



**The Psycho- social impact of COVID 19 and Partition , a
comparative , analysis**

Hardships : Then and Now

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Abstract:

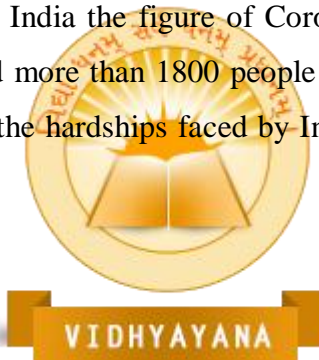
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Covid 19 has brought a vast change in the society all around the world. Still it is too early to study its overall effect since the pandemic is still not over, the lockdown compelled me to write something about the similarity of situation during partition and Covid19. A detailed analysis related to psychological and social impact after partition and the people moving to their own states during covid19 will be done. Religion and politics based on religion will be an important resemblance between the two . The common point that connects these two , is the hardships that the common man faced.



Introduction: During the event of partition that took place there was violence that was faced by millions. The violence is portrayed very realistically in all the literature forms that were written after the event of partition took place. Millions had to move from the land that they owned to the land that was so called their own. The life had to face many hardships when the independence was attained. Lakhs of people went missing, almost 1 million people lost their lives, people had lost their own identity just because a line was stretched on land just because of religion and culture, which existed together from thousands of years. Almost maximum stories of partition have intensely described the hardships faced by both the sides. Hardships is something that brings us back to the reality faced today. Hardships means the change in the routine which brings insecurity mentally and physically. There is state of confusion presently. The World Health Organization has declared this pandemic as global health emergency. Almost 198 countries have been affected till May 2020. More than 2.5 lakh people all over the world have lost their lives. In India the figure of Corona infected people as on 8th May 2020 is around 52000 people and more than 1800 people have lost their lives. (Figure from TV Today Network) Specifically the hardships faced by Indian labourers will be analysed in this paper.

Lockdown effects on Indians



It all started with a Janta Curfew dated 21 March 2020. Since then, the country is still under lockdown phase as on date 8th May 2020. The recent lockdown is supposed to get over around 17th May 2020. Although the daily necessities like dairy products, grocery and medical facilities have been made available but still there are sad stories which we have seen during the past few days. One of them was from Bihar where a mother is moving madly for emergency medical service for her son. (1) This period has different experiences by all the different class of people. Some of them have really utilised this as an opportunity. The rich class people have found this as qualitative time for the family. Almost all the people have used social media to entertain and to get entertained. It was emphasised by Honourable P.M. of India to not to cut the payments of any employee but unfortunately when the government itself denies to pay the DA for its employee then it is impossible to expect private companies



to follow this policy. The middle class people have been using their savings during the period of lock down. But the most vulnerable people are the labour class people who have migrated to different cities for earning their living. The decision of lockdown has been really appreciated by all the leaders but there are some loops which are really left unseen. The major issue is to provide food and shelters for the poor migrants. The state governments are busy planning about how to overcome the difficulties but the execution part hasn't been done that effectively. All the states are having different strategies and different relief funds for the labourers. Some states are giving Rs. 5000 to each such labourer whereas some are just giving Rs. 1000 to these labourers. Actually the instructions from the state governments are just very ambiguous causing the chaos and the confusion for common man. During the early phase of lockdown in Gujarat it was decided that workers doing the petty businesses like, food stall, barbers, carpenters, might receive Rs. 300 per day but neither the government tried to gather such data nor did they provide any such relief. There are thousands of people who do not own ration card to get the benefits, also, but there are leaders who promised to provide free ration to labourers who do not have the ration cards. The migrants have their families living in far of villages. Living away from their families in this emergency phase has brought tough times to these labourers as well as their families. Thousands of workers walked down to their own villages hundreds of Kms. There is a little change in lockdown 3, which started from 4th May 2020. The states have been divided in three zones, red, orange and green depending on the number of corona patients. Lock down is followed strictly in red zone whereas the other two zones have some mild reliefs. Fortunately, the Government has finally decided to send these migrants back to their own villages . But sadly the migration of people from one place to other is spreading the corona virus. On one hand if the government has allowed to open the market on the other hand, the migrants have lost their jobs. Millions of people have lost their source of income. Even the government has cut short the jobs for an year.

Migration : The biggest issue of Covid 19 and Partition:

The Hindi song of the movie refugee ,: Panchi, Nadiyan , Pawankejokhey, Koi Sarhadnaainheroke.



Sarhadeinsaanokeliyehain, sochotumne or maine ,kyapayainsaan hoke

While writing about partition, migration couldn't stop myself from humming my favourite song. Migration brings the feelings of diaspora. It is really very difficult when, any such situation arises where migration becomes a compulsion. Same was the situation during the partition of 1947. People living on both the side, had to migrate just based on religion. The Hindus living in Pakistan migrated to India and many Muslims went to the other side, to the so called their own lands. A line was stretched and the land was divided. The politics that was being played was the divide and leave policy of the Britishers. The incident of Palghar, murder of two saints, which recently took place during the lockdown is one of the shameful incident to arouse the Hindu – Muslim riots(2). When India gained its freedom from the Britishers, there was violence that took place between Hindu and Muslim community people. The media is playing a vital role by blaming certain communities for spreading the covid 19 pandemic. Whereas the reality is that it has spread from Wuhan and because of international travellers. The life had become very difficult during the India – Pakistan partition of 1947. People had to leave their belongings, their land, their near and dear one and had to leave just their own identity also. The most vulnerable ones were, the Hindu Sindhi community, who left their motherland Sindh. Today, because of Covid 19 emergency, people are leaving their jobs, and heading towards their homes. Many sat on the top of the trains because, there was lack of transportation facilities, same is the situation now when we see people walking to their own states. During 1947, the migration was between two countries, now it is among the states. Partition was also a man-made disaster, Covid 19, though biological but ultimately, a man-made disaster. Millions had lost their lives because of violence,, presently, the world is heading towards losing millions because of Covid 19. The feeling of insecurity prevailed during the partition as well as it is prevailing now. Thousands of people are living in the shelter homes, run by the government, same was the situation of refugees, during the partition. Many videos have been on social media, where these migrants have complained about the hunger that is killing them. The partition literature has well woven the stories of refugees facing the hardships of life.

Psycho-social effects of partition and Covid 19



The society is definitely going to be different after the Covid 19 pandemic. Maintaining social distance and mask will be a part of life further. The gatherings want be more than 50 people per event. Though it is difficult for Indian culture to follow these norms but slowly they will be the way of our lives in future. Certain such habits have been followed by certain communities who follow the, Vallabhacharya , the Vaishnavs in the past , like taking a bath after visiting hospitals, changing the clothes immediately after reaching home , taking bath after passing the stool etc. But this life style was not approved by the modern people hence it was not followed by their children but once again this pandemic, enables us to understand the reason behind this kind of life style.

The partition has left deep scars in the psyche of Hindus and Muslims. Politicians have been raising the issues to win the votes of both the communities. The people of both the communities are not allowed to marry each other. If they do , wrong concepts like love – Zehad is stuffed in the minds of people. They are brain washed .Secularism , which was a matter of pride, has lost its original meaning in India. The word now has a negative sense among both the communities. The politics based on the religion can be felt during this emergency phase also. We have seen the fruit vendors naming their stall as Hindu stall. Still there is hatred among these two communities, who have been living together thousands of years agoIt is a shameful thing that a certain party leader asking to buy grocery from a certain community. The people who have become the victims and their family members are facing traumatic condition. Since the symptoms of this disease are not clear, each individual is going through the similar fear and anxiety. People were under traumatic condition which is best displayed in literature through the story of ‘Toba Tek Singh’.

Ineffectiveness of Law and Order during Partition and Pandemic Covid 19:

Many a times the situation of crowd gathering has taken place amidst the lock own in different states like Maharashtra, Gujarat Delhi and many more. It is really very difficult to handle these tense situation when the migrants are very right on their places but unfortunately the government is not capable of solving their issues on time. When the Britishers were leaving our country, there was a similar situation during partition. It took a long period of time to settle in the new land to earn their living as well as identity.



Conclusion :

After going through the above perspectives of partition and Covid19 situation, there is a definite resemblance between the two situations. A strong governance is the need of the hour now and it was the need of the hour during partition also. India should emerge as a strong nation where there is peace and harmony among the people. All the benefits should be nationalised so that equal benefits are assured to all. The migration of workers should stop and they should be provided relief centrally and we should not segregate them depending on the states. It is the responsibility of Central government to assure that the pandemic is handled carefully so that the situation does not worsen as it was in 1947 during the partition.

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