

November 2021

E-ISSN - 2348-7143



INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH FELLOWS ASSOCIATION'S

RESEARCH JOURNEY

International E-Research Journal

Peer Reviewed, Referred & Indexed Journal

Issue 279 (A)

Multidisciplinary Issue



Guest Editor :

Dr. M. N. Kharde

Director,

Shirdi Sai Rural Institute's

Rahata, Tal- Rahata Dist- Ahmednagar

Chief Editor :

Prof. S. V. Lahare,

Principal,

Arts, Science and Commerce College,

Rahata. Tal- Rahata Dist- Ahmednagar

Executive Editor : **Dr. D. T. Satpute (Librarian)**, ASC College, Rahata.

Co-Editors : **Dr. D. N. Dange, Prof C. M. Bansode**

Hon. Editor : **Dr. Dhanraj T. Dhangar (Yeola)**



For Details Visit To : www.researchjourney.net

SWATIDHAN PUBLICATIONS

Dr. S. V. Lahare
Co-ordinator,

Internal Quality Assurance Cell
M.G.V.C. Arts, Commerce & Science College
MUDDERHAL - 586212, Dist. Vijayapur.

Dr. S. V. Lahare
PRINCIPAL,

M. G. V. C. Arts, Com. & Science Co
MUDDERHAL - 586212.



'RESEARCH JOURNEY' International E- Research Journal
Issue - 279 (A) : Multidisciplinary Issue
Peer Reviewed Journal

E-ISSN :
2348-7143
Nov.- 2021



November 2021

E-ISSN - 2348-7143

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH FELLOWS ASSOCIATION'S
RESEARCH JOURNEY

International E-Research Journal

Peer Reviewed, Referred & Indexed Journal

Issue 279(A)

Guest Editor :

M. N. Kharde
Director,
Shirdi Sai Rural Institute's
Rahata, Tal- Rahata Dist- Ahmednagar

Executive Editors:

Dr. D. T. Satpute
Librarian,
Arts, Science and Commerce College,
Rahata, Tal- Rahata Dist- Ahmednagar

Hon. Editor : Dr. D. T. Dhangar (Yeola)

Chief Editor :

Prof. S. V. Lahare,
Principal,
Arts, Science and Commerce College,
Rahata, Tal- Rahata Dist- Ahmednagar

Co-Editors:

Dr. D. N. Dange
Associate Professor, Dept. of Hindi

Prof C. M. Bansode
Assistant Professor, Dept. of Geography
ASC College, Rahata, Tal- Rahata,
Dist- Ahmednagar.

Our Editors have reviewed papers with experts' committee, and they have checked the papers on their level best to stop furtive literature. Except it, the respective authors of the papers are responsible for originality of the papers and intensive thoughts in the papers. Nobody can republish these papers without pre-permission of the publisher.

- Chief & Executive Editor

SWATIDHAN INTERNATIONAL PUBLICATIONS

For Details Visit To : www.researchjourney.net

*Cover Photo (Source) : Internet

© All rights reserved with the authors & publisher

Price : Rs. 1000/-

Website - www.researchjourney.net

Email - researchjourney2014gmail.com

The Challenges of Cultural Diversity in India

Dr. Sunita B Jadhav

Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology
M.G.V.C. Arts, Commerce and
Science College Muddebihal, Karnataka
Ph. No. 9901964800
Email ID- rathore.vsunita@gmail.com

Abstract:

*"Diversity is the one true thing we have in common.
Celebrate it every day."*

-Anonymous

Diversity is a defining characteristic of modern society, yet there remains considerable debate over the benefits that it brings. The authors argue that positive psychological and behavioural outcomes will be observed only when social and cultural diversity is experienced in a way that challenges stereotypical expectations and that when this precondition is met, the experience has cognitive consequences that resonate across multiple domains. A model, rooted in social categorization theory and research, outlines the preconditions and processes through which people cognitively adapt to the experience of social and cultural diversity and the resulting cross-domain benefits that this brings. Evidence is drawn from a range of literatures to support this model, including work on biculturalism, minority influence, cognitive development, stereotype threat, work group productivity, creativity, and political ideology. The authors bring together a range of differing diversity experiences and explicitly draw parallels between programs of research that have focused on both perceiving others who are multicultural and being multicultural oneself. The findings from this integrative review suggest that experiencing diversity that challenges expectations may not only encourage greater tolerance but also have benefits beyond intergroup relations to varied aspects of psychological functioning.

Introduction:

The term 'diversity' emphasises differences rather than inequalities. When we say that India is a nation of great cultural diversity, we mean that there are many different types of social groups and communities living here. These are communities defined by cultural markers such as language, religion, sect, race or caste. When these diverse communities are also part of a larger entity like a nation, then difficulties may be created by competition or conflict between them. This is why cultural diversity can present tough challenges. The difficulties arise from the fact that cultural identities are very powerful – they can arouse intense passions and are often able to mobilise large numbers of people. Sometimes cultural differences are accompanied by economic and social inequalities, and this further complicates things. Measures to address the inequalities or injustices suffered by one community can provoke opposition from other communities. The situation is made worse when scarce resources – like river waters, jobs or government funds – have to be shared. If you read the newspapers regularly, or watch the news on television, you may often have had the depressing feeling that India has no future. There seem to be so many divisive forces hard at work tearing apart the unity and integrity of our country – communal riots, demands for regional autonomy, caste wars... You might have even felt upset that large sections of our population are not being patriotic and don't seem to feel as intensely for India as you and your classmates do. But if you look at any book dealing with the history of modern India, or books dealing specifically with issues like communalism or regionalism (Brass 1974).

you will realise that these problems are not new ones. Almost all the major 'divisive' problems of today have been there ever since Independence, or even earlier. But in spite of them India has not only survived as a nation, but is a stronger nation-state today.

Cultural Communities And The Nation-State:

Before discussing the major challenges that diversity poses in India – issues such as regionalism, communalism and casteism – we need to understand the relationship between nation-states and cultural communities. Why is it so important for people to belong to communities based on cultural identities like a caste, ethnic group, region, or religion? Why is so much passion aroused when there is a perceived threat, insult, or injustice to one's community? Why do these passions pose problems for the nation-state?

Every human being needs a sense of stable identity to operate in this world. Questions like — Who am I? How am I different from others? How do others understand and comprehend me? What goals and aspirations should I have? – constantly crop up in our life right from childhood. We are able to answer many of these questions because of the way in which we are socialised, or taught how-to live-in society by our immediate families and our community in various senses. The socialisation process involves a continuous dialogue, negotiation and even struggle against significant others (those directly involved in our lives) like our parents, family, kin group and our community. Our community provides us the language (our mother tongue) and the cultural values through which we comprehend the world. It also anchors our self-identity. Community identity is based on birth and 'belonging' rather than on some form of acquired qualifications or 'accomplishment'. It is what we 'are' rather than what we have 'become'. We don't have to do anything to be born into a community – in fact, no one has any choice about which family or community or country they are born into. These kinds of identities are called 'ascriptive' – that is, they are determined by the accidents of birth and do not involve any choice on the part of the individuals concerned. It is an odd fact of social life that people feel a deep sense of security and satisfaction in belonging to communities in which their membership is entirely accidental. We often identify so strongly with communities we have done nothing to 'deserve' – passed no exam, demonstrated no skill or competence... This is very unlike belonging to, say, a profession or team. Doctors or architects have to pass exams and demonstrate their competence. Even in sports, a certain level of skill and performance are a necessary pre-condition for membership in a team. But our membership in our families or religious or regional communities is without preconditions, and yet it is total. In fact, most ascriptive identities are very hard to shake off; even if we choose to disown them, others may continue to identify us by those very markers of belonging.

Communities, Nations And Nation-States:

At the simplest level, a nation is a sort of large-scale community – it is a community of communities. Members of a nation share the desire to be part of the same political collectively. This desire for political unity usually expresses itself as the aspiration to form a state. In its most general sense, the term state refers to an abstract entity consisting of a set of political-legal institutions claiming control over a particular geographical territory and the people living in it. In Max Weber's well-known definition, a state is a "body that successfully claims a monopoly of legitimate force in a particular territory" (Weber 1970:78). A nation is a peculiar sort of community that is easy to describe but hard to define. We know and can describe many specific

nations founded on the basis of common cultural, historical and political institutions like a shared religion, language, ethnicity, history or regional culture. But it is hard to come up with any defining features, any characteristics that a nation must possess. For every possible criterion there are exceptions and counter-examples. For example, there are many nations that do not share a single common language, religion, ethnicity and so on. On the other hand, there are many languages, religions or ethnicities that are shared across nations. But this does not lead to the formation of a single unified nation of, say, all English speakers or of all Buddhists. How, then, can we distinguish a nation from other kinds of communities, such as an ethnic group (based on common descent in addition to other commonalities of language or culture), a religious community, or a regionally defined community? Conceptually, there seems to be no hard distinction – any of the other types of community can one day form a nation. Conversely, no particular kind of community can be guaranteed to form a nation.

Cultural Diversity And The Indian Nation-State – An Overview :

The Indian nation-state is socially and culturally one of the most diverse countries of the world. It has a population of about 1029 million people, currently the second largest – and soon to become the largest – national population in the world. These billion-plus people speak about 1,632 different languages and dialects. As many as eighteen of these languages have been officially recognised and placed under the 8th Schedule of the Constitution, thus guaranteeing their legal status. In terms of religion, about 80.5% of the population are Hindus, who in turn are regionally specific, plural in beliefs and practices, and divided by castes and languages. About 13.4% of the population are Muslims, which makes India the world's third largest Muslim country after Indonesia and Pakistan. The other major religious communities are Christians (2.3%), Sikhs (1.9%), Buddhists (0.8%) and Jains (0.4%). Because of India's huge population, these small percentages can also add up to large absolute numbers.

The Constitution declares the state to be a secular state, but religion, language and other such factors are not banished from the public sphere. In fact, these communities have been explicitly recognised by the state. By international standards, very strong constitutional protection is offered to minority religions. In general, India's problems have been more in the sphere of implementation and practice rather than laws or principles. But on the whole, India can be considered a good example of a 'state-nation' though it is not entirely free from the problems common to nation-states.

Regionalism In The Indian Context :

Regionalism in India is rooted in India's diversity of languages, cultures, tribes, and religions. It is also encouraged by the geographical concentration of these identity markers in particular regions, and fuelled by a sense of regional deprivation. Indian federalism has been a means of accommodating these regional sentiments. (Bhattacharyya 2005). After Independence, initially the Indian state continued with the British-Indian arrangement dividing India into large provinces, also called 'presidencies. (Madras, Bombay, and Calcutta were the three major presidencies; incidentally, all three cities after which the presidencies were named have changed their names recently). These were large multi-ethnic and multilingual provincial states constituting the major political-administrative units of a semi-federal state called the Union of India. For example, the old Bombay State (Continuation of the Bombay Presidency) was a multilingual state of Marathi, Gujarati, Kannada and Konkani speaking people. Similarly, the



Madras State was constituted by Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam speaking people. In addition to the presidencies and provinces directly administered by the British Indian government, there were also a large number of princely states and principalities all over India. The larger princely states included Mysore, Kashmir, and Baroda. But soon after the adoption of the Constitution, all these units of the colonial era had to be reorganised into ethno-linguistic States within the Indian union in response to strong popular agitations.

The Nation-State And Religion-Related Issues And Identities :

Perhaps the most contentious of all aspects of cultural diversity are issues relating to religious communities and religion-based identities. These issues may be broadly divided into two related groups – the secularism–communalism set and the minority–majority set. Questions of secularism and communalism are about the state's relationship to religion and to political groupings that invoke religion as their primary identity. Questions about minorities and majorities involve decisions on how the state is to treat different religious, ethnic about the origins of your own State. When was it formed? What were the main criteria used to define it? – Was it language, ethnic/ tribal identity, regional deprivation, ecological difference or another criterion? How does this compare with other States within the Indian nation-state? Try to classify all the States of India in terms of the criteria for their formation. Are you aware of any current social movements that are demanding the creation of a State? Try to find out the criteria being used by these movements. [Check the Telengana and Vidarbha movements, and others in your region...] The Challenges of Cultural Diversity 129 or other communities that are unequal in terms of numbers and/or power (including social, economic and political power).

Minority Rights And Nation Building:

In Indian nationalism, the dominant trend was marked by an inclusive and democratic vision. Inclusive because it recognised diversity and plurality. Democratic because it sought to do away with discrimination and exclusion and bring forth a just and equitable society. The term 'people' has not been seen in exclusive terms, as referring to any specific group defined by religion, ethnicity, race or caste. Ideas of humanism influenced Indian nationalists and the ugly aspects of exclusive nationalism were extensively commented upon by leading figures like Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore. To be effective, the ideas of inclusive nationalism had to be built into the Constitution. For, as already discussed (in section 6.1), there is a very strong tendency for the dominant group to assume that their culture or language or religion is synonymous with the nation state. However, for a strong and democratic nation, special constitutional provisions are required to ensure the rights of all groups and those of minority groups in particular. A brief discussion on the definition of minorities will enable us to appreciate the importance of safeguarding minority rights for a strong, united and democratic nation. The notion of minority groups is widely used in sociology and is more than a merely numerical distinction – it usually involves some sense of relative disadvantage. Thus, privileged minorities such as extremely wealthy people are not usually referred to as minorities; if they are, the term is qualified in some way, as in the phrase 'privileged minority'. When minority is used without qualification, it generally implies a relatively small but also disadvantaged group.

State And Civil Society:

The state is indeed a very crucial institution when it comes to the management of cultural diversity in a nation. Although it claims to represent the nation, the state can also become

somewhat independent of the nation and its people. To the extent that the state structure – the legislature, bureaucracy, judiciary, armed forces, police and other arms of the state – becomes insulated from the people, it also has the potential of turning authoritarian. An authoritarian state is the opposite of a democratic state. It is a state in which the people have no voice and those in power are not accountable to anyone. Authoritarian states often limit or abolish civil liberties like freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of political activity, right to protection from wrongful use of authority, right to the due processes of the law, and so on. Apart from authoritarianism, there is also the possibility that state institutions become unable or unwilling to respond to the needs of the people because of corruption, inefficiency, or lack of resources. In short, there are many reasons why a state may not be all that it should be. Non-state actors and institutions become important in this context, for they can keep a watch on the state, protest against its injustices or supplement its efforts.

Civil society is the name given to the broad arena which lies beyond the private domain of the family, but outside the domain of both state and market. Civil society is the non-state and non-market part of the public domain in which individuals get together voluntarily to create institutions and organisations. It is the sphere of active citizenship: here, individuals take up social issues, try to influence the state or make demands on it, pursue their collective interests or seek support for a variety of causes. It consists of voluntary associations, organisations or institutions formed by groups of citizens. It includes political parties, media institutions, trade unions, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), religious organisations, and other kinds of collective entities. The main criteria for inclusion in civil society are that the organisation should not be state-controlled, and it should not be a purely commercial profit-making entity. Thus, Doordarshan is not part of civil society though private television channels are; a car manufacturing company is not part of civil society but the trade unions to which its workers belong are. Of course, these criteria allow for a lot of grey areas. For example, a newspaper may be run like a purely commercial enterprise, or an NGO may be supported by government funds.

Conclusion:

The issues taken up are diverse, ranging from tribal struggles for land rights, devolution in urban governance, campaigns against rape and violence against women, rehabilitation of those displaced by dams and other developmental projects, fishermen's struggles against mechanised fishing, rehabilitation of hawkers and pavement dwellers, campaigns against slum demolitions and for housing rights, primary education reform, distribution of land to Dalits, and so on. Civil liberties organisations have been particularly important in keeping a watch on the state and forcing it to obey the law. The media, too, has taken an increasingly active role, specially its emergent visual and electronic segments. Among the most significant recent initiatives is the campaign for the Right to Information. Beginning with an agitation in rural Rajasthan for the release of information on government funds spent on village development, this effort grew into a nation-wide campaign. Despite the resistance of the bureaucracy, the government was forced to respond to the campaign and pass a new law formally acknowledging the citizens' right to information. Examples of this sort illustrate the crucial importance of civil society in ensuring that the state is accountable to the nation and its people.

By exploring different approaches of understanding cultural diversity, and the relationship culture and identity, cultural diversity is a vast pool where different (and sometimes contradictory) approaches toward it coexist together. There is no unconditionally good or bad.

unconditionally effective or non- effective, approach of understanding and teaching about cultural diversity. Rather, it is a question of what kind of approach better fits a specific context and to what extent cultural diversity is understood or misunderstood in the context. By grasping the idiosyncrasy of a context, local understanding of cultural diversity, and the particular form(s) that cultural diversity takes and could take in the specific context, it could bring hope to the society to bring people from different cultures together and cooperate to solve the problems that all human beings are facing.

References:

- Bhargava, Rajeev. 1998. 'What is Secularism for?'. in Bhargava, Rajeev. ed. Secularism and its Critic. Oxford University Press. New Delhi.
- Bhargava, Rajeev. 2005. Civil Society, Public Sphere and Citizenship. Sage Publications. New Delhi.
- Bhattacharyya, Harihar. 2005. Federalism and Regionalism in India: Institutional Strategies and Political Accommodation of Identities. working paper No. 27. South Asia Institute. Dept of Political Science. University of Heidelberg.
- Brass, Paul. 1974. Language, Religion and Politics in North India. Vikas Publishing House. Delhi.
- Chandra, Bipan. 1987. Communalism in Modern India. Vikas Publishing House. New Delhi.
- Miller, David. 1995. On Nationality. Clarendon Press, Oxford.
- Sheth, D.L. 1999. 'The Nations-State and Minority Rights'.
- Sheth, D.L. and Mahajan, Gurpreet. ed. Minority Identities and the Nation-State. Oxford University Press. New Delhi.
- Kayser, B. (1994), "Culture an important tool in rural development." Leader: Quarterly Journal of the Community Programme.