

OUR RESEARCH SCHOLARS' MUSINGS

National Seminar Inclusive Democracy: People, Power & Progress

(May 30 - 31, 2012)



Central University of Haryana

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Financial Inclusion through SHGs: A Case Study of Narnaul Block in Haryana

Bajrang*

Introduction

Financial Inclusion refers to a process of providing the financial products/services to weaker section of the society at affordable cost. Financial inclusion is delivery of financial services to poor people and low-income group at reasonable price. In other word, financial inclusion is access of safe, easy and affordable financial services to financially disadvantaged people. People may be financially included through Commercial Banks, Regional Rural Banks (RRBs), Insurance services, Post Office Saving Banks (POSB). Planning Commission (Government of India) has targeted the Faster Inclusive Growth in Twelfth Five Year Plan (2012-17)¹. In order to achieve the inclusive growth, Government of India has launched several development and employment programmes such as MGNREGS, Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA), Swarnajayanti Gram Swarajgar Yojana (SGSY) especially for women development, National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) etc. Financial inclusion is one of the major areas, on which government is paying attention to achieve the inclusive growth. An inclusive financial system is necessary to reduce informal financial system where people borrow money from neighbours, relatives, and village money-lenders by paying high rate of interest. In the rural area, large number of population does not have bank account, insurance schemes and other financial services. Thus, there is need of inclusive financial system that will facilitate financial services efficiently to financially excluded people at affordable cost. The financial development and access to banking or financial services not only help out to accelerate the economic growth but also reduce income inequality and poverty². Financial excluded individual/households cannot be expected for financial inclusion without inclusive financial system.

In the present era, financial inclusion has become a policy priority of the government. In India, RBI has taken a number of initiatives to achieve more financial inclusion viz. No-Frill Account, General Credit Card (GCC), Know Your Customers (KYCs) norms, Business Correspondence Model, Business Facilitators (BF) Model, and Bank Branches & ATMs expansion etc. The German Bankers' Association introduced a voluntary code in 1996, so that people can make basic financial transaction through this code. The South African Banking Association has introduced a low cost bank account for financial excluded people in 2004.

Financial Inclusion vs. Financial Exclusion

In the earlier studies, a number of scholars have defined the financial inclusion and financial exclusion. World Bank (2008) considers financial inclusion as broad access to financial services implying an absence of price and non-price barriers in the use of financial services; it is difficult to define and measure because access has many dimensions. Mandira Sarma and Jesim Pais (2008) define financial inclusion as a process that ensures the ease of access,

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¹ Approach Paper to 12th Five Year Plan, Planning Commission, Government of India.

² Sangwan S. S. (2008), Financial Inclusion and Self Help Groups

availability and usage of the formal financial system for all members of an economy. Financial inclusion usually refers to the delivery of banking services at an affordable cost to the vast sections of the disadvantaged and low-income groups (Leeladhar, 2006). Carbo et al. (2005), have defined financial exclusion as broadly the inability (however occasioned) of some societal groups to access the financial system. Leyshon and Thrift (1995) define financial exclusion as referring to those processes that serve to prevent certain social groups and individuals from gaining access to the formal financial system. According to Usha Thorat (2007), financial inclusion means the provision of affordable financial services, (viz. access to payments and remittance facilities, savings, loans and insurance services) by the formal financial system to those who tend to be excluded. After reviewing previous studies, it can be concluded that financial inclusion is to easily access to financial services by vulnerable groups or weaker sections of the society from formal financial system.

Historical Background of Financial Inclusion

Financial inclusion is not a new concept. It emerged during the first decades of 20th century when cooperative movement took place for the first time in India. It highlighted at time of nationalisation of 14 major commercial banks in India in 1969. Large number of bank branches were opened to include the people in formal financial system. Bangladeshi Economist and Nobel Laureate Prof. Muhammad Yunus Khan developed a Grameen Model and finally he named his model as Grameen Bank in late 1980 to provide loan to poor people of Bangladesh. The planning commission of India constituted a committee on financial inclusion in 2005. C. Rangarajan was chair person of this committee and the report of the committee was published in 2008. The Rangarajan committee defined Financial Inclusion is a process of ensuring access to financial services and timely and adequate credit where needed by vulnerable groups such as weaker sections and low-income group at affordable cost. Many other eminent scholars highlighted the issue of financial inclusion and have done research on financial inclusion. *Sarma and Pais (2008)* examined the cross country empirical analysis of the relationship between financial inclusion and development. Index of financial inclusion developed by Mandira Sarma is used to identify the associated factors with financial inclusion. It was found out that index of human development and index of financial inclusion are strongly correlated except few factors and non-performing assets which are inversely associated with financial inclusion. It was also found that capital asset ratio is negatively associated with financial inclusion. *Ghosh (2007)* tried to examine the role of micro finance in improving the financial inclusion vulnerable groups of the society such as marginalized farmers, low income groups etc. The study used the time series data from 1991 to 2007 on selected variables like bank branches, financially excluded population and impact of SHGs linkages programme with banks. Data were obtained from various sources such as Hand Book of Statistics on Indian Economy, RBI and Economic Survey. In this study, he examined the problems of formal banking in providing micro credit to the poor of rural and urban areas in the present era and suggested that programs like Post Office Saving Banks (POSBs), SHGs and micro finance can be used to cater the financial needs of rural India. *Ganghaiah and Nagaraja (2009)* tried to examine the impact of Self-Help Groups on income and employment. They determined some objectives such as to include the savings and banking habits among members, to secure them from financial, technical and moral strengths, and to gain economic prosperity through loan/credit.

Self Help Group and Financial Inclusion

The SHGs approach was introduced in 1992 to include the vulnerable groups such as poor people and low income group who were excluded from financial services and informal financial system. The SHG is a group of people belonging to same socio-economic conditions; they are associated for eradication of poverty. These people are often residing in same location. The SHGs make a common fund and open a group's bank account for doing a small business and to fulfil livelihood requirement of the groups. Women members of SHGs are encouraged to save amount of rupees within range of approximately Rs. 20 to Rs. 100 per month. Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) are playing a vital role in promoting the SHGs in India. The government is monitoring and implementing several wage employment and economic developments such as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Scheme (MGNRES), Swarnjayanti Gram Swarajgar Yojana (SGSY) through District Rural Development Agencies (DRDA). SGSY was launched by the Union Ministry of Rural Development with effect from April 1, 1999 which was replaced by Integrated Rural Development (IRDP) and its allied schemes. The main objectives of SGSY are to cover all aspects of self-employed activities such as SHGs and to provide financial assistance and subsidies to Below Poverty Line (BPL) families. Therefore, SGSY is making very key role in promoting the SHGs for greater access of financial inclusion. The SHGs have given a life-line to the women in villages for their social and economic development. Social and economic developments both are playing a significant role for the growth of women in society. The SHGs are playing very significant role in access to financial services by working women of groups. Women members of SHGs can get loan under the scheme of SGSY through DRDA.

Rationale of Study

In this paper, a case study is made especially for the rural women because women can play a vital role in global economic growth as well as men. Women should be participated in economic activities, access to capital, markets and opportunities according to their talent. At the same time, women are at top such as in education, employments in prestigious posts, and decision making. According to chief economist of Department of State, USA, source of global economic growth is women³. In present case study, it is tried to find out that how women members of SHGs can improve their livelihood and can contribute in economic growth.

³ Speech by the chief Economist, Department of United State of America on May 10, 2012 in George C. Marshall Auditorium on the occasion of the launch of the OECD Development Center's 2012 Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI).

Objectives of the Study

The present study attempts to achieve following objectives:

- To compare the human development indicators between Kerala and Haryana.
- To find out the financial condition of women members of SHGs (pre and post joining of Self Help Groups).
- To examine the financial literacy of women members of SHGs.
- To highlight the relationship between Financial Inclusion and Inclusive Democracy.

Research Methodology

An innovative model is developed to make linkage between financial inclusion and inclusive democracy. The model highlights that how financial inclusion can achieve the inclusive democracy? In this model, it is tried to achieve inclusive democracy through financial inclusion. On the other hand, the primary survey is conducted in the present study in order to fulfil above mentioned objectives. A structured interview method of primary data collection is used to obtain the information and data on factor associated with financial literacy, financial inclusion, economic decisions, and participatory democracy. A structured interview method of data collection is a very vibrant technique for statistical collection and quantitative as well as qualitative research. Five SHGs are randomly selected from Narnaul block of Mahendergarh district in Haryana for obtaining the quantitative as well as qualitative information. The pradhan members of the SHGs are selected from each group. Some questions were asked from the members of SHGs on financial literacy and pre & post financial condition of women members of SHGs.

Human Development Indicators

Table 1: Comparison of Human Development Indicators between Haryana and Kerala

States	Index of Financial Inclusion (IFI)	HDI Rank	Population Density	Literacy Rate (percent)	Life Expectancy Rate (years)	Infant Mortality Rate
Haryana	0.32 (10 th)	.552 (9 th)	25353081 (573)	76.64	66.2	48
Kerala	0.54 (1 st)	.790 (1 st)	33387677 (819)	93.91	74.0	13
India	-	.547 (134)	1210193422 (382)	74.04	63.5	48

- Source: 1. India Human Development Report 2011: Towards Social Inclusion
2. Human Development Report, UNDP 2011⁴
3. Census 2011
4. WPS (DEPR): 8/2011, RBI Working Paper Series

Note: Figures in parentheses show ranking.

Today, microfinance is covering the unbanked area and disadvantaged sections of the society. Microfinance is playing a pro-active role in south region of India. But MFIs has a biggest drawback of providing credit on higher rate of interest vis. 30%, to 50% p.a. Recently, government of Andhra Pradesh passed a finance bill and took initiatives to promote SHGs in state⁵.

In the present study, comparison is made between Haryana and Kerala in respect of financial inclusion and human development indicators. Kerala has top rank in the IFI and HDI, while Haryana is having tenth rank in IFI and ninth in HDI. Moreover, Kerala has highest 93.91 percent literacy rate and 74 year life expectancy rate, but Haryana has 76.64 percent literacy rate and 66.2 years life expected. But in case of GDP, Kerala has lower GDP than Haryana.

Case Study

A sample survey was conducted in completion of the present study. Five SHGs' women are selected Nashibpur and Shekpura villages of Narnaul Block in Mahendergarh district. It is situated in south Haryana and has very poor economic development. An interview was taken from five women of five SHGs namely Bimla Devi, Saroj, Indira Devi, Mamta and Rekha from above mentioned SHGs respectively. Bimla Devi is pradhan member of IshJyoti group that is running in Nashibpur village. She joined this group five years back. She did not open bank account in any bank. After joining the group, she has opened bank account in Punjab National Bank. She got credit of amount Rs. 18,700/- @ 1 percent rate of interest per annum under SGSY through DRDA and received a subsidy of Rs 10,000/-. Meanwhile, she is depositing amount Rs. 500 per month for repayment of credit and Rs. 50/- for saving. She started a small business of making Ladi, Kathputli, and Bandarwal etc. DRDA provides opportunities to their products in Mela at difference places. She feels freedom in making economic decisions and also socially uplifted after joining group.

⁴ Human Development Report, UNDP 2011, Retrieved on May 11, 2012 from online link http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_2011_EN_Table1.pdf

⁵ The Economic Times, May 10, 2012, page 1.

Table No. 2: Composition of Sample of Self Help Group

<i>Sr. No.</i>	<i>Name of SHGs</i>	<i>Year of SHG Formation</i>	<i>No. of Members</i>	<i>No. of women Members (Percent)</i>
1	Ish Jyoti	2007	11	10 (90.9)
2	Jai Bajrang Bali	2007	10	10 (100)
3	SantoshiMaa	2008	10	10 (100)
4	Shree Mahadev Baba	2009	10	10 (100)
5	Shyam Baba	2009	11	10 (100)

Source: Field Survey conducted on 23.02.2012

Mrs. Saroj Devi is pradhan member of Jai Bajrang Bali group in Shekpura village. She joined this group before three years. She opened a bank account in Punjab National Bank and got credit of amount Rs. 23,600/- @ 1 percent rate of interest per annum under SGSY after joining the group. She is returning the amount of credit Rs. 500/- per month and depositing amount Rs. 50/- per month as a saving. She also got a job in village's government school in mid day meal. She is moved to socially upliftment and has freedom in making decisions socially and economically.

Mamta Devi is pradhan member of Shree Mahadev Baba that is running by 10 members in Shekpura village. She joined the group around three years back. She has opened a group bank account in Punjab National Bank. She got a loan of amount Rs. 23,600/-@ 1 percent rate of interest per annum under SGSY through DRDA. She did not use this amount for special purpose, just spent on house expenditure. She is depositing amount Rs. 500/- per month for repayment of loan and Rs. 50/- per month in savings.

Another Mrs Rekha Devi is a pradhan member of Shyam Baba SHG that is running by 11 members in Shekpura village. She joined the group three years back. She got an amount of credit Rs. 1800/-@ 1percent rate of interest under SGSY through DRDA, although she could not take more economical benefits of SGSY scheme.

Mrs Indira Devi is pradhan member of Santosh Maa SHG that is running by 10 members in Shekpura village. She joined this group around before five years. She has opened a group bank account and also has a separate bank account in Punjab National Bank. She got loan of amount Rs. 1800/- and 25000/- @ 1 percent rate of interest under SGSY through DRDA. She is depositing amount Rs. 500/- per month for repayment of loan and Rs. 50/- per month in savings. The amount of loan is used to buy some goat and sheep. Her husband is taking care of live stock. They have four children, who are studying in village's government school. She got a job in government school in mid day meal. She is uplifted morally as well as socially and has freedom to make decision for family's economic development.

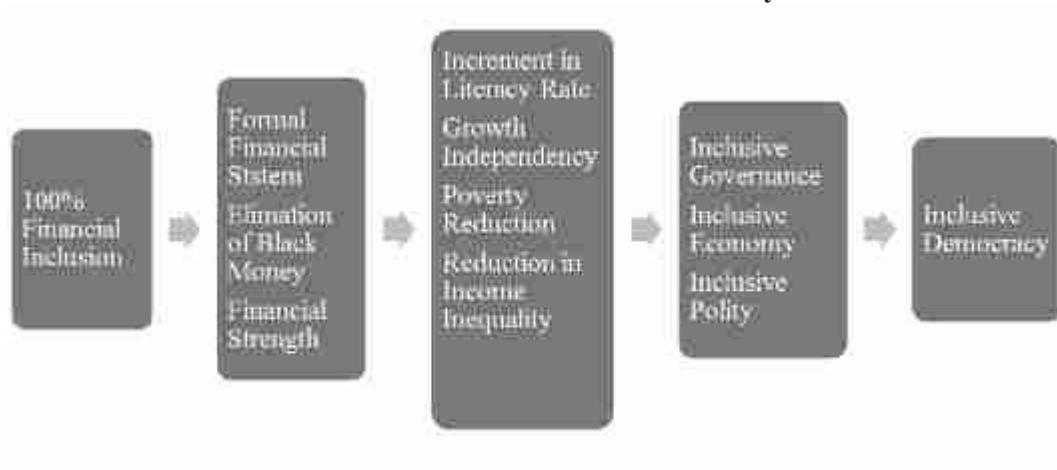
Table No. 3: Self Help Group Members' Statistics

Sr. No.	Name of SHGs Members	Family Income p.m.*(Rs.)	Age	Education	Life Insurance	Separate Account
1	Bimla Devi	5000	36	Illiterate	Yes	No
2	Saroj Devi	4000	30	8 th	No	No
3	Indira Devi	3000	35	5 th	Yes	Yes (PNB)
4	Mamta	4000	25	8 th	No	No
5	Rekha	2000	34	Illiterate	No	No

Source: Interview conducted on 23.02.2012

*(Family Income of members in approximate figure)

A Model towards Inclusive Democracy



An innovative model is developed which revealed that inclusive democracy can be achieved through financial inclusion. Financial inclusion leads to inclusive democracy. Supposed to that we have achieved 100 percent financial inclusion, it will lead to formal financial system, elimination of black money, financial strength, then it will lead to literacy rate, poverty reduction, income inequalities, inclusive governance and inclusive economy and finally it will approach to inclusive democracy as per model shown above.

Facts and Findings of the Study

- No member is aware of financial services provided by commercial bank.
- No one member has post office savings.
- The selected members do not have life-insurance except one member.
- No one member has ATM, Net Banking, and Mobile Banking. Even, they do not know about net banking and mobile banking.

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- Pradhan members of these SHGs feel troubles on holding the position of pradhan of group, because some time they face over burden at the time of distributing loan amount and collecting monthly instalment from group's members.
- None has No-Frill Account.
- Before joining the SHGs, they did not open the bank account, but they have opened group bank account after joining the group.
- Some of them have taken benefits by getting job in mid-day meals in schools.
- SHGs women members do not have separate bank account except one member.

Conclusion

In this paper, the status of financial inclusion among rural women with special reference of SHGs women members has been analysed. By conducting a sample survey, it is found that SHGs members have included in formal financial system, while, they had not been opened separate bank account in any public or private bank before joining the SHGs. Although, 80 percent of women members have only group account after joining the SHGs. The result of survey shows no one member of groups have ATMs, Mobile banking, Net banking, and financial literacy. It is found that women's family income is very low, although 60 percent of them have got a job in mid-day meal in schools. These women could not take decision for domestic expenditure, but after joining the groups, they are able to expend money without any hesitations and restrictions of family. So it can be said that these women have improved their social and financial conditions after joining the SHGs.

Poor people or low income groups or disadvantaged people cannot participate in inclusive growth, inclusive economy, and inclusive polity without uplifting their financial and social status. First of all, everyone tries to fulfil physiological need such as food, air, water, home, and then he/she can think about safety needs, social needs, esteem needs and self-actualisation needs.

If we want to achieve 12th five year plan's target and inclusive democracy, disadvantaged people are needed to come under umbrella of formal financial system, so that they can become a part of participatory democracy.

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Inclusive Democracy: A Fiction or a Reality?

Bhavya Singhal*

No one pretends that democracy is perfect or all-wise. Indeed, it has been said that democracy is the worst form of government except all those other forms that have been tried from time to time.

- Winston Churchill

Democracy, a term which comes from the Greek language and means "rule by the (simple) people" as it was Greeks who first introduced this idea. It signifies liberty, equality, fraternity and justice to all and in the words of U. S. President, Abraham Lincoln, is the "Government of the people, by the people, for the people" where all people are equal in the eyes of law and it is a form of a government which ensures "harmonious co-existence of multiple identities" in India which has a rich and varied culture. The 'Preamble' of the Constitution of India says, "We, the people of India, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a Sovereign Socialist Secular Democratic Republic . . ." wherein efforts are made to provide "economic, social and political" justice to all, where a person can have "liberty of thought, expression, belief and faith" provided it does not harm the sentiments of others, wherein "equality of status and of opportunity" is being provided to all the citizens of a nation and assuring the "dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the Nation". But this statement in today's era of globalization sounds redundant and a fiction because it has, now, become the tool in the hands of the most powerful people of our country. It is these people sitting at the top most positions who make laws and implement them though our young generation is being motivated by some people to raise their voice against injustice yet a huge disparity is clearly seen. Now there are visible examples of discrimination at various levels— like in the name of caste, colour, gender, nationality, religion and discrimination based on class.

This paper intends to highlight certain areas where discrimination is still been practiced even in the present day globalized world. The paper also tends to discuss these issues in detail so as to show whether democracy is really inclusive and whether people really have power to bring changes in the system and whether there is progress. This paper is an attempt to show where our democracy is exclusive and how efforts and steps should be taken up for "preserving, fostering and promoting diversity of languages and cultures" which will make it an inclusive democracy.

One of the major factors is the trend of competing in this ICT age where one has to be updated with latest trends and fashions and where language is seen as an identity marker. Economic

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globalization is encouraging people to embrace languages like German, French etc and making them forget about languages like Sanskrit. This shows that the education system, itself, is blowing the axe on our languages and has a major role in the extinction of certain languages. The discrimination based on language is one of the pitfalls in calling our democracy as 'inclusive democracy'.

A book titled *Language and Politics in India* edited by Asha Sarangi makes it very clear how linguistic debates have been going on since the making of the Constitution about the rights of regional languages. The sensitive issues like which language should be the national language of India and whether English should be replaced by Hindi were discussed during the formation of the Constitution. India, a land of diverse languages and cultures, does not really promote the linguistic minorities though attempts are made towards the inclusion of certain regional languages in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution the task is yet to be achieved. But the situation of Tribal languages is pitiable as these are still unrecognized by the Constitution and globalization is one of the factors behind this as it is a “powerful homogenizing factor”. Granville Austin, in his essay, “Language and the Constitution: The Half-Hearted Compromise” from the same book talks about how leaders discussed major issues related to language but the sentiments of people belonging to non-Hindi or non-English background states were neglected though these people were allowed to keep their records in their regional language.

Austin writes that the varied regional languages, each having different scripts but none of them were spoken by the majority of the population. India has 700 minor languages and dialects which is again the problem in achieving the unity because all these languages are not given proper recognition in the Constitution of India. The other major problem is that the Hindustani which is called as the 'bazaar language' comprised of Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi, words from other Indian languages and also words from English and was spoken by 45% of the population yet people were keen to introduce Hindi as the national language of India. Austin writes how the debates among the extremists and the moderates continued regarding the national language of India and Austin writes how:

The extremists, although finally forced into a compromise by the resistance of the moderates, spurned accommodation as they had consensus. Theirs was a half-hearted compromise, and the issue of language thus remained a source of great danger to Indian unity. (Language and Politics in India, 45)

While considering lots of issues, Austin remarks how certain issues were ignored completely like the exact position of English in independent India; the status of regional languages; the language to be used in the court, the parliament, and in the Constitution itself; and the threat posed to north-south relation by the choice of Hindustani as the national language which still is a major problem. He also writes that people from north India also did not embrace Hindi

because of the different dialects available in North India also, which shows “very little feeling of linguistic nationalism”. An editorial written in *The Hindu* points out that the fifteen years which is seen as the maximum period for the replacement of English by people like Prasad is, in fact, the minimum period for the replacement of English. (*Language and Politics in India*, 91)

Apart from certain regional languages of India which do not find a place in the Constitution of India there are major languages which are ignored completely like Bagada, a Dravidian language spoken in the Nilgiri hills and Kunda Hill of Tamil Nadu and many other languages. These Tribal languages do not find any place in the Constitution of India which has resulted in the extinction of many old and ancient languages. The death of the last speaker of these languages marks the end of their language, their culture and their identity. The major drawback is that there are no texts available and the government does not take any step in preserving their culture. If the texts of these languages are available then also their identity can be preserved and they can reach out to a larger world through translation. The other threat to these languages is the increase in the globalization where the mass is influenced by languages like French, German and Portuguese etc in order to compete with the world but this promotes the end of certain old languages. The introduction of German language in schools in order to make students adept with the modern world also plays a role in the near extinction of language like Sanskrit. So the government should think wisely towards the preservation of these languages which highlight the culture of a particular community.

Gender is also another area where discrimination is still prevalent and where democracy fails to be inclusive. The clear example is that the women's reservation Bill is still pending and has not been passed by any House of the Parliament. So talking about the rise of feminism and an improvement in the status of women and increase in the number of independent working women is still a dream to be achieved. The safer world for women where they can live without any fear is also still a dream. The question is—do they really get equal opportunity in the world? Certain fields like engineering and armed forces are still thought to be unachievable by women and they are not encouraged to go for these fields. The idea of Simone de Beauvoir who writes in *The Second Sex* “One is not born, but rather becomes, woman” clearly shows that the position of women have already been secondary (*The Second Sex*, 203). The clear example is seen where the boys and girls are socialized differently. The girls, in India, are always brought up with the notion that how girls must dress, how they have to be submissive, passive and cannot be aggressive otherwise they will be criticized by the society and they are forced to become a woman. Toys also become a way of telling children that they will have different future when they become men and women as a small girl will always be given dolls to play with and she acts out the role of a loving and caring mother towards her doll whereas the boys will be given electronic gadgets signifying that they will

become engineers, doctors etc.

The discrimination is also on the basis of class and caste. Women who are already empowered are progressing provided they are being given proper opportunities but women belonging to lower strata of the society, economically, are weaker group and there is no hope for their upliftment. Women living in villages continue doing their household chores and that too happily and accept these roles defined by the society meekly. They are not aware of their rights which make them even more excluded from the idea of inclusive democracy. There are several cases wherein woman elected as Sarpanch of village does not have full fledged power in her hands rather it is the patriarchal power that influence them in taking certain decisions. Does this show that people have power in their hands and can exercise their choice of decisions independently?

The other reason which plays a major role in the suppression of women is the problem of belonging to a dalit community. One can see only very few women who belong to dalit caste and they hold certain respectable positions at certain places. But most of these women face oppression at three levels, first by their own males, then by the women of upper castes and then by the larger patriarchal world. One can see dalit male writers like Omprakash Valmiki, Sivagami Bama and Sugirtharani writing for the cause of their caste and for focusing on the problems faced by their women because they are relegated to the lowest stratum of the society. K. A. Geetha in her paper "A Dalit among Dalits: The Angst of Tamil Dalit Women" talks about dalit literature as a literature of protest, pain and agony. But one hardly finds any first hand account of any dalit female writers who have expressed their own agony and pain through literature. One of them is Meena Kandasamy who is a Dalit writer from Tamilnadu and writes poetry in English. She is also an active translator yet she is still unknown to the students of literature. This shows that their voice is repressed and still unheard in this democracy where everybody has freedom of expression.

Dalit male writers also face this kind of problem where Omprakash Valmiki, a famous Dalit writer, in his autobiography Joothan writes, "I had to sit away from the other in the class, and that too on the floor. The mat ran out before reaching the spot I sat on. Sometimes I would have to sit way behind everybody, right near the door . . . Sometimes they would beat me without any reason." His master asked him to sweep the school and the playground when he was in class IV. This shows that they are discriminated in educational institutes also where a huge disparity can be seen between the schools which the rich attend and the schools which the poor attend. But certain laws and certain government programmes or schemes help disadvantaged communities like they provide midday meal in all government elementary schools. Tamil Nadu was the first state to introduce this in 2001 due to which the enrollment improved and also the attendance. Still there is a difference between the schools which rich attend and those that the poor attend though certain reservation for them is being made in

private schools also. So the government is making some effort to bring the poor to the level of the rich but this has not been successfully implemented in certain top schools as the poor are thrown out of the school after some time due to lack of money.

Nationality is also another factor where the idea of inclusive democracy fails. This freedom of expression provided it does not harm the sentiments of any group is suppressed which can be seen in the writers like Taslima Nasreen, Salman Rushdie who are exiled from their country for creating a religious furore in their countries. Taslima is still facing the exile from her country Bangladesh and also faces death threat in India for her works. Recently her latest autobiography has, again, been banned from its release at certain places. Even Salman Rushdie's novels *Shame* and *Midnight's Children* are facing opposition in certain universities in a country better known for upholding democratic ideals. He was also not allowed to attend Jaipur Literary Festival as he was informed about his fake death threat. This, again, shows that certain people follow their monopoly and do not allow others to express themselves freely.

Religion is another area where democracy fails to be inclusive. Though the Constitution provides a law that people will not be discriminated on the basis of their religion yet they are still oppressed due to this. The rising intolerance among the people of different religious communities also leads to horrible incidents like riots. The pending decision which was to be taken in regard to Babri Masjid was a sensitive issue and the judgment took a longer time so as to accommodate the feelings of all the religious communities. Still discrimination is made on the basis of religion which is clearly seen in the novel of Chetan Bhagat *2 States: The Story of My Marriage* which is inspired from his real life. This novel is about people belonging to two different states and different religions who fall in love and face the hardships. Krish is a Punjabi boy who falls in love with a Tamil Brahmin girl, Ananya but it's not a simple love story. Novelist narrates that after the boy falls in love with the girl and the girl falls in love with the boy it is necessary that both of them should love each other's family and also their family should love them. The story is about how both of them face opposition from their respective family members and how they tackle all these problems. This novel also shows how people of different religious communities face certain problems at work. Ananya's father has to face humiliation at the hands of his boss who belongs to a non-Tamil background which creates a sense of disgust and dislike for all the north Indians. Similarly, Krish develops a sense of isolation when he joins his job in Chennai and when he has to work under a Tamil boss. But Chetan Bhagat also offers a solution to this problem which is seen in their marriage and Bhagat makes people think about it. At the end of the novel when his twins are born the nurse asks, "You are from two different states, right? So, what will be their state" referring to Krish and Ananya and to their twins. Krish replies, "They'll be from a state called India." (*2 States: The Story of My Marriage*, 269)

The other incident which shows that certain minor religious differences create havoc in the

lives of few people is the problem of Khap panchyat which imposes its whip through social boycotts and fines and in most cases end up by killing or forcing the victims to commit suicide. All this is done in the name of brotherhood and its honour. Khap panchayats have been powerful than the government. So the right to life is violated and the government has still not taken strong measures to stop this problem. It is due to the inherent weakness of democratically elected Panchayati Raj institutions. Even the government has not done much to control their power which again questions the inclusivity of democracy where people are still being killed and their right to life is snatched from them.

In a democratic country like India all adults irrespective of what religion they belong to, how much education they had, what caste they are, or whether they are rich or poor are allowed to vote which is called Universal Adult Franchise. In a democracy people expect the government to work for their welfare which could be through the equal provision of education, health, employment, housing or the development of roads, electricity etc. But there are millions who are not provided proper educational and medical facilities and they have to sweat out to get the treatment in the hospital. The problem or the disparity in providing better healthcare facilities also brings out the inequality among these people. Though it is an aspect of our fundamental right, its provisioning is rather unequal. The government claims to provide better medical facilities yet people are dying of diseases. Our country has money, knowledge and people with experience but cannot make the necessary healthcare available to all because those doctors who are well qualified do not wish to work in the rural areas because of fewer facilities which are available there. The government has taken certain measures in this regard yet one may find many tribal areas with few health centres and they do not run properly as these professionally qualified doctors do not wish to go to certain areas where they are likely to face their death threats.

Considering all these factors where one sees the gaps in the working of democracy to give equal opportunities to all, where discrimination is still made on the basis of class, caste, religion, nationality, gender and language one can conclude that it is only a fiction that India has an inclusive democracy because the above mentioned problems clearly show that it is still a dream and efforts should be made to make our democracy more inclusive. No country can be described as being completely democratic but efforts can be made towards providing a just and equal society. There is the continuous struggle for the recognition of all persons as equal and for their dignity to be maintained. There is an urgent need to bring a change on large scale which can only take place through collective struggles. "Inclusive democracy must necessarily evolve into inclusive development; development not taken narrowly as only economic progress but also ensuring economic and social justice to every section of population." The Constitution of India guarantees equality to all citizens. Despite this, the daily lives of people in India are far from equal. Though certain provisions are there but in reality these people live an altogether different life. It is necessary to discuss the need for

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equality through highlighting the inequalities that continue to be practiced and experienced by various communities. This might draw the attention of the authorities and make them think whether our democracy is inclusive or not and they should show their commitment to the elimination of existing inequalities and to achieve the goals that are set in the Preamble of our Constitution. The solution which is offered that the “power structures created by democracy (should) reflect people's aspirations, are sensitive to them and are responsive in terms of promoting welfare and empowerment of people” and should try to remove the internal conflicts in order to ensure a just and equal society. It is also the change in attitude and outlook of the young generation of today that is required for making democracy inclusive. Though establishing equality in a democratic society is a continuous struggle yet the task is not huge enough that it cannot be achieved by the joint efforts of the public as well as the government. By these efforts one can achieve unity in India where Nehru also said, “How shall we promote the unity of India and yet preserve the rich diversity of our inheritance?” (Language and Politics in India, 41). Thus the idea of inclusive democracy is still a fiction but with the joint efforts of the government and people of India this daunting task can be achieved easily.

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Is Inclusive Democracy Feasible without Food Security in India?

Chhatra Pal and Sheetal Dhamija*

Introduction

Discussion about inclusive democracy and inclusive growth has been an old age issues though terms used were different. We have been seeking growth with social justice since the inception of first five year plan. But this is still a foremost and contemporary issue. India is the third fastest growing economy of the world but not all its sectors are growing at the same pace as reflected from the low agricultural growth rate and even its social indicators are very poor. One such Indicator is hunger. International Food Policy Research Institute's (IFPRI) Global Hunger Report (GHI)-2011 ranks India at 67th place in a ranking of 81 countries.¹ Poverty in India has reduced but still around 30 per cent of Indian population lives below poverty line, 836 million people live with less than Rs. 20 per day and one third food insecure population of the world live in India. It is also a matter of concern that the evidence of malnutrition and under-nutrition are found from National Family Health Survey (NFHS). According to NFHS-3, 46 per cent of its children are under nutrition and 50 per cent women are anemic. If the malnourished in India formed a country, it would be the world's fifth largest almost the size of Indonesia. According to Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), 237.7 million Indians are currently undernourished (up from 224.6 million in 2008)². These nutritional deficiencies have disturbing consequences for the well-being and future of the Indian people. Hunger and under nutrition are intrinsic deprivations and severely diminish the quality of life. Further, under nutrition is associated with reduced learning abilities, greater exposure to disease, and other impairments of individual and social opportunities.

India is the largest democratic country in the world but all this indicate that Indian democracy is trapped in a vicious circle of exclusion and elitism. Because underprivileged sections of the population are excluded from active participation in democratic politics, their aspirations and priorities are not reflected in public policy. The elitist orientation of public policy, in turn, perpetuates the deprivations (poverty, hunger, illiteracy, discrimination, etc) that disempowered people and prevent them from participating in democratic politics. The root of the problem was identified quite clearly by B R Ambedkar in the context of his argument for linking political democracy with economic and social democracy.

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¹<http://www.steipd.com/UserFiles/File/National%20Food%20Security%20Bill%20-%20A%20Discussion.pdf>

²Mukherjee, A. (2012. February 1). From Food Security to Food Justice. The Hindu.

“On January 26, 1950,” he said, “we are going to enter into a life of contradictions. In politics we will have equality and in social and economic life we will have inequality”.

The contradiction is still with us today, and in some respects at least, the problem is even intensifying at this time of growing inequality and elitism. There is an urgent need to revive the concern with economic and social rights expressed in the Directive Principles of the Constitution and the main objective of the Directive Principles was specifically to lay the foundations of “economic and social democracy”.³ To achieve this objective, food security is essential because the mass hunger is basically incompatible with democracy. Food is the most basic need of a person and it is a locus of democratic process. Our former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee also said that democracy and food insecurity both can't exist at same time.⁴ In democracy we need food for all not for the few and achieving food security for all has been a national goal of India since independence.

Accordingly the objective of the present study is to analyze the food security situation in India in terms of availability, access and absorption. Another objective is to analyze the relevance of Food Security Bill in present scenario. The paper has been organized in five sections. Second section explains the concept of Food Security and methodology. Next section analyzes the indicators of food availability, food access and food absorption in India. Fourth section discusses the relevance of Food Security Bill and the last section concludes the main findings of the study.

The Concept of Food Security

The concept of food security has evolved significantly over time. The most widely used definition is the one adopted at the 1996 World Food Summit in Rome, which has been slightly revised and formally endorsed at the global level and reads as follows:

“Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.”

This definition addresses four main dimensions of food security: the physical availability of food; economic, social and physical access to food; food utilisation; and the stability of the other three dimensions over time. The definition is the result of important advances in the meaning and common understanding of food security (FAO, 2008).

Initially, interest in food security revived with the world food crisis of 1972–74, which was characterised by reduced global grain supplies due to adverse conditions in several parts of the world. As a result, the first World Food Conference in 1974 focused on global production, trade and stocks. The original food-security debate also concentrated on these themes, and hence attention centred entirely on the physical availability of food.

³Dreze, Z. (2004). Democracy and Right to Food. *Economic & Political Weekly* Vol. 39 No. 17.

⁴Swaminathan, M.S, (2008). *Bhukh Se Mukti aur Gramin Gayan Kranti*. Yojna, Vol. 56.

Later, however, it became clear that ensuring sufficient food supplies at the national or international levels would not in itself guarantee household-level food security. From the early 1980s, therefore, access to food was increasingly recognised as an important determinant of food security, and thus more attention was paid to income and expenditure in achieving Food security objectives.

As a continuation of this process, the issue of food utilisation has become increasingly prominent in food-security discussions since the 1990s.⁵ Other matters such as general hygiene and sanitation, water quality, healthcare practices, and food safety and quality are also determinants of good food utilisation.

Moreover, the discussions have also come to include sufficient energy and nutrient intake by individuals, as influenced by good care and feeding practices, food preparation, diversity of the diet and intra-household distribution.

Finally, the stability of food security has been emphasised. Individuals who have an adequate food intake today can become food-insecure if they are exposed periodically to inadequate access to food. Adverse weather conditions or political and economic instability may affect an individual's food-security status. Reducing the risk of adverse effects on the other food-security dimensions, therefore, is of crucial importance.⁶

Some of these different dimensions of food security will guide our approach to the phenomenon throughout this paper namely food availability, food access and food absorption which means proper utilization.

Methodology

To analyze the situation of food security in India three components viz. availability, accessibility and absorption of food is taken into consideration. Growth rate of food-grains production & yield and per capita net availability of food-grains are used as indicators of availability. Factors such as poverty, employment, hunger and performance of some schemes like Public Distribution System (PDS), Mid-Day Meal (MDM), Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA) are used to assess accessibility. To clear the picture on the situation of absorption of food, indicators like access to safe drinking water and sanitation

⁵Utilisation is commonly understood as the way the body makes the most of the various nutrients in food, this dimension being mainly determined by people's health status depending upon sanitation, access to clean drinking water, hygiene and health care facilities.

⁶Souza, D. & D. Chmielewska (2011). Public Support to Food Security in India, Brazil and South Africa: Elements for a Policy Dialogue. Working Paper no. 80. International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth.

are used. Anthropometric indicators are used to reveal the nutritional situation in India.⁷The data is derived from secondary sources. Main sources of data are Agricultural Statistics at a glance, 2011, publication of Directorate of Economics & Statistics, Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India (GOI), National Family Health Survey (NFHS) conducted under the stewardship of Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MOHFW), GOI, Nutritional Intake in India, 66th round of National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO), Annual Report of Department of Food and Public Distribution, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, GOI, FAO Statistical Yearbook 2012 and Progress on Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation 2012 by WHO/UNICEF.

Present Scenario of Food Security in India

Food Availability

Food security at the national level refers mainly to availability in the country of sufficient stocks of food to meet domestic demand, either through domestic supply or through imports. Attainment of self-sufficiency in food grains at the national level is one of the country's major achievements in the post-independence period. After remaining a food deficit country for about two decades after independence, India became largely self-sufficient in food-grains production at the macro level. There have hardly been any food-grains imports after the mid-1970s. Government of India paid considerable attention to the problem of food availability at national level by giving price and non-price incentives to the farmers. As a result food-grain production increased from 50.8 MT in 1950-51 to 241.6 MT in 2010-11. But the experience of the last two decades shows that growth rates of production and yield of food-grains have declining trends.

Table 1 shows that the growth rate of food-grains production has decreased from 3.5 percent in 1980-81 and 1989-90 to 2.0 per cent in 1990-91 to 1999-00 and improved to 2.6 per cent during 2000-01 and 2010-11 because of bumper production from last three consecutive years. Similarly, the growth rate of yield of food-grains declined from 3.3 per cent during 1980-81 to 1989-90 to 1.9 per cent during 2000-01 to 2010-11. Adding to it, the fear arouse for the sustainability of future food security due to climate change, degradation of land in the form of depleting soil fertility, soil erosion, salinity, water logging and falling ground water table.

Per capita net availability of food-grains has increased over 10 percent since independence but it has declined from 510.1 grams per day to 438.6 grams per day in 2010 as clear from

figure 1. In other words, significant increase in food-grains production has not been able to keep pace with growing population.

Access to Food

Access to food is a crucial part of food security. At the individual level, food security means that all members of the society have access to the food they need, either from their own production, from the market and from the government's transfer mechanism which can be termed as 'entitlements' on which Amartya Sen put special emphasis. Even the World Food Summit (1996) identifies access to food rather than amounts of food produced globally as the key issue in food security.⁸ India is self sufficient in the production of most of the agricultural products. But the lack of purchasing power is the key issue in the area of food security in India, which limits the economic access to food. The recent figures of Planning Commission have shown that the number of India's poor fell to 29.8 per cent of its population in 2009-10 from 37.2 per cent in 2004-05. In absolute term, the numbers of poor in the country based on per-capita expenditure data came down by 15 per cent from 407.2 million in 2004-05 to 354.6 million in 2009-10.⁹ The figures suggest substantial decline in the ratio but still the absolute number is very big. In terms of hunger, the world hunger report says that 89 per cent of Indians live under poverty line calculated according to the international standards.¹⁰ In order to mobilize political will and promote good policies, the IFPRI has designed GHI by taking into consideration three dimensions of hunger viz. insufficient availability of food, shortfalls in the nutritional status of children and child mortality. It is found that India is lacking in GHI compared to other developing countries like Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Philippines and Pakistan¹¹.

Poor people cannot afford to purchase the food they need at market prices, and therefore, social protection programmes are needed. Adequate purchasing power for the poor to buy food can be ensured in two ways. One is to have an employment intensive pattern of growth which can provide remunerative work to the poor and enhance their power to purchase food. Another way is to provide subsidized food through social protection programmes. India has various social sector programmes which transfer food like PDS, Supplementary nutritional programme like ICDS, MDM and employment programmes like MNREGA etc.

⁸The term 'entitlements' stands for the different things that a person can acquire. People have to go hungry when their entitlement does not include enough food.

⁹Planning Commission of India Bureau (2012, March 20). India now has fewer poor to worry about. *The Economic Times*.

¹⁰Indo-Asian News Service (2012, March 21). Opposition lambasts govt's poor standards. *The Economic Times*.

¹¹International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), *Global hunger Index: A basis for cross-country comparisons*, Washington, D.C, USA: IFPRI; 2006.

Creation of employment is very crucial in providing food security. Therefore, it is useful to know about the employment growth in the Indian economy. The 66th round NSSO data (2009-10) on the employment situation paints a grim picture of a limited creation of jobs between 2004-05 and 2009-10, widespread withdrawal from the labour force (especially by women) and slow growth of employment in the non-agricultural sector. Although India's GDP growth was a robust 8.6 per cent per annum between 2004-05 and 2009-10, even then in the rural areas, male usual (principal and subsidiary) status employment increased by only 13.4 million between 2004-05 to 2009-10, as compared with 20.2 million between 1999-2000 and 2004-05. The corresponding figures for the urban areas were 9.8 million and 15 million respectively. Female employment both in rural and urban area are showing negative trends and criticized by many scholars for underestimation.¹² The survey shows that as per the usual principal status the rate of unemployment in India has increased from 6.1 per cent in 1993-94 to 8.3 percent in 2004-05 and 9.4 percent in 2009-10, which is big hurdle in ensuring food security.

PDS is one of the instruments for improving food security at the household level in India. The PDS ensures availability of essential commodities like rice, wheat, edible oils, and kerosene to the consumers through a network of outlets or fair price shops. These commodities are supplied at below market prices to consumers. PDS in India is perhaps the largest distribution network of its kind in the world. The PDS evolved as an important instrument of government policy for management of scarcity and for distribution of food-grains at affordable prices. Supplemental in nature, the scheme is not intended to make available the entire requirements of food-grains of the households.

The Targeted PDS (TPDS) was introduced in 1997 and under this scheme special cards were issued to families below poverty line (BPL) and food-grains were distributed at a lower price for these families compared to those above the poverty line (known as APL families). The entire population was divided into three categories i.e.: BPL (Below Poverty Line), APL (Above Poverty Line) and AAY – Antyodaya Anna Yojana (destitute). The BPL population are provided 35kg of food-grains per month at subsidized price. AAY, the destitute households (part of BPL households) are provided a monthly provision of 35 kg of food-grains at specially subsidized rates (Rs. 2 per kg for wheat and Rs. 3 for rice). About 25 million (38 per cent of BPL) people have been covered under AAY. The central government allocates food-grains to different states of India based on poverty ratios. According to the central government there are around 65 million poor households in the country.

¹² Chandrashekher, C. P. (2011, July 25). New Trends in Employment. The Hindu. National Family Health Survey-3 (2005-06) conducted by Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MOHFW), Government of India.

Off take of food-grains (rice+wheat) under TPDS and the Welfare Scheme in 2010-11 are as follows: BPL – 12.8 million tonnes; APL – 12.6 million tonnes; AAY (Destitute) – 7.2 million tonnes; Total TPDS – 32.8 million tonnes; Welfare Scheme – 2.6 million tonnes; All (TPDS + Welfare Schemes) – 35.4 million tonnes.

NSSO has been collecting information on purchases of rice, wheat, sugar, and kerosene from fair price shops. These data have been analysed to examine utilization of PDS. As far as the PDS consumption is concerned only 11 per cent of the total per capita monthly food grains consumption comes from the PDS in 2004-05. Though the figures are outdated but there will not be substantial difference from this figure. The major problem in the PDS system is that it does not reach to the target groups.

The Integrated Child Development Services (1975) and Mid Day Meal (1995) are some other programmes, which aim at increasing nutritional level of children and women. In spite of expansion of these schemes, the impact on child and women nutrition is quite limited as child malnutrition has declined only marginally and the number of anaemic women has increased during the period of 1998-99 to 2005-06.¹³

Absorption of Food

Food absorption means being able to digest the food consumed for a healthy life. Availability of food is the first step. Livelihood access and physical access to food constitute the second step. Food absorption or digestion of the food into the body is the final step in achieving food security for a healthy and active life. Absorption of food depends upon safe drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene and health care facilities. The outcome of proper absorption is indicated by the nutritional status of the population. Poor sanitation, water and hygiene can have many serious consequences. The children will be stunted, under weight and wasted. Adults will be malnutrition with low BMI and will become less productive due to illness, as an outcome national economy will suffer.

Access to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation

The JMP report on Progress on Drinking Water and Sanitation 2012 reveals that Millennium Development Goal (MDG) drinking water target of halving the proportion of population without access to safe drinking water between 1990 to 2015 was met in 2010, five years ahead of schedule. But still over 780 million people are without access to safe drinking water, which is one tenth of the global population. India and China regarding improved access to drinking water sources not only dominates their respective regions but represents nearly half of the global progress towards the drinking water targets. Almost half of the 2 billion people who gained access to improved drinking water source since 1990 live in china (457 million) and India (522 million). But still around 97 million in India lack the above said facilities.

¹³National Family Health Survey-3 (2005-06) conducted by Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MOHFW), Government of India.

However, the world is unlikely to meet the MDG sanitation target as 2.5 billion lack improved sanitation. The progress regarding improved sanitation in China and India is highlighted since these two countries represent such a large proportion of their regional population. While China has contributed to more than 95 per cent of the progress in Eastern Asia, the same is not true for India in South Asia. Together China and India contributed just half of the global progress towards the MDG target in sanitation. Still more than half of 2.5 billion people without improved sanitation live in India (814 million) and China (477 million). Table 3 is showing that the proportion of population having access to improved drinking water and sanitation facilities is increasing during the period of 1990 to 2010. But there are disparities in rural and urban areas as only 27 per cent rural population have improved sanitation facilities against 58 per cent in urban areas.

Nutritional Situation in India

The nutritional status can be examined by physical 'anthropometric' indicators for children under five. India presents a dismal picture in these indicators. Data of NFHS-3 shows that 46 per cent of children under age of three year are undernourished, 38 percent are stunted and 19 per cent are wasted. There are problems of regional disparities, gender and caste discrimination which are rooted in society and affects the food security in the country. There is big difference in nutritional level of rural and urban children. The proportion of underweight children and stunted children are 36 and 32 per cent higher in rural area in comparison to urban area respectively.

Table 4 clears that nutritional deficiencies are more prevalent among disadvantaged groups. Young children from scheduled tribes and scheduled castes are more likely to be stunted, wasted, and underweight than children from other castes/tribes. Children from other backward classes fall in the middle of the scale on all three measures of nutritional status. Children who do not belong to any of the above disadvantaged groups are least likely to be stunted, wasted, and underweight. However, even for this group, the levels of under nutrition are extremely high relative to the levels expected in a normal, healthy population.

Malnutrition in adults can be assessed using the body mass index (BMI), which is defined as weight in kilograms divided by height in metres squared (kg/m^2). 36 per cent of women and 34 per cent of men are undernourished in India. About 55 per cent women and 24 per cent men are anaemic. Regional disparities and gender discrimination in the nutritional status can be seen from Table 5 which indicates that BMI of women is higher than men both in urban and rural area. Around 58 percent of rural women and 28 percent of men are anemic which is higher than urban area.

Relevance of Food Security Bill

It was Mahatma Gandhi's desire that god of bread should bless every home and hut in India. But India has performed poorly to provide food security to its people and failed to tackle the

problem of hunger and malnutrition. Food is the basic need of a person and it is a locus of democratic process. It is widely accepted that food is an economic and social right of a person. It is a constitutional right as well as right to food is an integral part of right to life mentioned in Article 21 of Indian Constitution. Democracy itself is synonymous with “Liberty, equality and fraternity” and democracy itself in real sense cannot be achieved without giving Right to Food to its people. In this direction, the proposed National Food Security Bill is a revolutionary initiative of the Government for the food security. The stated aim of the draft Bill is “to provide for food and nutritional security, in human life cycle approach, by ensuring access to adequate quantity of quality food at affordable prices, for people to live a life with dignity.”The silent features of the bill are presented below.

Food Security Bill at a Glance

- Subsidized grains for up to 75 percent of rural population and up to 50 percent of urban population. Beneficiaries divided into priority and general categories.
- 7 kg. of grain per person per month for priority households at prices not exceeding Rs. 3/2/1 for 1 kg. of rice/wheat/coarse grains.
- Not less than 3 kg. of grain per person per month for general household at prices not exceeding half the minimum support price (MSP) for wheat and coarse grains and not exceeding half the derived MSP (recalculated MSP after de-husking of paddy) of rice.
- Nutritional support for children and lactating mothers.
- Monthly allowance of Rs. 1000 over six months for lactating mothers.
- One free meal every day for the destitute.
- Affordable meals at community kitchens for the homeless.
- Two free meals a day for up to three months for the disaster-hit.
- Financial implication estimated at Rs. 94,973 cr. a year.

Ever since the Bill has proposed it has led to an acrimonious debate. Public debate on the food bill is, however, mostly focused on its economic implications, with many concerned that India simply cannot afford Rs. one billion required to implement it. D. Subbarao, Governor of the Reserve Bank of India advises that the bill will contribute to growing inflationary pressures in future. India already has 54.7 million tones of rice and wheat lying as stocks with the Centre and the states, 29.7 million tones of grain in excess of the buffer stocking norm. Offtake of rice in the current fiscal year has been 74% of the allotment, and that of wheat, 64%. The residual will keep adding to the grain mountain with the government, which will rot, due to poor storage, be eaten by rats and be pilfered. By cornering huge volumes of grain, the government reduces the supply in the open market, putting upward pressure on prices. Estimated annual requirement of food grains is about 446 lakh tones under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPD) and 50 lakh tones under other welfare

schemes. If food Right to Food Act is introduced there will be approximately 200 lakh extra requirement of food grains. For ensuring food security of the country through Food Security Act, there will be need to accelerate the growth of the agriculture sector otherwise 20 million tons of food grains deficit has been projected by 2020. This question marks the future of food security.

Conclusion

In a democratic country like India, food security is essential because the mass hunger is basically incompatible with democracy. Therefore, in this paper we have examined the present scenario of food security in India in terms of accessibility, availability and absorption. India is self sufficient in the production of food-grains. The production of food-grains has increased about five-fold in India since independence. But the declining growth rate of production and yield and diminishing per capita net availability of food-grains have aroused the fear of future sustainability of food security. Access to food rather than amount of food is more important in food security. In India poverty and unemployment ratios are high which harm the purchasing power of people and results in food insecurity. Indian Government has implemented various social protection programmes of food transfer and employment generation like PDS, ICDS, MDM, and MNREGA to increase access to food. Social protection programme have helped India to provide protection to its population, but there are lots of gap, inefficiencies and corruption. After availability and access, absorption of food is the final step to achieve food security. The indicators showing absorption of food has performed poorly in India. The malnutrition level in India is higher than the international level. Around 814 million people lack sanitation facilities and 97 million lack access to safe drinking water. Regional disparities and gender and caste discrimination which are deep rooted in Indian society is also present in providing food security. National Food Security Bill is proposed to ensure food security to people of India. However, there are some flaws in this bill but still it is essential to provide food security in India.

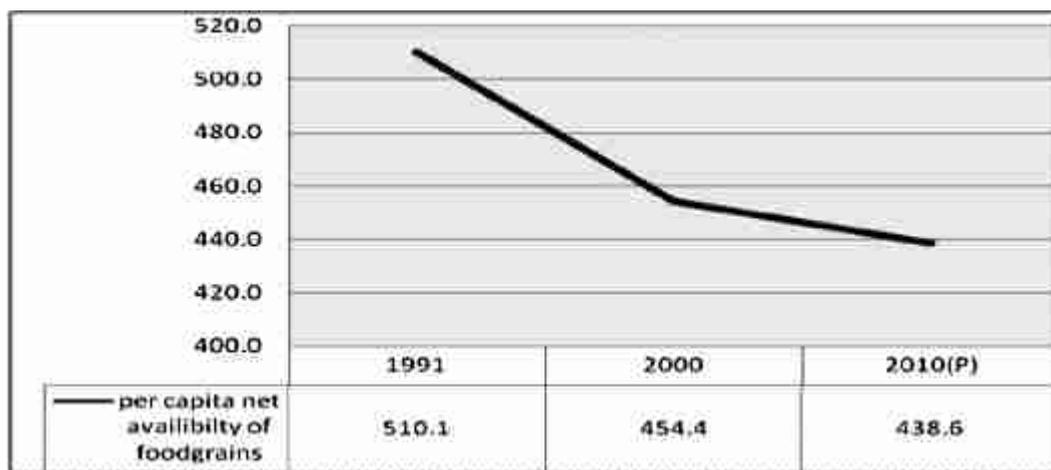
Appendix

Table 1: Trends of Growth Rate in Production and Yield of Food-grains

Year	Production	Yield
1980-81 to 1989-90	3.5	3.3
1990-91 to 1999-00	2.0	2.4
2000-01 to 2010-11	2.6	1.9

Source: Agricultural statistics at a glance, 2011. Directorate of Economics & Statistics, Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India.

Figure 1: Per Capita Net Availability of Food-Grains (Gram Per Day)



Source: Agricultural statistics at a glance, 2011. Directorate of Economics & Statistics, ministry of Agriculture, Government of India

Table 2: Access to Safe Drinking Water and Improved Sanitation Facilities in India (percentage of population)

Year	Access to safe drinking water			Access to improved sanitation facilities		
	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural	Total
1990	88	63	69	51	7	18
2000	93	77	81	55	14	25
2010	97	90	92	58	23	34

Source: Progress on Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation 2012, WHO/UNICEF.

Table 3: Level of Malnutrition among Rural and Urban Children.

Nutritional Indicators	Rural	Urban
Underweight	49	36
Stunted	41	31
Wasted	20	17

Source: National Family Health Survey-3 (2005-06) conducted by Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MOHFW), Government of India.

Table 4: Stunting, Wasting and Underweight among Children under Five Years by Caste/Tribe

Caste/Tribe	Stunted	Wasted	Underweight
Scheduled Tribe	54	28	55
Scheduled Caste	54	21	48
Other Backward Caste	49	20	16
Other	41	16	34

Source: National Family Health Survey-3 (2005-06) conducted by Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MOHFW), Government of India.

Table 5: Nutritional Indicators for Ever-Married Adult (15-49) in India

Proportion in Percent	Rural		Urban	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Whose BMI* is below normal	38.8	33.1	19.8	17.5
Who are anaemic	58.2	27.7	51.5	17.2

Source: National Family Health Survey-3 (2005-06) conducted by Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MOHFW), Government of India.

Social Inclusion and Development: A Comparison between India and China

Ravinder Kaur*

Introduction

Success of the working of a nation's Government is reflected in terms of development of nation, and that may be obtained by development of economy of a nation. However, development is not confined to merely improved GDP, high national income, holding of many policies for growth, having more education or wealth facilities or enacting laws and rules. It is much wider; indeed, the real test of development lies in how inclusive it is. Success of development and growth is judged by the extent to which people have progressed and is to be measured in terms of the number of people having access and equity in enjoying fruits of development. Welfare and care of every single member of the society, especially underprivileged, marginalized and the excluded, needs to be taken into consideration. Inclusive development must necessarily evolve into inclusive democracy; development not taken narrowly as only economic progress should ensure economic, political and social justice to every section of population. In the eighteenth century, Adam Smith, the Scottish moral philosopher and a pioneer of political economy in his treatise, *Wealth of Nations*, mentioned "No society can surely be flourishing and happy of which by far the greater part of the numbers are poor and miserable". Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of the Nation, and a great visionary of the twentieth century also observed 'No culture can live if it attempts to be exclusive.'

A country's overall development depends upon its well-educated and skilled persons. The ultimate objective of global development planning is human development or increased social welfare and well-being of the people. Increased social welfare requires a more equitable distribution of development benefits. Development process therefore needs continuous improvement in the standard of living and quantity of life through an inclusive development strategy. The challenge is to formulate inclusive plans to bridge disparities. In India, The Eleventh Five Year Plan sought to address this challenge by providing a strategy for inclusive development, building on the growing strength of the economy. To explain all the terms of inclusion in present is beyond the limit due to shortage of time and relevant available data. Therefore, an attempt to highlight the role of social inclusion /inclusiveness in development of a nation has been analysed in the present paper.

The paper is organised and divided into four sections. Section –I captures the introduction to social inclusion and human development. Section –II presents Review of Related Literature, Objectives of the study and Methodology. Section –III shows the comparative status of HDI in India and China and Section –IV examines the impact of Human Development on Development of these countries with comparison.

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I

Concept of Social Inclusion

Lau, a famous Holland singer, says, 'Everybody belongs to the world and the world belongs to everybody.' If we want to include 'everybody' in our fast evolving world, it is necessary to give 'everybody' a face. After studying literature, it is found that inclusion means a trend towards equality of opportunity. Inclusive growth has been defined as an improvement in a country's well-being which benefits all strata of the country's wealth spectrum. It refers to equal access to public infrastructure such as education, fair competition and equal treatments of law and regulation for all. In this way inclusion provides equal exposure to yield the benefits from economic prosperity. Similarly, inclusive growth means equality in growth i.e. growth is shared equally by all population. Equal growth rates mean that whatever growth occurs, it will be inclusive. Inclusive development refers to development with a sense of belongingness. It benefits the masses by making them feel valued, empowers them and enables them to participate in the development process. Inclusive development goes against the spirit of discrimination (bias) and exclusion. Rather, it encourages people to play an active part in the development by using their full potential.

The concept of inclusive development, though a motto in recent policy and political domain across the globe, has its roots in almost all major ancient civilizations, across different parts of the world. The word "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" (vasudhaiva means the earth and kutumbakam, family), a Sanskrit phrase which means that the whole world is one single family. The idea was originated in the ancient Indian texts called the Upanishadas, and is considered an integral part of the Hindu philosophy. Inclusive development has been a practice in ancient Indian civilization. Evidence found in the Indus Valley civilization shows that this culture spread across hundreds of kilometres, and provided facilities for all, i.e., roads, bathrooms, transport, and storage facilities. Similarly, the village republic, or, the gram panchayat, which has existed in India for centuries, is a form of inclusive development. vasudhaiva Kutumbakam is similar to ancient African concepts, such as Ubuntu. Ubuntu is a concept that refers to a broad vision which sees humanity in terms of interconnectedness and belonging-ness. It is an expression of generosity and cooperation to fellow human being which is essential for a shared development goal. Ubuntu enables people and communities to be part of development by contributing positively, and helping each other Archbishop Desmond Tutu explains Ubuntu in the following manner (2008): "One of the sayings in our country is Ubuntu - the essence of being human. Ubuntu speaks particularly about the fact that you can't exist as a human being in isolation. It speaks about our interconnectedness. You can't be human all by yourself, and when you have this qualify - Ubuntu - you are known for your generosity". It is an ethic, or humanist philosophy, focusing on people's allegiance and relations with each other. Here, inclusion means a broader interrelationship among people, across the society. Though there are several complex factors that affect inclusive development, some of the major factors are inequity, social exclusion, deprivation, disparity, and displacement affecting inclusive development. It is also important to note that all these factors are not distinct from each other; rather they are interrelated and affect each other in a

number of ways.

Human Development

Human Development is considered as a measurement of social inclusion by UNDP (United Nation Development Programme). It includes three factors as health, education and income. Human development is about creating an environment in which people can develop their full potential, and lead productive, creative lives in accord with their needs and interests. People are the real wealth of nations. Inclusive development promotes human well being through a sense of belonging and feeling respected, building capability, enhancing choices and freedom. It is based on the premises of equity. Thus, it is desirable for every society. On the other hand, the exclusion of individuals and groups can become a major threat to social unity and dangerously affects the humanity. According to Amartya Sen, "Human development is about creating an environment in which people can develop their full potential and lead productive, creative lives in accord with their needs and interests. People are the real wealth of nations. Development is, thus, about expanding the choices people have to lead lives that they value. And, it is, thus, about much more than economic growth, which is only a means - if a very important one - of enlarging people's choices". Today, the world is witnessing severe ethnic problem, insurgencies, caste violence, social unrest, unemployment, poverty, malnutrition, etc., which severely affect the peaceful existence of human beings. These exclusions are not simple, but, a complex phenomena.

II

Review of Related Literature

Inclusion means providing facilities to all the spectrum of society with equality and justice so as to uplift their welfare and as a result would be able to development of nation. There are plenty of studies conducted on the relationship between human capital and economic growth of a nation.

Mehrotra, S., (2012), shows HDI status of different states in India and found positive increase in all the states which indicates development of human in India. This paper also highlights Health and Education Index showing better inclusion as there are SCs and Muslims various indicators showed convergence with National average.

Satyanarayana, (2005), observes that quality of people is determined by the level of literacy, health etc. and economic development is linked with quantity and quality of people in that particular nation and efficiency of people depends upon education and health of the people. The author studied health and education indicators in India and showed if there is an improvement in these factors then they indicates economic development.

Hanagodimath, S.V., (2002), in his paper studied the relationship between education and economic development. The author used regression analysis to know the relationship between literacy rate and poverty and NSDP the growth indicator. He concluded that literacy rate has positive relation with growth and negative with poverty. Therefore education has positive impact on economic development.

Objectives of the Study

Main objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To conceptualise need and factor affecting the inclusion (especially Social Inclusion).
2. To examine selected indicators of human development regarding Social Inclusion in India.
3. To study selected indicators of human development regarding Social Inclusion in China.
4. To study the impact of Human Development on Economic Development.
5. To make a comparison between India and China on social inclusion

Methodology

To achieve the above mentioned objectives, the following methodology has been adopted:

Sample for the Study

There is an attempt to show social inclusion in India and China. Therefore, this study is focused on India and China.

Time period of the Study

According to availability of data and to make comparison after economic reform period, the time of globalisation i.e. 1991 to 2011 has been considered for this study.

Variables

There are so many indicators to show Human Development, but due to shortage of time and availability of data some selected factors are considered i.e. health, education and employment. To verify the impact on economic development HDI (Human Development Index) and GDP (Gross Domestic Product) are selected.

Source for Data Collection

Data for the study have been collected from various issues of Economic Survey, UNDP HDR (Human Development Reports), World Bank, and various related sites providing relevant data.

III

Status of HDI in India and China

Human Development in India (Towards Social Inclusion)

The Indian economy has emerged with remarkable rapidity from the slowdown caused by the global financial crises of 2007-09, indeed managing growth and price stability are the major challenges of macro economic policy-making. In 2011-12, India found itself in the heart of these conflicting demands. The Indian economy has showed a slow growth i.e. 6.9 per cent in 2011-12, after having grown at the rate of 8.4 per cent in each of the two preceding years. This indicates a slow down compared not just to the previous two years but 2003 to 2011 (except 2008-09). At the same time, sight must not be lost of the fact that, by any cross-

countrycomparison, India remains among the front-runners.

India, once infamous (well known) for its lumbering bureaucracy and glacial growth rate, is rapidly transforming into a global growth leader. The Economist magazine states that India's GDP growth rate, currently 8.5percent, could overtake China's by 2013 and remain the fastest growing large country for the foreseeable (expectable) future. In the process, the Indian economy has created national champion firms which are beginning to compete on the world stage. The question worth asking, however, is whether this rising tide is in fact raising all ships. For what may be emerging, is an economy where entrenched (well established) national champions extract value from India's vast natural resources and low-cost labour force while contributing comparatively less to national well-being in the long run. Despite more than six decades of planned economic development, a large part of population particularly SCs, STs, OBCs, farmers, landless agricultural labourers, suffers social and financial exclusion. The Government policies are directed towards upliftment of them so as to enable everyone to take benefits of growth. The human development index (HDI) reported in the Human Development Report (HDR) published by the United National Development Programme (UNDP) is an alternative to the more standard method of measuring growth using gross domestic product (GDP). According to HDR 2010, the HDI for India was 0.519 in 2010 with an overall global ranking of 119(out of 169 countries) compared to 134(out of 182 countries) in 2007(HDR, 2009). However, a comparable analysis of the trends during 1980-2010 shows that although lower in HDI ranking, India has performed better than most countries in term of average annual HDI growth rate of 1.61%. India with an HDI improvement rank of 6 (1980-2010) has performed much better than most countries except China which secured second rank with average annual HDI growth rate of 1.96%.

However, there should be no possibility for change as India is still in the medium human development category with countries like China, Sri Lanka, Indonesia having better ranking. The existing gap in health and education indicators as compared to developed and many developing countries indicates a need for much faster and wider spread of basic health and education.

Table 1:Human Development in China (Towards Social Inclusion)

Year	2010
HDI Indicator	0.663
LifeExpectancy at birth(yrs) 2010	73.5
Employment	-
Youth Literacy Rate(%)	99

Source: World Development Indicators, World Bank, 2010

IV

Impact of Human Development on Development and Comparison with China

A new and more diverse world is emerging. The 21st century will be very different from the previous two centuries. China puts forward a glaring example of human development with communist background. China the world's most populous economy can deliver the fastest growing economy for the last two decades is a remarkable achievement. While India is a shining example of how to bring about a virtuous cycle of democracy and development, India's robust growth story reflected from 9.2% growth in GDP for the second successive year, bringing its closer to Chinese levels. Goldman a researcher assesses that China is expected to surpass the US GDP in 2027, and India would be the third largest economy. Thus twenty first century belongs to these two Asian giants.

One aspect, that is common in both the economies, is the population.

Table 2: A Comparative Trend Analysis in the HDI (1980-2010)

Country	Rank in HDI	1980	1990	2000	2009	2010	Avr. Annual HDI 1980-2010	HDI improvement Rank
India	119	0.320	0.389	0.440	0.512	0.519	1.61	6
China	89	0.368	0.460	0.567	0.655	0.663	1.96	2
World	-	0.455	0.526	0.570	0.619	0.624	1.05	-

Source: HDR 2011.

**Table 3: Selected indicators of Human Development:
A Comparison of Poverty**

Country	Life Expectancy at Birth (yrs) 2010	Multidimensional Poverty Index (2000-2008) (MPI)	Population below PPP \$1.25 a day 2000-2008 (in%)	National Poverty line (in %)
India	64.4	0.296	15.9	2.8
China	73.5	0.056	41.6	28.6

Source: World Development Indicators, World Bank,2010.

Life expectancy at birth in India was 64.4 years in 2010 as against 73.5 years in China which shows a better condition of China as it more than global average of 69.3 years.

Table 4: Inequality: A Comparison

Country	GEI (Gender equality index)2008	Inequality(Gini index)
India	0.748	36.8
China	0.405	41.5

Source: World Development Indicators, World Bank, 2010

In terms of GEI, India with an index value of 0.748 this indicates a higher degree of discrimination in India compared to country China (0.405). According to HDR 2011, inequality in India for the period 2000-10 in terms of Gini coefficient was 36.8, which was more favourable than those countries, which are ranked very high in human development.

Table 5: Health: Comparison between India and China

Country	Health Expenditure (% of GDP)	Health Workers (per 1000 people)	Hospital Beds (per 1000 person)
India	4.1	0.6	0.9
China	4.3	1.5	2.2

Source: World Development Indicators, World Bank, 2010

Table 6: Disease Prevention Coverage & Quality: Comparison between India and China

Country	Access to water sources (% of population)		Access to Sanitation(% of population)		Maternal Mortality Rate (per 100,000 live birth)
	1990	2006	1990	2006	
India	71	89	14	28	450
China	67	88	48	65	45

Source: World Development Indicators, World Bank, 2010

Conclusion

We all aspire to live in a developed human society where human beings lead long and healthy lives, to be knowledgeable, to have access to resources for a decent standard of living, and to be able to participate in the life of the community. Development is possible only by mass participation, which can be possible through the process of inclusion.

Post global crisis of 2008, the Indian economy has continued to recover robustly helped by the Government policies to counter the adverse impact of the crisis. On the employment front also, the Country has been able to withstand the adverse impact of the global crisis and generate employment since July 2009. Unlike other developed countries, where the measures to counter job losses were ad hoc and contained elements of protectionism, in the Indian case, the programmes of employment generation were planned with a long term outlook free of any elements of protectionism. The employment generation programmes of the Government like the MGNREGS have been in creating employment opportunities and placing additional income in the hands of the poor and the disadvantaged sections of society. Since a number of programmes are being run concurrently by the Government to address the twin issues of unemployment and poverty alleviation, there is need for better convergence of the schemes to avoid duplication and leakages and ensure that the fruits of the schemes reach

the targeted beneficiaries. If people are socially developed that gives way towards economic growth. So, healthy, educated and trained people would be able to contribute to more to the society towards development of a country as help in increase growth.

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Linguistic Exclusion and the Language of Violence through Romen Basu's Blackstone

Saikat Banerjee*

Talking of democracy the first thought that comes to one's mind being an Indian is that India is the largest democracy of the world. It is not only the largest democracy but also a democracy which has been successfully operating for the last 65 years. But the second thought that immediately creeps into mind is whether India is a democratic country only when it comes to casting of votes or it's a country which includes democratic functioning at all levels of government institutions. The reference here is towards inclusive democracy. The difference between democracy and inclusive democracy is same like the difference between an illiterate person who is considered to be a literate just because of his/her ability to sign and a literate person who with the help of his/her literacy uses the reasoning faculty and leads one's life.

Inclusive democracy is a concept of democracy, which expresses democracy in terms of direct political democracy, economic democracy beyond the confines of the market economy and state planning as well as democracy in the social realm and ecological democracy. In short, inclusive democracy is a form of social organisation which re-integrates society with economy, polity and nature. Before going into the detailed meaning of inclusive democracy it is very essential to understand two concepts: laissez-faire and Welfare state. laissez-faire is an environment in which transactions between private parties are free from state intervention, including regulations, taxes, tariffs and enforced monopolies. The phrase laissez-faire is French and literally means 'let them do', but it broadly implies 'let it be', or 'leave it alone'. A welfare state is a concept of government in which the state plays a key role in the protection and promotion of the economic and social well-being of its citizens. It is based on the principles of equality of opportunity, equitable distribution of wealth, and public responsibility for those unable to avail themselves of the minimal provisions for a good life. It is in the concept of welfare state that the concept of inclusive democracy is embedded. The hollow nature of laissez-faire has now made the people shift towards the concept of Welfare state and hence inclusive democracy evolved.

A fruitful way to define inclusive democracy may be to distinguish between the two main societal realms, the public and the private, to which we may add an "ecological realm", defined as the sphere of the relations between the natural and the social worlds. In this conception, the public realm, includes not just the political realm, but also the economic realm as well as a 'social' realm; in other words, any area of human activity in which decisions can be taken collectively and democratically. The political realm is defined as the sphere of

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political decision-taking, the area in which political power is exercised. The economic realm is defined as the sphere of economic decision-taking, the area in which economic power is exercised. Finally, the social realm is defined as the sphere of decision-taking in the workplace, the education place and any other economic or cultural institution which is a constituent element of a democratic society.

It is therefore obvious that the extension of the traditional public realm to include the economic, ecological and 'social' realms is an indispensable element of an inclusive democracy. Correspondingly, we may distinguish between four main constituent elements of an inclusive democracy: the political, the economic, 'democracy in the social realm' and the ecological. The

first three elements constitute the institutional framework which aims at the equal distribution of political, economic and social power respectively; the system which aims at the effective elimination of the domination of human being over human being. Similarly, ecological democracy is defined as the institutional framework which aims at the elimination of any human attempt to dominate the natural world, in other words, the system which aims to reintegrate humans and nature.

For an efficient working of democracy it is very essential that it delegates the power to the common people and power can only be delegated when there is a proper communication between the government institutions/agencies and the people. Here language plays a very important tool in expressing one's view and the language to be used by the common man is his/her birth right in this country. But when choosing one's own language to express one's own thought and feelings comes the language policy of the country does not provide space for all the languages specially the tribal and minority language communities.

As a multilingual democratic country India has 3372 (as per 1991 census) Mother Tongues (MTs) within its fold. Among them only 1572 were enlisted and the rest of the 1796 MTs were categorised under the Other Mother Tongue group. But only 22 of them have official status. There are 613 Tribal Communities (Government of India, 1978) and they speak around 304 mother tongues (Sridhar, 1996). According to the interactive atlas of the world's languages in danger published by UNESCO in 2009, India leads the list of countries with 196 endangered languages. And most of her endangered languages have a tribal origin.

Article 29 (1) of the Indian constitution states that: "Any section of the citizens residing in the territory of India on any part thereof having a distinct language, script, or culture of its own shall have the right to conserve the same." Article 350A of the Indian constitution states that: "It shall be the endeavour of every state and of every local authority within the state to provide adequate facilities for instruction in the mother tongue at the primary stage of education to children belonging to linguistic minority groups, and the president may issues such directions to any state as he/she considers necessary or proper for securing the provision

of such facilities.” Article 350B of the Indian constitution states that: “There shall be a special officer for linguistic minorities to be appointed by the President.” Whereas Article 348 of the Constitution states the language to be used in the Supreme Court and High Courts and for Acts and Bills etc. shall be English. Permission will be granted for use of Hindi only by the President and of any other language and translation of the same shall be made available in English. This itself shows the linguistic barrier which is strongly prevailing in this country.

When we talk of inclusive democracy it includes the right to use the language in which one is comfortable in expressing one's views and emotions. The above data is clearly suggestive of the fact that in the world's largest democracy, the right to use one's language has clearly been neglected and the fact that the laws about protecting a language or a dialect have not been practically enforced. The most significant factor which keeps an endangered language alive in this globalized world is to create favourable conditions for its users to speak the language and teach it to their children. It demands encouraging national policies that not only recognise and safeguard minority languages but also endorse mother-tongue as a medium of instruction in the educational systems.

Language is a very powerful tool because it is through language that human beings convey their views and feelings which in turn help in the formation of a balanced society. This balanced society is in turn governed by a form of government elected by the common people. This complete machinery right from the formation of a society to the governing of the society is integrated by language. When this powerful tool of expression is not being granted to the common people then the situation of forced language acquisition arise which in turn gives rise to the gap of communication between the people and the government which results in a rift between the two. This situation gives rise to an unrest which sometimes is individual and other times can take place in a more organized way in the form of a group. If this situation arises then it is quite indicative of the fact that there is some major malfunctioning in the government machinery. This paper intends to highlight the above mentioned dichotomy in the novel *Blackstone* by Romen Basu in which the protagonist Kalapathor resorts to violence in order to be listened to his grievances and how the language gap acts as a major hindrance leading to an innocent citizen taking the course of violence.

India has long been recognized as having the most stratified society of the world with myriad forms of superordination and subordination. The Indians are deeply involved in moral and ethical questions regarding the caste system, cultural diversity and economic inequality which form the central issues of social stratification. The coherence and order in a society eventually rest on its stratification.

The stratification is ranking of social positions which influence the social rewards to those in position. The term includes ranking by caste, class, religion, age, race and office. Among the various determining factors that determine the status of a person in India, Caste plays a very

important role. Caste is a form of stratification in which an individual is assigned to particular status based on his/her designation of birth. The fact is that members of the higher caste are much wealthier and more powerful than those below in caste. A 'caste' is a closed social stratum while class is more open a stratum. However in typical Indian milieu poverty was synonymous until recently with the one's low caste status. So in good many cases the low castes have been considered lower classes as well. So it is quite evident that being economically marginalised the low-caste people land up in the lower class category as well— hence the language they use become marginalised and they are forced to use the language of the elite thereby being denied their fundamental right of using their own language. It is manifestly so in Debra-Gopibalavpur in West Bengal, the main place of action in Romen Basu's *The Blackstone*. Debra-Gopibalavpur is a typical Indian Village, other than being a Bengali village.

Romen Basu's tenth novel, *Blackstone* (1989), deals with armed peasant-uprising in Debra-Gopibalavpur in West Bengal under Naxalite or Maoist leadership. The novel traces the dramatic rise and fall of the Naxalite movement. The novel also draws the reader's attention forcefully to the 'angry conscience' of the oppressed peasants giving rise to the violent movement against exploitation and holds lessons for a just and equitable social order.

The story Kalapathor forms the crux of the novel. Kalapathor's father, Karan, is harassed by the landlord, Gour Haldar, who demands his share of crop even when there are no rains. Karan gives up his land but is still harassed by the landlord. Karan pays with his life for informing the police of the illegal felling of sal trees by Gour Haldar's men. Kalapathor becomes a vagabond. His sister, Futu, is raped and killed by the police. When the novel opens, he is twenty, living on hunting and 'a tormented man, unable to forget the injustices his family had suffered.' He is one young man among hundreds of landless peasants in Gopibalavpur district "burning with passion to find justice for his fellow men" (Basu 3). They repose faith in the Naxalite Party chairman who they hope will help realise their dream of possessing their own land. He gives a call to follow the peasants in Naxalbari to seize land from the 'jotdars' (landlords) by killing them. Kesab Ganguli, a fresher from the university, is appointed local leader in Gopibalavpur. Kalapathor is selected to kill Gour Haldar because the latter is the most corrupt and hated landlord. Kalapathor becomes 'a blind follower' of Kesab. He carries out the task assigned to him. The murder of Gour Haldar is followed by the murder of another landlord, Ghanasham. The tempo of violence picks up when the students join the revolutionaries leading to the capturing of a police station and the murder of a police inspector. After this successful venture, Kesab plans 'Operation Midnight' to attack the district headquarters and to take the magistrate as a hostage. Meanwhile, Kesab makes a mistake of holding a people's court to try and hang a landlord, Khodan. The large meeting of peasants on this occasion is surrounded by the police and more than two hundred

'revolutionaries' are massacred. This action taken by the police puts the Naxalite leaders on the defensive. Differences set in between the chairman and the secretary of the Naxalites over the future course of action. The ailing chairman is arrested by the police and hospitalised. The secretary announces at the party meeting that the revolutionary movement should spread to the labourers in factories, other employees and women and asks everyone to shun secrecy in party matters. The chairman dies. Kalapathor is arrested by the police in his attempt to kill a policeman but is released after an armed confrontation between the police and the frenzied mob. The movement in Gopibalavpir district is at crossroads because of the uncertainty in the future course of action. By the end of the novel, Kesab, Kalapathor, the student's group and the tribal leader sit together, sort out their differences and resolve to start a 'new struggle' with a renewed commitment to revolution and not to relent 'until we become the master of the nation's destiny'.

What does the novel say about Naxalism as a movement? The novel does not aim to consider Naxalite movement, whether it's right or wrong. Commenting on this aspect, a reviewer says:

Romen Basu has evoked the spirit of those stirring movements at the height of the Naxalite movement between 1969-71. But it is romantic rather than political evocation. As such it will take its place in the lists of historical fiction perhaps, but it lacks the critical discrimination, even in fictionalised terms, that would have subjected the Naxalite 'reaction' to harder analysis or testing. This disappoints in a novel about such a subject written 20 years after the event.¹

Although the author gives a fictional treatment to the armed revolution but at the same time he has remained objective in presenting several viewpoints towards the movement. For instance, there are too divergent views within the leadership held by the chairman, Kesab and Kalapathor on the one hand and the Secretary on the other as to how to carry forward the movement. Further on one hand there is fierce sacrifice and idealism on the part of some student members while on the other there are some students who "found no reason to stay on if Comrade Kesab had decided to withdraw from the struggle' (Basu 110). Romen Basu also provides the viewpoint of the bureaucrat-parents through Rontu's father, Rippen, and the viewpoint of the government through the Home Minister, Harish. Harish looks at the Naxalite movement as a law and order problem and according to him suppression is the only solution. He asks Rippen:

What we are supposed to do when they throw bombs at our police and kill innocent people from sheer hatred? (Basu 32)

But Rippen is of the other view and sees nothing wrong in the idea of countering injustice and tyranny. He tells Harish:

Only the strongest have the courage to stand up to injustice and tyranny, I suppose.... These are innocent boys, misguided perhaps, but they are not hardened terrorists.... Look, I don't like terrorists any more than the next person, but these boys are searching for some answers. (Basu 31-32)

Thus, from the above paragraphs it becomes quite evident that Romen Basu remains objective in presenting several reactions to the Naxalite party or movement and leaves it for the reader to make an assessment of the movement for himself.

Blackstone is essentially a novel of social realism. Social realism is “the acute awareness of the social forces that surround the individual, their power to influence the lives of men and women and the overall interaction of individual and society” (Reddy 35). Being a topical novel, Blackstone abounds in realism not only in the choice of the theme but also in rendering the theme in fictional terms. The author succeeds in giving the reader the illusion of actual experience. The physical location of a district in West Bengal which is the seat of Naxalite movement and the historical time add verisimilitude to the novel.

The title of the novel, Blackstone, is an English translation of the Bengali name of the protagonist in the novel, Kalapathor. This, perhaps, suggests the nature of the heart of an innocent tribal changed into a burnt mass of stone by the cruelty of man to man. One of the reviewers of Blackstone is of the opinion that Romen Basu through this novel has once again proves his amazingly various qualities and skills that made him one of the best known Indian novelists.

The novel depicts the use of the language of violence at several levels. The people are compelled to use violence as a means to express the anger caused by the atrocious nature of the landed aristocracy and the ruthless nexus between the administration, feudal lords and comprador bourgeois. The state's use of the language of violence is reflective of an utter failure of democracy since the people deserve a more sympathetic and compassionate treatment from a welfare state. In the name of law and order it is the language of rattling of guns which is used to teach the lesson of peace. The failure of political leadership to convince the followers about the worthlessness of the path of violence is also due to their lack of understanding of the language of the tribal people. Kalapathor and Kesab are able to command the faith of the villagers because they speak their language. Nobody in the state machinery can do so and therefore the police officer cannot get across to the people. He simply uses force to tame the people. Thus the novel talks of a need of inclusive democracy and the failure of the system to achieve it.

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Assessment of Economic Development by Self Help Groups in Haryana

Surender*

Introduction

Economic Development is generally defined to include improvements in material welfare, especially for person with the lowest incomes, the eradication of mass poverty with its correlates of illiteracy, disease and early death, changes in the composition of inputs and outputs that generally include shifts in underlying structure of production away from agricultural towards industrial activities, the organization of the economy in such a way that productive employment is general among the working age population rather than the situation of a privileged minority; and the correspondingly greater participation of broad-based groups in making decisions about the directions, economic and otherwise, in which they should move to improve their welfare (Charles P. Kindleberg, p. 1). It implies progressive changes in the socio- economic structure of a country. Further, development goals are defined in terms of progressive reduction in unemployment, poverty and inequalities.

Microfinance has been used by NGOs, the UN and other agencies intensively in the development debate during the last few decades. It builds on the opinion that financial services are needed to make investments in physical and human capital, to smooth consumption and to overcome unexpected shocks. Microfinance can be seen as a solution to include a large-scale previously excluded poorer groups without access to capital into the financial system so that they may “rise out of poverty” by themselves (Banco Sol, 2006 p. 7). Micro credit is a critical anti-poverty tool and a wise investment in human capital. Now that the nations of the world have committed themselves to reduce by half by the year 2015 the number of people living on less than \$1 a day, we must look even more seriously at the pivotal role that sustainable microfinance can play and is playing in reaching this Millennium Development Goal. (United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan at Global Micro credit Summit 2006)

Micro finance is a financial service of small quantity, provided by financial institutions to the poor. These financial services may include savings, credit, insurance, leasing, money transfer, equity transaction, etc. that is, any type of financial services, provided to customers to meet their normal financial needs: life cycle, economic opportunity and emergency (Das Gupta and Rao, 2003). The failure of formal institutions in the world to serve the rural poor effectively led to a review of the informal financial systems. But it was observed from very beginning that the informal financial system is very exploitative and charging very high rate of interest from the poor. To bridge the gap between the formal and informal systems, Prof.

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Mohammad Yunus started a research project in Bangladesh in 1979 and established Grameen Bank (GB) in 1983. It changed the life of many poor people and improved their economic condition from below poverty line in Bangladesh. Linked with microfinance approach, the Self Help Group (SHG) movement has now been accepted by all countries of the world as an effective strategy for poverty alleviation.

SHG is a small voluntary association of poor people preferably from the same socio economic background. They come together for the purpose of solving their common problems through Self-Help Groups (SHGs). They provide the benefits of economies of scale, cost effective alternative for different financial services, collective learning, democratic and participatory culture, affirm base and platform for dialogue and co-operation. The groups have been recommended to be informal and to keep themselves away from bureaucratic and corrupt practices, unnecessary administrative expenditure and profiteering constraints. Groups are expected to be homogeneous so that the members do not have conflicting interest and all the members can participate freely without any fear. There is however something beyond this. These groups are expected to foster true democratic culture where all the members participate actively by taking part in the debate and decision – making process which is possible only in small groups. After being formed, generally by External Agency, Group starts collecting a fixed amount from each member regularly. For about six months it only collects amount; no loan is given to any member. During this period the groups are expected to open a saving account with Financial Institutions (FIs). After accumulating a reasonable amount of resources the group starts lending to its member for petty consumption needs. The repayment of the loan with interest and regular amount enlarge the working fund and increase the scope of lending. The groups are jointly liable to the bank for repayment. The joint liability, decision-making process and pressure at the group level are the most important aspects for the banks to do business with the poor, illiterate and informal groups. The demand for loan is for consumption, health, education, marriage, petty production and petty trade etc. A SHG can be all women group, all men group, or even a mixed group. However, it has been experienced that women's groups perform better in all the important activities of SHG.

Microfinance through SHGs has become a ladder for the poor to bring them up not only economically but also socially, mentally and attitudinally. Linked with micro finance approach, the SHG movement has now been accepted as an effective intervention strategy for poverty alleviation, generating income, empowering the poor and reducing unemployment. SHG linked micro finance includes such credits which are provided to the rural poor on easy terms and conditions and give access to several income generation activities. In many countries of the world, SHGs have succeeded in generating self – employment and income by providing access to small capital to people living in poverty. A number of institutional weaknesses have been identified like poor recovery, recycling funds,

poor deposit mobilization and ineffective lending. Against this backdrop, SHGs are an effective tool in generating income or employment and empowering poor.

There are not yet any formal official publications on different statistics of SHGs. However, NABARD has brought out some basic data of SHGs. According to this, 74.62 Laks SHGs as on March 31, 2011 are working in India. And 90 per cent SHGs are women groups. The overall objective of this paper is to examine the growth of microfinance through SHG in Haryana from year 2006 to 2011. This will be achieved by examining how loans and advance by microfinance banks penetrate different segmented areas of the economy in Haryana; identifying the relationship that exists between microfinance banks and deposit mobilizes from the rural areas. From this it is hoped to draw conclusions based on empirical analysis and to give recommendations for the successful implementation of microfinance institutions in all areas and for economic development. However, poverty alleviation programs in Haryana over the years were based on institutional approach mostly sponsored by the government with little or no private sector participation.

Number of SHGs in Haryana

The numbers of SHGs in Haryana was studied and the results are presented in Table- 1. It may be seen that number of SHGs in 2007-08 was 23,570. They increased 33,257 from last year in 2008-09. In 2009-10, the number of SHGs also increased from last year to 36,762. But it was decreased 35,319 in 2010-11. The %age increase in number of SHGs was 14.09% from last year in 2008-09 and 10.53% from last year in 2009-10. It decreased 3.92% in 2010-11. So it can be said that number of SHGs now are decreasing from last years but with slow rate.

Table- 1: Number of SHGs in Haryana

Sr. No	Years	Number of SHGs (Rs. Lakhs)	Increase in Number of SHGs (in %)
1.	2007-08	23,570	---
2.	2008-09	33,257	41.09
3.	2009-10	36,762	10.53
4.	2010-11	35,319	- 3.92

Source: NABARD's Reports on Microfinance in India in various years

Savings of SHGs in Haryana

Savings of SHGs in Haryana was studied and the results are presented in Table-2. It can be

seen that savings of SHGs in 2007-08 was Rs. 1365.15 Lakhs. They increased Rs. 2547.93 Lakhs from last year in 2008-09. In 2009-10, the savings of SHGs also increased from last year to Rs. 10762.55 Lakhs. But it was decreased 9920.45 Lakhs in 2010-11. The %age increase in amount of Savings of SHGs was 86.64% from last year in 2008-09 and 322.40% from last year in 2009-10. But it decreased 7.82% in 2010-11. So it can be said that amount of savings of SHGs are now decreasing from last years.

Table- 2: Savings of SHGs in Haryana

Sr. No	Years	Savings Amount (Rs. Lakhs)	Increase in Savings Amount (in %)
1.	2007-08	1365.15	---
2.	2008-09	2547.93	86.64
3.	2009-10	10762.55	322.40
4.	2010-11	9920.45	- 7.82

Source: NABARD's Reports on Microfinance in India in various years

Bank Loans disbursed to SHGs in Haryana

Bank Loans disbursed to SHGs in Haryana was studied and the results are presented in Table- 3. It can be seen that bank loans disbursed to SHGs in Haryana in 2007-08 was Rs. 2613.89 Lakhs. It increased Rs. 6383.91 Lakhs from last year in 2008-09. In 2009-10, the bank loans disbursed to SHGs in Haryana decreased from last year to Rs. 4669.74 Lakhs. But it increased 6243.46 Lakhs in 2010-11. The %age increase in bank loans disbursed to SHGs in Haryana was 144.23% from last year in 2008-09. It was reduced -26.85% from last year in 2009-10. But it increased 33.70% in 2010-11. So it can be said that bank loans disbursed to SHGs in Haryana is increasing now.

Table- 3: Bank Loans disbursed to SHGs in Haryana

Sr. No	Years	Loan Disbursed (Rs. Lakhs)	Change in Loan Disbursed (in %)
1.	2007-08	2613.89	---
2.	2008-09	6383.91	144.23
3.	2009-10	4669.74	-26.85
4.	2010-11	6243.46	33.70

Source: NABARD's Reports on Microfinance in India in various years

Bank loans outstanding against SHGs in Haryana

Bank Loans outstanding against SHGs in Haryana years wise was studied and the results are presented in Table- 4. It can be seen that bank loans outstanding against SHGs in Haryana in 2007-08 was Rs. 10,742.07 Lakhs. It increased Rs. 12,414.37 Lakhs from last year in 2008-09. In 2009-10, the bank loans outstanding against to SHGs in Haryana also increased from last year to Rs. 15,507.44 Lakhs. It was also increased 19,826.80 in 2010-11. The %age increase in bank loans outstanding against to SHGs in Haryana was 15.56% from last year in 2008-09, 322.40% from last year in 2009-10 and 27.85% in 2010-11. So it can be said that bank loans outstanding against to SHGs in Haryana is increasing with high rate of growth.

Table-4: Bank Loans Outstanding against SHGs in Haryana

Sr. No	Years	Bank Loans Outstanding against SHGs (Rs. Lakhs)	Change in Bank Loans Outstanding against SHGs (in %)
1.	2007-08	10,742.07	---
2.	2008-09	12,414.37	15.56
3.	2009-10	15,507.44	24.91
4.	2010-11	19,826.80	27.85

Source: NABARD's Reports on Microfinance in India in various years

Gross NPAs for bank Loans to SHGs in Haryana

Gross NPAs for Bank loans to SHGs in Haryana was studied and the results are presented in Table- 5. It can be seen that Gross NPAs for bank loans to SHGs in Haryana in 2007-08 was Rs. 202.87 Lakhs. It increased Rs. 446.95 Lakhs from last year in 2008-09. In 2009-10, the Gross NPAs for bank loans to SHGs in Haryana also increased from last year to Rs. 784.05 Lakhs. But it was decreased 783.44 Lakhs in 2010-11. The %age increase in Gross NPAs for bank loans to SHGs in Haryana was 120.31% from last year in 2008-09 and 75.42% from last year in 2009-10. But it decreased 0.07% in 2010-11. So it can be said that Gross NPAs for bank loans to SHGs in Haryana is now decreasing with very small rate of growth.

Table- 5: Gross NPAs for Bank Loans to SHGs in Haryana

Sr. No	Years	Amount of Gross NPAs for Bank Loans to SHGs (Rs. Lakhs)	Change in Gross NPAs for bank Loans to SHGs (in %)
1.	2007-08	202.87	---
2.	2008-09	446.95	120.31
3.	2009-10	784.05	75.42
4.	2010-11	783.44	-0.07

Source: NABARD's Reports on Microfinance in India in various years

Conclusion

The paper show that the numbers of SHGs are now decreasing from last years but with slow rate. The amount of savings of SHGs is also decreasing from last years. The Bank loans disbursed to SHGs in Haryana is now increasing with high rate. The Bank loans outstanding against to SHGs in Haryana are increasing with high rate of growth and Gross NPAs for Bank loans to SHGs in Haryana is decreasing with very small rate of growth. This shows that Microfinance through SHGs have not really improved nor developed the economy of Haryana state because loans given by the microfinance banks went for other areas that do not directly or indirectly affect the socio economic well being of the poor people of Haryana and do not contribute to their developmental status. So with the help of above fact, we can say that the growth of microfinance in Haryana is not as fast as other states of India. The geographical spread of SHGs programme is less than 20% in Haryana. It may be due to that Haryana is not a priority state in India by government agencies to expand microfinance activities. But it is not sustainable because Haryana has not free from the problems of poverty, unemployment and empowerment of derivatees poor people till date. Still approximately 8% to 10 % population in Haryana is living below poverty line. So the government and the formal banking institutions should come forward to increase the growth of microfinance through SHGs in Haryana. Though the evil of poverty can completely remove from all parts of Haryana and a true economic development can be achieved by the economy of Haryana.

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ICT as a Tool of Inclusive Democracy: A Study of Perception of Beneficiaries and Some Cases

Suyash Mishra*

“Internet will extend electronic marketplace and make it the ultimate go-between, the universal middleman.”

- Bill Gates

Introduction

The Government both at the centre and in the states including various Government agencies has found that IT and Internet can be used in a highly effective manner to improve the Government to Citizen Inter-face. Now, this is a time of E – democracy. The e-democracy is an effort to modify the role of citizen from inactive information giving to active citizen involvement. In an E-democracy the Government will be informing the citizen, representing the citizen, encouraging the citizen to vote, consulting the citizen and appealing the citizen in the Governance. Taking the citizens input about the various government policies by organizing an E-debate will further strengthen the e-democracy. The concept of E-debate is similar to chat over the Internet, wherein not only the citizens but also the political leaders contesting the elections participate. The citizens give their feedback about the various policies of the parties and particularly the manifesto of the party. The plan will further strengthen the process by enhancing the representative role, improving accessibility of citizens to their elected members and developing the capacity of elected representatives to engage in E-government. Elected members will also be provided with access to the local authority's Intranet and e-mail systems so that they become available online for decision making and people can easily access them.

Review of Literature

Richard Heeks (2001) studied the effect of new information and communication technologies and how it can make a significant contribution to the achievement of good governance goals. The study made by the researcher highlighted the role of Information Communication and Technology for the society development .The paper outlines the three main contributions of e-governance: improving government processes(e administration), connecting citizens (e-citizens and e-services) and building external interactions (e-society) .This paper shows the importance of ICT in the different dimensions. Roumeen Islam (2003) explored the link between information flows and governance with the objective to examine

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how the availability of information may affect governance. Analysis showed that countries which have better information flows as measured by both indicators have better quality governance.

Saxena(2005) is of the opinion that E-governance initiatives in most countries promise a more citizen-centric government and reduce operational cost. Unfortunately most of these initiatives have not been able to achieve the benefits claimed. Often the reason for this failure is a techno-centric focus rather than a governance-centric focus. The paper explores the necessary attributes of a governance-centric initiative under the banner “excellent e-governance” (e2-governance), and describe a methodology for ensuring such excellence in e-governance implementations. Excellence (or governance-centricism) in e-governance requires the initiative to be effectiveness-driven and not merely efficiency-driven. This will require the initiative to be led by “good governance” driven goal/purpose: additionally, the initiative must be outcome-focused.

The study by F. Corradini, et al (2007) highlights that Digital identities, profiles and their management enables online interactions and transactions among people, enterprises, service providers and government institutions. In this paper, after having examined the European identity management policies, they explain the differences between digital identity and digital citizenship and introduce digital credentials and also discuss how an identity management framework, composed by shared and standardized services supporting authentication procedures, can change within the e-Government domain.

The study by Danish Dada (2006) the paper suggests that there exist wide gaps between the current reality in developing countries and the future of e-governance systems. These gaps could be classified into three types: a hard-soft gap, implying a gap between the technology and the social context in which it is applied; a private-public gap, suggesting that what works in the private sector may not work in the public sector; and a country context gap, that arises from the application of the same e-governance systems for both the developing and developed countries. The paper recommends that administrators in developing countries must assess the situation at hand before implementing e-governance. E- governance, that has the benefit of providing clear cut, transparent, interactive, easy to implement and just solutions (in dynamic mode) in the quickest possible time frame.

Objectives of the present study:

1. To study different cases of Information Communication Technology (ICT) for inclusive democracy.
2. To find out the factors which encourage or discourage the citizens while using Information Communication Technology (ICT)

3. To propose a conceptual model to assess the performance of Information Communication Technology (ICT) in India.

Cases of Information Communication Technology (ICT): An Approach of Inclusive Democracy

Researcher has taken four cases to examine the role of Information Communication Technology (ICT) for the growth of inclusive democracy in India. Research has judged the role of ICT in not only urban area but also in the rural area of India, So this is a mix approach for citizen of rural and urban area for the participation in the democracy. There are four cases TARahaat, E-Choupal, E-Seva and Lokvani has been taken from Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh. The following is the detailed study of the four cases:

Case 1. TARA (Technology and Action for Rural Advancement):TARahaat

There are more than 600,000 villages in India and around 700 million people live in villages. Many villages are relatively disadvantaged in terms of basic amenities and services, especially those related to education, health, sanitation and empowerment. There is a need to improve the quality of life in villages to achieve overall national development.

TARahaat was established as a social enterprise dedicated to bridging the digital divide between rural communities and the mainstream economy. It provides village communities particularly the youth, access to information and livelihood opportunities comparable to those available in urban India. A broad portfolio of services is offered through TARAkendras – the community knowledge cum business centre. Initial focus has been on vocational training, community development, information and e-governance through a host of programmes customized for local communities (e.g. TARaChetna, TARAMEljol). The next generation of services focuses on the promotion of micro and small enterprises through a unique Enterprise Development Programme.

End Users

ISRO has been interacting for the last three decades with the Planning Commission, Departments of Central Government and State Governments, District Authorities, academia, industries, NGOs and others to effectively utilize the space applications for national development.

Space technologies - satellite based communication and remote sensing has demonstrated their capabilities to provide services related to health care, education, weather, land and water resources, agriculture etc. To provide these space-based services to the rural areas, Department of Space has initiated a programme to set up Village Resource Centres (VRCs)

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in partnership with concerned state, central agencies and NGOs.

The Development Alternatives (DA) Group comprises Development Alternatives and its associate organizations in India: Technology and Action for Rural Advancement (TARA), TARAhaat Information and Marketing Services Ltd., TARA Nirman Kendra and Decentralized Energy Systems India Ltd. The DA Group, a pioneer sustainable development enterprise was established in 1983 as a not for profit research, development and action organization. With two decades of experience and over 400 professionals, the DA Group has had a profound impact on the creation of sustainable livelihoods, specifically in the innovation and application of appropriate technologies and their distribution through micro enterprises in rural India. It is recognized by the Ministry of Science and Technology as a scientific research institution.

Over the years, the DA Group has built up several initiatives and networks at the field level in different parts of the country. The partnerships established with over 500 NGOs and rural entrepreneurs across Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Chattisgarh, Jharkhand, Bihar and Maharashtra will be of particular interest to the VRC Programme.

Rural Entrepreneurship with the use of ICT

In keeping with its mandate to empower rural and marginalized communities through ICT with the purpose of enabling them to integrate with the mainstream economy, TARAhaat's latest venture - ICT enabled Enterprise Development and Support Services- is an exciting step forward.

It focuses on providing entrepreneurship opportunities to youth, women and self-help groups through the rapidly expanding network of TARAKendras, TARAhaat's rural business-cum-community centers. When ready, the Enterprise Development Support and Service (EDSS) will add a critical dimension to the scope of services provided by TARAhaat, or indeed any experiment in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) enabled services for rural India!

ICT forms the backbone of the EDS process flow as it delivers the following benefits:

- consistent quality of delivery
- Offers rich learner-centric audio-video and interactive content
- Encourages self-paced learning
- Makes services accessible and affordable in remote villages and towns

- Reduces dramatically the cost of delivering services
- Makes marketing of local products and services easier through easy communication
 - Access to information
 - Advertising
 - E-commerce
- Replicates using modular and generic structures and tools
- Scales to larger audiences

Case 2. E-Choupal : A Boon for Farmers

Launched in June 2000, 'e-Choupal', has already become the largest initiative among all Internet-based interventions in rural India. 'e-Choupal' services today reach out to over 4 million farmers growing a range of crops - soyabean, coffee, wheat, rice, pulses, shrimp - in over 40,000 villages through 6500 kiosks across ten states (Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Uttarakhand, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Kerala and Tamil Nadu).

Real-time information and customised knowledge provided by 'e-Choupal' enhance the ability of farmers to take decisions and align their farm output with market demand and secure quality & productivity. The aggregation of the demand for farm inputs from individual farmers gives them access to high quality inputs from established and reputed manufacturers at fair prices. As a direct marketing channel, virtually linked to the 'mandi' system for price discovery, 'e-Choupal' eliminates wasteful intermediation and multiple handling. 'e-Choupal' ensures world-class quality in delivering all these goods & services through several product / service specific partnerships with the leaders in the respective fields, in addition to ITC's own expertise.

While the farmers benefit through enhanced farm productivity and higher farm gate prices, ITC benefits from the lower net cost of procurement (despite offering better prices to the farmer) having eliminated costs in the supply chain that do not add value.

E-Choupal is an ICT platform that facilitates flow of information and knowledge, and supports market transactions on line. It helps in the following ways:

Inclusive Democracy: People, Power & Progress

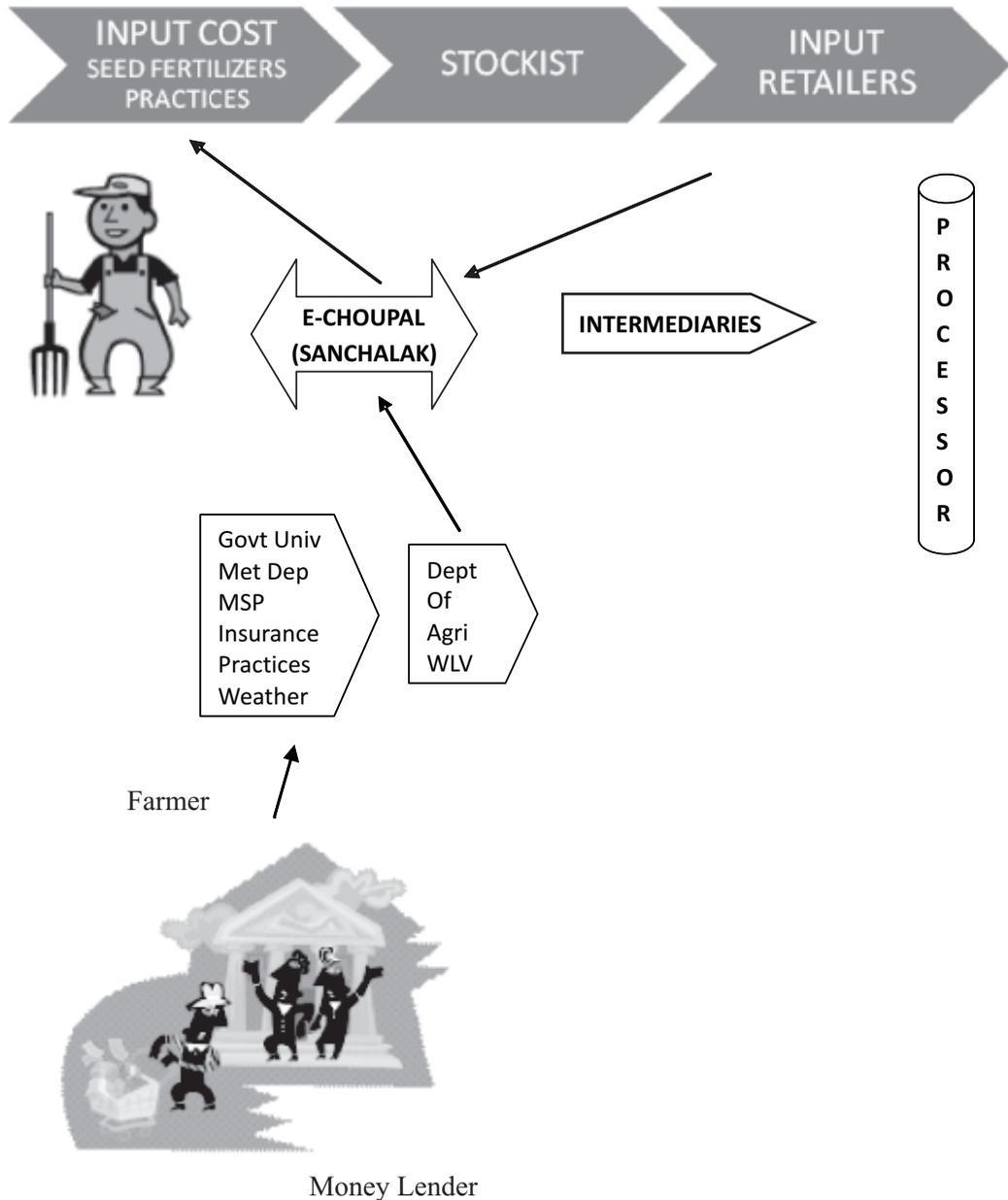
- It transmits **Information** (weather, prices, news).
- It transfers **Knowledge** (farm management, risk management).
- It facilitates sales of **Farm Inputs** (screened for quality).
- It offers the choice of an alternative **Output**-marketing channel (convenience, lower transaction costs) to the farmer right at his doorstep.

Success Factors of E- Choupal

The e-Choupal experience highlights that ICT platforms can provide rural connectivity and e-commerce support. These platforms have enormous potential provided they are conceptualized for the specific needs of the community and business. Some of the elements that helped the e-choupal to work successfully are discussed below:

- **Comprehensive knowledge of rural markets:** Rural markets are both economic and social networks and there is a strong connection between the operation of social and economic transactions. Understanding the operations is vital before the systems are conceptualized. Use of local population, as much as possible helped the network to get the acceptance closely.
- **Designing a Win-Win transaction model:** The success of e-choupal comes from the condition in which both the farmer and the processor share the benefits coming out of the elimination of middle men and due to timely information availability.
- **Leveraging the logistics channels:** The existing logistics of the rural markets are leveraged but they are not able to exploit the information asymmetry (unlike that in a conventional market). In that sense e-choupal uses the local institutions but eliminates the information asymmetry that they used previously.
- **Selection of Sanchalak:** Both the selection of Sanchalak and the acceptance of Sanchalak by the community are very critical for the success of e-choupal. ITC used a trial and error method for developing the procedure for selecting Sanchalaks. In the platform terminology Sanchalak is the interface for maintaining the platform. For the farmer the Sanchalak is the e-choupal. Training and sensitizing him for the crucial role has been the main reason for the acceptance of the Sanchalak by the farmers. Sanchalak, thus, acts as the coordinator of the knowledge community, and a representative of farming community.

- **Bottom-up model for entrepreneurship:** e-Choupal encourages enormous amount of creativity at the local level along with local entrepreneurship stimulation. The farmer and Sanchalak are free to use the e-choupal and develop new uses. e-choupal unleashes the creative spirit in the rural India.



E-Choupal : Modern approach of Business and Social Welfare

Case 3: E- SEVA : An Innovation in Business and Government Services

An Integrated Approach : E-Seva is an integrated approach , E-Seva is ingerated in the following ways :

Integration of departments - central and state governments.

Integration of services.

Integration of G2C and B2C.

Efficiency, Reliability, Transparency and Scalability are the watchwords at eSeva.

Vision of E-Seva: The Government of Andhra Pradesh has a clear vision to create a knowledge society by using Information Technology in all aspects of development and governance. Pioneering efforts are being made to reach the benefits of IT to the citizens - urban and rural, rich and poor, literate and illiterate. The Government is conscious of the dangers of the 'digital divide', and is making special provisions for reaching the 'information have-nots'.

Features of E-seva :

The following are the features of E-Seva in the state of Andhra Pradesh for the support of the citizens :

1. 51 eSeva centres (with 400 service counters) spread over the Twin Cities and Ranga Reddy District.
2. All service counters are facilitated with an electronic queuing system.
3. Operating from 8.00 am to 8.00 pm, on all working days and 9.00am to 1.00pm on holidays (Second Saturdays & Sundays).
4. One-stop-shop' for over 66 G2C and B2C services.
5. No jurisdiction limits - any citizen in the twin cities can avail of the services at any of the 51 eSeva service centres.
6. Online services: eForms, eFiling, ePayments.

7. Payments by cash/cheque/DD/credit card/Internet.

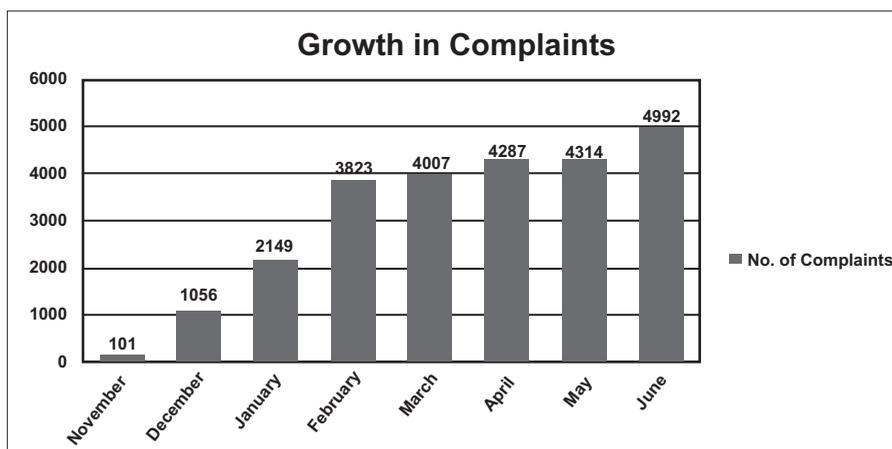
***Case 4: Lokvani, Voice of the People :
An Approach of the U.P. Government in Sitapur District***

About Lokvani

Lokvani (Meaning “Voice of the people”) is an e-governance initiative in the Sitapur District of Uttar Pradesh. It is a unique programme for improving governance, in the district Sitapur. Lokvani enables citizens to interact with the Government without physical visits to any government office. (C2G Approach was developed)

It is a community owned self-sufficient structure. It is driven by a profitable business model for private entrepreneurs; easy and suitable access to information to the citizens through a hassle free citizen-government interface and ensuring fairness in decision making, accountability of public offices and clearness in administration.

Initially, to attract the citizens to using the services of Lokvani, it was decided that lokvani would begin with public grievance services. After the implementation of Lokvani, a complainant could visit the nearest Lokvani center at any point in time and lodge a complaint through the Internet (with the help of the Lokvani center operator). The operator login to the Lokvani site with his username and password and enter the complaint in the specific format. The system, then generate a complaint number which would be passed on to the complainant for tracking/ follow up of the complaint. In some case when the complaint could not be logged on to the system immediately due to power cut or problems with internet connectivity, the operator log the complaint later, and provide the complainant with the complaint number on his next visit, or through telephone.



Source : <http://sitapur.nic.in/lokvani/rojgar/lokvani.pdf>

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A study was conducted by the District Magistrate (D.M.) to know the effect of public grievance services through ICT in November 2004 to June 2005 and there was a huge growth in the complaints through ICT (with the help of the Lokvani center operator). It means that there was an increase for complaints and Lokvani got a huge success to solve the public grievance through ICT. The above graph shows the growth in complaints from November to June in 2004-2005.

Services provided by Lokvani

1. Online submission, monitoring and disposal of public grievance / complaints.
2. Single Window Services: Birth Certificate, Death Certificate, Caste Certificate, Income Certificate and Domicile Certificate.
3. Tendering Services, status of arms license applications, Information about local employment opportunities in the district.
4. Online Land records, Information about various Government Schemes, Information about various Government works / expenditures/ beneficiaries.

Research Methodology

To obtain the data for this study a survey instrument was designed. The present study is empirical, descriptive and analytical in nature based on primary and secondary data. To collect primary data, a well structured questionnaire was distributed with close-ended questions. The survey was conducted in Lucknow (U.P.) among 187 citizens of India (This study is based on 250 citizens of India out of which 187 questionnaires were relevant for the study.). The study was conducted in the Month of April and May in 2012. The respondents were asked to indicate the degree of agreement / disagreement on a five point Likert type scale that ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree (Strongly agree , agree , Neutral , disagree and strongly disagree). The survey included multiple item measures for each of the five dimensions of perception of performance. The validity of constructs was assessed by use of factor analysis. The data was analysed using Statistical package for the Social Sciences(SPSS).The paper is also based on analysis and interpretation of the secondary sources of information i.e. research report, Central government authentic reports and documents, reports by world level institutions and other relevant publications and their findings.

Result and Discussion of Factor Analysis

To identify the underlying constructs and examine the relationship among the variable which were supposed to determine or affect citizen's perception on ICT services, factor analysis was applied. Based on the literature, a total of 20 variables were selected. To test the sampling adequacy, Kaiser – Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was applied and it was 0.541. It indicates that the sample is good enough for sampling. The significance of correlation matrix was tested with Bartlett test of sphericity (chi – square 357.187 and significance at 0.00). This support the validity of applying the factor analysis. Principal Component analysis was applied for extracting factors and it was applied with varimax rotation.

The variable whose communalities were greater than 0.50 were retained. The factors with eigen – values greater than one were considered for the study .It is found that all the 20 variables had their communalities exceeding 0.50 and were retained for the analysis. Table - 1 gives the communalities of the variables and it is also shown in the chart-1.

Table 1: Communalities of the variables

Variables	Commonalities	Variables	Commonalities
Effectiveness of Service Quality .	0.519	Technical Hurdle.	0.604
Access to all .	0.666	Knowledge of the service provider staff.	0.706
Accuracy.	0.601	Courtesy of the service provider staff.	0.657
Efficiency for query handling.	0.73	Consistency.	0.681
Security and confidentiality of data.	0.561	Availability of alternate power and connectivity.	0.554
Time Saving.	0.726	Fit in complaint handling mechanisn.	0.535
Reduction in queuing system.	0.702	Comprehensiveness of service in a single session.	0.649
Risk to use.	0.575	Easy to assess the services.	0.641
Service quality improvement through ICT.	0.679	Effective results.	0.562
Citizen satisfaction.	0.656	Use of local language interface.	0.575

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

For the study, it was found that nine factors having Eigen values greater than one

were extracted. The Eigen – values of the nine factors along with the cumulative percentage is shown in table-2.

Chart 1: Commonalities of the Variables

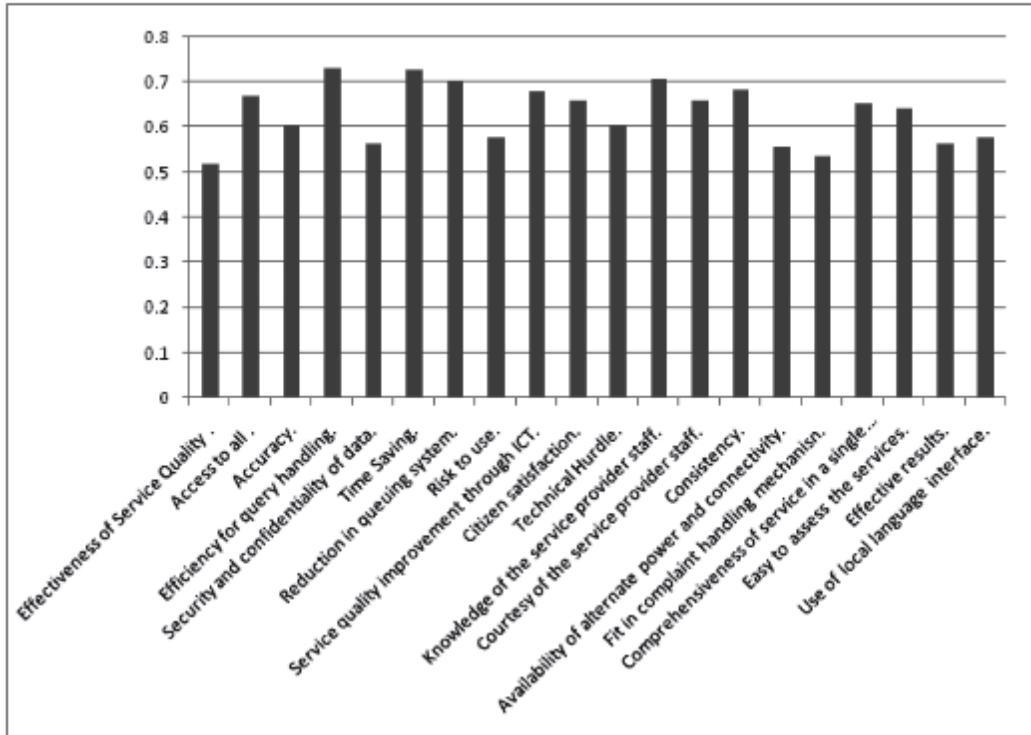
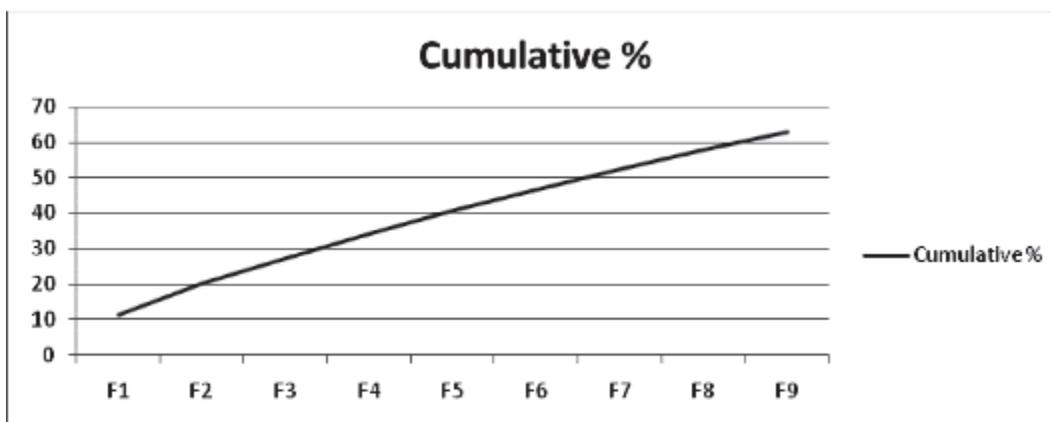
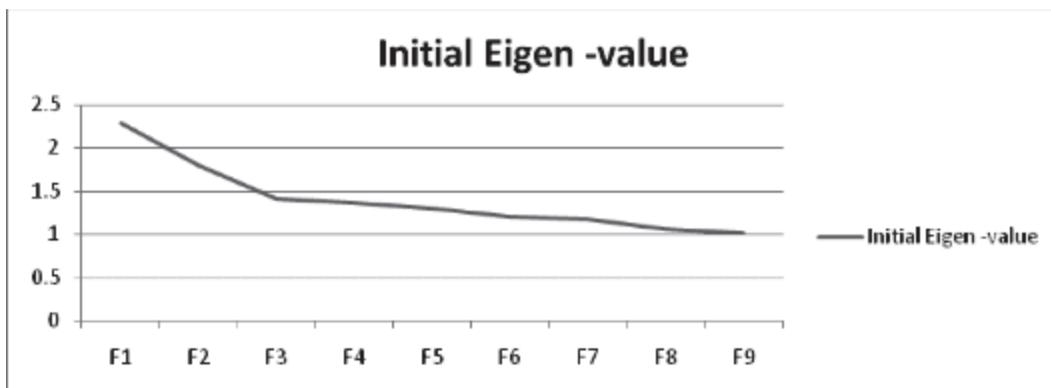


Table -2 Total Variance Explained

Factor	Total Variance Explained		
	Initial Eigen - Value	% of Variance	Cumulative %
F ₁	2.293	11.467	11.467
F ₂	1.795	8.974	20.440
F ₃	1.407	7.034	27.475
F ₄	1.354	6.771	34.246
F ₅	1.297	6.485	40.730
F ₆	1.204	6.018	46.749
F ₇	1.168	5.840	52.589
F ₈	1.051	5.256	57.845
F ₉	1.007	5.035	62.880

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Chart-2: Depicting Eigen Value and Cumulative Percentage



The percentage of the total variance which is used as an index to determine how well the factor solution accounts for what the variables together represent was found 62.880 %. Table -3 gives the factor loading of the variables under nine extracted factors .

Table – 3: Rotated Component Matrix (Factor Loading >0.50)

<u>Variables</u>	Factors								
	F₁	F₂	F₃	F₄	F₅	F₆	F₇	F₈	F₉
Effectiveness of Service Quality			0.569						
Access to all				0.742					
Accuracy		0.757							
Efficiency for query handling								0.84	
Security and confidentiality of data						0.597			
Time Saving									0.822
Reduction in queuing system					0.783				
Risk to use									
Service quality improvement through ICT					0.501				
Citizen satisfaction									
Technical Hurdle			0.701						
Knowledge of the service provider staff							0.781		
Courtesy of the service provider staff							0.699		
Consistency.				0.731					
Availability of alternate power and connectivity						0.606			
Fit in complaint handling mechanism		0.695							
Comprehensiveness of service in a single session	0.588								
Easy to assess the services	0.783								
Effective results	0.672								
Use of local language interface	0.655								

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Factor one is characterising the result and service dimension pertaining to effective results through ICT services that has four measures. These measures are comprehensiveness of service in a single session, easy to access the services, effective result and use of local language interface. This is the most important factor which explains 11.467 % of variance before rotation. Factor two describes accurate in complaint handling and has two measures such as accuracy and fit in complaint handling mechanism. This factor explains 8.974 % of variance before rotation. Third factor covers the effective service quality and technical hurdle and has two measures such as effectiveness of service quality and technical hurdle and explains 7.034 % of variance before rotation. Fourth factor covers the consistency for all and has two measure such as access to all and consistency and explains 6.771% of Variance before rotation. Fifth factor refers to the reduction in queuing system through ICT and covers the measures such as reduction in queuing system and service quality improvement through ICT , explains 6.485 % of variance before rotation. Sixth Factor pertains security and connectivity attribute and has the two measure, security and confidentiality of data and availability of alternate power and connectivity and explains 6.018 % of variance before rotation. Seventh factor stands for staff knowledge and courtesy which included knowledge of the service provider staff and Courtesy of the service provider staff and explains 5.840 % of variance before rotation. Eighth factor is efficient for query handling and last factor is the time saving factor through the use of ICT.

Proposed Model for Assessing Performance of the ICT Services

Based on the study, model for Assessing Performance of the ICT Services can be drawn and the figure, suggest support for the basic structure of this model. The analysis revealed nine dimensions of the performance.

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Conclusion

The effective use of ICT services in government administration has greatly enhanced existing efficiencies. Based on the results and analysis, it was found that ICT system is very successful and used by the different companies and government of the states. ICT has created a platform for e- Governance which essentially aims at enhancing good governance and support the inclusive democratic process, can also be seen as a way of providing access to information, freedom of expression, efficiency, productivity growth and inclusiveness. The future is poised in how effort can sustain momentum and meet the load of increasing expectations. This paper is an attempt to study the various ICT initiatives by government and companies to get the result more transparent & accurate.

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