ways and means and for distinctiveness. In its basic spirit, it not only ensures prevalence of different and multiple forms of culture but also liberates the minority groups from the homogenizing logic of identity. It is this stance of pluralism that guarantees social and cultural rights to diverse groups and leads to recognition of minority groups. The principles of pluralism, therefore, renders the presumption of homogeneity and uniformity of cultural mode in a multicultural, multi-religious, multi-ethnic, multi-caste and multi-regional society - theoretically, empirically and operationally invalid. Advocating for the pluralist condition for civil democracy, Iris Young very eloquently articulates four virtues of pluralist heterogeneity: (i) It encourages and enables interactive and intersecting multiplicities in social and subject positions. It thus gives voice to, and works to clear an institutional space for, that which might otherwise be eclipsed or effaced; (ii) It makes possible the living out of variety, imparting contextualized nuance and specificity to the general and the various; (iii) It is committed critically to satisfying the excitement and desirability of the new or multiple and diffused possibilities; and (iv) Plural heterogeneity must not only exist (silently), it must be seen to exist (publicly).⁹

These four virtues of multicultural heterogeneity get expression through the federal idea of regulating differences and multicultural heterogeneity in a plural society.

In its political context pluralism demands the fulfilment of the following conditions: (a) recognition of socio-cultural differences; (b) preservation, maintenance and promotion of socio-cultural differences; and (c) representation of differences in all the basic decision-making arrangements. It is in this context that federal idea makes special appeal, for it provides well articulated space for both autonomy and integration. Here the interests of the minorities and groups are protected and promoted in a manner which cannot be done in any other institutional arrangement. Federal principle facilitates harmonious political integration out of a plural social order. Federalism provides a shield to the minorities for the protection of their rights and claims.¹⁰ In its manifestation it appears a non-majoritarian form of democracy. It serves well the principle that there are no simple majorities or minorities. All majorities are compounded of congeries of groups/

Dynamics of Human Rights in a Federal Polity

and the corollary principle of minority rights, which not only protect the possibility for minorities to preserve themselves but forces majorities to be compound rather than artificially simple.¹¹ Thus the protection of minorities and their rights is an important component of the principle of pluralism and federalism. Their incorporation in the agenda of human rights enhances and enriches the ambit of the idea of human rights itself. However, little attention has been paid to these principles in case of addressing the problems of human rights and the specificity of identity, problems and rights of minorities. These have largely been addressed according to the general principles of democracy and the claims of citizenship.

The assertion of ethno-religious and cultural identity by minorities, movement for recognition and representation and ethno-cultural conflicts in different parts of the world have led to realization that minority problems and their accommodation invite special attention. The general principle of liberal democracy and the universal agenda of human rights do not address to the disadvantages to which these groups are subjected to. Group differentiated rights can help rectify this disadvantage by alleviating the vulnerability of minority cultures to majority decisions. These external protections ensure that members of the minority have the same opportunity to live and work in their own culture as members of the majority.¹² This is the reason that consociationalism and federalism have been advanced as models of accommodating diversities and protecting minorities in a plural society. Both the models represent non-majoritarian principles of democracy. Both of them are based on the prescription of 'recognition' and 'representation'. But whereas consociationalism stands for non-territoriality principle of recognition and representation of cultural diversity, federalism in its basic spirit and design is based on territorial principle of recognition and representation of differences.

Lijphart¹³ outlines links between federalism and consociationalism on the basis of certain attributes. He identifies five principal attributes of federalism: (i) a written constitution; (ii) a bicameral legislature; (iii) of legislature; (iv) the right of the component units to be involved in the process of amending the federal constitution; and (v) decentralized government. Talking about consociational democracy, he identifies following attributes: (i) Grand coalition which referees to power sharing, means that the political leaders of all the significant segments of a plural society jointly govern the country; (ii) Segmented autonomy means that the decision-making is delegated to the separate segments as much as possible; (iii) Proportionality in terms of political representation, appointments in civil services and allocation of funds; and (iv) Minority veto - a guarantee for minorities that they will not be outvoted by majorities when their vital interest is at stake.

However, it appears that consociationalism is based on the idea of the existence of essentially permanent minority and majority on certain accounts of ethnic, religious and cultural distinctiveness.

The Indian Experience

As pointed out earlier consociationalism runs through a difficult situation in a complex plural society like India wherein there is no permanent division of majority and minority in terms of time and space. At one point of time one group may appear minority on certain accounts and as a majority on other. Sikhs are in majority in Punjab, while in minority in the country. Similarly Muslims who are in minority in the country are in majority in the state of Jammu & Kashmir. Region has its own importance. Territorial dimensions of cultural differences are equally pronounced in India. In this context federal principles have more appeal, for federalism does not take a simple view of cultural difference. It rather provides a more comprehensive model of recognition and representation of cultural diversity. It reconciles identity and autonomy. If it grants autonomy to the minorities through a complex process and institutional mechanism, it also associates them to the larger society. Its institutional mechanism serves the purpose of protecting and promoting the rights of the minority groups. If we examine the Indian situation, India presents an important and interesting case. The Indian Constitution incorporates both the principles of federalism and consociationalism and judiciously combines the demands of both. However, the federal principles are more pronounced than the consociational principles because the former takes a different position with regard to the redressal of the problems of minorities in a complex situation of India. Special provisions in the Constitution of India relating to minorities are very close to the idea of federalism.

The recognition of the territorial dimension of cultural diversity is exemplification of the federal principle. Many times federalism is considered as preferred form of political recognition of cultural diversity and consociationalism is considered as transient arrangement.¹⁴ So far as the protection of minorities in terms of their specific cultural identity and rights is concerned, the Indian Constitution devised a more broader framework. In many respects it incorporates the agenda of human rights but goes beyond the liberal framework of human rights. Though the idea of equality, liberty and fraternity reigns supreme, it has special provisions for group specific and minority rights. This concern is attested by the Articles of the Indian Constitution which make space for protective discrimination and minority rights. Whereas Articles 15(4) and 16(4) exclusively deal with the protective discrimination clauses, Article 25 to 30 are concerned with

minority protection. These provisions are the product of long deliberations and considered views of the Constituent Assembly members.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the architect of the Indian Constitution, categorically stated in the Constituent Assembly that rights of minorities should be absolute rights. He observed that the rights which are indicated in Article 18 are rights which every minority, irrespective of any other consideration, is entitled to claim.¹⁵ It is another thing that the idea of protection of minorities and full enjoyment of minority rights have yet to be realized. The constitutional shield with regard to protection is important but the more important is societal response in which these groups are located. The operational dynamics of society may not match with the constitutional proclamation. Tolerance and nondiscrimination have much to do with the ethos of society.

Mutual understanding and respect among the groups and communities may provide better anchorage to the idea of multiculturalism and an adequate agenda for minority protection. In this regard Duchacek rightly points out that whether minority rights are protected by a national constitution or an international treaty, much depends on the actual practice,' sometimes a minority may use its own language, run its mass media, and glorify its own separate culture and heritage and yet be effectively barred by the majority from any real share in the political life and decision-making processes; as a result, living in a ghetto-like situation such a groups may permanently train behind the political, social and evolution of the rest of the country.¹⁶ Perhaps this is the context in which the idea of Federal Nation Building becomes important.

Current Concerns

Federal nation building in its basic spirit and orientation addresses to the Indian imperatives of human rights. The specificity of India calls for a more constructive approach towards human rights which should not essentially be confined to the constitutional model. It should be reflected both in society and in the pattern of nation and state building. The concept of federal nation building weaves a thread which largely corresponds to the demands of both autonomy and integration.¹⁷ Its prescriptions are important in many respects but chiefly in that it provides conducive condition for protection and promotion of human rights. It neither falls prey to exclusivist agenda nor to the hegemonic prescription to generalized and homogenous design of the majoritarian tenets. It is based on the belief that the celebration of cultural heterogeneity has its own validity once it is juxtaposed with homogeneity in a plural society. However, there must be a common space for mediating the demands of identity and difference. Federal nation building offers such space. While at one level it believes in the existence of cultural

pluralism, social diversity and heterogeneity, at other level it does not deny the commonness of experience and shared sense of identity.

The two extremes of identity and difference have their own limitations because the one extreme of identity can sustain fascist social movements as readily as emancipatory ones, and difference may license genocide almost as easily as it does celebration.¹⁸ The logic of construction of federal nation is rooted in the belief that there should be constructive balance between difference and identity. The diversities of culture, religion, ethnic formation and regional particularism be respected and accommodated in the spirit of autonomy and interdependence. These should also form the essential part of the larger common shared identity and commonness. In many respects it also champions the idea of territorial community and sustains a bond of affinity. This bond of affinity and commonness, however, must affect non-homogeneity, non-hierarchical and non-centralizing spirit. The core of the process of federal nation building is territorial organisation of social and cultural diversities.

Territorialization of diversities has been a part of the process of state formation and nation building in India. Both autonomy and integration have been the operative principles. Due to its unique historical experience, India has been referred as a federal nation state. Rasheeduddin Khan observes, "A Federal Nation is a mosaic of people in which unified political identity is reconciled with socio-cultural diversities. Its hallmark is unity of polity and plurality of society."¹⁹ This perception of Indian identity advances the idea of human rights in a plural society. Such a conceptualisation of the process of nation and state building not only strikes a balance between identity and difference but also presupposes the protection of the rights of different categories of minorities. Federal nation building is based on the important value premises of democracy, secularism, social justice and respect and protection of human rights. Each of these value premises is exhaustive with regard to the idea of human rights both in its essence and appearance. The striking feature of federal nation building is its strong assumption of living together in difference which is generally referred as unity in diversity in India. In this regard it must be remembered that the aspects of unity and diversity must be reflected in the realm of civil society and in the institutional structure of the state. The basic principles of multiculturalism and the process of federal nation building correspond to this demand which, in turn, facilitate the promotion and protection of human rights. Thus, it appears that along the principle of multiculturalism and its articulation through the structure and process of federal nation building, there must prevail a sense of mutual understanding and appreciation among different segments of society. Though the minority-majority

framework remains there, this does not essentially preclude exclusion and subordination. In India, pluralism has been a part of philosophy and social and cultural life. Religious pluralism has been a fact and value in the multireligious situation of India.²⁰ This aspect of collective existence needs to be brought back in society. The political principle in itself is not a sufficient condition of peace, harmony and order. More deeper is societal perception. Some federalists go to the extent of claiming that social life is by nature federal. The way people live their lives and organize themselves naturally, without state intervention, is intrinsically federal. It is a natural social reality expressive of multiple roles, aims and identities.²¹ Therefore, for better understanding of the multicultural conditions and specific demands of federal nation building, a sense of appreciation needs to be instilled among the people. The human rights education will have to take this fact into consideration. The aspects of cultural diversity, intercommunity relations, autonomy and identity of different groups etc. need to be highlighted. Their inclusion in the curriculum and projection through media may promote understanding and respect for human rights.

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Changing School Environment: An Indian Experience

Neeru Snehi

Introduction

School education systems all over the world are continuously adapting themselves to meet the challenges of globalization. The demand for educated and skilled workers is on rise. In fact the speed at which these changes are influencing the environment in the local as well as global market calls for reassessment of preparedness in school and higher education institutions to meet these challenges. Moreover, for developing a knowledge society the availability of quality education assumes increasing significance in such a scenario. Hudson (2004) argued that the key concern for educational policy makers is how to provide quality education that is sensitive to local context and at the same time responsible to the demands of the global market. Conventionally, higher education provides leadership- manpower for different sectors of national development and growth whereas school education, to be specific secondary education sector is the major provider of workforce for all spheres of national productivity (CABE, 2005). Therefore, the school's responsibility towards realizing student's potential is further enhanced. Also, to ensure availability of quality education at school level is essential because the quality of teaching, learning and the nature of the knowledge transmitted are perceived as the central concerns of the knowledge society.

It is in this context this paper attempts to bring forth and discuss the various strategies adopted at institutional level for improving secondary school functioning whether it is organization structure, institutional management, classroom organization, teaching-learning process and so on. Based on this analysis, the paper would also attempt to discuss an approach to improve the school by all the stakeholders involved in planning, leading and managing the school.

Background

Schools are perceived as agents for transmission of knowledge, social values and customs to the younger generations. The expectations from the school are high as 'schools' being the major providers of education all over the world stand out to initiate and catalyze the process of change. Everard et al. (2004) observed that schools are part of a bigger system i.e. education system and therefore pursue their functions in an environment through continuous interactions. The school takes in its inputs, namely younger pupils, funds, teachers, learning materials etc. from the society; gives out output in the form of older, educated pupils, service to the community, a livelihood for teachers and their families etc. (Everard et al., 2004, p.147).

This is to underline that the functions to socialize children and to equip them as future mature members of the society by developing a feedback mechanism between school and its environment. In this process the schools are influenced continuously by the changing educational philosophies and the ongoing technological developments around them. In the contemporary society, school has thus become the focus of different reform initiatives for ensuring provision of relevant and quality education. Efforts to provide school environment conducive to learning are based on the feedback drawn from the wider social and environmental factors in which the schools operate. A large body of research literature available reflects the emphasis that is being accorded to initiatives for exploration of strategies and interventions for school improvement as a whole that result in improved student learning at the school level. This has led to development of interventions for school reforms including elementary, secondary and senior secondary levels.

In India also efforts for improvement of quality of education are continuing for the last five decades. Recommendations of various Education Commissions and Reports from time to time provided the necessary impetus to these initiatives in different countries. Major challenge the country is facing today is how to reform the existing educational system in the context of the recent developments in and around the country. There is urgent need in terms of plan of actions, implementation strategies along with adequate financial resources and manpower support for the improvement of schools. Particularly affected are secondary schools because 'secondary education in India is simultaneously challenged with expansion and quality' (Mukhopadhyay, 2002). These issues gain significant importance in view of the existence of differently managed schools. Moreover, major share of interventions that have so far been initiated are based mostly in schools managed by private sector. Recently, Departments of Education in some States are also in the process of introducing interventions for improving schools. The impact of these

programs in terms of improvement in quality and coverage is yet to be researched and evaluated.

Indian System of Education

Indian system of education that evolved during the post independence period was highly influenced by historical experiences, both colonial and pre-colonial, and the social, cultural and intellectual legacy inherited therefrom. These experiences acted as the driving force for its liberal and secular character. *The "Education" in Indian federal system of government was basically a State subject. Only after the 42nd Amendment it was placed in Concurrent List of the Constitution, thereby making it a joint responsibility of Centre and States.* The central government sets policy, stimulates innovation and plans frameworks while the state governments are responsible for implementation of these policies at the grass roots. As a consequence of National Policy of Education, 1986 and Programme of Action 1986 and 1992 (revised), several initiatives have been undertaken at national level and initiated in elementary education sector, such as *Operation Blackboard (1987-88), Restructuring and Reorganization of Teacher Education (1987), Minimum Levels of Learning (1991), National Programme for Nutritional Support to Primary Education (1995), District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) (1994), and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (2002)* for improving the access and quality of education. In secondary education sector also, based on the recommendations of several Education Commissions, Committees, National Policies on Education large-scale expansion in the size of the secondary education system took place. Along with the schools set up by different state governments, schools under *Centrally Sponsored Schemes namely Kendriya Vidyalayas (Central schools), Navodaya Vidyalayas* and other schemes for *improving science and mathematics education, improving facilities for girls and minority education* and others are on going.

National Policy on Education (1986) suggested that all states switch to a uniform structure of 10+2 pattern of education as recommended by the Kothari Commission Report (1964-66). Thus school education constitutes twelve years of schooling. Presently there is a public examination at the end of grade X and the successful candidates are admitted to +2 stage. At the end of +2 stage again there is a public examination for admission to higher education. These examinations are conducted by Central and State Boards of Education established in most of the States. However due to lack of equivalence in the evaluation processes followed by different Boards, management of quality aspects of secondary and senior secondary education is a major challenge.

School education system in India is vast and highly differentiated. It comprises of 1031367 schools as on September 30, 2002. Primary and upper primary schools form the major group with percentage share of 63.15 per cent and 23.78 per cent respectively. The share of schools catering to secondary and senior secondary is 13.6 percent (8.8 percent for secondary and 4.26 percent for senior secondary). Along with this are 2499 degree colleges also that promote education in secondary classes i.e. class XI - XII (7th AIES, NCERT). The formal school education system is further differentiated based on the management structure of the schools. In general, there are schools managed by various agencies like the local bodies, government (State), private-aided, and private-unaided schools. In case of local body and government schools, states have the full responsibility of school education. On the other hand non-governmental organizations, societies, trusts, religious bodies etc. also establish private unaided institutions. Such a scenario throws up various challenges to provide quality-schooling facilities to 200.82 million enrolled children and is still an uphill task.

School Education in Delhi - The National Capital Territory

Union Territory of Delhi is now named as the National Capital Territory of Delhi and is still far from enjoying the status of full-fledged state. New Delhi is the capital of India and is predominantly urban in character. Being the capital city it holds attraction for people from all over the country. The population profile of the city is a complex mix of highly successful people, working class, migrants, employed, unemployed etc from various regions, castes, religions and occupations. For the smooth administration of Delhi it is divided into three local bodies, namely Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) and Delhi Cantonment Board (DCB). Educational zones of these three bodies, which control primary education in their respective areas, except NDMC, which also manages schools from primary to senior secondary level, are coterminus with the administrative zones. Apart from this the Government of NCT of Delhi, which generally controls education from upper primary to senior secondary, has schools in all the areas of three local bodies (Tyagi et al., 2000).

Delhi schools present a highly differentiated composition in response to differentiated demands for school education. These schools are of different categories, namely local body, government schools, government-aided schools, private unaided schools established by different trusts, private organizations and religious bodies etc. Besides this there are Kendriya Vidyalayas, Navodaya Vidyalayas, Sainik schools that are established by various centrally sponsored schemes. Thus even among the government run schools there is a large variation in terms of management by Municipal Corporation,

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Delhi Administration, New Delhi Municipal Corporation and Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan and others. These schools include all types of schools such as primary schools, upper primary schools, secondary schools and senior secondary schools. Further, the secondary schools under private management have developed their own criteria for school management and functioning under the guidelines provided by Delhi Education Act, 1973, which has been modified in 1990. The private unaided schools except for the curriculum and the final board examinations, enjoy a large degree of freedom and autonomy. Government-aided schools in the city and in other states also enjoy some degree of freedom and autonomy in some aspects such as locally elected management committees manage the schools, in many cases teacher recruitment is school based and so on within the rules and regulations provided by the concerned state's statutes (Mukhopadhyay, 2002, p.11). The government schools are directly under the states' control.

Another aspect that is important to point out here is that Delhi being a metropolitan city, school education here is not a representative model of school education for other parts of country. At the same time keeping in view the complex population profile, the schools cater to highly differentiated classes of people. Private schools in general are for those people who can buy education. Among the private schools also there is large variation in terms of type and quality of education they provide. The second group constitutes Kendriya Vidyalayas and Navodya Vidyalayas, established by central government and they are being developed and promoted as pace setters and role models for other schools. Government schools are the major providers of school education to the masses in the city. Efforts for improving the quality of education provided by them are ongoing though goals are still elusive. For instance, in order to provide continuous education some of the middle and secondary government schools, being run by Delhi Administration, are now converted to schools having all the sections i.e. from class I to class XII and are called as Sarvodya schools. In addition to this, some government-managed schools are being developed as Model schools and Prathibha Vikas Vidyalayas to provide quality education. It is in this background that the paper attempts to bring forth and discuss the factors affecting the school environment made available to the students studying in differently managed schools.

Case Study Schools

This article is the outcome of continuous interaction with the schools under different managements in Delhi. Visits to various schools for collecting data, conduction of field visits during workshops and training programs at NIEPA provided the opportunity to study and explore their various dimensions. The case studies included in this article

represent the schools catering to educational needs of middle class families. The case study schools are diverse in terms of their management modes. They include four government schools, two Kendriya Vidyalayas (central schools) and four private schools. These schools are specifically chosen to identify the leadership qualities and also to study their impact on managing and bringing change in their institutions under the situational environments. Thus the school environment is analyzed with reference to the initiatives undertaken in the school for improvement and prescribed management policy guidelines. The qualitative data was collected during discussions with school management members, principals, teachers, parents and students.

Major Findings from the Case Studies

The findings of the study have been divided into broad themes. They were school infrastructure facilities, school leadership, learners, teachers, organization of instructional programme, and strategies for success and monitoring ongoing growth.

Infrastructure facilities in the schools

The most important aspect of all the ten case study schools was their spacious buildings and big playgrounds. Basic infrastructure facilities for classrooms such as furniture, toilets and drinking water facilities were adequate in all the schools. However, the maintenance and upkeep of the facilities presented a very different picture. In case of government schools it was observed that the overall environment presented unclean rooms and corridors, dusty bulletin boards and notice boards on the walls, unclean toilets and the utility areas. On the other hand, the condition of buildings in Kendriya Vidyalayas and private schools presented quite a different picture. These schools had well maintained lawns, playgrounds and school building; classrooms were neat and clean and efforts for keeping the school environment pleasant were visible. The principals associated this miserable situation in government schools to the lack of availability of required staff for carrying out these tasks and also their unwillingness to work. In spite of their repeated complaints to Department of Education action was yet to be taken by the concerned authorities. The Kendriya Vidyalaya principals also shared similar concerns. One of the principals pointed out that sometimes for getting the tasks done they have to take strict administrative actions. In private schools it was reported that some of their staff is hired on contractual basis while others, though in permanent position, had clear-cut distribution of duties. Thus it is clear from the above observations that despite having adequate facilities, their maintenance and proper utilization for improving the school environment is a concern for government schools.

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Availability of science laboratories is essential for schools offering science in secondary and senior secondary schools. The Kendriya Vidyalayas had good laboratories for computer, physics, chemistry and biology subjects for secondary and senior secondary classes. Students worked in the laboratories according to their timetable. Fully equipped laboratory facilities were present in all the private schools. In two schools it was highlighted by the principals that besides the senior classes, junior students from class VI onwards also have time slotted for practical experiments. Separate laboratory facilities are provided for primary class students. Other two private unaided schools were found to provide laboratory facilities to secondary and senior secondary students. Among the sample of government schools, two schools were offering science at the senior secondary level while the other two had general science up to class X. Moreover, such facilities in all the government schools were limited. They had combined laboratory for three subjects. The principals and staff reported lack of equipments and chemicals. It was therefore not surprising when teachers reported that practical assignments are mostly not spread throughout the year, but are based on the availability of the chemicals, equipments, etc., in the school. Major part of the discussion focused on the availability of facilities and their optimal utilization. The principals and teachers teaching those subjects were of the view that lack of significant authority and procedural delays in government schools has negative influence on the learning environment of the school. While in private schools principal had the authority to take decisions for procuring the essential requirements in government schools, budgets and allocations are sanctioned by the education departments and arrival of funds on time or their adequacy was the main concern. These concerns shared by the principals of different case study schools demand greater attention towards the practical work which helps in learning basic concepts.

Another significant change occurring in the learning scenario is the influence of information and communication technology (ICT). Secondary education departments are now providing computers to the government schools for their academic and administrative improvement. So far, exposure of students to these ICTs is nearly non-existent. In comparison to the government schools, Kendriya Vidyalayas had good computer labs and other audio-visual equipments. It was evident from the discussions and the visits that students studying in class VI-XII are getting opportunities of learning computer applications. Availability and exposure of children to ICTs was found to be full in the private schools. Students were aware and exposed to playing educational games at the pre-primary level. The research evidences certainly highlight the differences in the learning environments available to students and it was recognized, that apart from availability of school resources, their appropriate utilization was highly essential.

Learner's Admission Criteria

The principals of all the schools reported growth in enrolment. The admission policy differs among government schools, KVs and private unaided institutions within the area under study. Regarding admissions of the students it was pointed out that government schools cannot refuse admission to any child. This implies that there is no selection of students. Principals of the government schools reported that majority of students enrolled in the government schools belonged to middle class families. Many of students taking admissions are first grade learners and work in the remaining time. Average pass percentage of these students in examination was around 50%. The transition rate from upper primary to secondary classes to senior secondary classes in school varied from 40% to 60% while for secondary to senior secondary classes the transition rate was more than 80% during the last four years. Another important aspect of the students admitted to these schools, as reported by majority of the principals, was the trend of shifting to other schools when they scored good marks. This way the government schools lose even those few students who scored high percentage during the Class X board examination and had good learning abilities. Besides this, private schools give them admission. Consequently, those students who scored less in private schools were unable to retain their seats. As a result, it was pointed out, that ability level of student intake is skewed towards lower end.

In contrast to state managed government schools, Kendriya Vidyalayas that are managed by the central government, admissions are primarily restricted to children of central government employees and defense personnel. The seats that remain unfulfilled can be filled up based on entrance examination from the general category students. As compared to government schools average ability levels of children taking admissions is mixed and pass percentage is also around 90%. The principals of the case study schools reported that transition from secondary to senior secondary is nearly total. Average achievement of the students in the last four years has improved and was on the higher side.

The admission criteria in the private schools are limited by the distance factor only as they are children from the families residing within 8km range from the school. In general, as there is more than one private school within the area, and there is stiff competition for admission to schools, factors commonly considered are academic performance and learning environment provided by these schools. All the four case study schools cater to the children belonging to middle class families. One of them is an ISO 9000: 2000 certified school and is run by a charitable society which has a chain of more than 700 schools all over the country. The trusts/societies running the other

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schools also have other schools in New Delhi. Student intake in these schools at the nursery level is based on interactions with parents as well as with the child. The schools exercise their choice in giving admissions. Transition rates in these schools from secondary to senior secondary level is nearly 100% as school can restrict the weaker students from appearing in the examination. Average achievement in the first two schools ranged around 70% while around 15-20% students score above 80% marks in examinations. In the third school pass percentage in children reported by the principals was above 80% during the last three years while the fourth one it was around 70 percent. Besides this, the principal reported that the students in the school belonged to economically well off families but the education level of parents was comparatively low; as a result of the educational aspirations of majority of students are limited.

The Teacher Factor

The teaching staff in the school occupies a central place, 9+ as they are the contemporary learning managers. Without them transaction of curriculum and teaching - learning process cannot sustain. During the interview and meeting with principals the issue of impact of teachers on students was highlighted. Recruitment and selection of teachers emerged as one of the significant concerns. The principals of government and Kendriya Vidyalaya schools reported that they had no control over the staff selection; recruitment and placement in both the cases selection of teachers and recruitment was carried out at the management level. In case of government schools in Delhi, department of education conducts or authorizes other state level bodies to organize the selection process. Usually, selection of teachers is through entrance test followed by an interview.

In case of Kendriya Vidyalayas, Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan organizes the whole process of selection, recruitment and placement. Thus in both the types of government managed schools, principals have to accept the placements of teachers. Teachers in these schools can be transferred and can even ask for transfers. However, there is one difference: in case of KVs teachers can be posted anywhere in India and also within the set limit whereas in the state managed schools they remain within the state. There are specified rules for teacher postings yet in some cases preferential postings do take place.

In sharp contrast to this, teacher selection and recruitment in private schools is done at institutional level implying that school management exercises the choice in selection. School management committees in which school principal and a few members from the staff organize selection the process. Moreover presence of an official from Directorate of Education is mandatory for all such procedures. The records of

appointments/retirements, etc., are essentially communicated to Directorate of Education. During the discussions and also the time spent in the schools it was observed that most of the teachers appeared to be enthusiastic and committed to the welfare of students. They were trying to encourage and motivate the children for better performance. Principals of government schools highlighted many problems which the teachers faced during their classes; this was due to diverse student clientele of students belonging to weak socio-economic background of children of slum dwellers, labourers, etc. They also pointed out that many a time teachers were unable to solve their problems and adopt indifferent attitude to their personal issues. Another important concern discussed with them was the conflict between the teachers belonging to different groups which led to inappropriate and preferential distribution of work load in terms of additional duties apart from teaching assignments. Some of them were overloaded with work while others moved freely.

In the KVs under the study, principals perceived his colleagues as very dedicated, competent and enthusiastic about their teaching activities. But it was also highlighted that the new approaches, which were implemented for creating teacher accountability time were not acceptable to many. Inspection and monitoring system exist in both the types of government schools but they lack consistency.

Research studies conducted for determining the relationship between the quality of teacher's knowledge and skills validity the idea that students generally learn what they are taught with skill and understanding (Daryl Hammond, 1998; Rowe & Hicks 1998; Rowe 2003, cited in Kleinhenz & Irzvarson, 2004). However, the principals indicated that though the teachers were found to differ in their views regarding teaching methods, school programmes, discipline and strictness, about the student's learning abilities, yet they all were of the opinion that sincere efforts for promoting their ability improvement ought to be made. In sharp contrast to this, teachers in the private schools were found to have quite high workload. The school principals and management have high expectations from the staff and are under continuous observation. They are also expected to contribute to co curricular activities such as cultural, social and sports events, manage different hobby club and discipline committees for provision of quality education to students. Teachers are organized based on their subject specializations and the classes they teach. Each group with the teacher in charge plans curricular and co-curricular activities in a collaborative manner with other teachers. It was also observed that school management makes efforts to maintain good working relationship between management, administration, principal, teachers and students.

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Professional growth and development of teachers in the private schools was perceived as a priority by the school managements. Seminars and workshops are organized regularly for providing in service training to teachers. Within the school and also in collaboration with other schools teacher training is organized by the Directorate of Education and KV Sangathan (ZIETs) respectively. Mostly these trainings are organized during summer vacations and are of 21 days duration at their four zonal institutes of educational training. As per rules of KVs a teacher has to undergo training once in six years wherein government schools, SCERTs conduct these trainings during summer holidays.

Strategies for monitoring success and ongoing growth

Majority of the schools in Delhi are affiliated to Central Board of Secondary Education; State and Central Boards of Education/Secondary Education primarily function as examining and recognition giving bodies. Except for Class X and Class XII examinations, for all other classes school is the examining authority. Internal assessment of students is done in the form of class tests, unit tests and terminal examinations. In the case of government schools, results of class X and class XII examination during the last three years revealed that more than two-third of students appearing in the examination were successful. However, their average performance in the examination was around 50% yet very few initiatives such as remedial classes during the school hours and vacations were being undertaken to improve the performance of the students.

The situation in KVs was far better. Though they are also affiliated to CBSE, they followed a similar annual plan for examination and other activities in all the schools of a particular zone. The schools have well planned schedule of examinations divided into unit tests, terminal and final examinations to improve their results at secondary and senior secondary levels. The management of KVs has now started preparing question banks and model assignment sheets for providing practice to the students for the past three - four years. The students attempted these assignments/model papers within the school itself during specified time. Remedial classes for those who need extra guidance were planned during the school hours. Result records of each student for every test are maintained for analyzing and improving the student's performance in every subject. In case of private schools the emphasis on performance in examinations is very high. It was observed that examination system in the school was well planned and distributed over the year. Infact it appeared that the whole system was geared towards success i.e. high scholastic achievement. The schedule was made available to student's right in the beginning of the session. Regular weekly tests, surprise tests, terminal examinations

along with assessment in other co curricular activities were the norm. Regular review of homework and class assessments was discussed at departmental meetings with the principal and teachers representing the class.

Discussion and observations have revealed that the efforts are being undertaken to improve the school's performance. Driving forces for some of these changes are originating from the top (policy formulations and its implementations) while in other cases as response to local demands and needs. In case of private unaided schools, impetus for initiating reforms and school improvement activities is generated to keep them viable and attract better clientele. Impact of these strategies is reflected in the overall improvement of examination results in class X and class XII.

Organization of Instructional Program

Based on the recommendations of Kothari Commission, NPE 1968 paved way for adoption of common curriculum until class X within the 10+2+3 framework. The National Curriculum Framework for Ten Years of School Education (1975) followed stream-wise differentiated curriculum for two years of senior secondary classes. This framework was implemented nationwide. The NPE 1986 also reiterated this pattern of education and The National Curriculum Framework has undergone revision in the years 1988, 2000 and 2005. However, The National Curriculum Framework provides flexibility for responding to local needs and environment at State level and facilitates its practice by various State Boards of School Education. Along with State Boards of School Education there are All India Boards such as Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE). Their mandate includes granting recognition, conduction of examinations at national level and also look into quality of education, teacher qualifications, training and so on. All the case study schools included in the sample are affiliated to CBSE and thus are following common curriculum. The common curriculum includes languages, core subjects and co-curricular areas. Choice of the subjects by the student is also restricted due to availability of subjects and teachers for teaching the subject as well. Thus in these schools all the students are required to choose subjects for studying within the range of combinations provided.

With reference to organization of instructional programme, quite a few variations were observed. Most of the case study schools, whether government or private, were offering subjects in all the three streams, namely Arts, Commerce and Science at senior secondary level. Nevertheless the combinations of subjects available to the students were very limited. Among the government schools the teachers and principals reported that the whole curriculum for the grade is distributed and planned for the year with

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reference to annual calendar. Instruction methodology and classroom organization were found to be very traditional. In most of the classes observed, use of teaching-learning material, demonstrations and discussions had very little place in the transaction process. At every point it was perceived by the principal that though they have more qualified teachers yet the average performance of the students was low. In view of low level of average academic achievement also, it was felt essential to provide students positive attitude towards learning as well as on environment of better institutional programmes to meet the needs of the students.

On the other hand, in KVs the stress is on remedial and drill work for preparation for the examinations. However, the most favoured method for teaching employed is lecture method, which is sometimes supplemented by teaching aids. The principals further pointed out that though the pass percentage was near 80 percent, the average academic achievement was comparatively low. To improve the percentage and academic achievement of the students, KVs has started providing model papers and question banks, which the students are required to attempt in the school in the presence of their teachers. During the school hours and vacations and preparatory holidays before the examinations, time is scheduled for these activities to encourage and motivate students. They were of the opinion that such changes are welcome to the students, teachers and parents as all the discussions with parents and management officials were of the view that the standardized common curriculum in the schools which are differentiated in terms of their student intake, resources, capability of teaching staff restrict the implementation of various strategies of academic success.

On the other hand, it was observed in private schools that emphasis on academic as well as co curricular issues was significantly high. The annual academic calendar was planned to finer details and made available to each child in the beginning of session. Apart from these competitions, other activities like eco club, science club/fairs etc. were also planned and included in the calendar. The teaching programme included lectures, discussions, demonstrations, preparation of projects, drill and practice and also regular testing schedules. For providing remedial teaching to weaker students and additional coaching to the ability students, abilitywise groupings were also made. Thus the discussions with the principal, teachers and even students indicated that that the central focus of attempted interventions was increase in academic achievement in terms of marks obtained in the external examinations.

Based on these findings it was quite visible that every school's journey towards improvement passes through many challenges and school functionings vary from one school to school. But one aspect, that is, efforts for improving education, its purpose,

its values and its content, continues to take place. In this context these findings reveal the need for urgent steps to be taken in order to provide quality school education.

The Road Ahead

Important insights obtained through the observations and discussions with the stakeholders in the differently managed schools have highlighted some key issues related to the functioning of schools. Moreover, improving the quality of schools is a challenging task in view of the large number of secondary and senior secondary schools. The nature and extent of this gigantic task must be taken into consideration before initiating any steps for school improvement.

These case studies have brought awareness that our educational system vis-à-vis schools have to continuously adapt to emerging social needs. Some are flexible enough to face current educational challenges while others slowly follow the leaders. In this process, school systems are being driven to place greater responsibility on individual schools, consequently facing a major challenge i.e. how to improve schools within the existing set up. This would ultimately lead to reorganization of every component of school - from the overall organizational structure to the decision-making process, pedagogical framework down to teaching-learning processes and management of human and financial resources. Therefore there is an urgent need to design an approach to improve the school by all the stakeholders involved in planning, leading and managing the school by redefining their roles and professional profiles.

The school improvement planning process is being increasingly used to enhance effectiveness of the school in large number of countries such as Australia, Singapore, USA and UK. Moreover, School Improvement Planning (SIP) is closely related to School Development Planning (SDP), a term which is often used for a similar approach to devolving power to the local level. SIP and SDP can be defined "as the active involvement of the school and its community in identifying and meeting school determined goals in the context of local or national policies and goals". The terms are sometimes used interchangeably, but SIP is more commonly used for improvement of quality of teaching and learning through a focus on school management of resources. The definition emphasizes on schools setting their own realistic targets for development and using their own resources as well as state resources to meet those targets (Acharya, Sibbons and Bailey, 2002). Further, to bring change in the school's quality it is essential for each school to develop its plan; this is true not only for the weak schools for achieving constant improvement in access and quality of schooling. Therefore SIP is a strategic plan because it is prepared within the school involving school principal and staff for uplifting the school

from present level to higher level in academics co-curricular and other school areas. It could also act as a vital tool for ensuring accountability. School Improvement Planning Process is a planning model, which focuses on continuous improvement.

In addition to this, ongoing researches have indicated another important factor, namely leadership, which cuts across all the dimensions and can lead to social and institutional change. Improvement is a key issue and a challenge for leadership. It is required that leaders are proactively empowered so that they can become agents of change. Further, in an institution strategies need to be developed so that competent school leaders may be identified, recruited, trained, supervised and appraised. However, nurturing of leadership must not be limited to school heads and/or administrators; all the stakeholders should be active partners in this changing paradigm in order to bring about improvement in the education system.

Since India is currently striving to provide quality education through large-scale expansion of formal education system there is need to conceive and implement educational reform initiatives or programs to release local creativity, tap new resources within the school and the community. This could be achieved by developing an interface between state-level aspirations (goals) with school-level freedom and leadership.

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Additional Member System as an Alternative to Women's Reservation

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Electoral systems do have an impact on the quality of representative democracy. Different electoral laws produce different results and different types of representatives also. The electoral system also does have an impact on the nature and extent of voting behaviour. In this context, the present paper looks into the question whether the 'first-past-the-post' (FPTP) system in India is truly representative and examines whether alternative models are available which can make our democracy more representative and meaningful.

We may begin by distinguishing electoral laws from other kinds of law. If we agree that 'laws' generally are authoritative rules of conduct enacted and enforced by the holders of governmental authority, then 'election laws' are those authoritative rules which pertain to the conduct of laws. "Electoral laws are those which govern the processes by which electoral preferences are articulated as votes and by which these votes are translated into distributions of governmental authority (typically parliamentary seats) among the competing political parties" (Rae 1967:14). A number of concomitant questions are then asked with regard to the electoral laws. Are the voters asked to choose between men or parties? Does the candidate or party with more votes than any other win outright or is the victory divided among the contestants in proportion to their vote? Does the voter express a nominal preference or is he asked to rank his preferences among a number of alternatives? Does each constituency choose a single legislator, or does it select a number of them?

The answers to these questions are interdependent; an answer to any one limits the answers the law may reasonably give to the others. For example, single-member constituency system and elaborate rules for proportionality, at least at the

constituency level, are incompatible. It is this interdependence which leads political scientists and politicians alike to regard the total pattern of electoral laws prevailing for a particular country's general elections as an organic whole- an "electoral system" (Rae 1967: 14-15). Different countries do have different electoral systems.

Now it is pertinent to examine the question what kind of electoral system exists in India. The essential characteristics of the Indian electoral system are summarized below.

1. First-past-the-post system of election

This system enables a candidate to win an election when he gets more votes than his strongest single competitor, but has not necessarily polled a higher total than the combined opposition. It is this property which accounts for terms like "relative majority", and "plurality formula". The plurality formula makes an election a contest in which the winner is to outscore the best of the opposition. This, of course, introduces an element of "chance", since the number of votes required to win cannot be predicted from the formula and the total vote alone. Sometimes, a candidate may win with 35 votes, while two opponents get 25 and 30 votes respectively. The term 'first-past-the-post' originated from the analogy of a horse race. For a horse which is first to pass the winning post it is, indeed, a matter of indifference whether it has left one or many horses behind. Thus, it is a strange experience for us to consider that the winner with his 35 votes is a smart fellow: he has left two opponents behind him, the one at a distance of 5, the other at a distance of 10 votes. The rationale is that the object of racing is just to decide which horse or automobile has travelled the distance most rapidly.

Another difficulty with the FPTP is that the votes a candidate gets beyond the minimum requirement are, in a sense, wasted. It makes no difference that a candidate wins by a landslide in a constituency; a hair's breadth margin would do as well. In the same logic, the votes given to losing candidates are also wasted.

2. Ballot structure is categorical rather than ordinal

In democratic elections, voting is essentially an act of choice. The function of the ballot is to structure that choice. All ballots ask the voter to choose among the contestants in some way, but they vary in the kind of choice they demand. The ballot structure is of two types: (1) categorical ballots, and (2) ordinal ballots. Categorical ballots ask the voter to decide which one of the candidates he prefers. The ballot forces him to say that he prefers one candidate in parliament as opposed to all others. He cannot qualify his decision; and he cannot divide his mandate among different candidates.

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By way of contrast, ordinal ballots allow the voter to express a more complex, equivocal preference by rank-ordering the candidates. He may thus say that he prefers Candidate A most, Candidate C second, and so forth. The voter need not opt in favour of any single candidate.

The significant difference between these two types of ballot lies in the nature of the role imposed by each upon the voter. Under categorical systems the voter must act decisively, delivering his whole mandate to a single candidate. Under ordinal systems the voter is not required to act quite so decisively, and is allowed to represent even his least powerful positive feelings in small parcels of support for each of several candidates.

3. The constituency magnitude is single rather than many

The electoral constituencies are the units within which vote totals are translated into distribution of Parliamentary seats. In some cases, only a single seat is awarded in such a constituency. This brings us to the distinction between "single-member constituencies" and "multi-member constituencies". It is also an appropriate occasion to remind ourselves that multi-member constituencies may have as few as two seats each, but may also have upward of a hundred seats (the Netherlands and Israel offer such extreme cases). The underlying dimension here is neither geographic area nor population; it is the number of seats assigned to the constituency. This variable may be called the 'magnitude' of the constituency, and is defined as the number of seats assigned by the electoral law to any constituency. W.J.M. Mackenzie suggests that, "the larger the number of seats in the constituency the more exact is the proportionality that can be attained" (Rae 1967: 21).

The Indian Electoral system revisited

In short, the Indian electoral system is 'first-past-the-post' which takes place on a categorical ballot in single-member constituencies. It enables the candidate who gets the most votes (need not be a majority of total votes polled) to win an election in a multi-cornered contest. This results, at times, in the victory of a candidate with a minority (less than 50% of votes polled) of votes. At the national level, it leads to disproportionality between the percentage of votes polled by political parties and the number of seats won by parties. In the history of general elections in independent India, these two have never been matched.

In the first general elections of 1952, 1957 and 1962 the Congress party had bagged 75% of seats each in Lok Sabha with 45%, 48%, and 45% of votes respectively. In 1967 and 1971 the Congress won 54% and 68% of total seats with a vote share of 40%

and 44% respectively. The case is repeated in 1977 when Janata Party got 55% of seats with 43% of votes. When the Congress party returned to power in 1980, it got 67% of seats with 43% of votes. Even when Rajiv Gandhi led the Congress party to its best ever performance in 1984, it got only 48% of votes but mustered a huge share of seats (77%). Since then no political party could get an absolute majority on its own, but the disproportionality between vote share and seat share continued.

This being a serious flaw of the Indian electoral system, majority of Indian voters live with a feeling that they are not represented in the parliament. The system does not take care to see that the minority (social and political) groups, women and other marginalized sections are adequately represented in the legislature. This badly affects the quality of representation in Indian democracy.

The perceived drawbacks of the present electoral system, necessarily, need to be corrected. All democratic theorists accept that there should be fair representation to all social segments in proportion to their strength. That seems at first obvious: if a party receives half the votes in the country it should have half of the seats in the parliament; if it gets only a tenth of the votes it should have one tenth of the seats. Now another question arises as how to distribute the seats proportionately. To answer this question, one can obviously cite the various forms of proportional representation; prominent among them being 'single transferable vote' and 'party list systems'. But I would suggest a modified version of the Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) system of election that exists in Germany to suit the demands of the Indian situation.

The Mixed Member Proportional system which is also called Additional Member system would both remedy the disproportional effects of the current Indian system and preserve the constituency MP system to which the Indians are so attached. An additional input to this electoral system could also take care of the under-representation of women in elected bodies.

The German Model

The German system is designed to fill 50% of the Bundestag (Lower House) with constituency MPs and 50% with MPs drawn from party lists. The former is elected on an FPTP basis, essentially the same as that in India, and with equivalent disproportion in the pattern of results. The latter 50% are allocated 'correctively' so that FPTP distortions are ironed out and the final composition of the Bundestag is (with limited exceptions) in proportion with how the electorate cast its votes for each party. There are two central features of the system:

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- (1) Voters have two votes, both of which are on a single ballot paper. One vote is the 'constituency vote'. This part of the ballot paper shows the names of all the candidates contesting for election as the Member of Parliament to represent that constituency. The candidate who wins the most votes becomes the constituency MP. The second vote is the 'party vote'. This part of the ballot paper shows names of all the registered political parties that have nominated lists of candidates drawn up separately in each region, or Land. Somewhat perversely, it is the 'party vote', which is the more important. The 'party vote' determines the final, proportional composition of the Bundestag; the first has an impact only in the constituency concerned.
- (2) However, a political party has to clear one of two 'hurdles'- gaining at least 5% of the 'party votes' nation-wide or three constituency wins- in order to receive a proportional allocation of seats in the Bundestag. Votes for parties, which fail these two hurdles, are disregarded in calculating the composition of the Bundestag. If a party does cross any of these hurdles, its total number of MPs will be made up of any constituency MPs it has plus enough list MPs to reach its final share of total membership in the House. If a party crossed the 5% votes hurdle but wins no constituency seats, all its MPs will be list MPs.

It should also be noted that the total number of constituency seats won by independent candidates and by candidates for parties that are not on the 'party vote' are deducted from the total number of seats before seats are allocated according to parties' shares of all the 'party votes'. So in a 100 member House, if 5 independents have won from various constituencies, 95 seats will be available for proportional allocation.

Allocation of Seats

The number of 'party votes' won by each registered party which has submitted a party list and crossed the threshold is used to decide how many seats overall each party will have in Parliament. These parties will receive enough list seats to add to their constituency seats to reach the total number of seats to which they are entitled.

To determine the precise order in which all the seats in Parliament are allocated to the various parties, a number of statistical methods are in use. The simplest of them is one called St. Lague formula. According to this formula, the nation-wide 'party vote' of each of the parties which crossed the threshold is divided by successive odd numbers starting with 1 (i.e. the number of 'party votes' won by each party is divided by 1,3,5,7,9,11 etc.). The highest resulting numbers (which are called quotients) determine both the

number of seats for each party and the order in which they are allocated. This process of division is continued till enough quotients to fill all the seats are found.

The number of quotients received by each party is the number of seats that party is entitled to have in the Parliament. The electoral officer will then deduct the number of constituency seats that each party has won and allocate enough list seats to each party to bring the total number of seats up to the number to which it was entitled. The electoral officer will then examine the list of candidates submitted on its party list before the election, and delete the names of any candidate who had won a constituency seat. He will then allocate the party's list seats to the remaining list candidates in order they appear on the party's list. Such candidates will be declared elected to the Parliament.

Implications

The list system is in some respects problematic. Lists are 'closed', in other words defined by the parties themselves, with no possibility for voters to influence either the selection or the rank order of candidates. Even the names of the list candidates do not figure in the ballot paper, though the lists are officially sent to all households and widely published. Given that half the members of the Bundestag are drawn from party lists, this may be judged a limitation on democratic choice.

Another problem is that leading politicians often appear both as constituency candidates and - as insurance against failing to win the constituency- in high positions on the party list. The winning candidates from the constituencies will be, obviously, deleted from the party list and the following candidates on that party's list move up.

Another significant qualification to proportionality is the phenomenon of so-called 'surplus seats'. This arises when a party wins more constituency seats than the number it is entitled to take on the basis of party votes cast. If this happens, then that party retains these 'surplus seats' and the size of the Bundestag is increased accordingly. No compensatory seats are awarded to other parties to maintain proportionality. It is also possible that a party might not nominate enough list candidates to fill all the seats it was entitled to have on the basis of its share of all the 'party votes' it received. It would then not be able to fill those seats, which would remain vacant until the next general election. If that happened, Parliament would have fewer members than expected.

Adopting German System in India

The realization of existing diversities in a large country like India might necessitate some variations from the German model. The nation-wide 5% vote and three seat hurdles could be reduced and made state-wide or district-wide. It would be fair, if

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the hurdle is set at 5% votes at the state level or one constituency win for the Lok-Sabha. For the State legislature, the district could be taken as a unit and the hurdle is set at 5% at the district level or one constituency seat.

To enhance the representation of women in the legislatures, rule can be made to place women candidates in the party lists at winnable positions. It can be stipulated that one women candidate should be placed for every three candidates on the party list. Thus, it can be ensured that there will be a women legislator if a party could return three candidates; two women, if the party gets six seats and so on. Considering the fact that the total number of seats is doubled, it is certain that the number of women legislators would, definitely, reach 33% or even beyond that. The party lists can also be made use for distributing tickets to different sections of the community like OBCs and minorities.

Adopting the MMP system would positively influence the participation of voters in the electoral process. The fact that more representatives are chosen in the election, more voters can get identified with the candidates of their choice, who have a chance of winning. This would definitely attract the otherwise indifferent sections of the electorate towards the election process.

Conclusion

Care has to be taken in identifying the relevance of one country's experience for another's reform debate. Institutions such as electoral systems are embedded in a country's wider political tradition and institutional environment and cannot simply be transplanted elsewhere. The German system is of course more complex than the simple FPTP, but there is no real evidence that it overburdens the intelligence of the German electorate. Germany has been practicing this system ever since 1949. New Zealand has adopted this system with slight variations in 1993 and it is being actively considered in countries that discuss electoral reforms.

Given that the principle of constituency representation is deeply embedded in Indian politics, an electoral reform process, which abandoned that principle, would not easily take root. The advantage of a German style system would be the maintenance of constituencies and FPTP contests, which select constituency representatives. At the same time, it has its own mechanism to ensure proportionality between the percentage of votes polled and seats won by parties. It also ensures even smaller parties to have representation in proportion to their voter strength. The German system brings stability to political system as it requires the naming of a successor Prime Minister while moving a no-confidence motion (constructive Vote of no-confidence).

If the political pulls and pressures that exist in Indian society are any indication, electoral reforms naturally merit a serious debate. In that debate, the German model is well placed to feature strongly as it ensures stability, allows constituency representation and provides outcomes far more proportional than those generated by the current Indian system. It can also put an end to the prolonged controversy over the women's reservation Bill, if we could make it mandatory for political parties to place women candidates at winnable positions in Party lists.

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Population Pressure, Migration and Development

D.C. Sah and Amita Shah

Sah and Shah (2003) have established that incidence of poverty in Southwestern tribal belt is alarmingly high. About three-fifths of the households in this tribal belt are categorised as chronic poor. A large part of chronic poverty is due to access failure to production resources: population pressure and declined landholdings; recurring droughts and access failure to land-based livelihood; lack of off-farm employment avenues and consumption loan from moneylender result in a debt-trap that pulls people into chronic poverty. Seasonal migration in this tribal belt is regarded as an essential coping mechanism especially in response to a shock, including crop failure, son's marriage, serious sickness et cetera. The objective of this paper is to analyse the observations relating to seasonal migration from two villages, Pospur and Kirchali, of Badwani district of Southwestern tribal belt of Madhya Pradesh¹. We have tried to establish, in this paper, that (i) a shock can induce a complex socio-economic process like access failure to food, debt-trap and depletion of assets, short-term land transactions, withdrawal of children from school and migration; (ii) all location and households do not respond in the same pattern; for some, migration means livelihood option, for others it means savings, asset formation and technology transfer; (iii) locational disadvantage in a shock can be overcome by investment in agriculture. We have used both qualitative and quantitative methods in data collection. The qualitative data provided understanding on extent and patterns of migration and its consequences, which were developed using wealth ranking exercise, case studies and group discussions. The quantitative data were generated for 84 sample households that provide information relating to incidence and intensity of seasonal migration, income and saving from migration and the correlates of migration.

I

Conceptualising Migration

A voluminous literature is available explaining migration that mirrors the discipline and ideological underpinnings of the researcher. Although sociologists like Lee (1966) conceptualised migration as the play of negative and positive forces that respectively pushes a migrant from the place of origin to migrate and pulls him to the place of destination, neoclassical constructs dominated the explanations. Locating migration decisions at the household level and arguing that such decisions are based on opportunities and constraints that the households face, the neoclassical theorists propagated human capital theory (Sjaastad: 1962; Todaro: 1969, 1980). This construct argued that inclination to migrate is determined by difference in income between source and destination of migration, and may result in equating expected income. Given their skills, decisions about where to live are based on where individuals can optimise the present value of their discounted stream of expected future earnings. Migration according to Saxena (1977) may be motivated by a desire to seek skill and leads to development, urbanisation and socio-economic transformation. In the same vein, Stark (1980) identifies transaction cost, imperfect information and imperfect credit, land and labour markets as main determinants of migration. On the other hand, researches driven by Marxist ideology (Breman: 1985; Olsen & Murthy: 2000) identified structural constraints of capitalist system as main source of exploitation of migrant labours. In absence of alternatives, in extreme cases, monopoly creditor also becomes a monopsony buyer of migrant's labour (Olsen & Murthy: 2000). But the recognition that seasonal migration also provides a respite from interlocked credit, land and labour transactions were never missing. Breman (1985) also shows that while for resource poor, migration is a coping mechanism that provides means for debt servicing, for the well-endowed it increases households' earnings, creditworthiness and ability to manage crisis. Breaking away from the neoclassical interpretations of determinants of migration, Mosse et. al. (2002) argue that 'migration is not an external factor impinging upon or undermining agrarian society. Existing social relations and inequalities, which define differential opportunities, constraining experiences and social outcome, profoundly shape it. Moreover, migration contributes to continuation and intensification of agriculture and social networks on which it depends'. Insufficient land, larger dependency within family and poor are more likely to seasonally migrate than others. Sah (1999) argues that access failure to resources as well as constraints on markets influence seasonal migration.

In a resource poor economy, the existing economic hierarchy collapses during a shock like crop failure, drought, sickness, death, son's marriage, *Notra* (gifts in social

ceremonies), *Jhagda* (dispute settlement), population pressure², et cetera. In this situation, heads of even larger landholding households also have to borrow to meet the eventualities. In order to repay such loans some of the family members of the household have to migrate. In what follows, we try to establish that during a shock depletion of assets and related borrowings has strong positive influence on intensity of migration. Postulate a village consisting 'n' households with per capita calorie intake of the i^{th} household c_i such that during normal situation the available food stock with the households G_i is able to support the intake at the minimum per capita per day acceptable level c^* for all M_i of its members for rest of the d_i days till the new harvest arrives. During a shock there are, however, households whose per capita intake falls short of c^* by an amount s_i for remaining D_i days. Under such circumstances, in order to maintain the minimum level of intake, m_i out of M_i members of household migrate for D_i days in such a way that:

$$c^* \cdot (M_i - m_i) D_i + c^* \cdot M_i \cdot (d_i - D_i) < G_i$$

The following implications relating to seasonal migration may be noted. First, the decision to migrate is not taken by any individual in isolation; seasonal migration is a group decision, taken by the household as a whole, perhaps even by several households together. The cost of information relating to destination, movement of the group, type of work and wage contract, dwelling at the destination and payment to middlemen et cetera may be shared by households who perceive seasonal migration inevitable for the larger interest of their families. During a shock existing food stock are augmented to s_i by taking a loan from the local *bania*. Second, the duration of seasonal migration is controlled by households' perception about the shortfall in consumption s_i . As soon as the shortfall is overcome and borrowed loan repaid, the migrating members are free to rejoin the family; i.e. no sooner $m_i \cdot c^* \cdot D_i = s_i$ in such a manner that savings from migration are enough to repay the loan, the time to return is opportune. Third, after the decision to seasonally migrate has been taken, there may not be many households whose intake falls below c^* . In fact, among the 'n' households in the village, those opting for seasonal migration may be the ones with relatively higher intake levels. It can be seen from the above construct that if the migrating members from a household choose to stay for more than the required days at their destination the per capita intake of the remaining members of household may be maintained at higher levels than c^* . In a scarcity situation, it is highly probable that the calorie intake of the remaining members of migrating households is higher than of the members of non-migrating households in the village. These households may also have some savings and assets. Lastly, the decision to migrate could confer larger societal benefit provided the consumption level

of migrant is maintained at least at c* level at the destination without adversely affecting the wage rate. Although it is difficult to establish fully the above construct, evidence provided by our research indicates the operation of the process.

II

Extent and Pattern of Migration

There has been a long tradition of tribal migration in search of employment from the region (Baviskar: 1997). There are evidences that even in early 1970s, up to 40 per cent of total working populations of the Eastern tribal belt of Gujarat migrated seasonally in search of livelihood (Bureau: 1974). Breman (1985) describes such seasonal migration as marginal tribal farmers' efforts to prevent a slide down in the agrarian ladder. Evidences that are more recent reveal that over period of time, intensity of migration in terms of number, duration and distance has increased (Patel: 2001). This increase in migration can be attributed to both push and pull forces operating on the tribal economy; access failure to food in the village pushes the tribal out to seasonally migrate whereas the expansion of labour demand in irrigated agriculture as well as in the urban-industrial sectors in Gujarat and Maharashtra pull them to migrate in search of higher wages. But such explanations will be partial for, at societal level a complex process operates that governs migration.

Agriculture is the main economic activity in both Kirchali and Pospur during normal years. But agriculture does not provide sustenance for whole year for a sizeable number of households even during normal years. Poor quality of land, insufficient landholdings and low productivity are the main reasons that force households to resort to labouring in and around the villages. This also forces some households to work in cotton gins in Sendhwa or migrate seasonally. In abnormal situations like 2001-02, about 92 per cent of households from Pospur and about 46 per cent of households from Kirchali have reported seasonal migration of some of their family members. The major reasons for larger migration from Pospur in comparison to Kirchali are remoteness, its difficult and undulating terrain, poor soil and indifferent agricultural productivity, lack of employment opportunities and larger borrowings. Relative remoteness of Pospur in terms of its physical distance from agro-processing and industrial markets has resulted in significantly higher reliance on seasonal migration of households. Whereas in Kirchali, which is relatively less remote, non-farm employment opportunities in Sendhwa are important economic support that provide cash to households for about 5-6 months after the kharif harvest. In comparison to adjoining tribal areas, the Southwestern belt does not seem to be much different in terms of extent of migration; about 48 per cent of tribal

households in 1990s in Jhabua (West Madhya Pradesh), Banswara (South Rajasthan) and Panchmahals (East Gujarat) had to opt for seasonal migration for their livelihood (Mosse et. al.: 2002).

Drought not only has repercussions that disrupts the economy but also has socio-cultural implications (Table 1). Apart from depletion of milch animals, reduction in availability of food and fodder and increased debts coupled with increased intensity of seasonal migration, the households also faced serious non-economic problems like withdrawing children from school, doing work that in normal situation they would not have preferred, sending out old members of the family to relatives, inability to settle hospitalisation bills et cetera.

Table 1: Drought and its Implication for Households' Livelihood

	% of household	Odd ratio ^a	Difference ^b
Withdrawing Child from school	17	4	(+) ***
Started doing degrading jobs	26	NS	(+) *
Old family members sent out	12	4	(+) **
Increased land mortgage	29	NS	NS
Reduction in food consumption	77	3	NS
Depletion in milch animals	78	5	NS
Increased debt	74	NS	(+) **
Increased intensity of migration	60	5	(+) ***
Unpaid hospital bills	37	NS	NS
Fodder availability reduced	57	NS	NS
Short term land transitions	7	NS	NS

a) Odd-ratio of incident taking place rather than not in Pospur compared to Kirchali = (Frequency of event taking place / Frequency of event not taking place) in Pospur / (Frequency of event taking place / Frequency of event not taking place) in Kirchali

b) Significant difference between migrant and non-migrant households; +: those who migrated have experienced this significantly more than non-migrant.

Level of significance * 10%, ** 5% and *** 1%; NS not significant.

Source: For all the Tables Sah and Shah (2003)

Migration owing to drought, with whole family and taking care of siblings were main reasons for withdrawal of children from schools. Significantly, drought affected families, opted for larger out migration both in terms of number of members migrating and duration of migration. Some migrants, in distress, remained outside the village even during festivals like diwali and holi. Food availability alarmingly reduces during monsoon

when food stock depletes and current harvest would reach the hearth after nearly four months. For a large number of poor households, boiled cereals, called Rab, becomes staple food. Non-availability of fodder and malnutrition resulted in loss of milch animals whereas goat and sheep herds deplete because of additional demand for cash. Borrowings from bania located in markets (Chancaria, Dhamnod, Sendhwa and Pati) increases. In order to repay the loans, the intensity of migration -- duration of migration and number of family members who would migrate -- increases.

As the effects of drought were significantly harsh in Pospur than Kirchali (Table 1), it would be worth to understand the pattern separately in Pospur and Kirchali. The odd-ratio for withdrawal of children from school reveals that households located in Pospur are 4 times more likely to withdraw their children from school rather than not compared to Kirchali. Similarly, the incidence of old family members being sent out, reduction in food consumption, depletion of milch animals and increased migration was 3 to 5 times more in Pospur than Kirchali. The adverse effects of drought on migrant families were much harsher than non-migrating families: withdrawal of child from school, doing odd jobs that they would not have preferred in normal circumstances, old family members being sent to relatives, increased debt and increased intensity of migration et cetera were reported significantly more in the case of households that had resorted to migration than those that did not migrate. Although both remoteness and bad agriculture superimpose each other in forcing migration, subsequent analysis would establish that it is failing agriculture is relatively more important than relative remoteness in explaining the migration³.

Table 2: Migrant Households and their Resource Position

	Pospur	Kirchali	Difference between	
			Villages ^a	Migrant-non-migrant ^b
Total households	250	212	-	-
Surveyed household	47	37	-	-
Size of Family	7.1	8.1	*	NS
Total male workers/Hh	2.2	2.4	NS	NS
Total female workers/Hh	1.9	2.3	NS	NS
Per capita land (acre/Hh)	0.63	0.57	NS	NS
Silver (kg/Hh)	0.15	0.32	NS	*
Loss of silver (kg/Hh)	1.2	2.2	NS	NS
Size of farm (acre/Hh)	4.3	4.4	NS	NS
% Holding irrigated	19	41	**	-
Loss of land due to drought	0.8	1.7	NS	NS
Food consumption as % of normal				
2001-02	85	93	*	-
2000-01	77	90	***	-
1999-00	69	90	***	*
% of households migrating	92	46	***	-
% Family members migrating	33	20	**	-
Migrants per Hh	2.3	1.2	**	-
Female as % of total migrants	43	50	**	-
Migration-Intensity (person-month)	13	18	**	-

^aBetween villages Pospur and Kirchali. ^bBetween migrating and non-migrating households. NS - Not significantly different. *** Significantly different at 1% . ** 5% and *10 %

As implication of shock for some households are more adverse than others, it can be argued that those affected more may decide to migrate. If the case may be so, examining asset distribution within the sample is warranted. In a resource poor economy like Southwestern Madhya Pradesh, where concept of asset are synonymous to possession of animal and silver, we find that asset position of migrants is significantly poor compared to non-migrants (Table 2). The evidences relating to drought indicate that a social process of indebtedness, repayment, short-term land transaction, and migration starts when savings are not enough to sustain the current consumption.

The seasonal migration resulted in about 20 to 33 per cent of family members remaining out of village for 4 to 9 months (Table 2). Females usually migrate along with the male in the area; the percentage of female migration was about 43 and 50 per cent of total migration from Pospur and Kirchali respectively. But the high female migration is not abnormal; studies (Mosse et. al: 2002; Sah: 1999; Breman: 1996) have also found that migration of family groups in order to maximize the productivity of their labour is quite

common in the Western tribal belt⁴. Although the number of households and total members who migrated was relatively higher in Pospur than Kirchali, the duration of migration was more in the latter. On an average, intensity of migration was 13 person-month in Pospur and 18 person-month in Kirchali.

Findings relating to pattern of migration can be summed up as follows: (a) seasonal migration in the study villages is forced by access failure to food and failing agriculture. The more the un-sustainability in agriculture, the more is seasonal migration; (b) average migration is about 2.3 members per household, and such households that resorted to migrate, remain out for about 13 to 18 man-months per household; (c) the remoteness of the area creates paucity of off-farm employment in the nearby areas, forcing the migrants to move to agriculturally vibrant Nimar plains and sugarcane fields of South Gujarat and Northern Maharashtra; (d) migration in the last three years is more for survival rather than for supporting capital formation; (e) female migration is as high as male migration; (f) migration is a group activity which attracts households in distress taking certain decisions -- relating to choice of destination, movement, stay and coming back between to look after remaining family members in the village -- together.

Bulk of migrants from the study villages is engaged in on-farm employment. In most distressed situations, they work on farms as contract labour-family for whole year in Maharashtra, termed as Saalee. About 70 per cent of the migration is around the fertile Nimar valley within 40 km to 80 km from the village. Patidars, who settled in the fertile plains around a century back, employ the migrants as farm labourers. But the wage rates in the valley are not only low (Rs 25 per day) but also highly uncertain owing to excess labour. If the migration is in distress, the movements, in search for better wages, are to far off places. About 25 per cent of total migrants had moved about 400 to 500 km away to Northern Maharashtra mainly as sugarcane labourers. For about 98 per cent of migrants the main economic activity is farm labour, only 2 per cent of migrants in the study villages reported that they were employed as casual labour in non-agricultural sector. These non-farm opportunities are generally created through middlemen (Mukadam)⁵.

Table 3: Income and Savings from Migration

Size class of holding	Income	Saving
Marginal	6352	2409 (11)
Small	1189	6867 (37)
Medium	13304	6540 (12)
All	11160	5984 (60)
F across land holding size class	NS	NS

Figures in the brackets are number of households. NS: Not significantly different. (+) ***Significantly different at 1%. With positive correlation

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The movement generally is organised not as individual migrants but is in the form of a close kin-network of families. A close relative, like brother or cousin, provides information about labour demand, wage rate and living conditions prevailing at the destination. The migrants, in order to find work especially in distant locations like Khandesh, Jalgaon (Maharashtra), Surat and Vyara (Gujarat), form a group of 5-6 families that stay together. One member, more often the one who had no family members in the village, would come back to village to look after the remaining family members of the group. He replenishes the food grain stocks and other supplies. The accumulated savings are remitted once a month, at least, this way. This person, who brings the savings back to respective families of the group, has also an important task of meeting the sharecroppers who manage their land in their absence.

The remittance back home depends on the extent of migration in man-months a family has, the number of days the migrants could find employment, and cost of stay at the destination. Household income and savings from migration are significantly higher if total number of migrants was more. However, the income and saving across different size class of holding is not significantly different (Table 3). On an average, a migrant family earns an additional sum of Rs 11,160 per year from migration. After meeting the day-to-day expenditure at the destination and some purchases (clothes, shoes, transportation expenses et cetera) the net savings accrued due to migration was about Rs 5984 per family.

Those migrants who opted to stay within 80 km radius earn much less as wage rates are depressed in the Nimar valley. But those who had moved to sugarcane fields in Gujarat and Maharashtra earn more for, each one could earn up to Rs 80 per day. Female members, however, earn Rs 10 to 15 less per day compared to male members. But the migrants who had gone to Maharashtra and Gujarat narrate stories that they earn money under difficult conditions. The day starts at 5 am and ends as late as 11 pm. They have to do all sundry works from cleaning to managing fields. If they are under yearly contract - Saalee - the employment is not assured all throughout. The landlords do arrange for health care if the migrant falls sick but the wages are deducted for the days the migrant was sick. A prolonged illness brings him a severe contempt and ends generally in termination of the contract. The savings from migration are usually created in harsh environment; humiliation by landowners, unhealthy and inhospitable staying many times under open sky, poor health facilities, isolated living, lack of educational facilities for children et cetera. Given the hostile and insecure environment outside, the migrant finds it difficult to break away from the social lineage with the rest of the communities back home, which is the only dependable capital they have in the event of a major disaster. Besides these, opportunities for getting employment for longer period

of time are also doubtful. Hence, most of the households do not prefer to migrate for a longer time if the option for borrowing is still open. There are, however, a few households, which reported permanent out-migration of their close relatives in the last 20 years. The proportion of such households is 13 per cent.

Credit and migration work as supplement as well as substitute to each other (Sah and Shah: 2003). Absence of 'good' credit support is seen to be the major cause of migration, at least of distress type. However, in the case of the resource-poor (i.e. those with limited land as well as irrigation resources), migration is clearly a more effective option because of the limited 'credit worthiness'. In fact, migration in a dynamic context might help enhancing the credit worthiness, especially by improving the repayment schedule among these households. This would imply that given the limited land base and the uncertainty associated with the stream of income flowing from the land based activities, migration becomes inevitable for most of the poor households. A 'good' credit support could reduce the burden of migration, whereas a 'bad credit' system might increase it. But credit support per se can hardly be a substitute for migration unless both the household's resource base and the corresponding 'credit worthiness' are enhanced. Creditworthiness in this society is measured by dynamics of agriculture of a household. If household has irrigation and is capable of rabi cultivation, bania provides him credit without mortgage. This is because the bania is quite assured of recovering his capital from the tribal within 2 to 3 crop seasons from latter's agriculture. On the other hand, if bania is not assured of a tribal's agriculture, the latter is denied credit without mortgage. Occurrence of a shock or lumpy borrowing for social events like notra, death in the family, son's marriage and at times sickness may further turn the equation against the poor borrowers.

III

Correlates of Migration

Table 4 presents the findings of linear regression analysis taking total person-months of migration from the household as dependent variable. The variations in intensity of migration across household is explained by variations in the following explanatory variables: family size, dependency ratio of the family, depletion of family silver in order to borrow, depletion of own agricultural land due to drought, bullock loss, and cereal consumption during rainy season as percentage to normal cereal consumption. We have not attempted to run a logit model for, the question we are interested is why some households decide to migrate for longer duration with more migrant members rather than just their decision to migrate or not. Regression analysis is a better option in this situation. The

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regression analysis is done for all the 84 households irrespective of the status of migration, (dependent variable taking value zero for non-migrant households), as well as for the 60 migrating households. About 33 per cent of total variations of dependent variable are explained by the explanatory variables when all households were considered in the analysis. On the other hand, the explanatory power improves if the analysis is done only for migrating households. Over 57 per cent of total variations in intensity of migration amongst the migrating households are explained by the explanatory variables considered. We had considered land holdings and expenditure of households as explanatory variables but the variations in size of landholding and variations in total expenditure of households do not emerge as significant explanatory variables in the analysis. This indicates that during an abnormal year larger agricultural land could not contain seasonal migration. What these findings, however, reconfirm is that unless a critical minimum area is available in dry land conditions, many of the households even with relatively larger cropped area but without enough creditworthiness or savings to meet implications of a shock like crop failure, may have to resort to migration.

Table 4 also reveals that in distress situations, family with larger members could support large out-migration for more months than smaller families. Other factors remaining same, as dependents (old and young) increase in the households, the intensity of migration reduces. This is not surprising for, with high dependency ratio, larger work force will be needed to work on depleted agriculture as well as looking after the dependents. This is a negative imperative of low workforce in the family during a shock. The resource poor households that have been formed recently and those who have lost large production due to drought, have larger intensity (number of migrants as well as duration of migration) of migration. The consumption behaviour during a shock is revealing; findings indicate that those households that had not resorted to migration during the reference year were households whose gap in total expenditure compared to normal was higher.

Table 4: Factors Explaining Intensity of Migrationa

Explanatory variables b	Within Households	
	All	Migrants
X1 Size of family	0.994 ** (III) ^c	2.446*** (I)
X2 Dependency Ratio	-2.3125***	-4.671*** (III)
X3 Change in Silver possession	-1.725*** (I)	-1.452*** (II)
X4 Change in own land		4.125 *
X5 Change in Bullock possession	4.446***	
X6 Gap in Expenditure	4.495** (II)	4.573**
Constant	2.267	-1.684
D1 Remote_Investmen	-7.517***	-7.582***
D2 Not so Remote_ No Investment	-5.936**	-4.679
D2 Not so Remote_Investmen	-5.101 *	3.656
R bar square (%)	39	65
F	7.76***	14.56***
Number of households	84	60

a) The regression equation is:
 $Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 + b_4X_4 + b_5X_5 + b_6X_6 + a_1D_1 + a_2D_2 + a_3D_3 + e$

Where:

Y = migration intensity in person-months per household

X1 = Number of family members

X2 = percentage dependent to total members in the household

X3 = Silver position today - silver possession 5 years back in Kg

X4 = Land today in acres - land 5 years back

X5 = number of bullocks today - number of bullocks 5 years back

X6 = ((Expenditure today- Expenditure in normal times) * 100)/ Expenditure today

The following explanatory variables are coded as:

X2: dependent members 1- up to 40%, 2 - 40-60% and 3 - > 60%;

X4: agricultural land loss 1 - yes 0- No;

X5: bullocks loss 1- yes, 0 - No;

X6: Expenditure gap from normal: increase 0, up to 10% reduction 1, 10-20% reduction 2, and > 20% reduction 3.

D1, D2 and D3 are intercept dummies:

D1 takes value 1 for relatively remote village and households with private investment in agriculture, 0 for rest.

D2 takes value 1 for not so remote village and households with no private investment in agriculture, 0 for rest.

D3 takes value 1 for not so remote village and households with private investment in agriculture, 0 for rest; and

Constant captures the intercept for relatively remote and households with no private investment in agriculture.

a, b1, b2, b3, b4, b5, b6, a1, a2 and a3 are parameters of the equation and e is error term

b) The correlation between different explanatory variable is less than 0.3.

Level of significance *** 1%, ** 5% and * 10%.

c) Importance of explanatory variable based on beta coefficient.

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This implies that those who stay put had to suffer a welfare loss in terms of total expenditure. More migrants from a family and migration for longer duration tend to help in making a household's expenditure in distress period towards normal. But amongst the migrant households, variations in consumption gap are not large; as intensity of migration supports food consumption, the variations are relatively small. Although significant in explaining migration, the expenditure gap amongst the migrant households is not even one of the three important variables (Table 4). On the other hand, factors like depletion of silver, reduction in draught power and fall in operated land have direct impact on intensity of migration; i.e., larger the depletion of family assets, the larger would be the intensity of migration from the family.

The relative importance of remoteness vis-à-vis investment in agriculture in explaining migration intensity is caught by intercept dummy variables D1, D2 and D3. Although weakening in effect of remoteness and improvement in private investment in agriculture both significantly reduce migration, the reduction due to investment in agriculture is far more significant than that of weakening in the effect of remoteness. The constant represents the average intensity of migration in remote area with no private investment. Significance level of dummy D1 reveals that intensity of migration reduces significantly -- from the level that is in remote villages with households with no investment situation -- if the households are the one that have invested in agriculture even in relatively remote areas. But such reduction is low or insignificant even if one moves to relatively less remote areas but with no investment in agriculture (both size and significance of D2 and D3 reduces). In other words, intensity of migration would have been higher but for the investment in agriculture. This is so because such investment not only supports individual's agriculture and his capability to circumvent the debt-trap during a shock but also opens up avenues for employment for others in the village.

The above results need to be interpreted with caution for two reasons. First, there is a likelihood of error of measurement and as the low R^2 reveals, the specification may have a risk of omitted variable bias as well. The specification is least likely to have simultaneity bias for, logically it can be argued that a shock results in access failure to resources and creates new livelihood struggles. Migration is an outcome of the process rather than a cause of such access failure (see, Sah and Shah: 2003, for details). Secondly, the above analysis identifies the individual factors that have influenced the migration. However, it is interesting to note that it is the shared play of factors, rather than individual factors, that influences intensity of migration. Results of Analysis of Variance (Appendix 1) reveal that interaction between (a) size of family and expenditure gap, (b) dependency ratio of family and bullock loss and (c) size of family

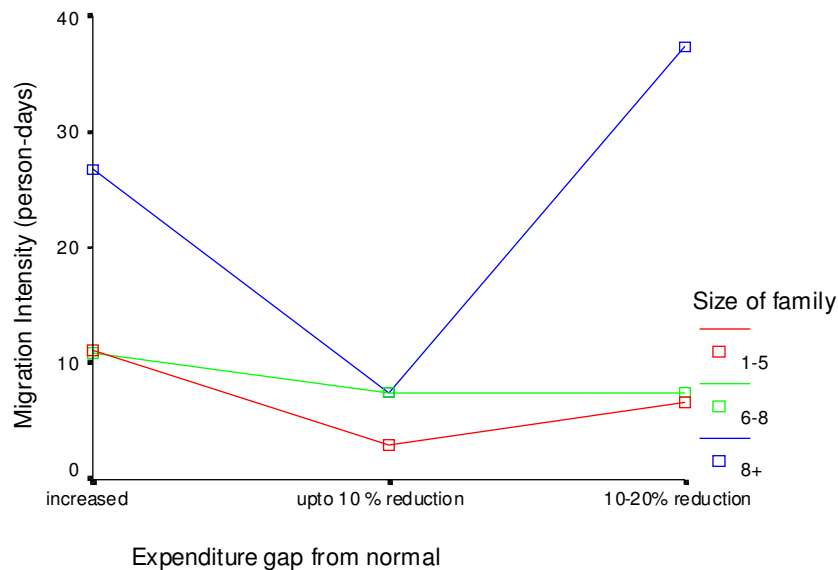
and dependency ratio have significantly influenced the migration intensity. The significance of the interactions also means that individual factors like the size of family, expenditure gap from normal, dependency ratio and bullock loss et cetera, though statistically significant have no impact in governing the migration. What matters is the combined effects of these. For example, it is neither size of family nor the level of expenditure gap alone that has serious significance in governing the migration pattern but if large families also have large expenditure gap then the intensity of migration increases dramatically. Figure 1 indicates that for households with less than 8 members in a family, even an expenditure loss of over 10 per cent from normal does not show any sign of increased intensity of migration, which remains at less than 10 person-months. On the other hand, households with more than 8 members when are faced with expenditure loss from normal of over 10 per cent, experience a significantly jump in intensity of migration from 10 person-months to about 40 person-months.

This apart, two different processes influence the well-being of the households, one supporting the intensity of migration and the other restraining it. Seasonal migration becomes inevitable during a shock in order to have command on resources to improve food consumption and to meet non-food expenditure of the remaining members in the village; it is inevitable that some members of the affected household must migrate. While the income generating processes like operational area, access to employment in nearby areas, better access to food are able to restrain intensity of seasonal migration, but these processes during a consecutive period of drought create market failure for individuals both as producers as well as consumers. But the extent of migration that takes place during a normal year is not always a distress migration. It provides access to additional capital and knowledge for investment in irrigation, new inputs and agricultural technology. Although sale and mortgage of silver and bullocks may provide necessary cash in hand, it also brings into operation the much-defamed bania who provides them cash or would do so for replenishing the depleted assets and draught power, or fresh agricultural loans for next season. Consequently, the bania has first access to migration savings.

There are also some households that have relatively lower savings. As a result, the resourceless is trapped in the perpetual web of debt, dependency and distress migration. The process is particularly severe for 50 per cent of households in Pospur and Kirchali that have less land with no irrigation. For these households, access to cash for preparing for migration, especially for purchasing some food grains for remaining members, is a process where the silver depletion is the only way to have access to some cash. On the other hand, access to cash, even during a shock for a large landowner with

some irrigation is much easier. The bania does not necessarily demand a mortgage-deed from them in anticipation of a good crop next season. But for both the above groups, resource poor and resource rich, the access to output market is restricted because of the credit provided by the bania. This interlocked market becomes severely exploitative. The bania not only charges high interest but also restricts free sale of output.

Figure 1
Interaction between Family Size and Expenditure Gap in Explaining Migration Intensity



Seasonal migration also results in short term land transactions like sharecropping, fixed rent and land mortgage. Some market institutions like labour and credit markets are well developed in the region. But in absence of land market, the land related institutions -- working for bringing tenant and owner together -- have developed. These institutions have come up to minimise the cost of negotiating agriculture under resource constraints. Dhans, a sort of exchange of bullock and labour between kin-groups, has also developed in response to market failure in the two important resources. The main role of short term land transactions is not only to share risk of farming but it also optimises labour use under a shock; poor quality of land and need to move out and engage the family in some economic activity other than agriculture, forces such land

transactions. While these institutions are likely to have existed over a long period of time, the recent changes in the functioning of these institutions due to increased incidence of droughts need to be probed further. Similarly, importance of such land transactions in making the migrant family's representation in social hierarchy would be worth discussing

An important facet of migration relates to a process of maintaining individuals' position in the social hierarchy⁶. This is one of the important investments in a society where social networking, rather than quantum physical assets, decides the worth of individuals in the society. What, however, is relevant to note is the fact that if the society is traditional, social relations and investment on maintaining social relations become important for the survival of the individual. In the process, land in exchange engenders a symbolic presence of the migrant household in the village and his representation in social hierarchy without his being physically present. The power to till land of a migrant protects economic interest of both the migrant and the tenant but in the exchange, the migrant also obtains control over his social interests. The most preferred arrangement is crop sharing because it makes migrant's links with the community preserved. In order to force the contract in terms of labour use and sharing output, the migrant has to make a number of trips to village, especially during peak harvest season⁷. That reinforces his severed interests in the social set up in his absence.

The expansion of cultivated land in the village after a shock is also not uncommon. In order to repay accumulated loans, migrants often start cultivating wasteland that had not been under cultivation. The untapped land resources in this tribal belt come under pressure because the debt-trap forces the migrants to supplement their land resources. This additional land has low productivity and can sustain only traditional crops like kodai, kudki and pulses on the one hand and often have serious environmental implications. Generally, the outer slopes are the only available areas but bringing such areas under cultivation creates favourable setting for soil erosion. Once under cultivation, the steep slopes deplete the natural grass cover that binds the soil, the expansion in cultivable area leads to washing off top soil. Population pressures and land fragmentation owing to succession also create pressures on land. Migration and expansion of cultivated area in this remote tribal region often trigger an environmental crisis. But migration for a few is a source of saving, investment and agricultural technology transfer (see, Sah: 2003a, for details).

The change in the form of technologically driven agriculture, though restricted to about 15 per cent of cultivated area, is not entirely an outcome of state intervention. It happened because of seasonal migration. Seasonal migration for the tribal is not

coping with shocks alone⁸; it is experiencing development that has by-passed them⁹. What a tribal learns during his stay as a migrant labourer -- either on irrigated farms of Nimar plains or on the farms of irrigated HB cotton growers of Khandesh or on the fields of irrigated paddy and sugarcane growers in south Gujarat -- is a main source of agriculture technology transfer. How to energise the well and distribute water, how to grow irrigated fertiliser-responsive cotton, soybean and wheat, and utilisation of post-harvest technology of these market-oriented crops et cetera are learnt during seasonal migration. No matter how much the Adivasi Mukti Sangathan¹⁰ discredits it, this process of production of knowledge has created space for non-tribal institutions, that is, inducing conversion of subsistence way of agriculture to a market driven agriculture. The process is, however, internalised without any state support. In irrigated areas, the bania provides agricultural credit without any security. The tribals are also able to repay the loans promptly at least during good agricultural years. But in the process, they have started attaching a high degree of dependence on non-tribal institution they loathed the most, the market.

In an economy under failing agriculture with population pressure having reduced wages, improving agricultural productivity by investing on soil and water conservation could be an important way of checking seasonal migration. Next section presents a successful experiment that has influence on seasonal migration during normal years. While the state has also made some interventions in the form of check dams in the study villages, outcome of these has been indifferent due to factors that are generally associated with low performance of such interventions. Against these, there are success stories from watershed programmes that have reduced migration.

IV

Migration and Long term Investment in Agriculture

Despite consistent efforts of state to improve tribal agriculture, problems like uncertainty of agricultural production and access failure to food have forced a large population of the tribals to adopt alternative avenues of livelihood¹¹. It can be argued that these efforts are not only target oriented and top heavy but also lack people's participation¹². Not only benefits of these projects have reached a few but also the structures have short life owing to poor construction and maintenance problems. There is, therefore, an urgent need for a paradigm shift in the process. Unlike the state, an influential non-government organisation always acts with communities with understanding and satisfies their most felt needs. Sadguru Water and Development Foundation (SWD Foundation) is actively involved in creating alternatives through

sustainable development of common property resources in tribal areas of Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Gujarat¹³. The SWD Foundation, in these tribal areas, intervenes with a design to improve carrying capacity of land so that agriculture becomes capable of providing sustenance to the needy.

The inevitability of making groundwater available to agriculture in a sustainable manner has been recognised by SWD Foundation. It has also recognised that only small water harvesting devices, such as check dams, would be able to harness water in these difficult areas. These devices harness surface and groundwater resources that flow through as run off. Thus, obstructing this run off and diverting it to enter into pitches of soil rocks through gravity is the major strategy of the Foundation for harnessing water for irrigation. Eventually, this underground water is lifted through tube wells for irrigation. Theoretically, this source of irrigation is renewable as long as groundwater recharge is in excess of its depletion. The Foundation forces this equilibrium to be in favour of water recharge by institutionalising water lifting and its use, and maintenance of the physical structure through farmers' irrigation co-operatives. Each co-operative, organised by the Foundation, comprises of 35 to 45 tribal farmers. The executive committee of the co-operative has main task of providing irrigation to its members in equitable and sustainable manner. This is done by putting community pressure for (i) optimising water use by extending irrigation only to low water using crops like cereals, pulses and short duration vegetables; (ii) maintaining irrigation infrastructure so that water availability in the command area is uninterrupted to all of its members; and (iii) maintaining water distribution, water lifting cost and revenue proceeds from sale of water at levels that are conducive for sustainable use.

The impact of such a water-harvesting programme in tribal areas is seen from two angles. The first is on macro economic aspects of the region, and second at the micro level on socio-economic conditions of tribal beneficiaries. The macro impact is felt on (Shah: 2000) increased groundwater table, changes in land use pattern, and increase in area under irrigation by various sources, improvement in soil quality and crop productivity. At the micro level, impact of SWD Foundation's water harvesting programme is observed (Shylendra and Umarani: 1999) in the following areas: first, (a) disappearance of mixed cropping, increase in cropping intensity and area cultivated in rabi and summer; (b) cropping pattern changes and increase in productivity; (c) increase in farm income and profits; (d) strong forward and backward market linkages; (e) increased access to farm residual for fuel and fodder. Secondly, there is significant reduction in distress migration, especially female migration. Lastly, there is significant improvement in food consumption and access to social infrastructure of the villagers. All these

changes initiated by the SWD Foundation have improved the quality of life of the beneficiaries with a strategy that is also highly viable¹⁴.

Such positive interventions have raised expectations that replication of such experiments in tribal areas would be a panacea for the ills of the tribal society¹⁵. But such positive impact is also accompanied with counter productive processes when physical structures are created without people's participation (Sah: 1994; Patil D: 2000). When such physical structures do not accompany an institutional structure, they often prove beneficial for a few influential that take advantage of the system by extending irrigation beyond the command area and cultivate high water using commercial crops at the cost of the other tribal farmers. Consequently, ground water depletion is faster than its recharge. In the process, both equity and ecological considerations are at stake. Nevertheless, replicating the SWD Foundation intervention can ensure equity as well as sustainability of such development efforts. The important question, however, is: can a programme developed by intensive understanding of local conditions and needs be replicated by state through its NWDPR approach in other tribal areas?

Equally important is sustainability of water harvesting technology, especially in the remote tribal areas when such structure depends on rainwater. Consecutive droughts render such structures useless and the economy of the region owing to failing agriculture resorts to migration¹⁶. Evidences from command area of SWD Foundation, that has witnessed four consecutive droughts, have shown the efficacy of such structures in sever drought years. And hence, the policy implications of these water-harvesting experiments need to be understood in greater details.

V

Recapitulating Migration as a Process

Summary

Tribal migration in search of employment has a long tradition. Recent evidences reveal that the intensity of migration has increased over the years. Migration from tribal areas is not uniform; some locations have large seasonal migration whereas some locations have relatively less migration. Both remoteness and failing agriculture superimpose each other in forcing migration. But failing agriculture is relative more imposing than remoteness in explaining the migration. Although, in recent past migration has been caused by harvest failure, a shock can activate a complex socio-economic process leading to migration. Apart from depletion of milch animals, reduction in availability of food and fodder, increased debts and increased intensity of seasonal migration, the households under shock also face serious non-economic problems like

withdrawing children from school, doing work that in normal situation they would not have preferred, sending out old members of the family to relatives, inability to settle hospitalisation bills et cetera. Borrowings from traders located in markets increase. The intensity of migration seems to have strong links with borrowings for meeting current consumption needs; to repay the loan, the migration increases. Seasonal migration does supplement investable surplus when cash needs are more and sources of institutional borrowings are few. In fact, credit and migration work as supplement as well as substitute in the remote tribal society. On an average, a migrant family saves rupees six thousand per year from migration. But a large part of the savings goes for servicing the debt.

Evidently, in abnormal years larger agricultural holding is unable to neutralise the risk of harvest loss. Unless a critical minimum area is available, a household with relatively large cropped area but without enough savings needs to resort to migration. Interactions of factors like large family, higher expenditure gap, lower dependency ratio, larger asset losses and thus larger borrowings, result in increasing the intensity of migration. More migrants for longer duration from a family help in pushing food consumption of the remaining members to normal during bad agricultural years. Consequently, households that do not resort to migration have larger gaps in food consumption. Migration also induces short-term land transactions like sharecropping, fixed rent and land mortgage. This not only reduces the risk of farming but also optimises the efficiency of family labour. Some of these land transactions also strengthen social links that maintain individuals' position in social hierarchy even in their absence. But for some resourceful, migration has become the major source of agricultural technology transfer, savings and investment in this remote tribal area.

Migration in absence of a sustainable livelihood has become unavoidable in remote rural areas. A way of reducing the incidence of migration is to intensify investment that conserves the soil-moisture and makes agriculture sustainable. Evidences reveal that civil society initiatives in tribal areas have reduced seasonal migration significantly. Replicating such efforts may be pleasing for the hapless migrants.

Policy Implications

Our study has demonstrated that a shock can push even a well to do tribal household into a debt-trap and has to resort to migration as a coping mechanism. But for a large section of households that are resourceless owing to population pressures, migration is the coping mechanism. Migration in remote tribal areas is a coping strategy that -- under the harsh tribal environment -- becomes inevitable. Therefore, the processes

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that facilitate migrants in the course of migration are as important as reducing migration. How to make the lives of migrants at the place of destination less stressful, provide them with amenities there, and make their position stronger in the labour market is as important as improving agriculture and increasing borrowing capacity of migrants at the place of origin. Breaking the debt-trap that triggers migration and strengthening agriculture of the area are two important interventions that may result in reducing migration. The first steps in this direction are to replicate successful water harvesting interventions in remote tribal areas and make their agriculture sustainable in normal years. Thus, the cushions that good agriculture years may provide would be enough to sustain a few shocks. The second step is to strengthen the borrowing capacity of the tribals through group financing for ground water exploitation, creating production-oriented self-help groups and easy access to institutional 'consumption' finance. The third task is to facilitate process of migration by reducing the cost of transaction and strengthening support that is traditionally given by middlemen, like where to go, type of work, wage negotiations et cetera. And lastly, providing support to migrants at the destination in terms of childcare, educational facilities, healthcare, drinking water and sanitation, and subsidised food supply would make the migrants' life less stressful. If these are the few important tasks that are obvious in remote tribal areas to strengthen the coping mechanism of the tribals, evidences show that the state is ill equipped to undertake them. The role of civil society to facilitate the migration as well as restricting it cannot be overemphasised.

Appendix 1

ANOVA Results Explaining Variations* in Migration Person-months

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Model	16238.209	20	811.910	11.471	.000
FSIZE	2561.736	2	1280.868	18.097	.000
RREXP	1255.490	2	627.745	8.869	.000
RRDEP	1018.766	2	509.383	7.197	.002
FSIZE * RREXP	1665.323	4	416.331	5.882	.000
RBULL * RRDEP	592.218	2	296.109	4.184	.020
RBULL * RREXP	269.824	2	134.912	1.906	.157
FSIZE * RRDEP	2301.626	4	575.407	8.130	.000
Error	4529.791	64	70.778		
Total	20768.000	84			

FSIZE: size of family; RREXP: expenditure gap per capita; RRDEP: dependency ratio; RBULL: change in bullock possession. See Table 4 for classification of these variables.

* R Squared = .78 (Adjusted R Squared = .71)

End Notes

- 1 Macro findings have identified Southwestern tribal belt of Madhya Pradesh as one of the economically poorest region in the country. Badwani district in the region has been selected for an in-depth study to understand why and how people in Remote Rural Areas are trapped in chronic poverty. Two Janpads, Sendhwa, relatively developed and Pati a resource poor, were selected for the study. One village from each of the selected Janpad, Pospur from Pati, and Kirchali from Sendhwa, were selected based on the relative remoteness; Kirchali is relatively less remote compared to Pospur. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used in collecting data.
It needs to be clarified that though both Kirchali and Pospur are tribal dominated villages, the quality of land, access to irrigation and infrastructure development varies across the two. (Sah and Shah: 2003). In Pospur agricultural land is poor in quality compared to Kirchali and with some well irrigation during rabi, the cropping pattern in Kirchali is dominated by soybean, cotton and wheat while with marginal irrigation, kharif cereals and pulses dominate cropping pattern in Pospur. Kirchali has developed input-output markets near the village whereas in the case of Pospur one has to go to taluka headquarter for these functions. An important outcome of relative remoteness of Pospur is relatively homogenous society with marginal economic stratification and highly developed social capital. On the other hand, being less-remote, Kirchali has economically stratified society and dormant social capital (for, details, see Sah: 2003).
- 2 In tribal society, agriculture is the way of life and also its major economic activity. Population pressures result in depletion of agriculture land due to marriage of children and thus division of family. The newly formed households are relatively resource deficient and rely not only on social networks but also on migration for survival. For details, see, Sah and Shah (2003).
- 3 The remoteness of Pospur and poor agricultural base has resulted in relatively large population to rely on migration as a coping mechanism compared to less remote Kirchali (Sah and Shah: 2003). In Kirchali, individuals have invested over Rs 20,000 for digging wells in rocky terrain with high risk of failure and in drawing electricity line from the nearest Distribution Point. There are about thirty individuals who have such connections. This process, though brought economic success to individuals, has stratified the society on economic lines. Remoteness of Pospur -- its difficult terrain, high risk and initial failures in such investment -- has made the village more homogenous. For details on relative importance of remoteness and investment, see section III.
- 4 This society has relatively high female work participation rate than that of nontribal. Moreover, those who have paid dowry price of Rs 12 to 15 thousand would like to get the money back through migration.

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- 5 Since migration from the study villages was more in the agricultural sector, the movements of the migrants are familiar: destinations are known to the groups as, some of the members have past experiences of working there. But middlemen, locally termed as mukadam, generally guide movements towards city. A mukadam is a middleman-cum-supervisor who has well developed network in the areas from where migration originates. He provides some advance to migrant groups, arranges for basic facilities at the destinations and negotiates with prospective employer.
- 6 Tribal economy is based on reciprocity. Apart from performing economic transaction under market failure conditions, the short-term land transaction, especially share cropping and fixed rent create social trust that works as metaphor for social return in exchange of economic gains. This latter (social) function of this exchange is an important as its formal (economic) function of exchange.
- 7 A number of villages in this tribal belt have come under submergence of Sardar Sarovar Project. The scars of relocation and play of civil society institution have made the inhabitant weary of outsiders on the one hand and created trust and solidarity amongst them on the other hand (Sah: 2003).
- 8 In drought prone areas, migration also works as asset formation device. Successive droughts render agriculture as unsustainable livelihood option and forces even large farmers to join the queue for doles. Rains have failed in the last four years in this area. Land less labourers and marginal farmers do save some money owing to migration. But such savings are major source of repayment to Bania on consumption loans taken to meet the scarcity. The debt trap and dependence on non-institutional sources for consumption loan creates a socio-economic process in which migration becomes a major livelihood option.
- 9 Civil society movements have strong presence in this tribal belt. Control over forest is a major contention that has brought into play institutions like the Adivasi Mukti Sangathan (AMS). Displacement due to large dams in the region has rationalised the presence of the movements like Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA), an NGO that has provided alternatives to the existing development paradigm. Both these movements have created a strong social capital base in the area. For details, see, Sah (2003).
- 10 Moral hazards are involved in sharecropping: The tribal who is leasing out land would like to ensure that the tenant, as agreed, has applied labour and inputs on the field for he has to share the out-of-pocket cost. Similar is the case when the crop would be harvested and shared for, the landowner has to ensure that he receives the crop output portion as agreed. For enforcing these, the landowner migrant has to either make a number of visits to the village or leave all these monitoring in trust on the other party. In this area the first option is more prevalent, not because of lack of trust but because it re-establishes his ties with the community.

- 11 Working as wage labour and seasonal migration are the most widely adopted livelihood strategies in tribal areas.
- 12 These official irrigation schemes are carried as if their creation is an end in itself. These official programmes are operating without institutional arrangements necessary to enforce equity and ecological considerations. Consequently, the checks and balances needed for water use efficiency are missing. Planning for these programmes are not only target oriented but also lack understanding on various constraints, which resulted in past failures of the programmes.
- 13 Sadguru Water Development Foundation is working in about 375 tribal villages of Gujarat (Panchmahals and Dahod), Madhya Pradesh (Jhabua) and Rajasthan (Banswara). By the end of 2000-01 195 lift irrigation projects and 187 check dams were operational in the project area irrigating about 37000 acre land; for detail see Foundation (2001).
- 14 A Study by Kumar et al. (2000) has estimated that the economic Benefit-Cost Ratio of check dam-lift irrigation schemes turns out to be highly viable in tribal regions. The economic cost in the project included construction cost of 6 check dams on Mahhan River located in Dahod (Gujarat) Banswara (Rajasthan) and Jhabua (Madhya Pradesh), plus capital cost of 6 lift irrigation schemes and operation & maintenance cost. The benefits from the project included increase in agricultural income owing to irrigation and income earned from water charges. The capital cost of check dams and lift irrigation schemes put together was Rs. 17.37 million. The scheme irrigates about 690 acre of land per year. Increase in agricultural income owing to irrigation net of maintenance & operation cost, plus the water charges received by the project were estimated at Rs. 3.12 million per year for next 20 years. The present value of this income stream at 12 per cent discount of was Rs. 23.25 million. When compared against the capital investment, the benefit cost ratio turns out to be 1.33, which, for irrigation project, is very high economic rate of return. If social benefit of drought proofing were added to it, the benefit-cost ratio would go further up.
- 15 The strategy, however, is not a solution for all situations. Drought proofing in recurring monsoons failure has its own problems. During least three years dry farming in Madhya Pradesh, including its tribal belt, saw three consecutive crop failures, not only food security has adversely been affected but also seen a prolonged drinking water crises, especially in the tribal region including areas covered under water harvesting structures.
- 16 Mr Harnath Jagawat, Director SWD Foundation, has emphatically said that under sever rainfall deficit years though the watershed interventions do provide drinking water to the inhabitants in the command area, the structures are unable to sustain normal agriculture

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**Credit Disbursement by Primary Agricultural Credit Societies in Madhya Pradesh:
An Inter-District Analysis**

Kanhaiya Ahuja, Ganesh Kawadia, Anant Gwal and Anand Shrivastava

Introduction

Agriculture continues to be the most vital sector of Indian economy, contributing a major share to our national income and also providing livelihood to the majority of our population. A strong base of agriculture growth is must for the overall economic development in a country like India. Agricultural growth depends on the growth of productivity, which in turn requires sustained infusion of finance. The growing tendency among the farmers to replace the traditional farming practices with scientific and modern technology has necessitated the increased use of capital both for improving farm infrastructure and for meeting the operational cost. Consequently, the need for cash in rural economy has increased manifold as one of the strategic inputs for agricultural development. Besides this, most of the Indian farmers being trapped into the vicious circle of indebtedness, the institutional flow of finance through agricultural and rural development programmes would prove significantly in their overall development. Rural finance, therefore, plays an important role not only in production, storage, maintenance and marketing, but contributes immensely to the expansion of agricultural activities. Credit contributes to accelerating the agricultural development provided it is adequate, cheap and development oriented (Belshaw 1931; Galbraith 1952; Myrdal 1968; Schultz 1964). It is almost impossible for a poor farmer to adopt the continuously changing agricultural technology with increasing demand in investment requirements (Singh & Sagar 2004). Small farmers during the sixties and seventies had lagged in the adoption of high yielding variety (HYV) technology due to inadequate flow of institutional credit (Muthiah, 1972; Parthasarathy and Prasad 1978; Schluter and Parikh 1974).High quantum

of credit is required not only for short term cash inputs like use of improved seeds, fertilizers, insecticides, etc, but also for medium and long term investment for irrigation and land development activities by the farmers to enhance farm productivity and fulfillment of their goals (Rath 1998).

The phenomenal expansion of credit from the institutional sources has been the most important feature of agriculture credit in independent India. The share of institutional credit sources in the supply of rural credit in India has registered a tremendous growth from only 7.3 per cent in the year 1951-52 to 56.6 per cent in 1991-92. The relative importance of non-institutional credit agencies has declined over the years. Institutional credit agencies such as Co-operatives, Commercial Banks and Regional Rural Banks are advancing term loans to farmers to help them to adopt better technology and improve agricultural practices for raising crop productivity and production. The flow of institutional credit for agriculture has increased from Rs.24.23 crore in 1950-51 to Rs. 53504 crore in 2000-01, registering a trend growth of about 13.7 per cent from 1970s to 2000-01 (Sukhadeo & Smita 2004).

Apart from substantial expansion in the flow of credit by Commercial banks and Regional Rural Banks, the Co-operative societies are equally important institutional agencies for providing credit support for agricultural and rural development. Agricultural cooperatives are very actively involved in several agricultural related activities including disbursement of agricultural credit. It is the Primary Agriculture Credit Societies (PACS), which deal directly with the individual farmers providing short term and medium term credit.

At the end of March 2001, there were approximately 99,000 PACS with total membership of 999 lakh people, of which around 47 per cent were the borrowing members. These societies have extended their coverage from 65.88% villages in 1960-61 to 98.35% villages in 2000-01. The average membership per PACS has increased from 42 in 1950-51 to 1011 in 2000-01 (Singh & Sagar 2004; Sukhadeo & Smita 2004). According to NAFSCOB (2004), the total membership of the PACS is reported to be around 13 crore in 2003-04, whereas the proportion of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe membership to the total PACS membership accounts to 22.6 per cent and 8.8 per cent respectively.

Primary Agricultural Credit Cooperative societies play an important role in meeting the growing credit needs of rural India, especially for small and marginal farmers. The volume of credit flowing through these institutions has increased now. The amount of credit disbursed has also shown a tremendous rise from Rs.23 crore in 1950-51 to Rs. 25698 crore in 2000-01. Across States, the Western States such as Maharashtra and Gujarat accounted for 26.69 per cent of total PACS in the country in 2001-02 with Maharashtra alone accounting to about 21 per cent of the PACS. With one-fourth of the

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predominantly rural population, the Central Region (U.P. & M.P) accounted for only 15 per cent of the total PACS. In Madhya Pradesh there are 5808 PACS with total membership of 7022 thousand in the year 2001-02. The members borrowing from PACS account to 50 per cent in Madhya Pradesh (Sukhadeo & Smita 2004).

In India, the Co-operative movement, as an instrument of economic and social reform was introduced in 1904. It was started as a defense mechanism against usurious money-lenders. The Co-operative credit mechanism in Madhya Pradesh is a three-tier structure, with the State Co-operative Bank at the Apex in the State, the Central Co-operative Bank at the district level and the Primary Agricultural Credit Society (PACS) functioning at the base (village) level. Cooperative credit structures have been based on the concept of mutuality, with thrift and credit functions going hand in hand. The structure has largely been focused on credit. The primary level cooperatives, therefore, have traditionally been agencies for credit disbursement. Because of this characteristic at the base level, the upper tiers were created to ensure that the lower tiers got adequate and timely finance. The primary level cooperatives, therefore, form the base of the credit movement as it is through them that the farmers obtain the much needed credit.

This study is an attempt to examine major issues concerning disbursement of agricultural credit by Primary Agricultural Credit Societies with reference to input use at district level in Madhya Pradesh. This is to be admitted that the PACS have put forth a positive step in providing financial assistance to our rural population. But the point to focus here is to analyze the determinant factors of agricultural credit disbursed by PACS. There are various factors which may influence the demand for credit through PACS. These factors are-per hectare fertilizer consumption, agricultural income per farmer, number of electric engines per farmer, net irrigated area to net cultivated area, cultivated area per farmer, cropping intensity and per capita consumption of electricity. This study analyses the impact of all these variables on credit disbursement by Primary Agricultural Credit Societies in Madhya Pradesh.

Objectives

The specific objectives of study are:

1. To examine the pattern of Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) in general and disbursement of credit in particular.
2. To analyze the variation at inter-district level in Madhya Pradesh with respect to disbursement of credit by PACS.
3. To identify various determinants and to undertake a quantitative assessment of their impact on disbursement of agricultural credit by PACS.

Methodology

The study attempts to analyze variation at inter -district level regarding credit disbursement by Primary Agricultural Credit Societies in Madhya Pradesh. The cross-sectional data are collected for the year 1999-2000 from the statistical book "Districtwise socio-economic development indicator of Madhya Pradesh", published by Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Madhya Pradesh. This study is based on the secondary data pertaining to 38 districts out of 45 districts of Madhya Pradesh, as adequate information is not available for the newly formed districts in the State. Besides the basic statistical tools like mean, standard deviation and coefficient of variation, we have used the technique of multiple regressions for the analysis of data. The three different multiple regression models are worked out to identify the factors responsible for the rise in demand of credit through PACS.

Agricultural credit disbursed per farmer by PACS is taken as a dependent variable used in the following three econometric models to identify the influence of various factors on it.

Model 1

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_5 X_5 + \beta_6 X_6 + \beta_7 X_7 + U_i$$

Model 2

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_7 X_7 + \beta_8 X_8 + \beta_9 X_9 + \beta_{10} X_{10} + U_i$$

Model 3

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_7 X_7 + \beta_8 X_8 + \beta_9 X_9 + \beta_{11} X_{11} + U_i$$

Where,

$\beta_0, \beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4, \beta_5, \beta_6, \beta_7, \beta_8, \beta_9, \beta_{10}$ and β_{11} are the regression coefficients,

U = Error Term

Y is the dependent variable,

$X_1, X_2, X_3, X_4, X_5, X_6, X_7, X_8, X_9, X_{10}$ and X_{11} are the independent variables

R_2 explains the overall explanatory power of a model. It shows the variation in the dependent variable with respect to an independent variable.

The variables included in the models are -

Y = Amount of Agricultural Credit per Farmer by PACS

It is referred as agricultural credit per farmer in rupees disbursed by PACS.

X_1 = Per Hectare Fertiliser Consumption (Kg)

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Fertilizer consumption (Kg) per hectare is taken into account in explaining the variations in demand of credit.

X_2 = Per Hectare Agricultural Production

We have included the per hectare land productivity in terms of rupee at current price as an independent variable. It is assumed that higher productivity of land may motivate the farmer to invest more capital in agriculture and thus creating higher demand for credit.

X_3 = Number of Electric Engines per thousand Hectare

The availability of number of electric engines per thousand hectare of cultivated area has been considered a better measure of irrigation as it helps in obtaining higher yield due to assured supply of water at the required time. Therefore, a district having more number of electric engines is expected to create higher demand of credit for agriculture.

X_4 = Percentage of Net Irrigated Area to Net Cultivated Area

Higher percentage of net irrigated area raises the requirement of expensive inputs like fertilizers, thereby increasing the demand for credit. In view of this, it is expected that a district with higher proportion of net irrigated area to net cultivated area would create relatively higher demand for credit.

X_5 = Per Capita Consumption of Electricity (Kw/hour)

The economic prosperity of a region is also measured by Electricity consumption. It is not only an important social facility but also a major factor of production in agricultural economy. Therefore, it has been assumed that a district with high per capita consumption of electricity 00000 would attract more demand for agriculture credit.

X_6 = Percentage of Rural Family below poverty line

Agriculture is the main occupation for majority of marginal and small farmers in Madhya Pradesh. Majority of them, having a status of Below Poverty Line, look forward for the government's financial support for raising investment in their farm activities. This raises the demand for credit.

X_7 = Cropping Intensity

It is defined as a ratio of gross cultivated area to the net cultivated area. This raises the requirement of agricultural inputs and thereby the demand for credit.

X_8 = Agricultural Income per Farmer

The amount of agricultural income per farmer has been considered as explanatory variable for demand of credit. Farmers with higher level of agriculture income are expected to attract more credit proposals due to their improved capacity of repayment. This would help them in expansion of their farm activities.

X_9 = Number of Electric Engines per farmer

An electric engine is an important asset for a farmer. Therefore, a district with more number of electric engines per farmer is expected to create higher demand of credit.

X_{10} = Per capita net cultivated Area and

X_{11} = Net cultivated area per farmer.

Percentage of per capita net cultivated area and the net cultivated area per farmer are the two important indicators for extension of agriculture activities. Any change in these variables is expected to influence the demand for credit.

Primary Agricultural Credit Societies in Madhya Pradesh

The Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) function at the base level of the cooperatives credit system and constitute the major outlet of short and medium term credit for our rural population. Cooperatives are promoted as the primary institutions to relieve the rural people from the vicious circle of non-institutional debt. Primary agricultural societies in Madhya Pradesh have existed since the execution of the Cooperative Society Act in 1904. Table- 1 highlights the overall structure of primary agriculture credit societies in Madhya Pradesh. It provides information about number of societies, membership pattern, indebted members, loan disbursement, outstanding loans and share capital of PACS for the period 1995-96 to 1999-2000.

These societies account to 5934 in 1995-96, which later on reduced to 4538 in the year 1999-2000. The decline in number of PACS may be attributed to re-organization of Madhya Pradesh with the formation of Chhatishgarh. During this period of 1995-96 to 1999-2000, even the total membership of Primary Agricultural Credit Societies has declined from 67 lakh to 56.93 lakh. The declining trend is also observed in case of SC and ST membership. However, the percentage of SC and ST members to the total members has increased marginally during this period.

In the year 1995-96, there were 36.81 lakh of indebted members, which accounted to around 55 per cent of total membership of PACS in Madhya Pradesh. The strength of indebted members had fluctuated in next few years and reached a figure of 35.28 lakh in the year 1999-2000. It is observed that the share of indebted members in the total membership of PACS has always been more than 50 per cent during the period 1995-96

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to 1999-2000. Almost similar trend is observed as far as the share of SC indebted members is concerned. The percentage of ST indebted members to the ST membership has fluctuated between 39 per cent to about 42 per cent during the period under review.

Table: 1
Primary Co-Operative Agricultural Credit Societies in Madhya Pradesh
(1995-96 to 1999-00)

Details	1995- 1996	1996- 1997	1997- 1998*	1998- 1999*	1999- 2000*
No. of Societies	5934	5873	5873	4538	4538
No. of Members (In Lakhs)	67	67.50	70.13	50.85	56.93
Scheduled Castes	1015	1015	1091	848	947
% SC to the total Member	15.15	15.04	15.56	16.68	16.63
Scheduled Tribes	1653	1720	1787	1278	1432
% ST to the total Member	24.67	25.48	25.48	25.13	25.15
Indebted Members (Total) (In Lakhs)	36.81	38.65	40.61	32.33	35.28
% to total member	54.94	57.3	57.9	63.6	62.0
Scheduled Castes	5.07	6.45	6.78	5.57	6.08
% SC indebted member to the total SC Member	50.0	63.5	62.1	65.7	64.2
% SC indebted member to the total Indebted Member	13.77	16.69	16.70	17.23	17.23
Scheduled Tribes	6.97	7.22	7.59	5.14	5.6
% ST indebted member to the total ST Member	42.2	42.0	42.5	40.2	39.1
% ST indebted member to the total Indebted Member	18.94	18.68	18.69	15.90	15.87
Share Capital (Total)	17453	18325	20495	17648	23947
Loans Disbursed (Total)	74845	88408	90967	71031	72381
Short term	74145	87608	90058	52142	53944
Medium term	700	800	909	18889	18437
Outstanding Loans (Total)	113352	130810	126202	113093	166875
Short term	82951	95637	92268	91201	132054
Medium term	30401	35173	33934	21892	34821

Note : (*) : Provisional

Source: Department of Agriculture, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh,
www.indiastat.com

The institutional finance through Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) in Madhya Pradesh stood at Rs. 74845 lakh during 1995-96, which rose to Rs 88408 lakh by 1996-97 and further to Rs. 90967 lakh in 1997-98. After that, it declined to 72381 lakh at the end of the period. As far as the nature of loan disbursement by PACS is concerned, its major share of about 99 % is distributed as short term loan to the farmers for each year during the period of 1995-96 to 1997-98. The later years witnessed a dramatic change as the ratio of loan disbursement sharply increased from 25% in 1998-99 to 27% in 1999-00 in favour of medium term loan. On the other hand the outstanding loans of these credit cooperatives increased from Rs 113352 lakh in 1995-96 to Rs 166875 lakh in 1999-2000. The figure has continuously fallen during the period of 1996-97 to 1998-99. The study depicts an important observation that the amount of outstanding loans of these credit cooperatives has grown faster than the amount of loans disbursed. However, the total share capital during the same period has gradually increased from 17453 lakh to 23947 lakh with a minimal fall in the year 1998-99. The share of short term loan in the total amount of outstanding loan has increased from 73% in 1995-96 to 79% in 1999-00.

Table-2 explains the credit deposit ratio of PACS in Madhya Pradesh. The study clearly depicts that the total deposits have increased by 87.36 per cent during the period 1996-97 to 2000-01, whereas, the amount of total credit disbursed by the PACS has grown at the rate of 14.99 per cent. It is clear from the Table that credit deposit (CD) ratio has declined dramatically during this period from 4.605 in the year 1996-97 to 0.436 in the year 2000-01.

Table: 2
Credit- Deposit Ratio of PACS in Madhya Pradesh

Year	Deposits	Credit disbursement	Credit Deposit (CD) ratio
1996-97	14402.36	66324.21	4.605
1997-98	168827.2	74557.15	0.442
1998-99	196976.9	72581.74	0.368
1999-00	220988.7	82493	0.373
2000-01	290616.5	126773	0.436
Compound Growth rate	87.35707	14.99096	

Source: Different Statistics of Socio-economic Indicator Madhya Pradesh, 2001

Inter-district Variation among PACS

To examine the inter-district variation, the districts under study are classified into three categories on the basis of amount of credit disbursed per farmer by PACS (Table 3). A loan amount of less than Rs 680 per farmer represents the low category. There are twelve districts which belong to this category. The amount of loan disbursed between the range of Rs 680-1253 per farmer is classified as medium category and it gives representation to another twelve districts in the State. The remaining 14 districts belong to the high category, where the amount of loan disbursed per farmer exceeds Rs. 1253.

Table-4 depicts a detailed picture of inter-district variation with respect to number of PACS; Credit disbursement by PACS; number of PACS per lakh population of farmer and Agricultural credit disbursed per farmer. Quantitative techniques are used to calculate mean, standard deviation and coefficient of variation with respect to the category they belong to. It is clear from the Table that an average amount of agricultural credit disbursed per farmer by PACS in Madhya Pradesh account to Rs 1157 approximately. It varies sharply across all the three categories within a range of Rs 350.90 in low category to Rs 2027.65 in high category. The coefficient of variation in agricultural credit disbursed per farmer is the highest (49.42 %) among the districts belonging to the low category of credit, following with 48.88 per cent among the districts in the high category of credit.

Table: 3
Classification of Districts According to Credit Disbursement per Farmer

Categories	Name of district	No. of district
Low (less then Rs.680)	Morena, Shivpuri, Guna, Panna, Rewa, Shahdol, Sidhi, Jhabua, Betul, Jabalpur, Mandla, Balaghat.	12
Medium (Between Rs.680-1253)	Bhind, Datia, Tikamgarh, Chhatarpur, Sagar, Damoh, Satna, Mandsaur, Dhar, Rajgarh, Chhindwara, Seoni.	12
High (More than Rs.1253)	Gwalior, Ratlam, Ujjain, Shajapur, Dewas, Indore, Khargone, Khandwa, Vidisha, Bhopal, Raisen, Sehore, Hoshangabad, Narsinghpur.	14
Total		38

The average number of PACS per lakhs population of farmers varies from approximately 41 in low category to 79 in high category of credit. The mean of the State is approximately 60 PACS per lakhs of population. As far as the total disbursement of credit by PACS is concerned, majority of about 54 per cent is distributed among districts

belonging to the high category, followed by about 32 per cent in medium category and 14 per cent in the lower category.

Thus it may be stated that the districts under low category in Madhya Pradesh have an access to only 14 per cent out of the total credit disbursed by 28.6 per cent PACS with a share of each farmer being Rs.351. Whereas about 39 per cent PACS in high category have disbursed 54.3 per cent of total credit, with the average share per farmer being Rs. 2028. It is identified that there exists a very high disparity in the amount of loan disbursed per farmer in low and high category.

Table: 4
An Overall Structure of PACS in Madhya Pradesh (1999-2000)

Amount of Credit Per Farmer		Number of PACS in the District	Credit Disbursed by PACS (in Lakhs)	PACS Per Lakhs Population of Farmers	Agriculture Credit Per Former (Rupees)
Low (less than Rs. 680)	Sum	1300.00	11528.26	487.00	4210.84
	% of Total Sum	28.6%	14.0%	21.5%	9.6%
	Mean	108.3333	960.6883	40.5833	350.9033
	Std. Deviation	26.1754	495.0308	16.6976	173.4208
	CV	24%	52%	41.14%	49.42%
	N	12	12	12	12
Medium (Rs. 680-1253)	Sum	1472.00	25995.69	670.00	11359.13
	% of Total Sum	32.4%	31.7%	29.5%	25.8%
	Mean	122.6667	2166.3075	55.8333	946.5942
	Std. Deviation	43.6126	894.9653	21.8791	200.2836
	CV	35.55%	41.3%	39.2%	21.16%
	N	12	12	12	12
High (Greater than Rs. 1253)	Sum	1766.00	44569.13	1111.00	28387.06
	% of Total Sum	38.9%	54.3%	49.0%	64.6%
	Mean	126.1429	3183.5093	79.3571	2027.6471
	Std. Deviation	39.1208	1596.7247	21.1428	991.1277
	CV	31.01%	50.16%	26.64%	48.88%
	N	14	14	14	14
All districts	Sum	4538.00	82093.08	2268.00	43957.03
	% of Total Sum	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	Mean	119.4211	2160.3442	59.6842	1156.7639
	Std. Deviation	36.9767	1438.6249	25.5312	936.9809
	CV	31%	66.59%	42.78%	81%
	N	38	38	38	38

Note: CV- Coefficient of Variation

Source: Calculated by the authors on the basis of actual data

Factors affecting demand for agricultural credit

Our forgoing analysis suggests that there is a wide variation in credit disbursement among different districts of Madhya Pradesh by PACS. It is interesting to note that this degree of variation is not uniform in all the three categories of districts. The districts with higher level of credit disbursements are showing relatively low variation, whereas the districts with low level of credit disbursement are showing high variation. Thus in order to identify factors determining level of credit disbursement by PACS, we at the first stage have estimated the impact of many variables, namely X₁, X₂, X₃ X₄ X₅ X₆ and X₇. The results are shown in Table-5 as Model-1.

Table No.5
Regression Estimates of Credit Disbursement by PACS

Explanatory Variable	MODEL1	MODEL2	MODEL3
Constant	1609.12	-2182.293	-2190.991
Per Hectare fertilizer consumption in kg (X ₁)	17.946** (7.571)	15.854** (6.050)	18.662*** (5.573)
Per hectare Agricultural production in rupees at current price (X ₂)	0.02494 (0.043)		
No of electric engines per thousand hectare (X ₃)	-10.550* (5.393)		
% of net irrigated area to net cultivated area (X ₄)	24.326** (11.165)	7.949 (9.188)	9.501 (8.453)
Per capita consumption of electricity Kw/hour (X ₅)	0.933 (1.322)		
Percentage of rural family below poverty line (X ₆)	0.208 (12.145)		
Cropping intensity(X ₇)	11.849 (9.021)	10.450 (7.759)	8.299 (7.064)
Total agricultural income per farmer (X ₈)		0.03541*** (0.009)	0.009549 (0.014)
Number of engine per farmer (X ₉)		-3196.320* (1605.254)	-2851.10* (1471.023)
Per catpita net cultivated area (X ₁₀)		825.744 (1126.991)	
Cultivated area per farmer(X ₁₁)			419.315** (165.172)
R ²	0.637	0.724	0.768

***Significant at 1% level of significant, **Significant at 5% level of significant, *Significant at 10% level of significant. **Note:** figures given in brackets are the standard error.

This model (1) explains overall around 64 percent variation in the credit disbursement. All the variables are showing positive impact except the number of electric engines. It is clear from the estimates that only per hectare fertilizer consumption and percentage of net irrigated area to net cultivated area are showing positive and significant impact. This is obvious because the PACS normally give credit for short term requirements for agricultural operations. This credit is mainly determined by the intensity of fertilizer consumption and irrigation. It is interesting to note that neither the cropping intensity nor the consumption of electricity is significantly influencing the level of credit disbursement. It has also been observed that even agricultural production is not affecting the credit requirements of the farmers, as its coefficient is insignificant. It is difficult to explain how the impact of number of electric engines per thousand hectare is coming negative and significant. It seems that mostly middle or large farmers are using electric engines for their irrigation purpose and their dependency for short term loan on these agencies (PACS) is very meagre.

In order to further analyze the impact, we have considered variables namely X_1 , X_4 , X_7 , X_8 , X_9 and X_{10} . The results are shown in Table-5 as Model-2.

Here again, all these variables are showing positive impact except average number of electric engines per farmer. Among the variables, only per hectare fertilizer consumption and agricultural income per farmer show positive and significant impact. In other words, the level of family income and fertilizer use decide the demand for credit. In this model also, the impact of number of electric engines is negative but significant only at 10 per cent level of significance. The overall explanatory power of this model is 72 per cent. The study depicts that the irrigation and cropping intensity are not affecting the credit requirement, as their coefficients are insignificant.

Finally, we have tried this exercise by including variables namely X_1 , X_4 , X_7 , X_8 , X_9 and X_{11} to assess their impact on credit disbursement. The results are shown in Table-5 as Model-3.

In this case, the intensity of fertilizer use and amount of cultivated area per farmer are showing positive and significant impact. Here also, the average number of electric engine per farmer is showing negative and significant impact only at 10 per cent level of significance, whereas the other variables are not showing any significant impact.

Conclusion

Our study has shown that agricultural credit requirements of the farmers from Primary Agricultural Credit Societies are dependent mainly on the intensity of fertilizer consumption, irrigation intensity, availability of cultivated area per farmer and the

agriculture income per farmer, as their coefficients are positive and significant. It is really surprising that neither the cropping intensity nor the per capita consumption of electricity is having significant impact on the credit demand of farmers through PACS. It is important to observe that the intensity of electric engines is showing negative and significant impact on credit requirements of the farmers. The study shows that the farmers with more number of electric engines are demanding less credit from the primary agricultural co-operative societies. It might be possible that mostly these farmers are bigger middle size land owners and must have approached commercial banks or land development banks to meet their needs for credit. We therefore can conclude that the demand for credit from the PACS is mainly determined by the intensity of fertilizer consumption, cultivated area per farmer, agricultural income per farmer and irrigation intensity at inter-district level in Madhya Pradesh.

Our analysis has clearly suggested that the major share of the credit by Primary Agricultural Credit Societies is distributed to meet the short term needs of the farmers, majority of them being small and marginal farmers. As observed above, their short term credit requirements are mainly determined by the intensity of fertilizer consumption and irrigation intensity, which are the most important inputs for the agricultural growth of any region. Availability of timely and adequate supply of credit to farmers by PACS to meet their short term needs would not only enhance their farm productivity but protect them from the approaching the non institutional credit agencies. Thus in order to have a strong base of agricultural growth among different districts of Madhya Pradesh, there is a need to further strengthen the Primary Agricultural Credit Societies.

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**Community Involvement in Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan:
An Assessment of the Village Education Committees in India**

K. Girija Shankar

Introduction

Since the Independence of our country, the Government of India has been striving hard to involve the community more and more in the system of administration and process of development. The establishment of Community Development Blocks in the 1st Five Year Plan and the creation of Panchayati Raj Institutions at Gram Panchayat, Block and District levels were the initial attempts to ensure community involvement especially in development and administration. During the first 25 years after the Independence, it was realized by the Government that the involvement of community has remained more on pen and paper than in the real system of administration and development. Some of the major reasons identified to explain this situation were: (1) high rate of illiteracy especially among the Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes and Women, (2) lack of any policy and programme to empower the community in respect of development and administration (3) non effectiveness of the system of devolution of power etc. This realization led the Government to give more emphasis upon ensuring functional participation of community in administration and development. Hence the Government enacted the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992 to confer constitutional status on the Panchayati Raj Institutions and thereby made it mandatory to involve community in the process of development and administration. Since then, in all kinds of development programmes, involvement of community has been taken up as an integral component. During 1990s, in the field of education, a few programmes like Lok Jumbish, Education Guarantee Scheme and District Primary Education Programme were implemented involving the community and the experience gained from these programmes reinforced that community can play a significant

role in education. Keeping in view the vision of the Constitution (73rd and 74th Amendment) Act, 1992 and the output of these programmes, the Government of India launched the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, a nationwide, time bound educational programme to promote elementary education by involving community at various levels and in an institutionalized manner to sustain their involvement.

In Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, several kinds of community based institutions have been involved such as Parent Teacher Association (PTA), Mother Teacher Association (MTA), Village Education Committee (VEC) and Gram Panchayat. The VEC has the most significant role to play in implementing SSA at the grassroots level. This paper has delineated (i) the role and responsibilities given to VEC (ii) discussed the various steps taken in different States so far for the capacity building of the VECs; (iii) presented the critical assessment made by the Monitoring Institutions regarding the functioning of VECs; and (iv) suggested a few corrective measures to improve the quality and quantum of community involvement through VECs in SSA.

Role and Responsibilities of VEC under SSA

Structurally VEC is the executive body of a school and is represented by some members. The number and kind of members that make a VEC is State - specific and hence defined by each State Government separately. In different contexts, functionally equivalent to VEC, some other institutions also exist. For instance, the Parent Teacher Association in Madhya Pradesh, the School Management Committee (SMC) in Sikkim and Andhra Pradesh, the Vidyalaya Shiksha Samiti (VSS) in Bihar, the School Development and Management Committee (SDMC) in Karnataka and Rajasthan, and the Ward Education Committee (WEC) in urban areas of West Bengal functionally play the same role under SSA as is played by the VEC in other places of the country. Under SSA, the VECs have been bestowed with several tasks, the important among them are as follows:

- (i) Receipt and utilization of all the grants given under SSA following the guidelines and keeping records of all kinds of expenditures made out of these grants.
- (ii) Preparation and implementation of habitation/school level annual work plan called micro plan under SSA) every year to the achieve SSA goals.
- (iii) Motivation to community to donate cash/kind/labour for the all round development of the school.
- (iv) Construction of all kinds of civil works relating to schools that are sanctioned under SSA.
- (v) Regular monitoring of enrollment, attendance, retention and enhancement of learning achievement level of children.

- (vi) Organization of activities like enrollment drive, awareness general campaign, children fair, Maa-beti Mela and Kishori Mela to generate community awareness towards elementary education.

Steps taken for Capacity Building of VECs

Under SSA, specific thrust has been given to empower the VECs to ensure their participation in SSA activities more intensely. Hence in various States, training programmes have been conducted in different years for the capacity building of the VEC members to execute their responsibilities comfortably. The different aspects on which some States have already conducted training programmes for the VECs are mentioned below:

- (i) Nagaland: Utilization of the funds and preparation of utilization certificates, maintenance of accounts, banking etc.
- (ii) West Bengal: Role of community in monitoring attendance of students and teachers and identification of out of school children.
- (iii) Bihar: Participation of disadvantaged section of the society including SC, ST and women in the school management.
- (iv) Kerala: Convergence with Local Self Help Groups and NGO sector towards effective education system.
- (v) Madhya Pradesh: Training of PTAs on micro planning.
- (vi) Uttaranchal: Utility of educational mapping and usage of local resources.

In order to sustain the process of VEC involvement in SSA programme, various States have developed manuals, handbooks and training materials. A few examples have been cited below.

- (i) **Gujarat:** Module on gender awareness and girl's education.
- (ii) **Uttaranchal:** Manual on financial guideline to VECs, handbook on role of VEC to educate children with special needs.
- (iii) **Madhya Pradesh:** Training module for PTAs including posters and charts based on the content.
- (iv) **Rajasthan:** Sang Vidhan Patra and rules for constitution of SDMC, MTA folders, Community mobilization folder and SDMC training module.
- (v) **Bihar:** Abhiyan - one day orientation module for VSS members, Pahal - two days training module for community leaders, Pahal - one day training module for community leaders on Inclusive Education and Samvad - Half Yearly block level orientation module.

- (vi) **Jharkhand** - Handbooks on rights and duties of VEC developed and distributed to all VECs Training material in the form of display card developed to make training effective.
- (vii) **Orissa**: Modules for training of VECs. Handbook on the role of VECs. Categorization format to assess the performance of VECs.

Furthermore, in every State, SSA personnel like Cluster Resource Centre Coordinators (CRCCs) and Block Resource Centre Coordinators (BRCCs) have been engaged to supervise and monitor the activities taken up by the VECs on various occasions. They are also permitted to sometimes attend the VEC meetings to oversee whether the VECs are adhering to the prescribed norms as regards the composition of members and the mode of operation of meetings. They are also entrusted with the responsibility of conducting coordination meetings with members of different VECs to extend necessary guidance relating to various issues of implementing SSA programme.

Functioning of VECs as assessed by Monitoring Institutions (M.Is.)

The Government of India has identified 41 Monitoring Institutions to monitor and report on various SSA activities taken up all over the country. This also includes an assessment on the functioning of the VECs. Some of the findings of the MIs for different States during the year 2006-07 and 2007-08 have been given below:-

1. National Institute of Rural Development (NIRD), Hyderabad for Andhra Pradesh State

In Andhra Pradesh, the State Government has dissolved the Village Education Committee system and in place of this, it has established School Management Committees at the village level under the Chairmanship of Village Sarpanch since January 2007. However in some schools, the School Management Committees are not actively functioning and hence community ownership and accountability with regard to implementation of SSA interventions are at stake.

2. Rajiv Gandhi University, Itanagar for Arunachal Pradesh State

In Arunachal Pradesh, VECs have been formed in all schools as per the prescribed norms. The VEC members are deeply involved in educational management, academic activities, civil works and financial management. They take care of the regularity of teachers and smooth functioning of classes. VECs have also actively involved themselves in the procurement of teaching learning materials (TLMs) as well as free textbooks for the schools.

3. ***Gauhati University, Guwahati for Assam State***

All schools have VECs and VEC guidelines in Assam. But some VECs do not involve themselves wholeheartedly in improving the school environment and the attendance rates of students as well as teachers. Many VECs have not properly maintained their cash books and meeting registers owing to lack of adequate knowledge on accounts keeping. The VECs require necessary orientation on their responsibilities towards school development and management.

4. ***Jamia Millia Islamia, Delhi for Bihar State***

In Bihar as per the State legislation the nomenclature and area of work of the Village Education Committee (VEC) have been modified and instead of having one VEC for each village there is a Samiti for every school in village or town area which is called Vidyalaya Shiksha Samiti (VSS). The purpose of VSS is to promote and popularize the idea of decentralized planning and management of elementary education and make people not only participate in these processes but also encourage them to own elementary education institutions in their area through VSS structures and demonstrate a sense of concern for these institutions and for children who study or may study to these institutions. In Bihar, VSSs are formed under the VSS Act - 2005 which has the provision for a fair representation of all sections of the community around the school who may join it through a democratically organized process of election. Weaker sections and women folk of the area are duly represented in VSS. VSS meetings and discussions take place on different school related issues including civil works, dropout, teacher's presence, student attendance, procurement, storage, cooking and distribution of Mid Day Meals.

5. ***A.N. Sinha Institute of Social Science, Patna for Bihar State***

The members of VSS in Bihar have been trained on their roles and responsibilities towards schools and children. VSS guidelines have been found in every school. The VSS of each school has been given full power to utilize the school grants. The VSS also takes the necessary resolutions in its meetings before utilizing the grants.

6. ***Regional Institute of Education, Bhopal for Chhattisgarh State***

The VECs have been named as Jan Bhagidari evam Vikas Samiti (JBVS) in Chhattisgarh. They have been markedly contributed for improvement in teachers' attendance, student enrolment and school environment. They have conducted home surveys, written slogans and organized meetings for improvement of student enrolment and attendance. In some cases the JBVS has also engaged local teachers in that schools

have vacancy of teaching posts. The school Head Master acts as the Secretary of the JBVS. In every school proper record of receipt and utilization of funds has been maintained in cash books by the JBVS.

7. ***Maharaja Sayajirao (M.S.) University, Vadodara for Gujarat State and also for Daman and Diu UT***

In almost all schools in Gujarat, VECs exist and maintain their meeting records properly. But some of them have not conducted their meetings regularly every month. Yet they have contributed significantly to school management, distribution of text books to children and enrollment of out of school children.

In Daman and Diu, every school has a VEC and a copy of guidelines. The VECs follow the VEC guidelines properly in utilizing the grants received for the school. They look after the construction of additional classrooms and toilets.

8. ***Sardar Patel Institute of Economic and Social Research, Ahmedabad for Gujarat State***

In Gujarat, VEC guidelines have been issued to the schools but the VECs are not actively taking part in planning and implementing the SSA activities at school level. There is a need for regular monitoring and supervision of VECs to ensure their participation in SSA programme.

9. ***Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra for Haryana State***

The VEC members in Haryana have received training in their respective BRCs from the technical persons for execution of civil works. A large number of these VECs are satisfied with the nature of training. However, some VECs operate very irregularly in convening their meetings. Even they do not know how to keep the record of their meetings. They need necessary guidance from the supervisory staffs like BRCCs and CRCCs regarding organization of VEC meetings and recording of VEC resolutions, accounts keeping on receipt as well as expenditure of the grants and school management.

10. ***Himachal Pradesh University for Himachal Pradesh State***

The VECs in Himachal Pradesh have played significant roles in the enrolment and regular attendance of students and teachers, maintenance of school compound and provision of drinking water facility. All schools have VECs but many of them have not kept VEC guidelines. In some schools, VEC meetings are conducted after a gap of 3 to 4 months and the cash books are properly maintained. They require training on how to

maintain proper records of receipt and expenditure of funds given for school development.

11. *University of Jammu for Jammu and Kashmir for State*

In Jammu & Kashmir, every school has a VEC and in each VEC at least 01 woman member is included. But VEC guidelines are not available at many schools. Meetings of VECs are not held regularly in many schools, despite the fact that some VEC members have already got necessary trainings on their roles and responsibilities in school management and development. The VECs have received all grants given to the schools but very few of them have maintained proper record of receipt as well as expenditure of funds. This indicates that the VECs should be given regular training on accounts keeping.

12. *University of Kashmir for Jammu and Kashmir State*

VECs in all schools have made marked contribution towards enrollment of out of school children, textbook distribution and utilization of grants received for the school from the SSA programme. However, the VECs need regular training on accounts keeping, management of school and maintaining of SSA activities at school level.

13. *Xavier Labour Relations Institute (XLRI) Jamshedpur for Jharkhand State*

In Jharkhand, VEC has been formed in all schools but they are not uniformly active. The interest of the VEC in the functioning of the schools seems to be determined by the presence of a few key individuals. In a few cases where the chairman or a few members of the VEC appear to be active and interested in the functioning of the school, the VEC seems to be operating properly. The teachers, on the whole, seem to have a good rapport with the VECs and the key people in the village.

14. *Institute of Social & Economic Change, Bangalore for Karnataka State*

In Karnataka instead of VEC, the SDMC (School Development and Management Committee) is formed in the school. The SDMCs have been constituted in all schools. Guidelines have been issued to all SDMCs and training has been conducted for all SDMCs. The SDMC's contribution in terms of promoting school environment, enrolment of out of school children and attendance of teachers and students is found to be satisfactory. All SDMCs are maintaining proper records of the funds received by them. In majority of schools, the SDMCs conduct their monthly meetings regularly.

15. *Regional Institute of Education, Mysore for Karnataka State*

In every school, the SDMC has been formed in tune with the prescribed guidelines. Majority of the schools have the SDMC guidelines that depict the role and responsibilities of SDMC in the management and development of school. While conducting meetings, the SDMC have followed the guidelines strictly.

16. *Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum for Kerala State and also for Lakshadweep UT*

In Kerala, every school has a VEC, which is composed of members as prescribed by the State norms. VECs are taking necessary initiative in executing various school-related activities like enrollment and retention of out-of-school children, development of school campus and improvement in the quality of teaching.

In Lakshadweep, VEC has been formed in all schools. But VEC meetings are irregularly conducted. The meetings are conducted usually for taking resolutions relating to utilization grants obtained for conducting various SSA activities such as building construction, textbook distribution, repair and maintenance of classrooms etc.

17. *Madhya Pradesh Institute of Social Science Research, Ujjain for Madhya Pradesh State*

In all schools of Madhya Pradesh Parent Teacher Associations have been formed as per the provisions of Public Education Act, 2002. The Act provides for setting up of Parent Teacher Association (PTA) for each school, giving them the responsibility of school management. Each school has a copy of the guidelines relating to the formation of PTAs. The PTA members have also obtained training on their roles and responsibilities relating to school management and development, utilization of all kinds of grants given to the school under the SSA programme, and strategies to achieve universal enrollment in elementary education. However, it has been observed during the field visits that the PTA members belonging to marginal sections of society are not participating actively in the decision making process in many schools.

18. *Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai for Madhya Pradesh State*

In Madhya Pradesh, the Parent Teacher Association looks after the management and development of schools. It plays the role of VECs in the matter of all kinds of SSA activities such as civil works, textbook distribution, enrollment of out of school children, etc. Its meeting is held in most of the schools once in a month but its members feel that they should be given more orientation on SSA programme.

19. *Indian Institute of Education, Pune for Maharashtra State and also for Dadra and Nagar Haveli UT*

In Maharashtra every school has a VEC and the VEC guidelines. The VECs conduct their meetings monthly or bi-monthly. They are involved in the school development activity and maintain proper record of accounts and materials. They are improving the school environment and enrollment as well as attendance of students. In Dadra and Nagar Haveli, a copy of the guidelines on delegation of powers to the VEC has been given to each school. Some VECs have involved themselves in the management as well as development of the schools. They are also improving the enrollment of the children and maintaining proper record of accounts and materials.

20. *Shreemati Nathibai Damodar Thackersey (SNDT) College of Education for Women, Pune for Maharashtra State and for Goa State*

In Maharashtra some VEC members have got training on SSA programme and their role in implementing it at school level. But similar training should be given to other VEC members.

In Goa, the process of formation of VEC at school level has started since September 2007. The VEC members therefore require training on their roles and responsibilities relating to management and development of schools and implementation of SSA as well as MDM programmes at school level.

21. *Manipur University, Imphal for Manipur State*

In Manipur VECs exist in all schools. Guidelines on management of VEC is available in all schools. Each VEC has a minimum of 7 members including 2 women members. Funds given for the construction of civil works in the schools have been received and utilized by the VECs. But the details of receipt and expenditure of grants are not maintained by the VECs in cash books. The VECs need adequate orientation on their role in community ownership of schools.

22. *NEHU (North Eastern Hill University), Shillong, Meghalaya State*

In Meghalaya, VEC exists at village level and School Management Committee (SMC) at school level. The VECs conduct their meetings quarterly. The grants given to schools are received by the SMC. VECs do not enjoy the financial power and for this reason, they do not function actively.

23. *Mizoram University, Aizwal for Mizoram State*

In Mizoram all schools have VECs and VEC guidelines. All VECs are maintaining the cash book and are playing significant roles in enrollment, retention and regular attendance of students, and maintenance of school compounds. The VECs have got various trainings under SSA and have taken up responsibilities in implementing SSA activities at school level. All civil works at school level are done by them after taking necessary resolutions in VEC meetings.

24. *Nagaland University, Kohima for Nagaland State*

VEC's in Nagaland are actively involved in the SSA implementation activities. Members of VEC are given orientation on capacity building to implement SSA activities at school level. VECs are also responsive to execute their roles. Due to VEC's involvement, the percentage of attendance of teachers and students have shown much improvement. VECs are also maintaining records of receipt and expenditure of grants properly in cash books.

25. *Nabakrushna Choudhury Centre for Development Studies, Bhubaneswar for Orissa State*

In Orissa most of the schools have formed VECs but some of them do not have the VEC guidelines. Hence, some VECs do not maintain the cash book correctly. The VECs therefore require trainings on account keeping. The VECs in general are mostly concerned with civil works and grants utilization. Some VECs of course have contributed to the development of school campus, enrollment of out of school children and supervision of Mid-Day-Meals distribution. There is a need for conducting regular capacity building programme for the VECs on planning, implementation and monitoring of SSA activities at school level.

26. *Dr. P.M. Institute of Advanced Study in Education, Sambalpur for Orissa State*

In each VEC, at least 03 women members and 01 SC/ST member has been included. Majority of VECs are conducting their meetings every month to discuss on various matters relating to implementation SSA such as enrollment of out of school children, construction of school infrastructure, distribution of dress to girls and text books to all children, and utilization of grants given to the school.

27. *Punjab University, Chandigarh for Punjab State and also for the Chandigarh UT*

In Punjab the VECs in almost all villages have been formed according to the prescribed guidelines. Each VEC consists of 7 to 8 members. There is ample participation of SC members in the VECs. Invariably a lady from the village panchayat is also a member of VEC. Almost all the schools have been provided with the guidelines for the functioning of VEC. The VECs invariably meet once in a month and take resolution relating to school management, grant utilization, enrollment of out of school children, civil works etc.

In Chandigarh every village has a Village Education Committee. Schools located in areas other than the villages have School Management Committees and they have taken up all responsibilities for school management as well as development.

28. *Institute of Development Studies, Jaipur for Rajasthan State*

In Rajasthan, in place of VEC, School Development and Management Committee (SDMC) have been formed. SDMCs have obtained the necessary guidelines for their functioning. The women to men ratio in SDMCs is 1:3 and the ratio of SC/ST men to general men is 1:2. The ratio of SC/ST women and general women is nearly 1:2. Thus each SDMC is well represented by various sections of society. The member of SDMCs have also got necessary training on implementation of SSA activities at school level. They have contributed significantly to the development of school especially relating to construction of building, additional classrooms and toilets, enrollment and retention of children, utilization of school grants etc.

29. *University of North Bengal, Darjeeling for Sikkim State*

In Sikkim instead of VEC, School Management Committee (SMC) exists in every school. Every SMC has been supplied with a guideline that defines its role and responsibilities in school management and development. The SMC meets once in a month. Attendance of the students has been enhanced by the effort of the SMCs. Cash book is properly maintained by the SMC. Grants given to the school have been received and utilized by the SMC.

30. *Alagappa University, Karaikudi for Tamilnadu State*

In Tamil Nadu VEC has been formed in all schools. The VECs are also making a lot of contributions to the development and management of schools. In many schools, the VECs are taking measures for the academic excellence of children. Most of the VECs

conduct their meetings every month and take necessary resolution relating to the functioning of the school.

31. *Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore for Tamilnadu State*

The VECs in all schools are conducting their monthly meetings regularly. Majority of the VECs have got the VEC guidelines and have 16 to 20 members that also includes women and SC/ST people. Up to 5 members from each VEC have been given training on SSA programme and their roles in it. Almost all have acknowledged that the training has been beneficial to them. The VEC besides utilization of grants received for the schools have also taken part in organization of school functions, fund mobilization and promoting better attendance of students.

32. *Tripura University, Agartala for Tripura State*

In Tripura all schools have VEC and VEC guidelines. The VECs maintain the cash book properly and utilize the grants as per norms. They are actively contributing to improve school environment, students' enrollment and regular distribution of MDM.

33. *Giri Institute of Development Studies Lucknow for Uttar Pradesh State*

There are Village/Ward Education Committees in all schools in Uttar Pradesh. The female and caste-wise composition of VEC/WEC is as per the State prescribed norms. The VEC/WEC meetings are held relating to organization of cultural functions, cleaning of school campus, distribution of Mid Day Meals to students, students' enrolment and attendance, etc. All the VEC/WEC members are trained on SSA activities. Hence, they play more active role in this respect. VEC participation in MDM scheme is found satisfactory.

34. *GB Pant Social Science Institute, Allahabad for Uttar Pradesh State*

In Uttar Pradesh, VECs are involved in developing school campus, in enrolment of out of school children, and in motivating the teachers to attend the school on regular basis.

35. *Centre for Advanced Research (CADR) Lucknow for Uttar Pradesh State*

The VECs in Uttar Pradesh have played significant roles in improving the overall performance of schools. A manual relating to various aspects of construction of buildings of schools, additional classrooms, kitchen, toilets, etc has been sent to all VECs for supervising civil works. However, the VECs need adequate training on surprising

civil works as well as maintenance of records relating to expenditure of grants given to the schools.

36. Lucknow University, Lucknow for Uttar Pradesh State

As per norms the VEC meetings in Uttar Pradesh are held every month in every school. The female and caste-wise composition of VEC is as per norms. The agenda of meetings usually comprises of school maintenance, Mid Day Meal, students' scholarship, enrolment and attendance, etc.

37. National Institute of Administrative Research, Mussoorie for Uttarakhand State

The Village Education Committees are found in all schools in Uttarakhand. The representation of women and Scheduled Caste members in VECs has been made as per the norms. Guidelines on delegation of powers to VEC are available in most of the schools. Some members from each VEC have been given training on planning, implementation and monitoring of SSA activities at school. They have also got orientation on accounts keeping but there is a need for extending similar training facility for other members of VECs.

38. Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Kolkata for West Bengal State and also for Andaman and Nicobar (UT)

In West Bengal the Village/Ward Education Committee (VEC/WEC) is a body with representatives from guardians, Panchayat Members / Councilors and educationists in that area. In the VEC/WEC, special emphasis has been given to include sufficient women and SC / ST members. The VEC/WEC has been entrusted for supervising and monitoring day-to-day activities in schools. It plays a major role in improving the environment of the school and in raising the enrolment and attendance of teachers and students.

In Andaman and Nicobar Islands the VEC is existing in all schools. Each VEC has six members out of which three are women. The VECs look after the management and development of school by utilizing the grants received under SSA programme.

39. Viswabhatri University, Santiniketan for West Bengal State

Majority of VEC/WEC in West Bengal have received the copy of guidelines on delegation of powers etc. It is also found that VEC has adequate women representatives. At least 3/4 members of each VEC have been oriented about the SSA programme.

40. Centre for Study of Development Societies for Delhi State

Instead of VEC, in Delhi each school has a Vidyalaya Kalyan Samiti (VKS). The VKS manages the overall functioning of school. The members of VKS have got training on SSA activities and their role in executing such activities at school level. The VKS is receiving and utilizing all kinds of grants released to the school under SSA programme.

41. Pondicherry University, Puducherry for Puducherry UT

In all schools of Puducherry, VEC has been formed and the meetings are held quarterly. Most of the VECs regularly keep record of the meeting resolution in a register and utilize the grants received for the school after taking resolutions on an average, about 90% of VEC members attended the VEC meetings regularly.

Policy Recommendations

In order to make the involvement of VECs in school management and administration more effective, it is recommended that -

- (i) Every year, the VEC members should be given training on mode of operation of VEC meetings, role and responsibilities of VECs, facilities and grants available under SSA and MDM and monitoring of school activities.
- (ii) The CRCCs and BRCCs should interact with the VEC members more frequently and motivate them to participate in school management and development more effectively.
- (iii) Each District Project Office of SSA programme should classify the VECs in to different grades basing upon the extent of their participation in school management and development.
- (iv) The low grade VECs should be given more attention for activation.
- (v) In order to motivate the VECs to take part more effectively in SSA activities, rewards may be given to some selected VECs who have shown exemplary performance.
- (vi) VECs may be encouraged to take up innovative measures to achieve SSA goals at school level. VECs should be repeatedly guided in conducting micro planning exercise for their schools.

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Book Review

Chronic Poverty and Development Policy in India

Mehta Aasha K. and Shepherd A., 2006

Sage Publications, New Delhi, Page 411, Rupees 720, ISBN: 0-7619-3464-2 (HB).

Chronic poverty is a long-term process that makes people poor and keeps them poor for years and some time for generations. Ntale (2003) quite rightly argues that 'Chronic poverty is that poverty which is ever present and never ceases. It is like the rains of the grasshopper season that beat you consistently and for a very long time, you become completely soaked because you have no way out. It pass from one generation to another, as if the offspring sucks it from the mother's breast. They in turn passes it on to their children'. Until recently, poverty analysis was confined only to economic realm. Now the poverty research has captured social, economic and political processes rather economic process alone. Notwithstanding this, even today, our knowledge about causes of chronic poverty is partial. This is mainly because of lack of clarity about operationalisation of the concept of chronic poverty. Hulme et al. (2004) has defined chronic poverty as that which is severe, multidimensional and of long duration in nature; poverty that is both severe and multidimensional but does not last for a long time is not chronic. Responding to the question what is chronic poverty, Chronic Poverty Research Centre had argued that 'Chronic poverty describes people -- individuals, households, social groups, geographical areas, and territories -- that are poor for significant periods of their lives, who may pass their poverty onto their children and for whom finding exit routes from poverty is difficult'. However, poverty has several dimensions by which people suffer. There are several forms of deprivation, including poor livelihood, social and political exclusion, geographical remoteness, indebtedness and many more.

The book under review, Chronic Poverty and Development Policy in India, raises some of these issues mentioned above. Poverty is one of the perennial and intractable problems facing governments and populations throughout the world. India

is home to 22 percent of the world's poor. Thus, reducing and eventually eliminating poverty is vital if the country is to attain national and international goals of development and good governance. While various studies have drawn attention to the fact that some segments of the population find it especially hard to escape poverty, this volume provides a holistic understanding of the problem. Discussing the extent, location and severity of chronic poverty in India, the volume suggests poverty reduction policies from that perspective. Both primary and secondary data are used to demonstrate that a significant portion of India's population is chronically poor. This edited volume contains twelve articles by eminent social scientist. Mehta and Shepherd in their introduction define chronic poor as people who are poor for long period and finally it (poverty) is inherited by their children. Answering the question: 'why study of chronic poverty is required' the editors argued that one of the important reasons is that not all the national and international goals can be achieved unless chronic poor are included in the process of development. They considered geographical factors as important in influencing chronic poverty because it is mostly concentrated in tribal, forested and semi-arid regions.

In their article Bhide and Mehta have used NCAER panel data set for 1970-71 and 1981-82 to track 3,139 households from rural India, except Assam, to understand the incidence of chronic poverty. They collected comprehensive information on social, economic, and demographic characteristics of the households, including severity and multidimensionality. They also emphasized on long durational nature of chronic poverty, by tracking the same household after a decade. Households found poor in both the years despite of policy interventions, were identified as chronically poor. The Scheduled Tribe status was correlated with severe poverty in both the rounds of the survey, whereas the Scheduled Caste status was a significant correlation for both severe poor and moderate poor only in 1970-71. Other factors influencing poverty in both the rounds were literacy, physical assets such as land and livestock and social backwardness as well. Methodologically to track the same households after a span of ten years is problematic, for split in household makes such identification difficult.

The article "Rural casual labourers, wage and poverty" by Bhalla, Karan and Shobha is based on secondary data from NSS employment and unemployment rounds of 1983, 1987-88, 1993-94 and 1999-2000. The researchers after anglicising the employment situation over years argue that members of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe communities are grossly over represented among casual workers. On the other hand, people belonging to other social groups are over represented among regular salaried workers and self-employed workers. The growth of casual labour is fastest within the Scheduled Tribe population, the second fastest between the Scheduled Castes and at a slower pace among other social groups. The favourable impact of superior real wage

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levels on poverty has increased overtime. Inter-state disparities in wage rate were also noticed. In 1999-00 casual agricultural wage rates for males were highest in Kerala (97.02 Rupees), Punjab (63.97) and Harayana and (57.85) with a minimum in Madhya Pradesh (28.69) and Orissa (29.62 Rupees) at 1999-00 prices. They find that wage rates for non-agricultural occupations are comparatively high. For males highest wage rate was recorded again in Kerala (103.60) followed by Tamil Nadu (81.30) and Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa were having lowest male wages.

Paper by Radhakrishna, Rao, Ravi and Reddy has argued that an overview of malnutrition is necessary to differentiate between extreme poor and chronic poor. By extreme poverty, they mean per capita expenditure less than 75 percent of the poverty line. Chronic poor according to them are poor households with at least one stunted child and households where women are suffering from chronic energy deficiency. In order to measure chronicity in different states, the NFHS (National family health survey) and NNMB (National nutrition monitoring bureau) data were also used. Rajan, in his paper, has zeroed on chronic poverty among elderly Indians. Due to the fast medical advancement, the proportion of elderly people is increasing more rapidly in developing countries than developed countries. He argued that in India; even at the age of 80 and above, about 22 percent of males and 17 percent of females continue to work because of inadequate financial resources.

The article by Kabra analyses the impact of involuntary displacement on a tribal community through a case study of the Sahariya Adivasi displaced from 'Kuno' wildlife sanctuary of Madhya Pradesh. The involuntary displacement of tribal people in 20th century is increasing due to growing demands of resources by industries on one hand and biodiversity conservation pressure from government, non-government and civil society groups on the other. This is creating threat among local people who are being asked to vacate areas where they have remained traditionally inhabited, to relocate to other regions. The project tiger that is being implemented in 'Kuno' wildlife sanctuary has led the displacement of 5,000 peoples of 24 villages. She found that as compensation, the land, which was provided to those people, was not as good for cultivation as they were having before displacement inside the sanctuary. They also lost other supplementary forms of livelihood and livestock. While looking the positive impact the researcher found that situation with respect to health, sanitation, nutrition, education and living standard has improved.

Sudarshan and Bhattacharya's paper analyses chronic poverty and gendered patterns of intra-household resource allocation in slums of eastern Delhi. The variables used by them to operationalise chronic poverty were residence in the slums with ownership of TPDS card. Total 201 households were taken as sample, out of which 164

were having TPDS cards. To supplement their quantitative data, five case studies were also undertaken by researchers. These case studies brought out a dismal picture of women and girls in the chronic poor households. Looking into the political perspective on chronic poverty, Nath argued that in India political parties, due to their political interest, are implementing poverty alleviation programmes at state levels. Nath analyses election manifestos of Congress, BJP and CPI (M) on poverty reduction for 1999 general elections. He concluded that none of the leaders dealt on the issues of poverty seriously. Although maximum poor people are from Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe communities, there is no targeted government to help them. Using secondary data on 395 districts of India to operationalise multidimensional concepts of chronic poverty, Mehta, Panigrahi and Sivramkrishna, identified 55 districts from BIMARU states (Orissa, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh) as poorest of poor districts. The same method was applied to estimate poverty in 175 talukas of Karnataka. The researchers have used Kohonen self-organising map (K-Som) method utilising HDI, AHDI, and K-Som indicators of regional inequalities. All the districts were divided into six levels of development; very high, high, high middle, middle, less middle and low. A region was considered chronic poor that was found poor by all the three methods. This method can be called as only one of its kind because it focused on those districts that were found poor by all the three methods.

Thomas has highlighted the role of government policies in eradicating chronic poverty in rural areas. He argued that the deserving poor were left out while the undeserving non-poor were included for different benefits available from government agencies. He also reviewed various programmes launched by Ministry of Rural Development and came to the conclusion that there is a lack of proper communication between chronic poor and government agencies and lack of homogeneity among the group members. During the implementation of SGRY (Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojna) Thomas found that underpayment of wages was quite rampant and poor quality of foodgrains was distributed to the wage earners. He also found evidence of recycling of foodgrains in the open market in the scheme. He argued that there was an increasing gap between allocation and utilization of funds under various anti-poverty programmes. M.S. Swaminathan, in this article 'Technological change in food production: Implications for vulnerable sections', has put forth implications, in the form of food availability, food access, and food absorption and food security, of technological change in food production for vulnerable section of the society. He argued that there was no shortage in food production but problems like availability of clean drinking water for poor, lack of purchasing power with them and poor environmental hygiene were the main constraints. These problems are driving poor towards low consumption, hunger, malnutrition and

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starvation. It has become challenge for scientists to find ways of increasing production in sustainable manner without harming the environment. Chemical fertilisers used in a large quantity for increasing production of wheat have serious environmental implications. He suggests that research by breeders, agronomists, physiologists and soil scientists should not only increase agricultural production but also promote ecological balance. He proposed that to increase agricultural productivity, research and development should be initiated, especially in the cultivation of rice. He propagates the concept of evergreen revolution, which should sustain ecological balance, and at the same time should increase food production, especially in an environment, where land and water resources are shrinking.

In the last article of the volume 'Safety nets for chronic poor in India: an overview', Mahendra Dev argues that safety nets in the form of various developmental programmes are important for most vulnerable members of society such as lower caste groups, women, widows, migrants, older people and child labour. He has divided the safety net's programmes for poor in four categories: (a) self employment programmes, (b) wage employment programme, (c) public distribution system, (PDS) and nutrition programmes and (d) social security programmes. He proposed that the programmes like Jawahar Rojgar Yojana and Employment Guarantee Scheme (EGS) are greatly successful in promoting exit from poverty. One of the drawbacks he noticed in EGS was that it became bias towards higher income casual labourers, who could bear the cost of registering more easily. The PDS appeared to be another important safety net for the chronic poor. The overall impact of PDS was found to be less than expected. Mahendra Dev argued that as for every rupee spent, only 28 paisa reached the poor, PDS is found to have a wide coverage but at high cost. Therefore, diversification within agriculture and promotion of rural non-farm employment are felt important to create productive employment.

Although different contributors of the volume have put their best ideas to capture chronicity, only a few researchers have succeeded in involving all the three characteristics of chronicity, as discussed in the beginning of this Review. The chronicity can lack if any of the three aspects is deserted. Some of the researchers have used cross-sectional data for capturing chronic poverty. Bhide and Mehta used not only severity and multidimensionality but also emphasized on long durational nature of chronic poverty. But Radhakrishna et al. have failed to distinguish between extreme poor and chronic poor. They have set the common concept of extreme poor and chronic poor including (i) women with CED and (ii) stunted child in the household, as the correlates of chronic poverty. These two correlates can only be a contributor on the concept of chronic poverty, rather being an operationalising feature to it. The same slip-

up has been committed by Rajan. By considering chronic poor as those people who continue to work after the age of eighty, Rajan has tried to capture time dimension in a cross-section. This cannot be approved as operationalising the concept, chronic poverty. Nath was also unable to answer the question raised by him that why are the chronic poor ignored in the political dialogue? Lastly, the poverty eradicating programmes, which have been listed by Thomas, are only for eradicating income poverty but not chronic poverty because those programmes are implemented for the income poor.

Notwithstanding this limitation, the book is of immense value and addresses key policy issues from an entirely fresh perspective. This volume is of interest to development economists, sociologists, policy makers and donor agencies and NGOs working in areas of social transformation and poverty.

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Preeti Kathuria

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