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## **Editorial Note**

South Asian Journal of Management Research (SAJMR), is a scholarly journal that publishes scientific research on the theory and practice of management. All management, computer science, environmental science related issues relating to strategy, entrepreneurship, innovation, technology, and organizations are covered by the journal, along with all business-related functional areas like accounting, finance, information systems, marketing, and operations. The research presented in these articles contributes to our understanding of critical issues and offers valuable insights for policymakers, practitioners, and researchers. Authors are invited to publish novel, original, empirical, and high quality research work pertaining to the recent developments & practices in all areas and discipline.

Cross-functional, multidisciplinary research that reflects the diversity of the management science professions is also encouraged, the articles are generally based on the core disciplines of computer science, economics, environmental science, mathematics, psychology, sociology, and statistics. The journal's focus includes managerial issues in a variety of organizational contexts, including for profit and nonprofit businesses, organizations from the public and private sectors, and formal and informal networks of people. Theoretical, experimental (in the field or the lab), and empirical contributions are all welcome. The journal will continue to disseminate knowledge and publish high-quality research so that we may all benefit from it.

**Dr. Pooja M. Patil**  
Editor



# South Asian Journal of Management Research (SAJMR)

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# Knowledge, Attitudes and Perceptions towards COVID 19 Vaccinations of Healthcare Professionals' Working in the Yeka and Kotebe Health Centers, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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## Abstract

Ethiopia began to vaccinate healthcare professionals for COVID-19 with four types of vaccines that have been given permission to use on March 13, 2021. However, understanding healthcare professionals' knowledge, attitude and perception to use and expectations for the COVID-19 vaccination are critical for the government to overcome all obstacles to vaccine delivery and to introduce the most successful vaccination strategy. This study is aimed to assess the knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions towards the COVID-19 vaccinations among the healthcare professionals in the selected health centers in Addis Ababa. Two randomly selected health centers, Yeka and Kotebe, at Yeka sub city in Addis Ababa were sampled. All healthcare professionals working in the two health institutions were included. Validated, structured and self-reporting questionnaires were distributed and filled in by 206 out of 208 healthcare professionals. Data so collected were checked, coded, and entered into Microsoft Excel 2019 and SPSS version 25.0 (Chicago, IL, USA) for cleaning and analysis. Results revealed that the mean percentage ( $\pm$ SD) of healthcare professionals with good knowledge, positive attitudes and good perceptions about COVID-19 vaccination were, 73.4 ( $\pm$  4.9), 55.5 ( $\pm$  3.5) and 52.1 ( $\pm$ 5.7) respectively. About 61.7% of study participants reported that they were tested for COVID-19 and 48.5% of them had taken the COVID-19 vaccination without any hesitation. Findings from this study indicated that the healthcare professionals considered in this assessment had relatively good knowledge and nearly optimum positive attitudes and perceptions towards COVID-19 vaccinations. Less than half of them had taken the COVID-19 vaccination. It is recommended that awareness creation program through several means (including targeted training to healthcare professionals) must be continued.

**Key words:** COVID – 19, Vaccination, Knowledge, Attitude, Perception, Healthcare Professionals

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## Introduction

### Background

The first COVID-19 case was identified in Ethiopia on March 13, 2020. COVID-19 infection rates have been accelerating in Africa, including Ethiopia since then. The number of new cases has been rapidly increasing. As of February 13, 2022, the country had 467,498 COVID-19 positive cases and 7,424 deaths ((MoH), 2022). As a result, Ethiopia is now among the top five African countries with the most COVID-19 cases (Abebe, Shitu and Mose, 2021).

Ethiopia's government has been working hard to communicate COVID-19 prevention information through television, radio, and social media (Abebe, Shitu and Mose, 2021). It has used a variety of measures to combat COVID-19, including declaring a state of emergency, imposing mass gathering prohibitions, enforcing stay-at-home order and promoting the use of personal protective equipment (Adane, Ademas and Kloos, 2022).

Several COVID-19 vaccines have been approved for use by WHO. They are being used in a variety of places around the world. In line with this, countries (including Ethiopia) have the autonomy and authority to make use of any health product to domestic emergency situation based on their national regulations and legislation (Al-Zalfawi *et al.*, 2021).

Ethiopia launches a COVID-19 vaccination campaign targeting the 12 years and above population on 16 November 2021. In Ethiopia, four vaccination have been licensed for use. These are (1) Oxford/Astra Zeneca Vaxzevria; (2) Serum Institute of India Covishield (Oxford/AstraZeneca formulation); (3) Sinopharm (Beijing) Covilo, and (4) Pfizer-BioNTech. The government has initially deployed over 28,000 vaccinators

and more than 6.2 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines were distributed for the campaign. Only Pfizer-BioNTech vaccinations were given to children aged 12 to 18 in 62 cities, including Addis Ababa, whereas the other vaccines were given to individuals aged 18 and older across the country in all accessible regions, zones and districts (FMOH, 2022).

Earlier studies indicated that the public's knowledge, attitude and acceptance towards the pandemic and its vaccinations vary from region to region in Ethiopia. Hence, a portion of Ethiopia citizens are hesitant to take vaccines. For example, In February 2021, a comprehensive phone survey of households with 2178 participants was undertaken at the country level. This study indicated a very high rate of COVID-19 vaccine acceptance (92.3%), if vaccination was available for free (Oyekale, 2021). Another interviewer-administered questionnaire was provided to 492 individuals in Gurage zone, Ethiopia in March 2021, showed a lower intention to get COVID-19 vaccination (62.6%) (Abebe, Shitu and Mose, 2021). Another interviewer-administered questionnaire study with 415 participants from Sodo, south-central Ethiopia in April 2021 showed an even lower rate for COVID-19 vaccine acceptance (45.5%), (Mesele, 2021). For healthcare workers, a self-administered questionnaire study that involved more than 400 participants in public hospitals in southwestern Ethiopia in March 2021, showed an intention to get COVID-19 vaccination among 48.4% of the participants (Angelo, Alemayehu and Dachew, 2021). Aiming to improve vaccine uptake, the MoH has launched a communication campaign with support from WHO Ethiopia. Through this campaign, the Ministry is transmitting information and calls to get vaccinated through short messaging system (SMS), different radio stations, and national television. The vaccination campaign was launched nationally as well as in all regions in simultaneous high-level events. As per the National Deployment and Vaccination Plan (NDVP) developed following the WHO Prioritizing Roadmap, frontline health workers and support staff, the elderly with underlying conditions and other high-risk groups have been prioritized for vaccination deaths (FMOH, 2022)

It was on March 13 2021 that the Ministry of Health of Ethiopia launched COVID-19 vaccine at EkaKotebe COVID-19 Hospital, in Addis Ababa where frontline health workers were vaccinated with the AstraZeneca vaccine to mark the beginning of the vaccination campaign. Healthcare workers include medical doctors, laboratory technicians, nurses, midwives, pharmacists, radiographers, anesthesiologists, public health and environmental health officers and any other professionals including staff who work in a healthcare facility. Other than health professionals, non-medical auxiliary employees such as financial workers, and janitors were included (Adane, Ademas and Kloos, 2022).

**Literature review** Corona virus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Infected people with the virus will experience mild to serious respiratory illness. Most patients recover without requiring special treatment, while others require medical attention and even some others become seriously ill and die. The most common symptoms of the disease include fever, cough, tiredness and loss of taste or smell (WHO, 2021).

COVID-19 is characterized by rapid transmission through the nasal route and can occur by close contact with an infected person. The virus can spread from an infected person's mouth or nose, in small liquid particles when they cough, sneeze, speak, sing or breathe. The important precautionary guidelines for COVID-19 recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO) include: wearing a facial mask, social distancing, and avoiding crowded and poorly ventilated places (Al-Zalfawi *et al.*, 2021).

The WHO in the month of January 2020 announced a public health emergency of international concern and called for a collaborative effort from all countries, including Ethiopia, to contain the spread of the virus (Islam *et al.*, 2021). The reported data from around the world indicates 408 million COVID 19 cases and 5.79 million deaths as of 11 February 2022 (Ritchie, 2020).

The global impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in an unprecedented level of public interest in vaccines. This includes a focus on the development of vaccines and their regulatory review and safety monitoring. Much of this coverage has taken place through mass and social media. Reports of adverse events (side effects) have led some people to express concerns about getting vaccinated, delay getting vaccinated or even be strongly opposed to vaccination (WHO, 2021).

Nevertheless, the best way to prevent and slow down transmission is to be well informed about the disease, how the viruses spread and get vaccinated and also follow local guidance. Vaccination has been shown to contribute to reducing deaths and severe illness from COVID-19, and to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 (CDC, 2021).



Vaccinating as many people as possible and reducing the spread of disease is important for it protects vulnerable people, including those who cannot receive vaccines, or the small proportion of people who might remain at risk of infection after vaccination. Widespread vaccination will also help prevent people from having to go to hospital and contribute to fewer people getting sick, ultimately alleviating the burden of COVID-19 on healthcare systems. Failure to vaccinate widely also enables continued circulation of the virus and the generation of variants, including some that may pose a greater risk (WHO, 2021).

Any vaccination program's effectiveness is dependent on participants' awareness, behaviors, and willingness to accept the COVID-19 vaccine (Abebe, Shitu and Mose, 2021). According to study by (Biswas *et al.*, 2021), the most determinate of intention to use COVID-19 vaccine are age, parity, occupational status, gender, marital status, educational status, income, perceived risk of COVID-19 infection, a healthcare worker, attitude towards, knowledge of COVID-19, being sick with COVID-19, the pre-existence of chronic disease.

Statement of the problem: Vaccines play a critical role in preventing deaths, hospitalization caused by infectious diseases. Emerging data on effectiveness indicates that licensed COVID-19 vaccines are contributing to controlling the spread of the disease. As of 13 February 2022, 12 million total doses of vaccine have been given (distributed) and 1.8 million people are fully vaccinated (which is 1.6% of the total Ethiopian population) so far. (Ritchie, 2020).

Multiple myths and conspiracy theories on vaccines and COVID-19 would also potentially affect the COVID-19 vaccine acceptance in a population (Shitu *et al.*, 2021). The low levels of knowledge, attitude, and low level of intention to accept vaccine for COVID-19 may be a concern of the globe. Since the most efficient means of stopping the virus from spreading is by protecting oneself from being infected to COVID-19, it is also important to vaccinate persons who are the most vulnerable as quickly as possible (Islam *et al.*, 2021).

Healthcare professionals and public health authorities have a central role in discussing vaccination against COVID-19 with their patients. Their knowledge, attitude and perception to use and expectations for the COVID-19 vaccine are critical for government and policymakers to overcome all obstacles to vaccine delivery; and to introduce the most successful vaccination strategy in Ethiopia (Abebe, Shitu and Mose, 2021). Reluctance of healthcare professionals to accept COVID-19 vaccination may not only increase the risk of virus transmission to their patients but also reduce the likelihood that these professionals will encourage patients to be vaccinated (Adane, Ademas and Kloos, 2022). In this study assessment was made to analyze the healthcare professionals' levels of knowledge, attitudes and perceptions on the selected health institutions in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

### **Significance of the study**

Understanding the levels of good knowledge, positive attitudes and perceptions of frontline workers are crucial information for decision makers leading the COVID-19 vaccination campaign. Therefore, findings from this study can be used by Federal Ministry of Health (MoH) and other health institutions involved

1. To introduce the most successful vaccination strategy across the country; and overcome obstacles to COVID-19 vaccine delivery.
2. To organize additional awareness creation program through several information communication means (including targeted training to healthcare professionals).

### **Objectives of the study**

Analyzing knowledge, attitudes and other issues of perception among healthcare professionals based on facts and figures on practices is a scientific way for developing strategies. Consequently, this study had the following general and specific objectives.

## **General objective**

The general objectives of this study were to assess the knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions towards the COVID-19 vaccination among the healthcare professionals' in the Yeka and Kotebe health centers in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

**Specific objectives** The specific objectives of this study were:

1. To evaluate the level of knowledge to COVID 19 vaccinations of healthcare professionals working in the two health centers
2. To determine whether the healthcare professionals working in the two health centers were tested for COVID-19 vaccine and got vaccinated
3. To analyze the magnitude of positive attitudes and perceptions towards COVID 19 vaccinations of healthcare professionals working in the two health centers

## **Methodology**

### **Study area**

This study was conducted in Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia. Addis Ababa is geographically located at 9.005401 latitude, and 38.763611 longitudes. It is one of the largest cities in Africa and inhabited by people of various origins. currently it has an estimated population of about 5 million. The new administrative structure of Addis Ababa has 11 sub-cities, and Yeka sub city, where the selected health centers are situated, is one among them (EiABC, 2018). According to the 2012 (Ethiopian Fiscal Year) Health and Health Related Indicators published by MoH, Addis Ababa has 13 Hospitals, 98 Health Centers.

### **Study design and period**

A survey was conducted on the two randomly sampled health centers (Yeka and Kotebe) at Yeka sub city in Addis Ababa. The study covered a three months period ranging from March to May 2022. Actual data collection was done in the month of April 2022.

### **Source of population**

All health professionals working in the above two health centers were considered. Data available in the Human Resource Departments (HRDs) of the two health centers was extracted to determine the number of participants. Healthcare professionals (Physicians, Nurses, Midwives, Anesthesiologist, Health officers, Pharmacists, radiographers, environmental health specialists, Biomedical Laboratory Technologists, Community health workers and others) were included. The combined population size of all healthcare professionals in the two health centers was the source population.

### **Study population**

All healthcare professionals (208) working in the two health centers were considered.

### **Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria**

The inclusion criteria of participants were i) being a health professional and ii) providing consent. Those who were absent (on sick leave, annual leave, or maternity leave) were excluded.

### **Sampling and sample size determination**

From the two randomly sampled health centers, all healthcare professionals, 208 (77, YHC and 131, KHC) were sampled.

### **Study variables**

The dependent variables, in this study, were knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions. To compute the three outcome variables of knowledge (good or poor), attitude (positive or negative), and perception (good or

poor), I used the mean score of responses to 9 questions about knowledge, 6 questions about attitude and 9 questions about perceptions as independent variable.

### **Data collection**

I adapted a validated questionnaire as used in [(Islam *et al.*, 2021),(Adane, Ademas and Kloos, 2022) and (Abebe, Shitu and Mose, 2021)] and modified to suit to our study (see appendix for sample questionnaire distributed to individual respondents). This structured and self reporting questionnaire has four sections (i.e., socio-demographics, knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions)

### **Data management, coding, analyses and data collectors**

The **knowledge section** comprises 8-items with three possible responses (i.e., “Yes”, “No” and “Don’t know”). The ‘yes’ responses were coded as 1, while the ‘No’ responses were coded 2 and ‘don’t know’ responses were coded as 3. The frequency (*n*) was obtained by summing the raw scores for each of the eight items and proportions from total number of respondents were obtained as percentage for each category. The mean percentage for all knowledge items was also calculated. In addition, an additional variable was asked about knowledge of healthcare professionals about the mode of transmission of COVID-19 with some possible answers (e.g., poor hygiene, inhalation of the virus, touching contaminated surfaces, eyes, nose or mouth; and shaking hands, hugging, and kissing).The overall knowledge of participants toward COVID-19 was obtained as having “good knowledge” or “poor knowledge”.

The **attitude section** consists of 6-items (e.g., the newly discovered COVID-19 vaccine is safe; I will take the COVID-19 vaccine without any hesitation, if it is available), and the response of each item was coded 1 = Disagree, 2 = Undecided, and 3 = Agree). The frequency (*n*) was obtained by summing the raw scores for each of the six items and proportions from total number of respondents were obtained as percentage for each category. The mean percentage for all attitude items was also calculated.

The **perceptions section** includes 9-items regarding participant’s perceptions towards the COVID-19 vaccine, with three possible responses (i.e., “Yes”, “No” and “Don’t know”); and The ‘yes’ responses were coded as 1, while the ‘No’ responses were coded 2 and ‘don’t know’ responses were coded as 3. The frequency (*n*) was obtained by summing the raw scores for each of the nine items and proportions from total number of respondents’ were obtained as percentage for each category. The mean percentage for all perception items was also calculated and the level of good perceptions towards COVID-19 vaccinations was determined.

Data collection was carried out by Sister Seblewengele Hailu (healthcare professional) working at KHC. And w/rt TenayeFisiha (Civil Servant at Ethiopian Civil Service University - ECSU) collected data from YHC.

### **Quality assurance**

Data were collected through a validated self-administered questionnaire adapted from relevant literature. To ensure the collection of reliable data, data collectors were trained by the researcher for half a day on the objectives of the study, the content of the questionnaire and ethical issues.

I also pre-tested the questionnaire on healthcare professionals in Kotebe clinic before actual data collection.

### **Statistical analysis**

The data analysis was performed using Microsoft Excel 2019 and SPSS version 25.0 (Chicago, IL, USA). Microsoft Excel was used for data cleaning, editing, sorting, and coding. The excel file was imported into SPSS software. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages mean, and standard deviations) were performed.

### **Ethical considerations**

The study was conducted after getting an ethical clearance from Ethical Committee at the health Bureau, city government of Addis Ababa. Further, permission was obtained from, Yeka sub city Health Office. The study

participants' were informed about the aim of the study and also given orientation on the importance of their participation in the study. The information obtained from the respondents was kept confidential.

## Results

### Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents

The socio-demographic characteristics of the participants are represented in tables- 1A, 1B and 1 C. Of the 208 healthcare professionals participated, the response rate was 206 (99%) with very few items were not responded to by participants and recorded as missing data. In the age group category, the majority of the respondents 155 (76.4%) were Adults, aged above >25 years and the remaining 48 (23.6%) were young, (18-25years); and 84 were male (40.8%) and 122 females (59.2%). Among 51.6% were married. The respondents majority were university degree holders or even higher 146 (72.3%) and 56 (27.7%) possessed College diploma (refer to table-1 A).

**Table 1- A: Background (Socio- educational) of the samples in the Yeka and Kotebe Health Centers, Addis Ababa, April 2022.**

No	Variables	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
<b>1</b>	<b>Sex (N = 206)</b>		
	Male	<b>84</b>	<b>40.8</b>
	Female	<b>122</b>	<b>59.2</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Age (Years) (N = 203)</b>		
	Young (18-25Years)	<b>48</b>	<b>23.6</b>
	Adult (>25 Years )	<b>155</b>	<b>76.4</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Marital Status (N = 192)</b>		
	Single	87	45.3
	Married	99	51.6
	Divorced /Separated	6	3.1
<b>4</b>	<b>Educational status (N = 202)</b>		
	Diploma	<b>56</b>	<b>27.7</b>
	University Degree /Higher	<b>146</b>	<b>72.3</b>

The study participants included 7 (3.4%) medical doctors, 22 (10.7%) laboratory technicians, 92 (44.9%) nurses and midwives, 19 (9.3%) pharmacists, 3 (1.5%) radiographers, 12 (5.9%) anesthesiologists, 32 (15.6%) public health officers, 3 (1.5%) environmental health specialist and 15 (7.3%) community health specialist. In terms of experience in the service facility, 134 (65.4%) possessed an experience of 10 years or more while remaining 71 (34.6%) had less than 10 years' job experience in the facility (refer table-1b).

**Table 1- B: Medical professionals and their experience in the service/ facility at Yeka and Kotebe Health Centers, Addis Ababa, April 2022.**

NO	Variable	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	Professionals (N=205)		
	Medical Doctor	7	3.4
	Laboratory Technician	22	10.7
	Nurse and Midwives	92	44.9
	Pharmacist	19	9.3
	Radiographer	3	1.5
	Anesthesiologist	12	5.9
	Public Health Officer	32	15.6
	Environmental Health Specialist	3	1.5
	Community Health Specialist	15	7.3
2	Years of service in the facilities (N = 205)		
	10 or less	134	65.4
	>10	71	34.6

In terms of background history, test results of CIVID-19, and access to any training or orientation programs reveal that respondents' knowledge about the history of COVID-19 positive cases in the family, among colleagues or friends was 'yes' in as much as 128 cases (62.4%); whereas remaining 77 cases (37.6%) responded 'no' to the question. It means that a large majority of the sample respondents were aware about

the presence of COVID cases in the city as part of their knowledge in the family, among colleagues or friends. Similarly, a majority of 171 (83.4%) of respondents did not have any chronic condition while 34 (16.6%) had one or more these diseases such as hypertension, asthma, diabetes, and/or kidney disease. About 127 (61.7%) of study participants reported that they were tested for COVID-19 and the remaining 79 (38.3%) did not. More than half 110 (53.7%) had received training or orientation about COVID-19 vaccination; while 95 (46.3%) responded 'no' to this question (refer Table 1 C).

**Table 1- C: Background history, test results of COVID – 19, and access to any training or Orientation in Yeka and Kotebe Health Centers, Addis Ababa, April 2022**

NO	Variable	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	<b>History of COVID-19 positive cases in the family, among colleagues or friends (N = 205)</b>		
	Yes	128	62.4
	No	77	37.6
2	<b>I have chronic diseases (N = 205)</b>		
	Yes	34	16.6
	No	171	83.4
3	<b>I have been tested for COVID-19 (N = 206)</b>		
	Yes	127	61.7
	No	79	38.3
4	<b>If 'Yes', were you positive (N = 127)</b>		
	Yes	73	57.5
	No	54	42.5
5	<b>I received any training or Orientation about COVID 19 Vaccination (N = 205)</b>		
	Yes	110	53.7
	No	95	46.3

#### Healthcare professionals' knowledge about COVID-19 vaccination

The distribution of each knowledge item about the COVID-19 vaccination is presented in Table2-A, and table 2-B. The mean percentage ( $\pm$ SD) of healthcare professionals with good knowledge was 73.4 ( $\pm$  4.9). The majority 171 (83%) responded that COVID-19 is a serious disease. One hundred thirty-seven (67.1%) of the participants had been aware of the development of the COVID-19 vaccine and 145 (69.7%) stated that vaccine could have side effects that result in many health complications. Half of the respondents, 104 (50.5%) knew about the effectiveness of the developed COVID-19 vaccine. More than half, 130 (63.4%) of the study participants had responded that the overdose of COVID-19 vaccine would become dangerous for humans. One hundred seventy (82.9%) of the participants expressed that older people and chronic disease patients are most likely to experience severe illness and death from COVID-19 infection; and 173 (84%) responded that healthcare professionals are more vulnerable to COVID-19 infection than the general public.

**Table 2-A: Knowledge of health care professionals about COVID-19 vaccine in the Yeka and Kotebe Health Centers, Addis Ababa, April 2022.**

NO	Variable	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	<b>I know about the COVID- 19 vaccine and its development (N = 204)</b>		
	Yes	137	67.1
	No	45	22.1
	Don't Know	22	10.8
2	<b>Knowledge of Health Care Professionals about the mode of transmission of COVID-19 (Multiple Responses are possible) (N = 206)</b>		
	Poor Hygiene	119	57.8
	Inhalation of the Virus	132	64.1
	Touching Contaminated Surfaces, eyes, nose, mouth	167	81.1
	Shaking Hands, Hugging, and Kissing	134	65.1
3	<b>COVID-19 is a serious disease (N = 206)</b>		
	Yes	171	83
	No	29	14.1
	Don't Know	6	2.9

4	<b>Vaccines Effectively Prevent COVID-19 (N=206)</b>		
	Yes	104	50.5
	No	70	34
	Don't Know	32	15.5
5	<b>Overall knowledge towards COVID-19 (N = 204)</b>		
	Good	153	75
	Poor	51	25

Further, as many as one hundred twenty five (60.6%) have considered that COVID-19 be acquired after full vaccination. More than three-quarters 167 (81.1%) of healthcare professionals considered the major mode of COVID-19 transmission to be touching contaminated surfaces and touching one's eyes, nose, and mouth, followed by shaking hands, hugging, and kissing 134 (65.1%), inhaling the virus 132 (64.1%), poor hygiene 119 (57.8%). The overall good knowledge of the healthcare professionals about COVID-19 and its vaccine was rated 153 (75%) whereas the remaining 51 (25%) had rated as having poor knowledge (table 2A).

A study on the vulnerability to COVID-19 infection (refer table 2-B) reveals that as much as 125 respondents (60.6%) replied as 'yes', whereas 55 (27.1%) replied as 'no' while 23 (11.3%) as 'do not know'. Similarly response to another question whether COVID-19 vaccines have side effects? A majority of the respondents 145 (71.1%) replied as 'yes' whereas 39 (19.1%) replied 'no' and remaining 20 (9.8%) as don't know. It means side effects of COVID-19 were recognized by a majority. Similar was the response for the use of overdose of vaccines. As many as 130 (63.4%) said as 'yes' 47 as 'no', while 28 as don't know'. With reference to older people and chronic disease patients experiencing severe illness and death from COVID-19 infection; the response was overwhelmingly 'yes' in as many as 170 (82.9%); 'no' in case of 24 (11.7%) and remaining 11 (5.4%) as don't know. Elaborating issue towards deeper insights; question was healthcare professionals are more vulnerable to COVID-19 infection than general public? The response was extremely high. As many as 173 (84%) replied as 'yes'; 22 as 'no' and remaining 11 (5.3%) as 'don't know'.

**Table 2 B: Vulnerability to COVID-19 infection in the Yeka and Kotebe Health Centers, Addis Ababa, April 2022.**

NO	Variable	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	<b>COVID-19 can be acquired after full Vaccination (N=203)</b>		
	Yes	125	60.6
	No	55	27.1
	Don't Know	23	11.3
2	<b>COVID-19 Vaccines have side effects (N=204)</b>		
	Yes	145	71.1
	No	39	19.1
	Don't Know	20	9.8
3	<b>It is dangerous to use overdose vaccines (N = 205)</b>		
	Yes	130	63.4
	No	47	22.9
	Don't Know	28	13.7
4	<b>Older people and chronic disease patients most likely to experience severe illness and death from COVID-19 infection (N = 205)</b>		
	Yes	170	82.9
	No	24	11.7
	Don't Know	11	5.4
5	<b>Healthcare professionals are more vulnerable to COVID-19 Infection than the general public (N=206).</b>		
	Yes	173	84
	No	22	10.7
	Don't Know	11	5.3

#### Healthcare professionals' attitudes towards COVID-19 vaccination

The distribution of each of the attitudes items towards the COVID-19 vaccine is presented in Table 3. The mean percentage ( $\pm$ SD) of healthcare professionals with positive attitude was 55.5 ( $\pm$ 3.5). Less than half, 90 (44.1%) of the participants had agreed that the newly developed COVID-19 vaccine was safe. Nearly two-

third, 128 (63%) of the participants had also agreed that the COVID-19 vaccine was essential for us. Ninety-seven, (48.5%) of the participants had expressed that they have taken the COVID-19 vaccine without any hesitation. Almost two-third, 130 (63.7%) of the respondents had agreed to encourage family/friends/relatives to get vaccinated. Similar proportion like in the above item, 130 (63.7%) of the respondents had agreed that it is not possible to reduce the incidence of COVID-19 without vaccination. Half, 101 (50%) of the participants agreed that the COVID-19 vaccine should be distributed fairly to all of us.

**Table 3: Attitudes towards COVID-19 vaccines among healthcare professionals in the Yeka and Kotebe Health Centers, Addis Ababa, April 2022**

No	Variables	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	<b>The Newly discovered COVID-19 vaccine is safe (N = 204)</b>		
	Disagree	46	22.6
	Undecided	68	33.3
	Agree	90	44.1
2	<b>The COVID-19 vaccine is essential for us (N = 203)</b>		
	Disagree	33	16.3
	Undecided	42	20.7
	Agree	128	63
3	<b>I have taken the COVID-19 vaccine without any hesitation (N = 200)</b>		
	Disagree	64	32
	Undecided	39	19.5
	Agree	97	48.5
4	<b>I will also encourage my family /friends/ relatives to get vaccinated (N = 204)</b>		
	Disagree	42	20.6
	Undecided	32	15.7
	Agree	130	63.7
5	<b>It is not possible to reduce the incidence of COVID-19 without vaccination (N = 204)</b>		
	Disagree	42	20.5
	Undecided	32	15.7
	Agree	130	63.7
6	<b>The COVID-19 Vaccine should be distributed fairly to all of us (N = 202)</b>		
	Disagree	56	27.7
	Undecided	45	22.3
	Agree	101	50

#### **Healthcare professionals' perceptions about COVID- 19 vaccination**

The distribution of each perceptions item about COVID-19 vaccination is presented in Table 4- A and 4- B. The mean percentage ( $\pm$ SD) of healthcare professionals with good perceptions was 52.1 ( $\pm$ 5.6). Very few, 15 (7.4%) of the healthcare professionals considered themselves to be at high risk of becoming infected with COVID-19 and 103 (50.2%) of them thought that they could get infected with COVID-19 through vaccination. On the other hand, 92 (45.8%) of the respondents accepted that it is possible to reduce the incidence of COVID-19 without vaccination. Nearly half, 97 (48.5%) of the healthcare professionals thought that vaccines could worsen any pre-existing medical conditions. Again one hundred forty two (70.6%) agreed that getting vaccinated on his/her own for COVID -19 is a good way to protect his/her family and other people against infection. More than half, 119 (59.8%) of them had the opinion that their families and friends think that getting vaccinated for COVID -19 is a good idea.

Over half of participants 114 (57.3%) responded that they could get proper medical care if contracted COVID-19; and nearly two third of the respondents 131 (65.2%) accepted that the development of COVID-19 vaccines was properly carried out to make them safe. One hundred twenty-eight (63.7%) had good perception to get vaccinated (refer table 4-A).

**Table 4-A: Perception towards COVID-19 vaccine among healthcare professionals in the Yeka and Kotebe Health Centers, Addis Ababa, April 2022**

No.	Variables	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	<b>I believe that I can get proper medical care if I contract COVID-19 (N=199)</b>		
	Yes	114	57.3
	No	42	21.1
	Don't Know	43	21.6
2	<b>I think that the development of COVID-19 vaccines was properly carried out to make them safe (N = 201)</b>		
	Yes	131	65.2
	No	23	11.4
	Don't Know	47	23.4
3	<b>My family and Friends think that getting vaccinated for COVID -19 is a good idea (N = 199)</b>		
	Disagree	39	19.6
	Undecided	41	20.6
	Agree	119	59.8
4	<b>Most of my colleagues appear to think that getting vaccinated is a good idea (N =201)</b>		
	Yes	128	63.7
	No	39	19.4
	Don't Know	34	16.9
5	<b>Getting myself vaccinated for COVID -19 is a good way to protect your family and other people against infection (N = 201)</b>		
	Yes	142	70.6
	No	41	20.4
	Don't Know	18	9

Further making an in depth inquiry into the analysis of questions pertaining to negative perceptions among medical professionals about getting vaccinated has been presented in table 4-B. There are four specific questions to assess the negative perceptions among medical professionals. On the first question of being at high risk with COVID-19 infection; results reveal that 139 accounting for about 69.2% medical professionals disagreed with the idea. On the contrary, 47 (23.7%) were 'un decided'. However, 15 accounting for 7.4% replied as 'agree' to the question. Similarly, as many as 103 respondents (51.2%) replied 'yes' to the second question of getting infected with COVID-19 through vaccination. Contrary to the above, there was a 'no' response to this question as well and as many as 77 respondents forming 38.3% of the total responded 'no' to this question. On the other hand, 21 (10.5%) replied as 'don't know' as their response to the second question. The third question in the series related to the perception that it is possible to reduce and control the incidence of COVID-19 without vaccination. As many as 92 respondents, forming 45.8% of the total sample respondents, reported 'yes' to the question. On the contrary 73 (36.3%) responded 'no' on the question. Remaining 36 (17.9%) replied as 'don't know'. The result shows that there is a prevailing misconception and negative perception towards reduction and control measures of COVID-19 without vaccination among medical professionals in the study areas. The fourth question, in the series, was related to the perception that COVID-19 vaccine can worsen any health condition of an individual. The response to this question was 'yes' in cases of 97 respondents accounting for 48.5% of the total; 'no' in cases of 61 (30.5%); and 42 (21%) in cases of 'don't know'. Results further substantiate that there is a negative perception among a large number of medical professionals towards COVID -19 vaccines that it can worsen their existing health condition.



**Table 4 -B: Negative perception of medical professionals about getting vaccinated for COVID-19 in the Yeka and Kotebe Health Centers, Addis Ababa, April 2022.**

No	Variable	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	<b>I think I am at high risk of becoming infected with COVID-19 (N = 201)</b>		
	Disagree	139	69.2
	Undecided	47	23.4
	Agree	15	7.4
2	<b>I think that I could get infected with COVID-19 through vaccination (N = 201)</b>		
	Yes	103	51.2
	No	77	38.3
	Don't Know	21	10.5
3	<b>It is possible to reduce and control the incidence of COVID-19 without vaccination (N = 201)</b>		
	Yes	92	45.8
	No	73	36.3
	Don't Know	36	17.9
4	<b>I think that COVID -19 vaccine can worsen any health conditions I have (N = 200)</b>		
	Yes	97	48.5
	No	61	30.5
	Don't Know	42	21

## Discussions

The present study evaluated the knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions of the COVID-19 vaccination among healthcare professionals in the Yeka and Kotebe Health centers in Addis Ababa. The study group is comprised of either sex with different ages, educational backgrounds and professions (Table 1). The study suggested that the healthcare professionals that took part in the survey had the overall good knowledge about COVID-19 and its mode of transmission. They were aware of the development of the COVID-19 vaccine, its dosage, the possible side effects, and the non-recommended group of people for vaccination (Table 2).

The mean percentage level of good knowledge towards the COVID-19 vaccine of healthcare professionals was found to be 73.4%; in this study. This finding is in agreement with similar a study conducted in Ethiopia, i.e. 74% by (Abebe, Shitu and Mose, 2021). The similar research setting and the availability and accessibility of health service infrastructures may be the possible reason for the similarity observed.

In the 'attitude' domain, the study group indicated an overall positive response to the COVID-19 vaccination. They had agreed to encourage family/friends/relatives to get vaccinated. They had also had the idea that it is not possible to reduce the incidence of COVID-19 without vaccination and hence the COVID-19 vaccine should be distributed fairly to all of us (Table 3).

In this study, the level of positive attitude towards the COVID-19 vaccine was found to be (55.5%). Hence, this is higher than the earlier study conducted in Ethiopia, i.e. 44.7% by (Abebe, Shitu and Mose, 2021) and nearly in agreement (52.3%) with the study by (Adane, Ademas and Kloos, 2022). The similarity of this finding with the later might be explained by the similarity in socio-demographic characteristics of the study participants and method used in the study.

In the 'perception' category, the contributors revealed that they were considered themselves to be at low risk of becoming infected with COVID-19 but again believe that they could get infected while received vaccination. The respondents accepted that it is possible to reduce the incidence of COVID-19 without vaccination if adhering to safety measures. Some even had the perception that vaccines could worsen any pre-existing medical conditions. Whereas, above two third agreed that getting vaccinated on his/her own for COVID -19 is a good way to protect his/her family and other people against infection; and 63.7% had the opinion getting vaccinated for COVID -19 is a good idea (Table 4).

The overall good perception about the COVID-19 vaccination was (52.2%) in this study. This level of good perception observed was lower than two earlier studies conducted both one in the Saudi Arabia (71.3%) by (Al-Zalfawi *et al.*, 2021) and in Ethiopia (60.5%) by (Adane, Ademas and Kloos, 2022).

### **Limitation of the study**

This study is limited in its scope to the two health centers, Yeka and Kotebe, at Yeka sub city in Addis Ababa. The study evaluated the responses of only 208 healthcare professionals working in the above-mentioned health institutions. The study covered only three months period ranging from 1 March to 30 May 2022. Authors have used only descriptive statistics in the data analysis and finding from this study may not be generalized to all Health Centers in Addis Ababa.

### **Conclusion**

Any vaccination program's effectiveness is dependent on participants' knowledge, behaviors, and willingness to accept the vaccine. This study was, therefore, conducted to assess the knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions of healthcare professionals towards the COVID-19 vaccination. The study indicated that the healthcare professionals considered in the assessment have relatively good knowledge (73.4%) and nearly optimum positive attitudes (55.5%) and perceptions (52.2%) towards COVID-19 vaccinations. However, only 48.5% of the participants had taken the COVID-19 vaccine without any hesitation.

### **Recommendation**

Based on the findings from this survey, I recommend that the awareness creation program through several means' (including targeted training to healthcare professionals) should be continued, which has proven to play an important role in communicating information about the safety and efficacy of vaccines to different groups of the population.

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# Enhancing the Fight against Human Trafficking in Mauritius: Insights from the 2023 Round-Table Discussion on the National Action Plan

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## Abstract:

This report provides an extended analysis of a pivotal round-table discussion organised under the aegis of the University of Technology, Mauritius, led by Professor Hemant Chittoo, Mrs. Bhavna Mahadew, and Mr. Viraj Fulena. The event focused on the National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons 2022-2026 (NAPCTP) in Mauritius, with an emphasis on prosecution, prevention, protection, and partnership. Stakeholders from various sectors, including government agencies, civil society organizations, law enforcement, and academia, participated in the round-table, sharing their perspectives, challenges, and recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of combating human trafficking.

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## Introduction

Human trafficking remains a critical global concern, with devastating impacts on victims and severe repercussions for societies. Defined by the United Nations as the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring, or receipt of people through force, fraud, or deception for the purpose of exploitation, it is a crime that thrives in the shadows. In response to this grave issue, the Government of Mauritius has initiated the National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons 2022-2026 (NAPCTP), a four-year roadmap aimed at guiding the nation's response to trafficking in persons. The NAPCTP prioritizes prosecution, prevention, protection, and partnership and operates under a rights-based approach to address the multifaceted nature of this social ill.

## Stakeholders at the Round Table

The round-table discussion featured a diverse range of stakeholders who played pivotal roles in the anti-trafficking ecosystem. The impressive list included:

- Attorney General's Office
- Gender Links
- MACOSS (Mauritius Council of Social Service)
- Mauritius Police Force (Police Training School)
- Mauritius Prison Service
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration, and International Trade (Human Rights Division)
- National Human Rights Commission (Human Rights Division)
- Office of the Director of Public Prosecution
- Open University of Mauritius
- University of Mauritius
- University of Technology, Mauritius

## Discussion

The round-table discussions were both extensive and insightful, touching upon a range of key issues:

### Prosecution of Offenses Related to Trafficking in Persons

The cornerstone of combating human trafficking in Mauritius is the Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act of 2009. This legislation provides the legal basis for prosecuting trafficking offences. However, participants in the round-table highlighted several limitations and challenges. Notably, the absence of a clear legal

definition of 'exploitation' was cited as a significant hurdle, which has hampered prosecution efforts and deterred convictions. Stakeholders argued for necessary legislative amendments to address this gap.

The round-table discussions further emphasised the concept of judicial activism, whereby the judiciary plays an active role in interpreting laws, especially those related to the human rights of trafficking victims. This proactive approach could help compensate for deficiencies in the legal framework. Legal practitioners were encouraged to be more prepared and thorough in constructing well-researched cases, potentially prompting a more engaged judiciary.

Innovative mechanisms such as public interest litigation, class actions, and strategic litigation were also considered as valuable additions to the fight against trafficking. It was suggested that these mechanisms could make prosecution more effective and successful. Specialised training for stakeholders involved in the conduct of inquiries and prosecution, including prosecutors, magistrates, and judges, was proposed as an innovative measure. Given the unique challenges of prosecuting human trafficking cases, specialized training can help equip those involved in the legal process.

### **Awareness about the Legal Framework on Trafficking in Persons**

Representatives from civil society organisations shed light on a critical issue—the lack of awareness about the laws on human trafficking in Mauritius. They highlighted the challenges they face in understanding and dealing with trafficking cases due to insufficient legal education. This issue extends to their ability to distinguish possible offenses when working with victims or perpetrators of human trafficking. The round-table discussions emphasised the importance of collaboration between NGOs and legal practitioners to provide guidance and support in handling trafficking cases.

Effective advocacy campaigns and inter-agency collaborations were suggested as means to raise awareness and improve understanding of human trafficking. Collaborative efforts between NGOs, academia, law enforcement agencies, and the media could enhance their collective activism.

### **Data, Statistics, and Information on Trafficking in Persons**

The discussion emphasised the importance of evidence-based policy recommendations for an effective prosecution of human trafficking offenses. To achieve this, stakeholders pointed to the need for accurate and comprehensive data, statistics, and information about human trafficking, from both victims and perpetrators. However, the major challenge is the lack of readily available, disaggregated data. Current data collection methods were deemed insufficient for meaningful research in the field.

Representatives from academia emphasised that the lack of comprehensive data poses a significant challenge for conducting effective research on human trafficking. Such data should be made available publicly while respecting data protection policies and the privacy rights of victims. The need for a comprehensive data framework was discussed, one that could facilitate a more informed and targeted approach to addressing human trafficking in Mauritius.

### **The Role of the Police in Combating Trafficking in Persons**

The Mauritius Police Force plays a pivotal role in the prosecution of human trafficking offences. Participants discussed the importance of harmonious collaboration between the Police and the Office of the Director of Public Prosecution (ODPP). While training sessions are conducted to equip police officers to investigate human trafficking cases, the need for more effective, tailor-made training and more frequent sessions was underscored.

Participants raised the issue of resource constraints, especially in cases that involve cross-border investigations. More resources, including financial, technological, and human resources, were deemed essential for timely and detailed investigations, which are critical for successful prosecution. In the context of cross-border trafficking, concerns were also raised about the ineffectiveness of border controls at airports and seaports in Mauritius.

The participants called for an improved system of profiling at these points of entry, which could enable police officers to intervene more effectively in suspected cases of human trafficking. Furthermore, the need for police officers to undergo specialised training was emphasized to better equip them to handle the

complexities and challenges specific to human trafficking cases. In this regard, it was suggested that the Police Training School should consider revising its training needs analysis and effectiveness, potentially with the assistance of training specialists.

### **The Role of Civil Society Organizations in Combating Trafficking in Persons**

The round-table highlighted the pivotal role that civil society organisations can play in combating human trafficking. While they currently do their best with available resources, the need for more strategic and effective action was recognised. Specialised NGOs working on human trafficking, well-supported by other stakeholders, were proposed as an essential element in the fight against trafficking.

Civil society organisations were also encouraged to make effective use of international mechanisms, such as the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and UN treaty bodies, to advocate for change. This includes submitting individual complaints and drafting shadow reports to accurately capture the essence of human trafficking in Mauritius.

Collaboration between civil society organisations, academia, law enforcement agencies, and the media was considered critical to enhancing their effectiveness in addressing human trafficking.

### **The Role of Academia and Research**

The round-table discussions emphasised the crucial role of academia in advocacy and research on human trafficking in Mauritius. Academics can provide research and advocacy support that can inform legal amendments, educate the population, and conduct advocacy campaigns with policymakers.

Research and consultancy in the field of human trafficking from a broad perspective were deemed necessary to enhance the legislative framework. Participants recognised that academic research can provide valuable insights and data-driven recommendations to address the challenges faced in prosecuting human trafficking offenses effectively.

### **Psychological Support to Victims**

The discussions highlighted the significant role that victims play in the effective prosecution of human trafficking offences. Victims often serve as key witnesses in such cases. However, they face challenges such as trial delays, inadequate shelter provisions, and insufficient medical and psychological support. The conditions in which victims are currently being kept were deemed "unacceptable."

While the law provides for shelters for victims of human trafficking, the implementation on the ground falls short of providing adequate support. There is a need for a proper framework for victim shelters, one that upholds the rights and dignity of victims. The participants emphasized the urgency of addressing this issue to ensure that victims can testify effectively in court.

### **Conclusion**

The round-table discussion represented a significant milestone in the implementation of the NAPCTP in Mauritius. It provided a platform for in-depth discussions among relevant stakeholders, shedding light on challenges and proposing innovative solutions for a more effective prosecution of trafficking offenses.

This report serves as a foundational document, providing a preliminary situational analysis of prosecution issues related to human trafficking in Mauritius. Each point raised and discussed during the round-table can now be further researched and pursued to enhance the legal framework for combating human trafficking in the country. The collaborative efforts of stakeholders from various sectors have set a course for a more coordinated, informed, and effective fight against human trafficking in Mauritius.

# Enigma of Forest Rights in India

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## **Abstract:**

The Forest Rights Act, 2006, came into effect on December 31, 2007, and for the purpose of implementation Forest Right Act Rules, 2008, was notified on January 1, 2008. Both the Act and the Rules did not come with the implementation deadline. The historical injustice with forest dwellers is deep rooted in the institutional frameworks and layered within social, political and economic inequities. Consequently, the Forest Rights Act and the Forest Rights Act Rules countering previous acts and legislations brought more confusion in the management and the governance of forests than clarity. Evidently, implementing agencies lacked the capacity and the expertise to implement it effectively and smoothly. Nevertheless, the steadfastness for justice can be determined by how well adaptations were made to the challenges that emerged from the implementation of the Act. Who has the higher stake in conserving forests and who pays the price for development. In the quest for sustainability, the rights of 275 million people living in and around forest areas are being lost in the midst of politics of development and politics of conservation.

**Key Words:** Forest Rights; Justice; Conservation; Governance; Development

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## **Embodiment of Forest Rights Act, 2006**

In response to Dr. B. D. Sharma's Twenty-Ninth Report of the Commissioner Scheduled Caste & Schedule Tribe, submitted in 1990, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) released comprehensive orders to regularize legitimate forest occupants and settle claims over the disputed forest settlements, and on the same note the Supreme Court (SC) in 1995 directed the state governments to follow Government's instruction and decide on peoples' claims (Scheduled Areas and Schedule Tribes Commission, 2004; Dreze, 2005). However, as the Bhuria's report suggests, before the orders could be implemented, the SC reverted its decision in favor of the avaricious planters looking for a quick gain. On May 3, 2002, Dr. V. K. Bahuguna, Inspector General of Forests, enjoined orders to evict 10 million encroachers from at least 1,250,000 hectares (ha) in a time bound manner by September 30, 2002 (Ministry of Environment and Forest, 2002a; Dhavan, 2002). The directive cited the concern of the SC's order of November 23, 2001 in IA No. 703 in WP No. 202/95 on the pernicious practices. Modern computerized legal search fails to trace any such order of the SC. Bijoy (2003) inferred it as a deliberate, dangerous and false interpretation made by the Forest Department (FD) to evict encroachers on the basis of the order of November 11, 2001 that instructed nine states to prevent further encroachment on forest land.

To implement the wrongly interpreted court orders, committees were constituted at the Forest Circle Level and monitoring committees were set up at the state level. Consequently, a large scale eviction drive became the headlines in the national news. The drive faced colossal resistance, and political parties started warming up for a new political agenda. Thereupon, in response to the Writ Petition (Civil) No. 202/95 and 171/96, the MoEF&CC set up the Central Empowered Committee on September 17, 2002 under the Chairmanship of P.V. Jayakrishnan (Ministry of Environment and Forest, 2002b). Noted lawyer Rajeev Dhavan asserted that the Jayakrishnan Committee was being pretentious and ignorant about the previous commitments of the ministry and the alleged Rs. 4.5 trillion loss to the nation over the period of 50 years due to tribals in forests as a fabricated figure (Dhavan, 2002). During the 2004 general election, both the Indian National Congress and the Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) promised to enact tribal rights in forest areas. Congress led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) came into power and tribal rights over forests were included in the National Common Minimum Programme (CMP). On the recommendation of the Prime Minister Office (PMO), the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) presented the draft bill in the Parliament in March 2005. A Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) having 30 members from different parties was set up to make it a comprehensive legislation. The revised draft was put to the Parliament in May 2006 and after several changes, the Schedule Tribes and Others Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, got approved the same year in December. In short, the Act is known as Forest Rights Act (FRA).

## **Nature of Rights in Forest Rights Act**

FRA commissioned thirteen bundles of rights in the form of Individual Forest Rights (IFRs), Community Forest Rights (CFRs) or both. These rights allowed tribals and other forest dwellers to hold and live in forest land, use land for habitation and self-cultivation, and use forest resources for livelihood. These rights have been granted with the power to regenerate, conserve and manage forests while protecting wildlife and biodiversity. Having the right to hold forest land separates IFRs from CFRs. Both IFRs and CFRs are inalienable in nature. However, the provisions under CFRs are diverse and have far reaching ramifications on a community's access to forest resources, its role in forest management and its benefit in food and livelihood security. CFRs are the rights franchised by the settlers in and around the forest area or herdsmen and seasonal migrators for grazing and collecting Non Timber Forest Produce (NTFP) or those who sporadically access forest resources during disasters. CFRs are assigned under the broad areas of rights recognized as there is no mechanism to record every detail of the rights recognized.

For IFRs, the land must have been under the possession of an individual, family or the community at the commencement of the Act and must be confined to the actual area under possession and in no way outstrip 4 hectares (ha). The area of 4 ha is inclusive of self cultivation and allied activities such as cattle rearing, post harvest activities, tree crops and rotational fallows. The land granted is heritable, but not alienable or transferable. It is registered jointly in the name of husband and wife, and in the name of single head where a family is headed by a single person. When the family of the title holder does not have an inheritor, the inalienable right goes on to the next-of-kin. All the titles given under FRA are legal titles with deeds bearing ownership and other rights over forest resources that are cognizable or enforceable in the court of law.

## **Institutional Framework of FRA**

The FRA laid down the procedures to empower the existing as well as newly formed institutions. At the first line of implementation towards the grassroots are Gram Sabhas (GS) that commence the process of accepting, amalgamating and validating claims. The GS is supported by the Sub-Divisional Level Committee (SDLC) that scrutinizes GS's resolutions, prepares a Record of Rights (ROR) and maps related to claims. The SDLC forwards it to the next higher level, the District Level Committee (DLC). The District Level Committee reexamines the claims and gives final verdict on the acceptance or rejection of claims, and ensures GSs with necessary support to carry out its functions. State Level Monitoring Committees (SLMC) monitor the implementation of FRA throughout the state. The Tribal Department is the nodal agency in the state and the state government appoints a nodal officer. At the national level, MoTA is the nodal agency.

## **Gram Sabha**

Based on Article 243(b) of the Constitution of India, GS is a Constitutional Body of persons registered in the electoral rolls within a village falling under a village level Panchayat. This means there are several GSs within a Village Level Panchayat or Gram Panchayat. GS is a primary institution that determines the attributes of IFRs and CFRs, and constitutes a Forest Rights Committee (FRC) to authenticate claims. The FRC is elected by GS in the first meeting convened by the Gram Panchayat. FRC consists of ten to fifteen persons, where not less than two-third members are Schedule Tribes (ST)— if present— and not less than one third members are women. Upon GS's call, FRC receives and acknowledges claim applications in the prescribed format. In addition, FRC prepares CFR claims on behalf of GS. It's the responsibility of GS to form committees for the protection of wildlife, forest and biodiversity. GS also monitors and controls committees formed to prepare conservation and management plan for the sustainable and equitable use of community forest resources. However, it is necessary to integrate the conservation and management plan with FD's micro plan or working plan.

GS finalizes the decision made by the committee issuing transit permits and plans the expenditure of the amount derived from the sales of forest produce, and considers resettlement packages under free informed consent. The proceedings of GS take place in the presence of at least one half of its members with one-third women's representation. Decisions of GS in the matters of forest rights should be in the presence of not less than 50% of the forest right claimants or their representatives. The outcomes of the meetings of GS must be based on a simple majority of the people present and voting. Although there's no specified time limit for receiving claim applications, it's desirable that such claims be made within three months or as specified by GS, giving reasons for extension.



### **Sub-Divisional Level Committee**

SDLCs are constituted by respective state governments and members include Sub-Divisional Officer or an equivalent as Chairperson, Forest Officer in charge of the subdivision or an equivalent officer as a member, three members of Block or Tehsil level Panchayat, and an officer of the Tribal Welfare Department. Members of block or Tehsil level Panchayat are nominated by District Panchayat, where two members are preferably forest dwelling STs and one of the three members is a woman. Similarly, in Sixth Schedule areas, at least one out of three members nominated by the Autonomous District Council or Regional Council is a woman. In municipal areas, nominations are done by municipality. It's SDLC's primary responsibility to make GSs aware of duties and responsibilities in using forest resources, and provide forest maps, revenue maps and electoral rolls. The onus of free, open and fair decisions in GS is on SDLC.

### **District Level Committee**

DLCs are established by respective state governments and have District Collector or Deputy Commissioner as Chairperson, Divisional Forest Officer or Deputy Conservator of Forest as member, three members of District Panchayat, and an officer or officer in charge of the Tribal Welfare Department. The DLC's nominated members from District Panchayat in Sixth Schedule areas follow the same procedure as SDLC's nominated members in Sixth Schedule areas. DLC ensures that responsibilities of SDLC are performed profusely, especially those towards primitive tribal groups, pastoralist and nomadic tribes. DLC in coordination with other DLCs resolves inter-district claims. Certified copies of titles under IFRs to the concerned claimants and GS, and certified copies of the titles under CFRs to the concerned GSs are issued by DLC. It's empowered to issue directives to consolidate forest rights in government records together with Record of Rights (ROR).

### **State Level Monitoring Committees**

FRA mandates state governments to constitute SLMC under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary, Commissioner of Tribal Welfare or equivalent as Member Secretary, Secretary of Revenue Department (RD) as member, Secretary of Tribal or Social Welfare Department as member, Secretary of FD as member, Secretary of Panchayati Raj as member, Principal Chief Conservator of Forest as member, and three nominated ST members from Tribes Advisory Council, nominated by Chairperson of the Tribes Advisory Council or else three ST members nominated by the State Government. It's the prime obligation of SLMC to come up with criteria and indicators to oversee the process of recognizing, verifying and conferring forest rights. The SLMC takes cognizance of offences and contraventions of the provisions of FRA committed by any officer or authority or committee and proceeds against and punishes by fine up to Rs. 1,000. Besides rehabilitating illegally evicted forest dwellers before the commencement of FRA, the SLMC also monitors the modification of forest rights recognized in critical wildlife habitats of National Parks and Sanctuaries and subsequent resettlement as per the procedures established in the Act. SLMC meets at least once every three months to monitor and discuss the implementation of FRA, and provide quarterly reports to the Central Government. The quarterly report contains details of claims approved, claims rejected and pending claims. However, the status report of FRA on MOTA website shows that out of the 36 states and Union Territories (UT), the nodal agency has updates from only 23 states in which the status of 5 states are incomplete.

### **Implementation of FRA: Recognition and Vesting of Rights**

As per FRA, a forest dwelling ST is eligible only when he/she: (i) belongs to a ST; (ii) had been residing in forest or forest land prior to December 13, 2005; and (iii) had been depending on forests for legitimate livelihood needs. In case of Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (OTFDs): (i) any member of the community must have resided in the forest land for three generations (75 years) before December 13, 2005; and (ii) must be depending on forest for bona-fide livelihood needs. For determination, any or two evidence from a broad range of evidence specified in Rule 13 of FRA, which includes government receipts, maps, census data, physical evidence and *nistar*<sup>1</sup> rights and even a simple statement of elders except the claimant. The provision of 75 years is not mandatory in many cases, especially in the case of migrating communities and in forests and forest lands that were notified as forest during the 1950s. FRA confers equal status to forest dwelling STs and OTFDs.

After receiving claim forms, FRC intimates the concerned claimant, FD and RD for site visit and recording evidences to substantiate claims. It's ensured that pastoralists, nomadic tribes, primitive tribal groups and pre-agricultural community rights are verified in the presence of their members, recorded appropriately with recognizable landmarks and delineated on map showing forest resources and customary boundaries. After receiving the receipt of FRC findings, GS takes decision and communicates the same to SDLC. In case of rejection or modification of claims by GS or SDLC, the claimant must be communicated in person. The decisions of GS as well as SDLC are subject to appeal. When SDLC or DLC concludes that GS's decision is incomplete, it's remanded back to GS for reconsideration. Anyone aggrieved by the decision of GS may file a petition to SDLC, preferably within sixty days of the pronouncement made by GS. Likewise, any person aggrieved by the decision of SDLC may approach DLC within sixty days from the date of decision taken by SDLC. Decisions of SDLC and DLC concerning revision or rejection of GS's decision or rejection of SDLC's decision by DLC bear detailed explanation of modifications and rejection. If an objection is made by any other state agency, the appeal is decided by SDLC or DLC in the absence of the concerned state agency representative. The settlement finalization process follows creation of a map — jointly by RD and FD — assimilating forest rights in revenue records, where forest land is under the control of RD, and in forest records where forest land is under FD, latest within three months. The FRA process gets complete only after the creation of Record of Rights (ROR) in the Government books of records. When individual land rights and conversion of villages in the forest land to revenue village is under the administrative control of FD, entry of rights in the revenue records is mandatory. Title document received by beneficiary has meticulous details of forest rights bestowed. Furthermore, the final document received for IFRs should also contain survey number/*Khata* number of the land. The verdict of DLC on ROR is final and binding. In case of rejection of claims by DLC, reasons are provided to the claimant so that other legal course can be opted, such as the writ jurisdiction of the constitutional courts.

FRA was implemented without a cutoff date as it would have been tantamount to penalizing forest dwellers for the failure of state mechanism. Many state governments, especially ten states with notified Fifth Schedule areas and four Northeast states under Sixth Schedule, either felt FRA as irrelevant or had no inkling about how to apply it. Even though state governments constituted SLMC, DLCs, and SDLCs, the GSs were defined at Panchayat level rather than at revenue village level, or as defined under the Provisions of Panchayats (Extension to the Schedule Areas) Act 1996 (PESA) in the Fifth Schedule areas. The size of GS at the Panchayat level made attaining a meeting quorum difficult and functioning of FRC impractical. In the absence of vital clarification and guidelines, several SLMC and nodal agencies issued unlawful deadlines and forced DLCs to issue titles relying on satellite imagery. Undoubtedly, it demonstrated insufficient readiness and absence of schooled staff. In many states, the nodal Tribal Departments were a nominal Head as they had weak infrastructure and no prior experience in handling such settlements, and its obligations were transferred either to RD or FD as added responsibilities.

### **Implementation of Individual Forest Rights**

The implementation of IFRs showed incidences of forged claims on the basis of encroachments made after the enactment of FRA. At places there were instances of wrongful rejections, without explanations and proper communication to claimants, due to wrong interpretation of different sections, such as 'dependence' clause and the meaning of OTFDs. In sixteen years after the enactment of Act, forests, dwellers' claims are not being accepted at sites for development projects and in other places forest dwellers are being harassed and evicted. (Ministry of Tribal Affairs, 2012; Menon, 2018).

The monthly update on the status of FRA implementation, for the period ending June 30, 2023, shows that the highest number of 4,57,145 individual titles have been distributed in Chhattisgarh, followed by Odisha and Madhya Pradesh. In terms of extent of forest land in which IFRs have been given, the highest figure is for Chhattisgarh with 3,72,037.28 ha followed by Madhya Pradesh and Odisha (Ministry of Tribal Affairs, 2023). During the same period, across India, 2,201,842 individual titles were distributed out of 4,368,025 individual claims received, with overall 50.41% claims approved, making it 2.7% of the total forest cover in India (Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, 2023).

### **Implementation of Community Forest Rights**

Implementation of CFRs dragged on in the beginning as is evident from the past years record of titles distributed. CFRs are included in section 3 (1) of FRA, recognized and vested upon village communities and franchised by its members. CFRs include traditional or customary boundaries of the village, including seasonal use by pastoralists, even if such traditional and customary forests have been declared as protected

areas (Ministry of Tribal Affairs, n.d). CFR titles are issued to a GS that register claims. Undoubtedly, the root of historical injustice, non recognition of customary practices, undocumented rights and unavailability of recorded rights made CFR implementation difficult. When FRA was implemented, development rights under 3(2) were considered as CFRs at many places. In other places, *nistar* rights and Joint Forest Management (JFM) were assumed to fall under CFRs. It wasn't clear how Forest Villages (Van Panchayats) and the Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act, 1908, (CNT) would be dealt under FRA. Like IFRs, CFRs were also denied in areas demarcated for developmental projects and areas that lay within critical wildlife habitats.

FRA Rule ensures forest right holders get post claim support through state governments in facilitating government schemes for basic amenities, livelihood, land improvement and land development. These development rights can be exercised even before or during the process of vesting forest rights. The financial needs of state governments towards implementing CFRs can be partially or wholly met through grants under Article 275 (1) of the Constitution of India, Special Central Assistance (SCA) to Tribal Sub Plan (TSP), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 (MNREGA), forestry funds available with Gram Panchayats, funds under Compensatory Afforestation Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) and fund of the District Mineral Foundation (Ministry of Tribal Affairs, 2017b). Chhattisgarh is leading in the distribution of CFRs titles with 45,965 titles, followed by Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Odisha (Ministry of Tribal Affairs, 2023). In terms of the extent of forest land for which titles were given to communities, Chhattisgarh is leading with 2,002,064.70 ha, followed by Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh (Ministry of Tribal Affairs, 2023).

### **Forest Villages**

Forest village settlements were settled by FD for laborers engaged in forestry works. These villages were established for colonial commercial forest management and dates back 80 to 90 years. Residents of these villages had wage works for several months of the year. FD allotted them land for subsistence cultivation, allowed collection of MFP and other forest produce for domestic consumption. After the ban on felling and decrease in commercial exploitation, such villages have been facing crunch in employment opportunities. The exact number of such villages is unknown. Lives in these villages were adversely impacted with the enactment of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972. These villages have remained inhabited and are being cultivated for decades, but the land is recorded as forest land in government records. The attempts made by the government during the 1970s were curtailed by the enactment of Forest Conservation Act, 1980. As these villagers lack titles, they have been denied bank loans, domicile certificates, caste certificates, housing benefits and many others. At places, forest villages have been treated as a regular village under FRA, while in most cases their rights have been denied. It's the responsibility of the district administration in association with Panchayati Raj Institutions to identify such forest villages, *taungya* (Taungya system is a form of agroforestry which started in Burma in 1856. It's a system to grow forest crops along with agricultural crops. It was used to grow forests where farmers could grow crops for the first few years and they had to raise forest plantation in return) villages, hamlets, unsurveyed or unrecorded settlements and convert into revenue villages.

### **Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups**

Within STs, there're economically unsound communities with poor literacy, using pre-agricultural technology and whose population is either declining or stagnant. There're 75 such Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) residing in 18 states, and union territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands (Ministry of Tribal Affairs, 2019). The baseline survey exists for about 40 groups, and there're no national level data on the status of FRA implementation and PVTGs (Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment, 2016). The conditions with Nomadic Pastoral Communities and Shifting Cultivation Communities are quite similar. Odisha having highest number of PVTGs is the only state to show considerable progress in it. The fundamental issues with PVTGs are their habitat rights, which have been denied due to the lack of knowledge and the broad definition of habitat in the Act itself. Many nomadic and shifting cultivators lost their traditional institutions because they were coercively made to settle down with the Panchayat system imposed on them. Provisions for recognizing such institutions in FRA exist for areas not falling under Panchayats. The MoTA clarified in April 2015 with letter No. 23011/16/2015-FRA that habitats and habitation of PVTGs over customary territories includes spiritual, sacred, religious, economic, social and many more (Ministry of Tribal Affairs, n.d). Therefore, habitats of PVTGs can be spread over notified forests as well as revenue lands under the broader definition of forest or under the provisions of PESA. The puzzle remains how to restore traditional, customary governance and management systems of PVTGs within the system of Panchayats.

## Forest Rights Act and Development

In the last fifteen years, the total forest land diverted for non-forest purposes is more than 300000 ha (The Times of India, 2023). Despite section 4 (5) of FRA and the directions issued by the MoEF&CC, vide letter No. 11-9/1998-FC, forest dwelling STs and OTFDs are being evicted at many places without the settlement of forest Rights (Ministry of Environment and Forest, 2009; Chandra, 2019). The directions issued by MoTA, bearing No. 23011/18/2014-FRA, in the month of August and October 2014 asserted that the accord of GS is important for diversion of forest land for non-forest purposes or development projects as the power to preserve and manage forest vests upon GSs, otherwise it would quash section 5 of FRA (Ministry of Tribal Affairs, 2014a, 2014b). Even in 13 categories of developmental initiatives under section 3 (2) of FRA, the recommendation of GS is required, provided that such initiatives acquire less than 1 ha of forest land and need not require felling of more than 75 trees (Ministry of Tribal Affairs, 2009).

As per FRA Section 4(7), forest rights prevail over all encumbrances and procedural requirements, even clearance under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, with payment of Net Present Value (NPV) and compensatory afforestation for diversion of forest land, except the conditions stipulated in the Act. Thus, compliance with FRA is binding before forest land can be diverted, and in conformity with the Supreme Court's Judgment in the *Godavarman Case*. In contempt of FRA, there are 26 incidents across 11 states where land is acquired by the government for developmental projects using unlawful means (IndiaSpend, 2018). The major purpose of diversion is mining, followed by road construction, irrigation, transmission lines, defence, hydel projects, railways, thermal power and wind power infrastructure (The Times of India, 2023). FRA is not an impediment for developmental projects, but emanates democratic decision making with the involvement of forest dwellers towards inclusive growth.

## Minor Forest Produce

Justice to historical injustice is incomplete without addressing Minor Forest Produce (MFP)/ Non Timber Forest Produce (NTFP). More than 275 million people living in and around forest earn a considerable portion of livelihood from collection and sale of NTFP (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, n.d). The Indian Forest Act, 1927 defined 'forest produce', FRA took a step forward to define MFP as a subset of forest produce and included bamboo and cane. PESA had the provision of sanctioning Panchayats and GSs in Schedule Areas with ownership of MFP, but was never implemented before the enactment of FRA. PESA and FRA are harmonious, and FRA extends the benefits to forest dwellers in Non-Schedule areas with written titles. Forest settlements partially done in some states both during pre and post-independence periods lacked documentary proof. The various provisions of FRA, especially Section 3 (1) (j) and (i) mandate acceptance of forest rights recognized under state laws as well as traditional customary rights. Hence, CTA and Santhal Pargana Tenancy Act, 1949, (SPT) and states under Sixth Schedule have special laws executed by Autonomous District Councils, are all limited in FRA.

FRA bestows ownership rights over MFP to forest dwellers when appealed. The notion of ownership in PESA and FRA is different from the notion of private property. Here, individual rights are embedded within the rights of GS. GS or the committee delegated by GS is empowered to take decisions on MFP with the underlying principle – maintaining the sustainability of forests such that no produce goes out of the village without satisfactorily meeting community needs. Ownership of MFP means collection, use and disposal of MFP, including bamboo, kendu leaves and other nationalized forest produce under state laws. The tribes in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh collect 70% of the estimated collection potential of NTFP, earning 20% to 40% of their annual income (Sahu, 2021). The estimated MFP production potential value is Rs. 40 trillion, some even claim upto Rs. 60 trillion (Ministry of Tribal Affairs, n.d.).

It's indispensable that state policies be deregulated and straightened to trigger the spirit of FRA, giving forest rights holders or their cooperatives full freedom to take individual or collective processing and value addition of MFP and market the same for livelihood, even doing away with GS's permit. Extraction of any type of royalties by GSs on MFP ultra vires FRA. In May 2023 MOTA announced inclusion of 23 MFP in minimum support price (MSP) list, enhancing the coverage from 50 to 73. Despite MSP, developing value chain for MFP remains a challenge as MFP has been a major source of revenue for FD across all states, more than timber (Mahapatra et al., n.d.). CFR and MFP engage into tenacious discussions on sustainability, especially with the outburst in the trade of NTFP, and technical limitations in determining the replenishment

rate of the present resource levels with multiple species under consideration. A game plan used by FD to regulate MFP.

### **Forest Governance**

Redressing historical injustice needs a shift in the power dynamics amongst key players, changing institutional framework arrangements, thereby inducing change in forest governance. Before 1865, forests in India were majorly an open access resource. The Government Forest Act, 1865, brought a range of injunctions on access to forest. The Indian Forest Act, 1878, demarcated forests as Reserve Forests, Protected Forests and Village Forests. In Protected Forests, that cover maximum geographical area, rights and privileges were recorded, but not settled. Till independence, a series of legislations were passed and customary traditions were restrained to privileges. Independent India reconsidered the British Forest Policy and doubled the recorded forest area to 71.8 million ha and further suppressed privileges of the forest dependent communities to concessions. Specifically, the 42<sup>nd</sup> Amendment of the Constitution of India, followed by the Forest Conservation Act, 1980, cast away forest dependent people not having recorded rights as encroachers.

Both during pre-independence and post-independence periods, the prologue of community involvement in forest management was legally recognized in parts of Jharkhand, Van Panchayats in Uttarakhand, and the North Eastern States. Besides, there have been thousands of unrecognized initiatives of the 'community' viz., community managed forests in Odisha and Sacred Groves in different parts of India. However, the most important step towards involvement of communities in forest management was the Joint Forest Management (JFM) in the 1990s. JFM was started to manage degraded forests. Other such programmes include, Social Forestry projects funded by the World Bank, Swedish bilateral agency and the British ODA during the mid 1980s, but were limited to afforestation and farm forestry on revenue lands.

Presently, there are more than 118,000 JFM Committees, managing forest cover over 22 million ha (Forest Research Institute, 2011). In 2002, MoEF & CC extended JFM to cover dense forests. Though some areas of JFM and CFRs overlap, it teaches important lessons on forest governance. Assessments of JFM Committees show strengthened protection of forests and augmented availability of MFP. At places, it regenerated degraded forests and increased fuelwood supply. Through MNREGA, JFM projects provided employment for a considerable number of days. JFM increased forest conservation and management value within the community. Contrary to these positives, JFM has its downside. Everyday decisions are influenced by forest officers, generally ex-officio secretary of the committee. Important decisions regarding plantation and harvesting are controlled by FD. Decisions on silvi culture are taken by FD, whose interest is in fast growing exotic species, quenching the interest of grazers, MFP collectors, and fuelwood seekers. At many places, JFM plantations took place in community resource areas. Traditional and informal community forestry institutions were negatively impacted as customary rights are not recognized under JFM. Individual needs are suppressed by elites, whose interest in increasing profit from commercial timber matches to that of FD.

Communities have shares in JFM during thinning and final felling. It's upto 20% of the revenue from the final harvest, only if community has satisfactorily protected forest for 10 years (Ministry of Environment and Forest, 2014). However, there have been instances when assured shares were denied. JFM lacks legal support as they are implemented under executive orders. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between FD and community is for 5 years and can be revoked without due process, while indigenous trees take longer time to mature. Rights given under JFM are not statutory. Conclusively, JFM offers less freedom of choice for communities and is non-transparent.

FRA changed power dynamics between FD and community and gave CFRs over 40 million ha. Under JFM, gains to the community is some share in the forest produce. FRA grants ownerships and entitlements with substantive statutory rights under Central Legislation. JFM and CFR are not co-terminus. CFR acknowledges traditional boundaries and customary practices, whereas JFM committees are in accordance with FD's working plan. It's the ascendancy of GS to nominate members of JFM Committee in the committees formed under FR Rule 4 (1)(e), it is neither required nor desirable because the objectives, structure and mandate of JFM are different. JFMs were created at the Gram Panchayat level, consisting of more than one GS, it is impractical to convert JFM committees into committees under FR Rule 4(1)(e).

An in depth review of the functions of FD includes protection, conservation and development of forests. Protection means protection of forest, wildlife and natural-ecosystem from damage, fire, theft, misuse and degradation. Preservation encompasses conservation of soil, water and biological diversity. Development

deals with enriching present forest and increasing their productivity through carrying out need based plantation for fuel and fodder, construction and maintenance of roads, administrative and residential buildings, transport and communication systems for the management, and maintaining mechanized units of logging. It's the core of FD to scientifically manage forests through working plans to improve forest ecosystems, manage catchment areas of watersheds, regenerate degraded forest lands and wastelands. It regulates the rights and concessions of local communities within the extent of carrying capacity of forests. FD ensures development of farm forestry and social forestry outside reserve forests and carry out replenishment of degraded forests with indigenous species having established ecological values. The department is expected to invest on adoption of advanced technologies, and research and development. It carries out research on silviculture, ecology, seed and seedling production, regeneration, pathology and other fields of forestry. It's the responsibility of FD to train foresters in professional matters and scientific disciplines, and spread awareness in community to make better use of degraded forests in terms of land use for crops, fuel, fodder and raising cattle. FD undertakes systematic surveys to build an adequate database necessary for forest management.

FRA has axiomatically not changed the forest governance. There is no absolute method to assess the total number of potential claimants in every state, especially when statistics differ in government records itself. If the minimum estimated potential forest area to fall under CFRs is 40 million ha, and the extent of forest lands for which titles were distributed till June 30, 2023 is 5,274,679.31 ha, then only 13.18% of the minimum potential of CFRs has been utilized (Rights and Resource, 2016; Ministry of Tribal Affairs, 2023). The two popular reasons cited for the poor implementation of CFRs are: (i) loss of revenue to FD; and (ii) CFRs challenges the supremacy of FD. The revenues earned by FD are credited to treasury or sub-treasury as revenue deposit. It does not directly flow back into the resource development of FD and it's not shared with local communities except for community's conditional share in JFM. Therefore, neither it benefits any vested interests of FD nor community, except in corruption cases during auctioning and tenders made by FD.

Questioning FD's supremacy is not simple as it questions the integrity of FD and government's commitment. A closer look at the structure and functioning of FD reveals that it has a bigger role to play in the management and sustainability of forest, and a narrow look at FRA makes FD only a spectator to the decisions of GSs. The experience of JFMs shows disjointedness between FD and community, but CFRs and FD are seemingly paradoxical. JFM reveals elite capture, a problem to which GSs are not immune. A distinction is required in the present day decentralized forest governance where GSs have ownership rights over forest produce, usufruct rights over other resources and the power to protect and preserve forest within their customary and traditional boundaries. How are these ownership rights established and what can be privately owned? answers the fundamental principle of property law. Then follows what can owners do with their property and what are the remedies for the violation of property rights? Protection and preservation of forests from what and whom? Sixteen years after the implementation of FRA, neither GSs nor FD have clear answers. It becomes even more difficult on the verge of REDD+ and climate change. GSs are answerable for forest resources over which it has ownership rights, but to whom is not clear, neither in the Act nor in the Rules nor in the Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) on FRA. Should GS report to SDLC or DLC who are responsible for making GSs aware of duties and responsibilities or to FD the duty bound custodian of forest. Is it the hegemony of FD that it has faced the criticism for poor FRA implementation, especially CFRs?

Looking at the structure and functions of FD, the Forest Division forms the most important administrative unit, headed by the DFO. It's a unit at which budgeting and planning take place. A Forest Division comprises several *forest ranges* and a *forest range* comprise several *forests beats*. A *forest beat* approximately 10 to 15 km<sup>2</sup> is the lowest administrative unit. Therefore, a beat consists of several Gram Panchayats, villages and GSs. If GSs have ownership and usufruct rights over forest resources and the power to protect and preserve it, then FD is duty bound to protect, conserve and develop forest. Definitely, FD is answerable to the state government and the Government of India. Clearly, it's a conflict of interest in the matter of who has a higher stake in the protection and preservation of forest resources, the communities whose livelihood depends on forests or the department whose existence depends on forests. If there are venal officers in FD then there're nefarious elements in GSs. The important point of distinction comes from FRA Rules that mandates the conservation and management plan of GS to be integrated with the micro plan or working plan of FD. The integration of management plans of GS with the working plan of FD draws FRA closer to JFM. It is not clear how this integration of plans takes place or would take place. Integration of the two plans is more cumbersome than the recognition and vesting of rights. Transforming scientific and technical working plans of the FD into a simpler level to be understood by every right holder needs a paradigm shift and is pivotal to the outcome of FRA, especially CFR.

## Discussion

Recognition of forest rights is backbreaking. It's laborious and cumbersome. While it has been economically, socially and politically expensive to the forest dwellers, it has unquestionably been an overall loss to the state itself. Walking down the lane of history shows that forests have been considered as state property to generate revenue, muzzling the forest dwellers, lovers of forests and nature for the higher cause of progressive development. Therefore, intuitively, it has been expensive for the state to recognize and vest rights to forest dwellers. FRA is an outcome of the extensive eviction drive carried out by FD, followed by massive outcry that unfolded into a compelling docket for winning 2004 general election. It's necessary that environmental agendas get embossed in the ballot paper of a mature democracy. However, if green agenda like forest rights are used for political leverage than it is likely to slack off after political gains. It includes the methods used to draft FRA, the means chosen to implement it and the subsequent legislations. On February 13, 2019, just before the General Election, SC ordered to evict 2 million individuals who had their claims rejected under FRA. On February 28, 2019, the court placed stay on its own order. However, as per the statistics in MOTTA website, there has been no guidelines issued on the implementation of FRA after February 2019, followed by a slowdown in IFRs and increase in CFRs on paper, evidently, without any single successful replicable model across India. Paving way for the Forest (Conservation) Amendment Act, 2023.

The present day dissent with the moves of the Narendra Modi-led NDA government with regard to FRA is a simple reflection of the change in priorities for which the majority of the people of India opted – Make in India and Ease of Doing Business for the Good Days to come. The resentment of the forest rights' supporters include Compensatory Afforestation Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) Fund Act 2016, wrongful application of the clause of free informed consent of FRA, Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2015 (MMDR), the National Board of Wildlife, proposed amendments to CTA and SPT, and Goods and Services Tax (GST) on MFPs, and the Forest (Conservation) Amendment Act, 2023. CAMPA fund receives money from the diversion of forests for non-forest purpose on Net Present Value (NPV) and other project specific payments. The funds are transferred to State CAMPAs, giving prerogative to FD to make decisions on plantation location and types. While FRA gives power to community, CAMPA restores power back to FD. Communities suffer loss in forest diversions, but Siddhanta Das, Former Director General (Forests), opines that plantations are done on non-forest land and it doesn't interfere with FRA (Agarwal and Chakravarty, 2017). Nevertheless, compensatory forestry compensates for the loss of a number of trees and increases carbon stock, but it doesn't compensate for ecosystem and biodiversity loss. Natural forest is a non-renewable resource. Despite recommendations of the Kanchan Chopra Committee on forest NPV to compensate communities for the loss of forest, neither the bill nor the act has such provisions (Chopra et al., 2006). Records of the discussions held on January 12, 2018, under the chairpersonship of the Secretary of the MoTA suggest that the approval of GS for utilization of CAMPA fund is under consideration (Ministry of Tribal Affairs, 2018). During 2019-20 and 2021-22 only 27% of the CAMPA funds were utilized (Kancharla, 2023).

Mineral rich districts are amongst the poorest and inhabited by STs and OTFDs and largely fall in Fifth and Sixth Schedule areas. Contrary to earlier production practices of consent and settlement of the rights of STs before granting lease, MMDR and MoEF&CC adopted a general rule to give forests to miners without full-fledged forest clearance. MoEF&CC has expunged public hearing for the expansion projects of coal mines up to forty percent in their second and third phase. Attempts to amend CNT and SPT to ease transfer of tribal lands and conversion of agricultural land to boost trade, investment and revenue breach the provisions of FRA. Likewise, 2017 tax reform brought almost all MFPs under uniform 5 percent GST (Ministry of Tribal Affairs, 2017). Whereas earlier, 0% to 14.5% Value Added Tax (VAT) was applicable on different commodities of MFP. As per FRA Rules, imposition of any charges or royalties on forest right holders for value addition and marketing of MFP contravenes FRA.

Looking beyond politics, institutional framework of FRA itself answer its poor outcome. MoTA was chosen as nodal agency for the implementation of FRA— a ministry having little or no experience in dealing with issues related to forestry, wildlife, revenue system, and legalities of forest rights. FRA implementation in many states had been carried out through RD or FD. Historical injustice cannot be corrected without correcting historical mistakes. The committees were formed at district and sub-divisional levels. Committeemembers have heaps of other responsibilities as well. Moreover, FRA responsibilities assigned to the committees are not simple. FRA, FRA Rules, FAQ and training module have remained silent till now on how these committees will deliver on their responsibilities, who the supporting staff will be, and the role of civil society organizations. One needs to question how the two volumes of FRA training modules differ from

FRA Rules and FAQ. A lot has been written and talked in media and scholarly journals about FRA and they give an impression that there is more confusion than clarity.

The common lines of dialogues on FRA are: (i) FRA marked a *watershed* moment in the history of tribal development (ii) FRA has changed the forest *governance*, and; (iii) poor implementation of FRA due to *cruel FD* and lack of *political will*. There isn't any statistics on the number of people hired for the implementation of FRA. Similarly, there aren't any statistics available for the number of people trained in various government departments and the number of people trained in GSs. Also, it is important to question the content of training modules. There are no details available of grants received by state governments for implementing FRA. It's the responsibility of SDLC to make GS aware of duties and responsibilities. By now it must have been clear that the highest responsibility is on GS. GS has to form various committees for the protection and management of forests and its resources and integrate the same with the working plan of FD. It's fundamental to question how well are GSs equipped to make plans and integrate it with FD's scientific working plan. It's a catch 22 situation where FD is technically superior to manipulate towards its end and dilute inalienable forest rights. Despite 'disjointedness' between FD and community in JFM, there still exists a platform for both parties to interact and voice opinion. There is no such platform in FRA and it further directs to evaluate whether FRA has empowered forest dependent communities in the spirit of Act. It's not sufficient to make people aware of duties and responsibilities. In fact, it's crucial to make communities learn how to responsibly exercise forest rights fulfilling duties and responsibilities.

### Conclusion

Lastly, to unveil the enigma of FRA, it's important to look back and ask what difference has FRA made to be called the watershed moment. Even in the absence of FRA, forest rights existed in the realm of Natural Law, people were using forest lands for agriculture and forest resources for livelihood. Recognition of forest rights is embedded in the Constitutional Law, but vesting of forest rights confides in the Administrative Law. Weak Administrative Laws increase the dominance of political will and such has been the case for the tumultuous implementation of FRA. Given the Quasi Federal nature of the constitution of India and provisions under FRA, the area of Administrative Law has been left unexplored with SLMCs. Yes! Fresh encroachments took place and FD did not have enough resources and manpower to check as was the need to pursue development projects. The trajectory of FRA started with the time bound eviction drive of FD based on a wrong interpretation of an order of the SC. Even if FRA has been unable to bring the desired change in the governance and management of forest, it has successfully checked further encroachments in the forest land to a great extent. The FD is not cruel, but for sure it's angry with violation of FRA for political dividends (The Hindu, 2023). What is required is a political intervention that can bridge the gap between the community and FD, knitted in the social structure of subsistence economy.

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# India in the Development Assistance Global Landscape: Reflections from the Caribbean Sub Region

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## **Abstract :**

This paper reviews the secondary literature and applies insights from World Systems theory, World Polity theory and the Transnational State Perspective of Robinson to interpret India's emergence as a provider of development assistance. The paper finds that India has been providing development assistance since its independence and that its primary recipients are developing countries in the neighboring South Asian and African sub-regions but that this has gradually expanded to other regions such as the Caribbean sub-region where it has been seeking to strengthen its economic relationship. India's development assistance is driven by support for developing countries as well as the country's own strategic economic interests. Growth in development assistance from emerging countries is a challenge to the status quo of DAC-driven support. The paper concludes that India's ascendancy to the chair of the G20 provides the country with an opportunity to use support trilateral cooperation to improve the delivery of development assistance to developing countries.

**Keywords:** Development Assistance, India, Developing Countries, Caribbean, G20

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## **Introduction**

India is one of the largest and fastest growing economies in the world. While not a member of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC), India has nonetheless emerged as an important provider of development assistance, particularly for the developing south. The country's development assistance program has expanded post its dependence, both in instruments and geographical reach, and is now an important source of support for conflict-affected and neighboring countries. In absolute terms, the dollar value of India's support is small compared to DAC countries but there are several areas where India's development assistance approach, as is the case with other emerging markets such as China, deviates from DAC countries and is therefore perhaps more impactful for developing country recipients.

This paper reflects on the published literature to understand India's emergence as an aid donor. It draws analytical insights from World Systems theory, World Polity theory and the Transnational State Perspective of Robinson to interpret India's emergence as an aid donor.

The paper proceeds to reflect on the experience of the Caribbean sub-region both with respect to development assistance and general economic relations with India. The analysis points to the strong cultural ties between the two regions and the evolving relationship with respect to trade and investment, which they have sought to strengthen through ministerial and technical dialogue platforms. However, the paper concludes that the Caribbean region does not feature significantly as an aid recipient not compared with neighboring countries but understandably so given India's own strategic economic interests in providing aid to south Asian and neighboring countries. But the two regions do have a growing economic relationship, with India as an important supplier of pharmaceutical products and investor in tourism projects. The two regions also have shared interests in multilateral issues and have cooperated at various multilateral fora on these in the past. The ascendancy of India to the chair of the G20 provides an opportunity for the country to continue to demonstrate solidarity to the developing south by becoming the voice on many of the common issues affecting developing countries, which would benefit the Caribbean sub-region.

The paper is structured as follows: Section II discusses the modalities through which India provides development assistance. Section III draws analytical insights from World Systems theory, World Polity theory and the Transnational State Perspective of Robinson to interpret India's emergence as an aid donor. This allows for an identification of the main recipients and the. Section IV examines specifically India's economic relationship with CARICOM, inclusive of the provision of development assistance. Section V reflects on what India's presidency of the G20 means for bringing voice to issues affecting the global south.

### **India's modalities for overseas development assistance**

India's development cooperation spending in 2021 was estimated at US\$5.8 billion. This is delivered through various mechanisms and channels, including the Indian Technical and Economic Co-operation (ITEC) Programme which has been in place since 1964 with over 160 partner countries; the Special Commonwealth Assistance Programme for Africa; bilateral trade and investment; humanitarian support and loans to foreign governments (Bhogal 2016) (Center for Policy Research, 2015).

Technical cooperation according to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA, n.d.) is a priority policy focus and has expanded over the years both in terms of geographical spread, sectoral coverage and budgetary allocations. For instance, the country's technical cooperation program now provides advanced training in emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, nanotechnology, cyber security and forensics, in partnership with prestigious Indian institutions such as the Indian Institute of Technology, the Indian Institute of Science and the Indian Institute of Management. Also, the Program has expanded from about 4,000 training slots in 2006 to around 14,000 slots (including defense training) by 2020 (Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), n.d.). India has also provided grants to establish centers of excellence in information technology in various partner countries (*ibid*).

India's development cooperation program uses multiple types of instruments including grants, lines of credit, capacity building and technical assistance. Sometime development assistance to a particular country may involve multiple types of instruments at a time. As an example, India provided support to Mozambique for the establishment of a solar photovoltaic manufacturing plant. This involved a line of credit of US\$13 million, in addition to capacity building through technology transfer and training.

#### **The ITEC now has the following five main channels of assistance according to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA, n.d.):**

1. Educational scholarships and training (civilian and defense) in India of nominees from partner countries. For example, during 2019–2020, 2,342 defense training slots were allocated to partner countries.
2. Project-based cooperation, including related activities such as feasibility studies and consultancy services.
3. Deputation of Indian experts abroad on the request of partner countries.
4. Study tours to India for individuals and groups suggested by partner countries.
5. Humanitarian aid for disaster relief.

Training under ITEC is provided in a range of areas with the priorities being agricultural development and energy.

ITEC cooperation programs involve both government-to-government support as well as civil society organisations. Initiatives through civil society organisations allow for support to be provided to marginalised groups in recipient countries. For example, Indian NGOs such as Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) have assisted Afghan women with economic livelihoods (Arora, 2021). Similarly, under the ITEC program, Solar Mamas from the rural poor non-electrified villages across Africa are being trained (The Indian Express, 2020).

Grants and loans are provided to support infrastructure development such as railway links, roads and bridges, waterways, border-related infrastructure, transmission lines, power generation, hydropower, etc.

Lines of credit through the EXIM Bank were introduced in 2004. These are offered at below market rates to developing countries and are provided for large-scale projects (Chaturvedi, 2012). Over the period 2020 to 2014, India provided total line of credits equivalent to US\$ 18.6477 billion (Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), n. d).

Another major instrument for development cooperation is bilateral trade and investment. Among the trade and investment measures is credit through the EXIM Bank.

India also provides humanitarian assistance to countries affected by natural disasters (Meier and Murthy 2011). It has also provided peacekeepers and other expertise in support of post-conflict reconstruction in countries such as Rwanda, Ethiopia and Eritrea (Choedon, 2017).

## **Interpreting India's emergence as an aid donor**

Drawing analytical insights from World Systems theory, World Polity theory and the Transnational State Perspective of Robinson in this section, the paper seeks to interpret India's emergence as an aid donor. The key points are discussed in turn.

### **India's emergence as an aid donor is ideologically driven by an agenda to support the south.**

India's foreign aid is directed mainly at other developing countries, particularly neighboring countries in southern Asia such as Cambodia, Nepal, Burma, Afghanistan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Viet Nam and Africa (Bhagal 2016).

Mullen (2014) and Singh (2017) both indicate that India has been providing development assistance to other developing countries since its independence in 1947, starting with its neighbours but expanding to other countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America (including the Caribbean).

India's emergence as an aid donor, post its independence, and not withstanding its own limitations was driven by an emotional and ideational act of expressing solidarity with other developing countries in the words of Mullen (2014) and Singh (2017), consequent to the colonial experiences of the developing south. In fact, Kennedy (2015) asserts that following its own independence India played a leading role (especially in the United Nations) in pushing for decolonization of countries in Africa and Asia in the 1950s and 1960s. India has also shown leadership post colonialism according to Murthy (2020) in supporting non aligned foreign policy in a bid to keep developing countries away from the Cold War power struggle.

In recognition of the impediments that colonialism had paced on the prospects for economic development of former colonies, India sought to provide capacity building support through training programs and educational scholarships. It started educational exchanges and scholarships with African and Asian students in 1949 and continues to provide such as a main channel for its development assistance. Other examples of early support include for example, loans to Myanmar and to Nepal in the 1950s (Sinha, 2017). Between 1947 and 1964, apart from bilateral development assistance, India also offered assistance through the multilateral framework of Colombo Plan for Economic Development and Cooperation in South and Southeast Asia (Colombo Plan) launched in 1950 and Special Commonwealth Assistance for Africa Program (SCAAP) begun in 1960. It also started contributing to the United Nations Development Program (Tuhin, 2016)

Afghanistan and African countries have been large recipients of India's grant and loan assistance linked to reconstruction and peacebuilding works. In fact, Afghanistan is the second-largest recipient of Indian aid. India has provided support for construction of power substations and the Parliament building in Afghanistan. It also provides sector specific support in areas such as agriculture, rural development, education and health (Embassy of India, Kabul, n.d.)

Among the African countries, a large share of India's grant has been provided to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and particularly in the areas of education and health. During 2014 to 2019, the DRC received lines of credit of US\$227.55 million. The DRC has been the recipient of various grants, such as 60 Sonalika tractors with accessories and spare parts worth US\$ 0.66 million, the supply of medicine worth US\$1 million, and the establishment of an IT Centre of Excellence. It has also been a beneficiary of tele-education and telemedicine under the Pan African e-network, e-VidyaBharti (Tele-education) and e-ArogyaBharti (Telemedicine) projects launched in 2019 (Embassy of India, Kinshasa, n.d.).

African countries have also benefited from large scale private investments by Indian businesses in sectors such as automobiles, information technology, mining, logistics, pharmaceuticals and other areas (Desai, 2009).

### ***Ideological shifting of the political geography for development assistance***

The global institutional and political architecture for foreign aid activities has been shaped by developed countries. Specifically, the twenty-four countries that comprise the Development Assistance Committee

(DAC) (OECD, n.d.)<sup>2</sup>. This is symptomatic of the wider stratified structure of the world system. World Systems theory recognizes that for centuries, development and underdevelopment have been structured by global power relations. According to DaSilva-Glasgow and Pile (n.d.).

“This stratified structure sees a few developed countries that have emerged as global economic hegemony, and the developing and least developed countries as a lower stratum constituting the peripheral states. The relationship between the economic hegemony and the peripheral states while economically symbiotic, is unbalanced and has been shaped by historical exploitative factors such as colonialism.”

This structure has been emulated in the global foreign aid architecture due to the resource advantages and political dominance of developed countries. Consistent with World Polity the very identity, structures and behaviors of actors in the global system are shaped by the cultural context of the global environment (McNeely 2012). As such, the preeminence of the western nations as leading aid donors is reflected of their wider economic prowess and political expectations of leadership in every sphere.

Therefore, the emergence of the developing south (China, India), the so-called peripheral nations, as aid donors, albeit on relatively smaller scales as the DAC countries, essentially represents an ideological shifting of the political geography for development assistance where for many recipient nations, the main source of their support is other developing countries rather than DAC countries. Woods (2008) sees this increased role for developing countries as aid givers as not an attempt to overtly shift the status quo structure but really just providing developing countries with alternative sources of support, which he notes could have the effect of weakening the bargaining position of western donors with respect to aid- recipients.

***India is part of a group of non-DAC countries whose modalities for aid offers more flexibility to developing countries***

Aid provided by DAC countries has been criticised in several areas.

*Firstly*, as being inadequate, especially given what was promised as they have committed 0.7% of their GDP (OECD, n.d.) but consistently spend below this. In 2021, DAC spending was equivalent to 0.33% or US\$185.9 billion, 12% of which went towards COVID-19 related activities (Woods 2008).

*Secondly*, as being linked to damaging macroeconomic and governance conditionalities (Samuel and George, 2016). For instance, on the issue of the conditionalities “USAID has an explicit fragile states strategy, and the OECD has its policies and principles on engaging fragile states” (Adhikari, 2018). On the other hand, emerging donors have principles and priorities that are different from DAC donors conditioned by a different development outlook. For this reason, Arora (2021) notes that a guiding principle of India’s development assistance is the principle of non-interference in domestic affairs and respect for the sovereignty of development partners. This is conditioned also by the country’s own historical experience in fighting against colonialism. Consequently, India and other emerging countries such as China provide support irrespective of governance quality, political or financial condition or the development status of recipients. For instance, India does not have a specific policy or strategy that guides its engagement in the post-conflict states nor did it join the developed countries to champion the liberal peacebuilding agenda according to Choedon (2015). India therefore continues to provide continued engagement in development cooperation in conflict-affected states such as Afghanistan and the Democratic Republic of Congo. In fact, the Indian Express (2020) noted that in 2020 India had announced 150 projects worth US\$80 million for Afghanistan which was a signal of its long-term commitment to the country regardless of which political force is leading the country.

*Thirdly*, DAC support has not produced expected development outcomes (Woods 2008; Brautigam 2009). On the other hand, non-DAC support may likely produce greater development impacts because it is demand driven. Arora (2021) note that India has adopted the demand-driven approach to its development assistance where it responds to requests from partners in accordance with their expressed interests. This practice signifies its adherence to the principle of national ownership of development projects. This approach also

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<sup>2</sup>The DAC has 24 members are Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, the European Union, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

signifies India's sensitivity to the national interests and socioeconomic realities of its development partners. Support from emerging countries such as India is therefore perceived to be more suitable and appropriate to the socioeconomic needs of recipient nations (Centre for Policy Research, 2015).

*Fourthly*, it lacks an egalitarian attitude (Woods, 2008; Brautigam, 2009). Arora (2021) on the other hand, argues that India's persistence in using the term "development cooperation" and "development partnership" instead of development assistance or development cooperation shows that its engagements with partners is guided by the principle of "equality and mutual benefit". Therefore, egalitarian ethos undergirds all of its engagements.

*Fifthly*, DAC support tends to come with a high aid delivery cost such as high security overheads. This provides India as well as other emerging donors, with a comparative advantage in assisting reconstruction and development in conflict-affected countries due to lower delivery costs.

*Sixthly*, Western driven development has cumbersome administrative layers and poor coordination and alignment due to the array of the organisations involved (Woods, 2008).

### **India's increasing role in development assistance reflects its strategic economic interests**

Drawing from Robinson's transnational capitalist class and transnational state (2015, 2017) perspective, a country's protagonism in development assistance could be viewed as being linked to an attempt to facilitate more effective integration in the global system and to redress asymmetry in the capitalist system. Development assistance to the South is another platform to aid the achievement of the strategic economic interests of the donors (DaSilva-Glasgow and Pile, 2003).

Strategic economic interest is evident in India's development assistance. This is reflected in the countries that receive development assistance from India. Two observations are noteworthy in this regard. *Firstly*, India supplies proportionately more aid to larger trading partners. A case in point is Bhutan which conducts more than half of its global trade with India. Bhutan is an important source of imports of electricity, base minerals, cement, chemicals and wood products. During 2016 to 2017, 78% of India's aid to Bhutan went towards construction of hydropower projects that would ensure that India is able to access reliable and low-cost electricity.

*Secondly*, strategic importance as a means of accessing other markets or resources. For instance, Afghanistan provides strategic access to Central Asia—the hub of energy, minerals and gas resources and access to markets in the Middle East and Europe. India has provided support for infrastructure projects to Afghanistan and provides training for 300 to 600 Afghans on an annual basis. In addition, India has also provided support for infrastructure development projects in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal and the Maldives as 'aid for trade' projects aimed at developing those countries' trade capacity and infrastructure in order to reduce trade costs and generally improve transport connectivity among the countries in South Asia. India's involvement in development aid in Southern Asia is also aimed at safeguarding India's long term economic strategic interests and staving off the threat of Chinese expansion as Bhutan, Bangladesh and Nepal share a border with both India and China. Indian companies have also invested in mining of natural minerals like copper, cobalt, and diamond in DRC (Desai, 2009) to ensure access to the minerals.

All of the foregoing examples, reinforce the fact that India's support is driven by mutual interests; while the recipient nations benefit, India also benefits from access to key raw materials and markets for its goods and services.

### **Political self-interests**

Foreign aid is generally a tool used by countries to paint and protect their image abroad as well as to increase their influence on the global stage (DaSilva-Glasgow and Pile, 2003). In the case of political self-interests, India as a developing country has been providing development assistance to forge relationships with developing states. This helps to shape the country's global influence among this subgroup and ultimately helps to weaken the bargaining position of DAC countries in the developing south. Fuchs and Vadlamannati (2012) notes that the importance of political interests appears to be significantly larger for India than for all DAC donors, making the country a needy donor. This view exists because of India's push to support other developing countries while itself having a high poverty rate. Price (2004) notes that in its 2003/2004 budget

speech, India announced a policy to raise India’s global profile that would involve debt cancellations to seven heavily indebted countries (Ghana, Mozambique, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia; Guyana and Nicaragua).

Choedon (2021) points to the fact that the dividends of India’s support is a growth in its soft power, allowing the country to emerge as a leader among developing countries in world politics and use the currency of moral power to assert its global influence.

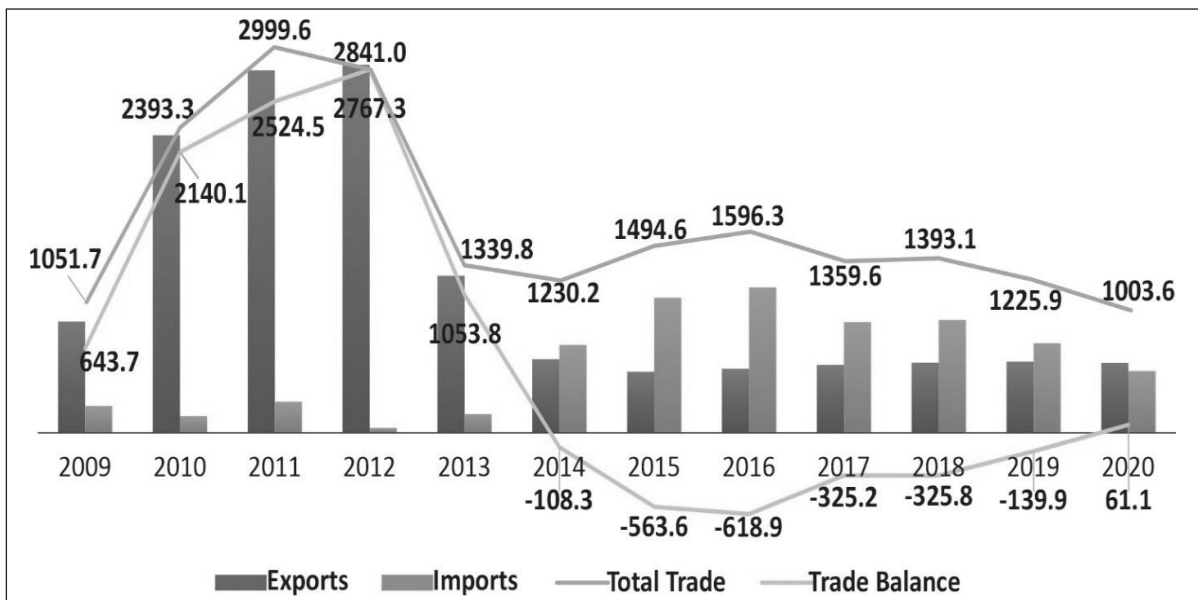
### CARICOM and India economic relationship

CARICOM (Caribbean Community and Common Market) was established on 4th July 1973 by the Treaty of Chaguaramas, and has 15 full members (Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Monsterrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad & Tobago). Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands and Turks & Caicos Islands are Associate Members of the Community.

Despite being geographically distant, CARICOM and India share a strong cultural connection due to their shared colonial experiences. Many Indian nationals came to the Caribbean as indentured plantation workers between 1838 and 1917 (Maharaj 2017). Statistically, Guyana (43.5%), Trinidad and Tobago (35.4%), and Suriname (27.5%) are home to the greater proportion of Indian nationals (Maharaj 2017). There is also a resident Indian diaspora in the Caribbean that have migrated to the region for economic opportunities ((ibid 2017).

India has diplomatic relations with both individual CARICOM countries as well as with CARICOM as a group. This has allowed for an expansion in their relationship which encompasses trade, foreign direct investment and development assistance (Maharaj 2017).

With respect to trade, CARIFORUM’s (CARICOM plus the Dominican Republic) trade with India reached US\$1003.6 million in 2020 (See Fig 1). 22.8% of India’s major exports to the CARIFORUM region is pharmaceutical products, followed by vehicles (HS 87) (8.9%), plastics (8.1%) and mineral fuels (7.8%). With respect to imports, India purchases mainly mineral fuels 42.5%, natural or cultured pearls (37.8%) and wood and articles of wood (6.8%).



**Fig 1:** India's Trade with CARIFORUM Region (US\$million)

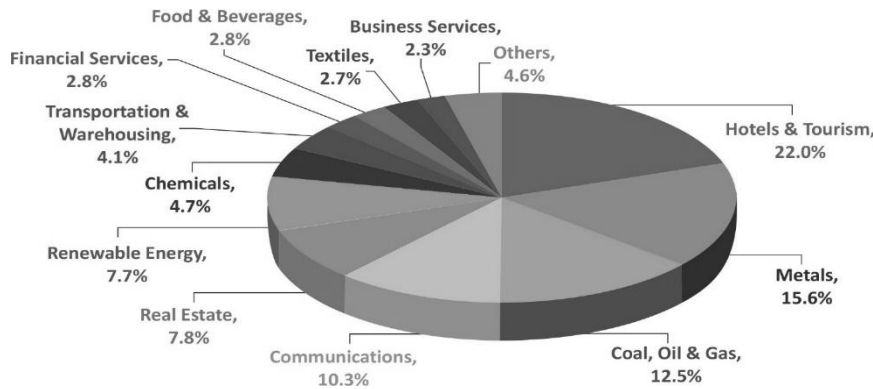
Source: ITC Trademap; India Exim Bank Analysis,

India’s trade with the region is smaller when compared with traditional partners in North America and Europe. In fact, Bhojwani (2015) considered India’s engagement with the region to be a non-substantive compared with the region’s trade with the United States and the European Union and Arora (2021) sees a missed opportunity with respect to the expansion of Indian trade with the region. But it is important to note that since 1997, India reviewed its trade policy towards the wider Latin American and Caribbean region and



as a result initiated what became known as their “FOCUS LAC” program which was extended in 2014 and 2019. Maharaj (2017) identified the main goals of the new approach as: Sensitizing the organizations, viz., Export Promotion Councils, Chambers of Commerce & Industry, EXIM Bank, ECGC, etc., involved in trade promotion efforts; Granting various incentives to Indian exporters and launching of export promotion measures; Focusing on the Latin American region with added emphasis on major trading partners of the region; Focusing on the following major product groups for enhancing India’s exports to the Latin American region, Textiles including ready-made garments carpets and handicrafts, Engineering products and computer software, Chemical products including drugs/pharmaceuticals.

With respect to foreign direct investment (FDI), FDI inflows in the CARIFORUM reached US\$9.4 million in 2020. The largest recipients were the Dominican Republic (41.9%), Guyana (23.8%), Jamaica (9.2%) and Bahamas (8.8%) with hotels and tourism as the largest area of investment (22%) (See Fig 2).



**Fig 2:** Top Sectors Attracting FDI in the CARIFORUM Countries (2003-2019),  
Source : UNCTADFDI Data ; India Exim Bank Analysis, EXIM Bank of India (2022)

In the area of development assistance, the Caribbean benefits from the ITEC program through scholarships for capacity building and has benefited from development grants and humanitarian support in the past. On the sidelines of a United Nations General Assembly on September 25, 2019, Prime Minister Modi deepened his commitment with the Caribbean by providing a USD \$1M grant for development projects while CARICOM gained access to “USD\$150 million Line of Credit for solar, renewable energy and climate-change related projects” (Chaudhury, 2019). Other initiatives proposed included the setting up of the “Regional Center for Excellence in Information Technology” in Guyana and a “Regional Vocational Training Center in Belize. The latter project builds on existing “India-funded centers” already existing within these identified countries (Asmus, 2021). In 2010, Haiti received a USD\$5M grant to support the reconstruction after the earthquake that destroyed much of its infrastructure (Singh, 2020). During the COVID-19 pandemic, the wider LAC region received medical assistance valued at INR 16 Crores from India.

Over the years, India and CARICOM have sought to strengthen their relationship. In 2003 India and CARICOM established a Standing Joint Commission on Consultation, Cooperation and Coordination and commencing in 2005, the two regions have had dialogues under the India-CARICOM Foreign Minister’s meeting and subsequent CARICOM-India Joint Commission meetings at the technical level. As a corollary new areas were identified for potential cooperation including India becoming a member of the Caribbean Development Bank, expanding intercontinental trade, development and infrastructure projects.

Ten year later, in 2015, cooperation between the two regions had expanded to include Indian expertise in areas of project management and strategic planning, business promotion and trade, expanded people to people contact, improved intersectoral connection with special emphasis on animal and dairy sector, shared expertise in traditional medicine, increase cultural exchange, provide access to India International Trade Fair and cooperation on visa access. Furthermore, India shared its expertise on combating terrorism, climate change, sustainable development as well as invitation to join the International Solar Alliance.

## **Using the G20 platform to advance development priorities and shape development assistance**

“The Group of Twenty (G20) is the premier forum for international economic cooperation. It plays an important role in shaping and strengthening global architecture and governance on all major international economic issues” (G20 India 2023). India ascended to the presidency of the G20 from 1 December 2022 to 30 November 2023. Under this platform India has advanced collective G20 actions to strengthen contributions to the 2030 Agenda mainly through the G20 Development Working Group. (G20 India 2023).

India’s ascension to the presidency is a symbol of the global political power that it has been able to amass, which is welcoming for the developing south because part of India’s ascendancy could be linked to its foreign policy in the global south (Ghosh and Bowmick, 2023).

While India’s emergence as a development assistance donor may have been driven by the need for solidarity rather than responsibility it has now been placed in a position where it is expected to demonstrate both solidarity and responsibility.

It is expected that with this position India would become the “Voice of the Global South”. The expectation of developing countries such as those in the Caribbean is that India’s presidency would be more than symbolic but would provide true opportunities to bring further global attention to the issues affecting the global south.

The Caribbean region does not feature significantly as an aid recipient not compared with neighboring countries but understandably so given India’s own strategic economic interests in providing aid to south Asian and neighboring countries. But the two regions do have a growing economic relationship, and vested political interest in those multilateral issues that mutually impacts them. The two regions also have shared interests in multilateral issues and have cooperated at various multilateral fora on these in the past.

Undoubtedly there are lots of interest areas where the Caribbean would welcome India’s leadership through the G20, both in bringing a voice to the issues and in shaping effective development support. One such is building resilience. The recent trade and development report prepared by UNCTAD (2023) paints a dismal picture of the economic outlook for the global economy for 2023 which is indicative of the fact that post-pandemic recovery is slow. Moreso, it points to; Divergent recovery paths in the context of slower growth across major regions; Global inequalities in income and wealth are widening; Growing pressures of indebtedness and thinning policy autonomy in developing countries; Market concentration in key sector such as the trading of agriculture commodities

These are all very important issues for Caribbean development given the structure of our economies and our trade; and the macro challenges we have had to confront including managing high levels of public debt.

The fact that developing countries are more disproportionately affected by these global realities point to the need for support in all areas, policy support to build resilience and improve macro management, investment to diversify production and trade arrangements to secure market access and manage access to markets in a manner that does not increase the cost of conducting trade. Galvanizing global support is particularly important in light of the fact that UNCTAD alludes to the potential of the current global issues to compromise achievement of the 2030 agenda.

UNCTAD has called for greater policy coordination through multilateral institutions, particularly to mobilize resources for countries in a position to deliver faster growth. As president of the G20 India has the unique opportunity to show leadership in truly galvanising economic cooperation among emerging countries, consistent with the mandate of the G20, to address priority issues affecting the developing South. India also has the opportunity to build out more opportunities for triangular cooperation involving the DAC and OECD countries, as it has already started to do, to ensure a more effective delivery of development assistance to the issues and countries in greater need of development support.

### **Conclusion**

The economic performance of emerging countries such as India and China have positioned them to step up in the global development assistance arena and provide support to the developing south. Indeed, these countries have explicitly emphasised a South-South agenda in their development support. Economic performance aside, countries such as India have provided assistance for political self-interests such as

increasing their soft power; as well as to express solidarity to developing countries by playing an active part in helping to fill skills gap that hinder economic growth development, through capacity building. These south-south partnerships open up new opportunities for both donors and recipients and represent a challenge to the *status quo* predominance of traditional aid donors. For the Caribbean, the shared colonial history and cultural ties has made India an important foreign policy partner in both supporting Caribbean development through development assistance, *albeit* not at the same scale as India's South Asian neighbours, as well as forging collaboration at multilateral levels to bring greater weight to the concerns of the developing south.

The ascendancy of India to the chair of the G20 provides another opportunity for the country to continue to demonstrate solidarity to the developing countries by becoming the voice of the global south on many of the common issues affecting developing countries, which would benefit the Caribbean sub-region; as well as pushing for more trilateral cooperation as a means of improving the effectiveness of development assistance offered by members of the Development Assistance Committee.

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# Clicks to Carts: Social Media's Influence on Mauritians' Buying Habits

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## **Abstract:**

In an era characterized by the ever-evolving landscape of social media, this research investigates the intricate relationship between Social Media Marketing (SMM) and the online buying behaviour of Mauritians. Examining the multifaceted dimensions of consumer choices, this research explores factors such as perceived usefulness, accessibility, user satisfaction, and environmental consciousness in the context of online shopping. The primary objective is to enrich the knowledge base of both marketers and researchers in the realms of digital marketing and consumer behaviour. As the digital realm continues to redefine the boundaries of consumer engagement, it is imperative for businesses to comprehend and harness the true potential of social media platforms. This research illuminates how effective utilization of SMM can foster robust customer relationships and steer favorable purchase decisions. By dissecting the nexus between SMM and consumer behaviour, this study equips businesses with actionable insights, enabling them to craft targeted and impactful marketing strategies. Methodologically, data was gathered from a diverse cohort of 200 participants through online surveys. Analyzing the empirical evidence and tested hypotheses, it becomes evident that specific factors wield a discernible positive influence on the online buying behaviour of Mauritian consumers. These findings underscore the pivotal role of social media as a formidable tool for shaping consumer decisions and molding their online purchasing patterns. The implications of this study extend far and wide, resonating with businesses and marketers alike. Armed with a comprehensive understanding of the pivotal drivers of consumer behaviour on social media platforms, businesses can engage their target audience more effectively and fortify their digital brand presence. In summary, this research offers insights into the ever-evolving sphere of SMM and its profound influence on the online buying behaviour of Mauritians. It underscores the significance of various factors that should be integral to the formulation of digital marketing strategies.

**Keywords:** Social Media, Marketers, Mauritian, Digital, Consumer Behavior

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## **Introduction**

Since their inception, social media platforms have basically provided innovative modes of contact and engagement between both consumers and businesses. With this additional social media activity, businesses have a ton of new opportunities to capitalize on both current and potential clients. Today, SMM is a crucial tool for companies looking to attract and keep online clients. It is critical to investigate how SMM is affecting consumers' purchase behaviours in Mauritius given that more locals use online shopping platforms to meet their shopping needs. In Mauritius, according to Data Reportal – Global Digital Insights by Kemp (2023), it is found that 78.6% of Mauritians uses social media platforms. The Mauritian's internet shopping habits are continually changing as they become more tech-savvy and reliant on online retailers.

A lot of attention has recently been paid to the impact of SMM on the online purchase habits of the Mauritians. SMM influences consumers' attitudes toward brands and their intent to purchase. Social media advertising has a favorable impact on consumers' perceived reliability and worth which in turn affect their online purchasing behaviour. Since social media platforms continue to be popular and become an indispensable promotional tool, it is becoming more and more crucial to analyze their effect on the online buying behaviour of customers in Mauritius.

It is found that there has not been much research into the influence of SMM on online purchasing behaviours in Mauritius. Social media advertising had a significant impact on customer purchasing behaviour in Mauritius. Customers' perceived quality, belief and satisfaction all played a major role in their online buying behaviour.

SMM has developed into a crucial marketing tool that businesses may use to connect with and affect their target market's online purchasing behaviours. While there is little study on the advantages of SMM for the Mauritians, some studies demonstrate that it can positively influence consumers' perceptions toward businesses and intention to buy. Hence, more research must be conducted to be able to understand the

factors which influence Mauritians' online buying behaviour and also on how to improve SMM to be more effective.

This study's main aim is to analyze SMM's impact on the online buying behaviour of Mauritians. This study will specifically aim to determine which social media platforms Mauritians use to make online purchases. It will also investigate the factors that impact the usefulness of Mauritians' SMM. The study will help to analyze the impact of factors influencing SMM on Mauritians' online purchasing behaviour and finally it will help in examining Mauritians' attitudes toward SMM and online shopping.

This study is significant as it will give beneficial and important information on how social media influences online buying behaviour in Mauritius. The findings can additionally be applied for future studies on this topic specifically in Mauritius. Overall, the study would seek to provide knowledge about the significance of SMM in influencing online buying behaviours in Mauritius.

## **Literature Review**

This study leveraged the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), a widely-recognized theoretical framework for understanding how individuals adopt and utilize innovative technologies, including social media platforms. Fred Davis introduced this model in the 1980s, proposing that an individual's intention to use technology is influenced by two primary factors: perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use (Charness, 2016). In this research, we apply TAM to evaluate the impact of SMM on the online purchasing behaviour of individuals in Mauritius. The model indicates that the perceived benefits and user-friendliness of social media platforms play a vital role in shaping the online buying behaviour of Mauritians.

### ***Perceived Usefulness and Online Buying Behaviour***

Perceived usefulness is a key factor in driving online purchases through SMM. It refers to how individuals perceive the value of SMM in making informed buying decisions. Numerous studies underscore its significant impact on online consumer behaviour. According to Davis's TAM (1989), perceived usefulness is a determinant of the intention to use technology, a concept widely applicable to online shopping and SMM.

The perceived usefulness of SMM hinges on convenient access to product information, reviews, and recommendations for informed decision-making. Features such as personalized recommendations, live chats, and customer support enhance the overall shopping experience. The social dimension fosters engagement, opinion-sharing, and the search for advice, creating a sense of community and validation. This interaction taps into collective knowledge, further enhancing the usefulness of SMM (McCole, Ramsey, & Williams, 2010).

The perceived usefulness of SMM platforms positively influences online buying behaviour. Factors such as access to extensive product information, user-generated content, personalized recommendations, live chats, customer support, and social interactions all contribute to the perceived usefulness of SMM. As consumers view SMM platforms as valuable tools for making informed purchases, they are more inclined to engage in online buying behaviour (Akar and Topçu, 2011). Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

### **H1: Perceived Usefulness Positively Influences Online Buying Behaviour.**

### ***Perceived Ease of Use and Online Buying Behaviour***

Perceived ease of use is a critical factor in influencing online buying intentions on SMM platforms. When these platforms are perceived as user-friendly and straightforward, individuals are more likely to engage with them and explore the products and services they offer. Factors contributing to this perception include intuitive navigation, clear product descriptions, and streamlined checkout processes (Dwivedi, Kapoor, & Chen, 2015).

The ease of use of SMM platforms significantly affects people's perceptions and likelihood of shopping online. A seamless browsing experience, simple product evaluation, and a smooth buying process foster a favorable view of these platforms. The integration of multiple payment options, secure transactions, and reliable delivery services further enhances user confidence and comfort. Consequently, fewer barriers lead to an increased intention to make purchases through SMM platforms (Wu and Eldon, 2018).

The ease of use on social media platforms positively influences online purchasing behaviour. A user-friendly interface, intuitive navigation, clear product descriptions, streamlined checkout processes, integration of payment options, secure transactions, and reliable delivery services all contribute to enhancing this perception. When people find social media platforms easy and straightforward to use, they are more likely to adopt a positive attitude towards online buying and are more motivated to make purchases (Lim et al., 2016). Hence, we propose the following hypothesis:

**H2: Perceived Ease of Use Positively Influences Online Buying Behaviour.**

*Accessibility & Convenience and Online Buying Behaviour*

Artanti et al. (2019) emphasize the significance of accessibility and convenience on social media platforms for enhancing customer engagement with online products and services. This entails providing user-friendly features like clear navigation, effective search options, and streamlined payment methods.

Furthermore, Rachmawati et al. (2020) highlight that social media platforms offer a convenient avenue for customers to access product information and make purchases. The convenience factor can significantly influence people's attitudes toward using social media for shopping and, consequently, their online buying behaviour.

According to Jason and Aishah (2021), easy accessibility and convenience in SMM have a positive impact on online buying behaviour. When customers perceive social media platforms as user-friendly and easy to navigate, they are more inclined to use them for making purchases. This enhanced ease of use leads to increased online purchases as customers can quickly find and buy the products or services they desire.

Based on the findings from these studies, it can be hypothesized that:

**H3: Accessibility and Convenience Positively Affect Online Buying Behaviour.**

*User Satisfaction and Online Buying Behaviour*

User satisfaction in online shopping depends on the ability to meet consumer expectations. SMM can effectively inform customers about products, features, and benefits, thereby influencing their buying behaviour (Jamal and Naser, 2002).

Numerous studies confirm a strong connection between user satisfaction, attitudes toward SMM, and online buying behaviour. For instance, Cheung et al. (2020) found that satisfied consumers are more likely to hold positive attitudes toward SMM, leading to an increased likelihood of engaging in online purchases. When users perceive SMM strategies as valuable and satisfying, they become more inclined to make online purchases.

A study by Leong et al. in 2021 revealed a correlation between user satisfaction, attitudes toward social media advertising, and the likelihood of purchasing products promoted on these platforms. The findings support the notion that content users view SMM positively and are more inclined to make online purchases.

In summary, it can be concluded that user satisfaction significantly affects perceptions regarding SMM and ultimately influences online purchasing behaviour when these studies are considered together. When users are satisfied with the information and experiences provided through SMM, they are more likely to view SMM positively and exhibit behaviours that lead to online purchases. Consequently, it can be hypothesized that:

**H4: User Satisfaction Positively Influences Online Buying Behaviour.**

*Social Influence and Online Buying Behaviour*

Social influence plays a significant role in shaping consumers' online buying behaviour, referring to the impact of individuals or groups on one's thoughts, attitudes, and behaviours. In the context of SMM, it positively affects purchase intentions.



The study by Alalwan et al. (2018) highlights the impact of social influence on customers' purchase intentions. Peer recommendations on social media positively influence consumers' likelihood to make a purchase. When individuals receive endorsements from their peers, it significantly boosts their intention to make a purchase. The study emphasizes social media's role in social influence through user-generated content and peer connections. These platforms offer an ideal space for sharing experiences, opinions, and recommendations that significantly impact purchasing choices. Marketers can benefit by promoting user-generated content and encouraging peer interactions on social media.

In the context of SMM, social influence positively influences online buying behaviour. The recommendations and endorsements from peers on social media platforms can significantly influence consumers' purchase intentions. Marketers can leverage this influence by actively encouraging user-generated content and facilitating peer-to-peer interactions, thereby harnessing the power of social influence to drive online sales. Consequently, the hypothesis is:

**H5: Social Influence Positively Affects Online Buying Behaviour.**

***Trust in Security & Privacy and Online Buying Behaviour***

Customer concerns about online transaction security may deter purchases due to data breaches or unauthorized access. Assurance of secure transactions and data protection fosters confidence in online shopping (Dua and Uddin, 2022).

Platform trust is vital for shaping consumer trust in online transactions (Gurung et al., 2016). When consumers perceive the platform as trustworthy and reliable, they are more likely to have faith in its security and privacy measures, leading to increased confidence in making online purchases. Consumer trust in social media impacts online buying behaviour (Appel et al., 2019). Trust in the platforms extends to the products and services advertised, leading to an increased inclination toward purchasing from these platforms.

Trust in security, privacy, and the platform are crucial factors impacting online buying behaviour. Customers' confidence in information security and platform reliability fosters trust in the products or services advertised online, ultimately encouraging online purchases.

Therefore, it is hypothesized that:

**H6: Trust in Security and Privacy Positively Affects Online Buying Behaviour.**

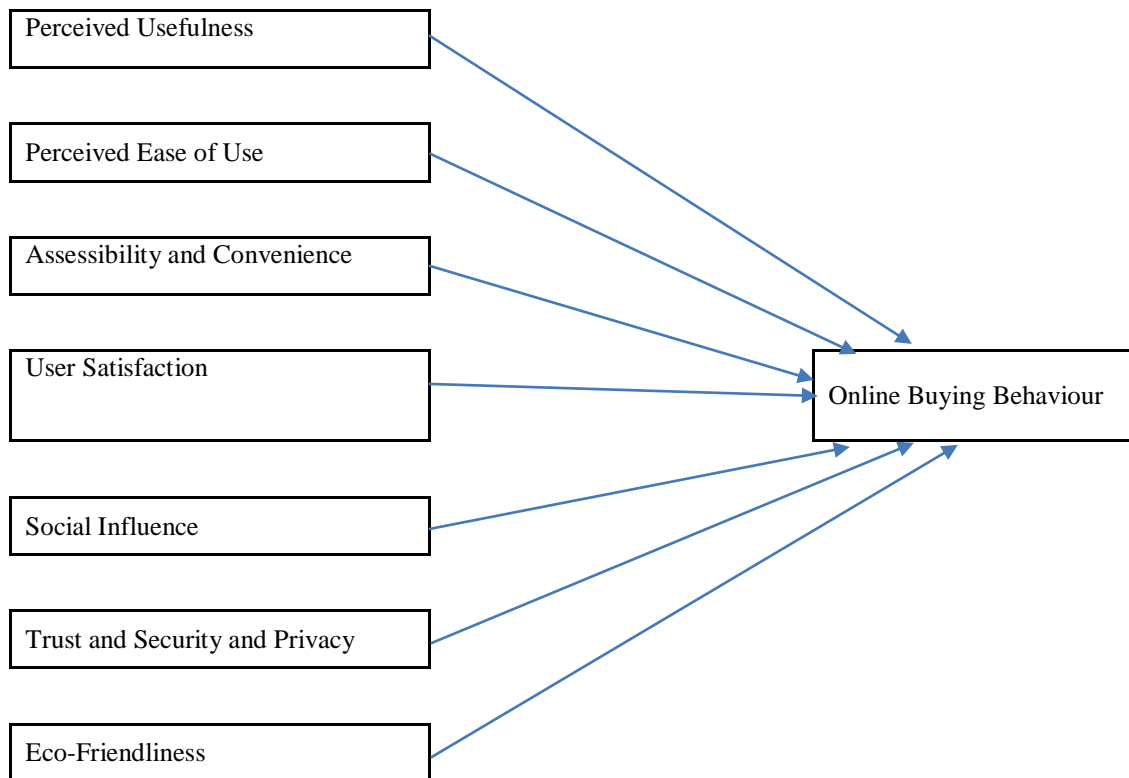
***Eco-Friendliness and Online Buying Behaviour***

Tobler et al. (2011) observed a growing adoption of green products among customers, indicating a shift in consumer preferences toward eco-friendly choices. Social media serves as a valuable tool for promoting these sustainable options by effectively communicating product sustainability to customers.

Haws et al. (2014) found that consumers are willing to spend more on green products, indicating a preference for environmentally friendly options. Social media can effectively promote eco-friendliness by allowing online retailers to educate customers about their environmentally friendly products.

Numerous studies highlight a strong link between eco-friendliness and online buying behaviour. Customers increasingly prefer eco-friendly products, driven by heightened awareness of their environmental impact. Social media platforms serve as valuable tools for promoting product sustainability and influencing consumer choices. Thus, integrating eco-friendliness into online retailers' SMM is vital to attract environmentally conscious consumers and positively impact their buying behaviour. Therefore, it can be hypothesized that:

**H7: Eco-Friendliness Positively Affects Online Buying Behaviour.**



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study.**

**Research Methodology**

This study is a non-experimental quantitative research effort that utilizes a survey questionnaire to quantitatively assess the influence of SMM on online buying behaviour in Mauritius. The methodology employed includes the following key components:

**Sampling Method**

The study employed a probability sampling method, specifically simple random sampling, to select participants from the Mauritian population. The population of interest for this study comprises individuals in Mauritius who engage in online shopping on social media platforms. Given the size of the population, which was estimated at approximately 875,000 active social media users in Mauritius in 2022, it was not feasible to survey the entire population. Consequently, a sample size was chosen to represent this population.

**Sample Size Determination**

A sample size calculator was utilized to determine the appropriate sample size, resulting in a recommended sample size of  $n = 196$ , rounded up to the nearest hundred, which is 200 respondents. This sample size was selected to ensure the study's accuracy and representativeness.

**Data Collection Method**

The data collection method employed was an online structured questionnaire created using Google Forms. This method was chosen for its ease of use, ability to quickly reach a large audience, and cost-effectiveness. The questionnaire consisted of 22 questions, including multiple-choice questions and linear scale questions, which asked respondents to rate statements on a scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." It was organized into 10 sections, each containing 5 questions or statements. This organization aimed to facilitate respondent navigation and comprehension of the survey's flow.

## Scope and Limitations

This study has a specific focus on a particular aspect of SMM, namely its impact on online purchasing behaviour, and may not comprehensively capture the entirety of SMM's influence on the Mauritian population. Nonetheless, the study's scope aligns with its research objectives.

The level of limitations in this study is considered low. Social media platforms served as an effective means of reaching the sample, and the sample itself was diverse and representative of the population. Consequently, there was no significant selection bias present in this study.

## Findings and Discussion

**Table 1: Demographic Information of the Participants**

Variables	Frequency (n=200)	Percentage (100.0%)	Mean	Standard Deviation
<b>Age Group</b>	28	14.0	2.47	1.074
16-30	98	49.0		
21-30	41	20.5		
31-40	20	10.0		
41-50	12	6.0		
51-60	1	0.5		
Over 60 years				
<b>Gender</b>	111	55.5	1.45	.489
Female	89	44.5		
Male				
<b>Education Level</b>	4	2.0	3.91	1.423
Primary School	39	19.5		
School Certificate	47	23.5		
Higher School Certificate	14	7.0		
Vocational School	76	38.0		
Bachelor's Degree	18	9.0		
Master's Degree	2	1.0		
Doctorate Degree				
<b>Employment Status</b>	108	54.0	2.46	1.727
Employed (Full-Time)	5	2.5		
Employed (Part-Time)	3	1.5		
Self-Employed	1	0.5		
Stay-at-Home	73	36.5		
Student	3	1.5		
Retired	7	3.5		
Unemployed				
<b>Level of Income</b>	7	3.5	4.69	2.114
Less than Rs 10,000	34	17		
Rs 10,000 - Rs 20,000	37	18.5		
Rs 20,000 - Rs 30,000	25	12.5		
Rs 30,000 - Rs 40,000	7	3.5		
Rs 40,000 - Rs 50,000	14	7.0		
Above Rs 50,000	76	38.0		
Not an income earner				

The study sample is predominantly composed of participants in their twenties (49%) and thirties (20.5%), with 16–20-year-olds making up 14% of the population. Those in their forties constitute 10% of the sample,

while respondents aged 51-60 and over 60 years represent smaller proportions, accounting for 6% and 0.5% respectively.

In terms of gender representation, the study sample slightly favors female respondents, making up 55.5% of the total. This indicates a slightly higher representation of females compared to males, who account for 44.5% of the respondents, which is still a significant portion of the sample.

In terms of educational backgrounds, the majority of respondents (38%) held a Bachelor's degree, followed by 23.50% with a Higher School Certificate and 19.50% completing the School Certificate. Some participants had a Master's degree (9%) or vocational qualifications (7%), while a small portion had completed only primary school (2%). The smallest group (1%) achieved a Doctorate's degree.

The study sample shows that 54% of respondents are employed full-time, while students make up 36.50%. Other categories include part-time employment (2.50%), self-employed (1.50%), stay-at-home (0.50%), retired (1.50%) and unemployed (3.50%), which have smaller proportions in the sample.

The income distribution reveals that 38% of participants are non-income earners, including the unemployed, retired or those not currently earning. The next significant group comprises 18.50% of respondents, falling in the Rs 20,000 - Rs 30,000 income range. Various other income categories, such as below Rs 10,000, Rs 10,000 - Rs 20,000, Rs 30,000 - Rs 40,000, Rs 40,000 - Rs 50,000 and above Rs 50,000, display varying proportions within the sample.

Cronbach's alpha, a statistical measure indicating questionnaire or survey reliability, yielded a high coefficient of 0.960 for the relevant questions in the questionnaire.

**Table 2: Reliability Statistics**

**Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.960	.956	35

The study aims to utilize Pearson's correlation analysis and linear regression to test hypotheses regarding factors influencing online buying behaviour. The results will offer valuable insights into the impact of investigated factors on online buying behaviour, helping to understand consumer purchasing decisions in the online marketplace.

**Pearson's Correlation Analysis**

**Hypothesis 1**

*Perceived Usefulness has a Positive Effect on Online Buying Behaviour*

**Table 3: Pearson's Correlation for Perceived Usefulness and Online Buying Behaviour**

**Correlations**

		Online Buying Behavior	Perceived Usefulness
Online Buying Behavior	Pearson Correlation	1	.165*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.020
	N	200	200
Perceived Usefulness	Pearson Correlation	.165*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.020	
	N	200	200

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: Table designed using IBMSPSSStatistics

The Pearson's correlation coefficient of 1.65 indicates a weak positive relationship between perceived usefulness and online buying behaviour, suggesting that as perceived usefulness increases, there is a slightly higher tendency for individuals to engage in online purchases. Though the effect is modest, it still supports the hypothesis that perceived usefulness positively influences online buying behaviour.

**Perceived Ease of Use has a Positive Effect on Online Buying Behaviour**

**Table 4: Pearson's Correlation for Perceived Ease of Use and Online Buying Behaviour**

**Correlations**

		Perceived Ease of Use	Online Buying Behavior
Perceived Ease of Use	Pearson Correlation	1	.122
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.084
	N	200	200
Online Buying Behavior	Pearson Correlation	.122	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.084	
	N	200	200

Source: Table designed using IBMSPSSStatistics

The Pearson's correlation coefficient results of 0.122 indicates a weak positive relationship between perceived ease of use and online buying behaviour. Despite the small value, it suggests a positive association between the two variables. As perceived ease of use increases, online buying behaviour also tends to increase though to a limited extent. The hypothesis of a positive effect of perceived ease of use on online buying behaviour is supported. In essence, when individuals find an online platform easy to use, they are more likely to engage in online buying activities.

**Accessibility & Convenience has a Positive Effect on Online Buying Behaviour**

**Table 5: Pearson's Correlation for Accessibility & Convenience and Online Buying Behaviour**

**Correlations**

		Online Buying Behavior	Accessibility and Convenience
Online Buying Behavior	Pearson Correlation	1	.137
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.054
	N	200	200
Accessibility and Convenience	Pearson Correlation	.137	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.054	
	N	200	200

Source: Table designed using IBM SPSS Statistics

A Pearson's correlation coefficient of 0.137 indicates a weak positive association between accessibility and convenience and online buying behaviour. This means that there is a slight tendency for online buying behaviour to increase as accessibility and convenience improve, but the relationship is relatively weak. This means that as accessibility and convenience increase, there is a slight tendency for online buying behaviour to also increase.

***User Satisfaction has a Positive Effect on Online Buying Behaviour***

**Table 6: Pearson’s Correlation for User Satisfaction and Online Buying Behaviour**

**Correlations**

		Online Buying Behavior	User Satisfaction
Online Buying Behavior	Pearson Correlation	1	.114
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.107
	N	200	200
User Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.114	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.107	
	N	200	200

Source: Table designed using IBM SPSS Statistics

The Pearson's regression test yielded a correlation coefficient of 0.114, indicating a positive relationship between user satisfaction and online buying behaviour. Though the correlation is weak, it suggests that as user satisfaction increases, online buying behaviour is more likely to increase as well. In summary, the results support the hypothesis that user satisfaction positively influences online buying behaviour.

***Social Influence has a Positive Effect on Online Buying Behaviour***

**Table 7: Pearson’s Correlation for Social Influence and Online Buying Behaviour**

**Correlations**

		Online Buying Behavior	Social Influence
Online Buying Behavior	Pearson Correlation	1	.079
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.268
	N	200	200
Social Influence	Pearson Correlation	.079	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.268	
	N	200	200

Source: Table designed using IBM SPSS Statistics

A Pearson's correlation coefficient of 0.079 suggests a weak positive relationship between user satisfaction and online buying behaviour. Although the value is small, it still indicates a positive effect. This means that as user satisfaction increases, there is a slight tendency for online buying behaviour to also increase. Thus, the hypothesis that social influence has a positive effect on online buying behaviour is supported.

***Trust in Security & Privacy has a Positive Effect on Online Buying Behaviour***

**Table 8: Pearson’s Correlation for Trust & Security and Online Buying Behaviour**

**Correlations**

		Online Buying Behavior	Trust and Security
Online Buying Behavior	Pearson Correlation	1	.074
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.297
	N	200	200
Trust and Security	Pearson Correlation	.074	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.297	
	N	200	200

Source: Table designed using IBM SPSS Statistics

The Pearson's regression test yielded a modest positive effect (0.074) for trust and security on online buying behaviour, indicating a connection between these factors and consumers' likelihood to make purchases

online. Despite the relatively low value, this suggests that enhancing trust and security measures could bolster individuals' confidence in online shopping and potentially lead to increased buying activity. In conclusion, the hypothesis of a positive effect of trust and security on online buying behaviour is supported.

***Eco-Friendliness has a Positive Effect on Online Buying Behaviour***

**Table 9: Pearson's Correlation for Eco-Friendliness and Online Buying Behaviour**

**Correlations**

		Online Buying Behavior	Eco-Friendliness
Online Buying Behavior	Pearson Correlation	1	.081
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.255
	N	200	200
Eco-Friendliness	Pearson Correlation	.081	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.255	
	N	200	200

Source: Table designed using IBM SPSS Statistics

The Pearson's regression test yielded a statistically significant result of 0.081, indicating a small positive effect of eco-friendliness on online buying behaviour. Although the effect size is modest, it suggests a positive association between the two variables. As the eco-friendliness of a product increases, there is a slight tendency for online consumers to engage in more buying behaviour, supporting the hypothesis of a positive effect of eco-friendliness on online buying behaviour.

**Linear Regression**

**Hypothesis 1**

***Perceived Usefulness has a Positive Effect on Online Buying Behaviour***

**Table 10: Model Summary of Perceived Usefulness**

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.165 <sup>a</sup>	.027	.022	.437

a. Predictors: (Constant), Perceived Usefulness

Source: Table designed using IBM SPSS Statistics

The linear regression shows a weak but positive relationship between online buying behaviour and perceived usefulness. The correlation coefficient (R) of 0.165 indicates limited positive association, while the adjusted R-square of 0.027 suggests about 2.7% variability in online buying behaviour is due to perceived usefulness. The standard error of 0.437 shows moderate prediction accuracy. Nonetheless, it is noteworthy that a positive direction exists between the two variables.

**Table 11: ANOVA of Perceived Usefulness**

**ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1.060	1	1.060	5.537	.020 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	37.895	198	.191		
	Total	38.955	199			

a. Dependent Variable: Online Buying Behavior

b. Predictors: (Constant), Perceived Usefulness

Source: Table designed using IBM SPSS Statistics



The ANOVA analysis showed a significant relationship between perceived usefulness and online buying behaviour ( $F = 5.537$ ,  $p = 0.020$ ). The F-statistic (5.537) indicates higher variability between the groups of perceived usefulness than within the groups. The associated p-value (0.020) suggests a 2% chance of obtaining the observed F-value or a more extreme one if there were no significant difference between the groups. Consequently, hypothesis H1 is accepted.

**Table 12: Coefficients of Perceived Usefulness**

**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.481	.112		4.294	<.001
	Perceived Usefulness	.072	.031	.165	2.353	.020

a. Dependent Variable: Online Buying Behavior

Source: Table designed using IBM SPSS Statistics

The linear regression analysis shows a weak but positive relationship between online buying behaviour and perceived usefulness (Beta coefficient = 0.072). This means that a one-unit increase in perceived usefulness corresponds to a small average increase of 0.072 units in online buying behaviour. Despite the small effect size, the positive direction supports the hypothesis that perceived usefulness influences online buying behaviour.

***Perceived Ease of Use has a Positive Effect on Online Buying Behaviour***

**Table 13: Model Summary of Perceived Ease of Use**

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.122 <sup>a</sup>	.015	.010	.440

a. Predictors: (Constant), Perceived Ease of Use

Source: Table designed using IBM SPSS Statistics

The analysis shows a modest but significant positive relationship ( $R = 0.122$ ) between perceived usefulness and online buying behaviour. As perceived usefulness increases, online buying behaviour also tends to rise slightly. Though only 1.5% of the variability in online buying behaviour can be explained by perceived usefulness ( $R$ -squared = 0.015), this effect should not be overlooked. The standard error (0.440) accounts for prediction variability but doesn't diminish the importance of the observed positive relationship. While not the sole predictor, perceived usefulness remains a significant factor in understanding online consumer behaviour.

**Table 14: ANOVA of Perceived Ease of Use**

**ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.584	1	.584	3.014	.084 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	38.371	198	.194		
	Total	38.955	199			

a. Dependent Variable: Online Buying Behavior

b. Predictors: (Constant), Perceived Ease of Use

Source: Table designed using IBM SPSS Statistics



The ANOVA yielded an F-value of 3.014 and a p-value of 0.084. The F-value assesses the significance of the regression model, indicating how well the IV explains the DV's variation. However, the p-value is slightly higher than the conventional threshold of 0.05. Consequently, the results suggest that the perceived ease of use does not have a statistically significant relationship with online buying behaviour at the 0.05 level. Therefore, hypothesis H2 is rejected.

**Table 15: Coefficients of Perceived Ease of Use**

**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.544	.114		4.758	<.001
	Perceived Ease of Use	.056	.032	.122	1.736	.084

a. Dependent Variable: Online Buying Behavior

Source: Table designed using IBM SPSS Statistics

The beta coefficient (0.056) implies a positive relationship between perceived ease of use and online buying behaviour, but the non-significant p-value (0.084) suggests that this relationship could be due to random chance and lacks statistical significance. Thus, the hypothesis of perceived ease of use positively impacting online buying behaviour is not supported.

**Accessibility & Convenience has a Positive Effect on Online Buying Behaviour**

**Table 16: Model Summary of Accessibility & Convenience**

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.171 <sup>a</sup>	.029	.025	.437

a. Predictors: (Constant), Accessibility and Convenience

Source: Table designed using IBM SPSS Statistics

The linear regression analysis reveals a weak but positive correlation (R = 0.171) between accessibility and convenience and online buying behaviour, indicating that improved accessibility and convenience lead to increased online buying. The R-square value (0.029) suggests 2.9% variation in online buying can be attributed to accessibility and convenience, showing their positive influence. The standard error (0.437) indicates moderately accurate regression estimates.

**Table 17: ANOVA of Accessibility & Convenience**

**ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1.146	1	1.146	6.000	.015 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	37.809	198	.191		
	Total	38.955	199			

a. Dependent Variable: Online Buying Behavior

b. Predictors: (Constant), Accessibility and Convenience

Source: Table designed using IBM SPSS Statistics

The linear regression test on accessibility, convenience, and online buying behaviour resulted in an F-value of 6.000 and a p-value of 0.015. The significant F-value indicates a potential relationship between the IV and the DV. The low p-value confirms that this relationship is statistically significant, meaning that changes in accessibility and convenience have a notable impact on online buying behaviour. Consequently, we accept hypothesis H3.

**Table 18: Coefficients of Accessibility & Convenience**

**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.472	.112		4.231	<.001
	Accessibility and Convenience	.074	.030	.171	2.449	.015

a. Dependent Variable: Online Buying Behavior

Source: Table designed using IBM SPSS Statistics

The linear regression test reveals a significant positive relationship between accessibility, convenience, and online buying behaviour. With a beta coefficient of 0.074, each one-unit increase in accessibility and convenience is expected to raise online buying behaviour by approximately 0.074 units. The low p-value of 0.015 confirms the statistical significance, ruling out chance. Thus, the hypothesis that accessibility and convenience positively affect online buying behaviour is supported.

**User Satisfaction has a Positive Effect on Online Buying Behaviour**

**Table 19: Model Summary of User Satisfaction**

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.122 <sup>a</sup>	.015	.010	.440

a. Predictors: (Constant), User Satisfaction

Source: Table designed using IBM SPSS Statistics

The linear regression shows a weak but encouraging link between user satisfaction and online buying behaviour (R = 0.122), suggesting higher satisfaction relates to improved buying behaviour. Although the R-square value (0.015) explains a small fraction of the variance, it allows further analysis to identify aspects influencing buying, aiding targeted strategies for enhancing the experience and driving more sales. Despite a standard error of 0.440, the model captures some variance, providing a foundation for potential improvements.

**Table 20: ANOVA of User Satisfaction**

**ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.584	1	.584	3.014	.084 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	38.371	198	.194		
	Total	38.955	199			

a. Dependent Variable: Online Buying Behavior

b. Predictors: (Constant), User Satisfaction

Source: Table designed using IBM SPSS Statistics

The ANOVA results showed an F-value of 3.014 with a corresponding p-value of 0.084, indicating that the hypothesis cannot be accepted. This suggests that there is no statistically significant relationship between user satisfaction and online buying behaviour. Although the F-value indicated a moderately good fit for the model, the lack of significance in the p-value highlights the need for further investigation or a larger sample size to draw definitive conclusions. As a result, hypothesis H4 is rejected.

**Table 21: Coefficients of User Satisfaction****Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.544	.114		4.758	<.001
	User Satisfaction	.056	.032	.122	1.736	.084

a. Dependent Variable: Online Buying Behavior

Source: Table designed using IBM SPSS Statistics

The linear regression analysis shows a positive association (beta coefficient = 0.056) between user satisfaction and online buying behaviour, indicating that as user satisfaction increases, online buying behaviour is expected to increase. However, the effect size is small. The p-value (0.084) is non-statistically significant, suggesting that the observed relationship could be due to chance. Therefore, the hypothesis of a positive effect of user satisfaction on online buying behaviour is not supported.

**Social Influence has a Positive Effect on Online Buying Behaviour****Table 22: Model Summary of Social Influence****Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.167 <sup>a</sup>	.028	.023	.437

a. Predictors: (Constant), Social Influence

Source: Table designed using IBM SPSS Statistics

The linear regression analysis between social influence and online buying behaviour revealed a weak but statistically significant positive relationship (R = 0.167). The R-square value of 0.028 indicates that social influence explains only 2.8% of the variability in online buying behaviour. Despite this small impact, the relationship is still noteworthy. The standard error of 0.437 shows some data variability, but the overall significance suggests social influence does play a role in online buying decisions.

**Table 23: ANOVA of Social Influence****ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1.088	1	1.088	5.687	.018 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	37.867	198	.191		
	Total	38.955	199			

a. Dependent Variable: Online Buying Behavior

b. Predictors: (Constant), Social Influence

Source: Table designed using IBM SPSS Statistics

The linear regression test between social influence (IV) and online buying behaviour (DV) yielded a significant result (F = 5.687, p = 0.018), indicating that social influence has a significant impact on online buying behaviour. With the p-value being <0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected, supporting the idea of a significant relationship between social influence and online buying behaviour. Consequently, H5 is accepted.

**Table 24: Coefficients of Social Influence****Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.469	.116		4.057	<.001
	Social Influence	.081	.034	.167	2.385	.018

a. Dependent Variable: Online Buying Behavior

Source: Table designed using IBM SPSS Statistics

The results indicate a significant positive correlation. A beta coefficient of 0.081 implies that a one-unit increase in social influence corresponds to approximately 0.081 units increase in online buying behaviour, and vice versa for a one-unit decrease. The low significance value of 0.018 reinforces the credibility of the findings, suggesting that the observed relationship is not merely a chance occurrence. Thus, the hypothesis of a positive effect of social influence on online buying behaviour is supported.

**Trust in Security & Privacy has a Positive Effect on Online Buying Behaviour****Table 25: Model Summary of Trust in Security & Privacy****Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.147 <sup>a</sup>	.022	.017	.439

a. Predictors: (Constant), Trust in Security and Privacy

Source: Table designed using IBM SPSS Statistics

The linear regression test examined the relationship between trust in security and privacy and online buying behaviour. The findings revealed a weak positive correlation ( $R = 0.147$ ), indicating a positive association between trust in security and privacy and online buying behaviour. Trust in security and privacy explains approximately 22% of the variability in online buying behaviour, highlighting its significant impact on consumers' decisions. The results support the idea that building trust in security and privacy positively influences online buying behaviour.

**Table 26: ANOVA of Trust in Security & Privacy****ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.838	1	.838	4.351	.038 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	38.117	198	.193		
	Total	38.955	199			

a. Dependent Variable: Online Buying Behavior

b. Predictors: (Constant), Trust in Security and Privacy

Source: Table designed using IBM SPSS Statistics

The linear regression test using an ANOVA table shows a significant relationship ( $F = 4.351$ ,  $p = 0.038$ ) between trust in security and privacy and online buying behaviour. The low p-value indicates that this relationship is not due to chance alone, supporting the significant findings. Consequently, H6 is accepted, indicating that trust in security and privacy has an impact on online buying behaviour.

**Table 27: Coefficients of Trust in Security & Privacy****Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.536	.100		5.335	<.001
	Trust in Security and Privacy	.071	.034	.147	2.086	.038

a. Dependent Variable: Online Buying Behavior

Source: Table designed using IBM SPSS Statistics

The linear regression test examined the relationship between trust in security & privacy and online buying behaviour. The obtained beta coefficient of 0.071 indicates a positive effect: as trust in security & privacy increases, online buying behaviour is expected to increase as well. The statistical significance was confirmed with a p-value (sig) of 0.038, supporting the hypothesis that trust in security and privacy positively influences online buying behaviour.

**Eco-Friendliness has a Positive Effect on Online Buying Behaviour****Table 28: Model Summary of Eco-Friendliness****Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.035 <sup>a</sup>	.001	-.004	.443

a. Predictors: (Constant), Eco-Friendliness

Source: Table designed using IBM SPSS Statistics

The linear regression analysis shows a weak positive correlation ( $R = 0.035$ ) between eco-friendliness and online buying behaviour. The low R-square value (-0.04) indicates the model has little predictive power and doesn't fit the data well. Moreover, the standard error (0.443) suggests imprecise predictions and a spread of data points around the regression line.

Consequently, hypothesis H7 is rejected.

**Table 29: ANOVA of Eco-Friendliness****ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.047	1	.047	.240	.625 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	38.908	198	.197		
	Total	38.955	199			

a. Dependent Variable: Online Buying Behavior

b. Predictors: (Constant), Eco-Friendliness

Source: Table designed using IBM SPSS Statistics

The linear regression test examining the connection between eco-friendliness and online buying behaviour produced non-significant results ( $F=0.240$ ,  $p=0.625$ ). These outcomes suggest that the explained variance in online buying behaviour is relatively minor compared to the unexplained variance. Consequently, the p-value reinforces the lack of meaningful relationship between the variables based on the available data. Thus, eco-friendliness does not seem to be a significant predictor of online buying behaviour in this study.



**Table 30: Coefficients of Eco-Friendliness****Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.677	.123		5.493	<.001
	Eco-Friendliness	.018	.036	.035	.490	.625

a. Dependent Variable: Online Buying Behavior

Source: Table designed using IBM SPSS Statistics

The linear regression test reveals a weak positive association ( $\beta = 0.018$ ) between eco-friendliness and online buying behaviour, indicating a slight increase in online purchases with higher eco-friendliness. However, the relationship lacks statistical significance ( $\text{sig} = 0.625$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), making it uncertain if eco-friendliness significantly impacts online buying behaviour based on the available data. Therefore, the hypothesis of a positive effect of eco-friendliness on online buying behaviour is not supported.

## Discussion

### Descriptive Analysis

This study revealed that 98% of respondents incorporate social media platforms into their daily lives, emphasizing their significance for communication and information sharing. Merely 2% indicated not using these platforms. These findings are consistent with zenmauritius' 2018 research, which also highlighted how social media platforms have become an integral part of people's lives worldwide including Mauritius.

The study highlights Facebook as the top choice for online buying, with 104 respondents preferring this platform, followed by Instagram with 65 respondents. This aligns with Ali Taha *et al.*'s 2021 research, which emphasizes the significant impact of Facebook and Instagram on consumers' online purchasing behaviour.

### Hypothesis 1

The study shows a weak positive correlation ( $r = 0.165$ ) between perceived usefulness and online buying behaviour, indicating a positive association between the two. The linear regression analysis confirms this with a small effect size ( $\beta = 0.072$ ), suggesting that a one-unit increase in perceived usefulness corresponds to a 0.072 unit average increase in online buying behaviour. Despite the weak strength, the results support the hypothesis that perceived usefulness influences online buying behaviour in a positive direction, consistent with Akar and Topçu, 2011's findings on SMM platforms.

### Hypothesis 2

The Pearson's correlation coefficient of 0.122 indicates a weak positive relationship between perceived ease of use and online buying behaviour. However, the subsequent linear regression with a beta coefficient of 0.056 shows a non-significant p-value of 0.084, suggesting that the observed relationship may be due to random chance and lacks statistical significance. Thus, the hypothesis that perceived ease of use positively affects online buying behaviour is not supported. This contradicts Lim *et al.* 2016's study, which claims a positive influence of perceived ease of use on social media platforms for online purchasing behaviour.

### Hypothesis 3

The Pearson's correlation coefficient of 0.137 suggests a weak positive association between accessibility and convenience and online buying behaviour. However, the linear regression test indicates a statistically significant positive relationship between accessibility and convenience and online buying behaviour, supported by a beta coefficient of 0.074. These findings align with Jason and Aishah's (2021) study, which also highlighted a positive association between high accessibility and convenience in SMM and online buying behaviour.

#### **Hypothesis 4**

The Pearson's regression test indicated a small, positive correlation ( $r = 0.114$ ) between user satisfaction and online buying behaviour. The linear regression analysis showed a positive association with a beta coefficient of 0.056. However, the non-statistically significant p-value of 0.084 suggests that this relationship may have occurred by chance, providing insufficient evidence to support the hypothesis. These findings contradict prior studies (Cheung *et al.*, 2020; Leong *et al.*) that demonstrated a significant connection between user satisfaction, attitudes towards SMM, and online buying behaviour.

#### **Hypothesis 5**

The Pearson's correlation coefficient of 0.079 indicates a weak positive relationship between user satisfaction and online buying behaviour, supporting the hypothesis that social influence positively affects online buying behaviour. The beta coefficient of 0.081 further confirms this relationship. These results align with a previous study by Alalwan *et al.* (2018) that also found a significant influence of social influence on customers' purchase intentions.

#### **Hypothesis 6**

The Pearson's regression test yielded a small positive effect (0.074) of trust and security on online buying behaviour, indicating a positive relationship between these factors and consumers' propensity for online purchases. This relationship was statistically significant (p-value = 0.038) at a 5% level of significance, supporting the hypothesis of a positive effect of trust in security and privacy on online buying behaviour. This finding aligns with Appel *et al.*'s 2019 study, suggesting that trust in social media platforms beyond security and privacy concerns can influence online purchasing behaviour.

#### **Hypothesis 7**

The Pearson's regression test yielded a small positive effect (0.081) of eco-friendliness on online buying behaviour, indicating a statistically significant relationship. However, the linear regression test showed a weak positive association (beta = 0.018) without statistical significance (sig = 0.625,  $p > 0.05$ ). Thus, the impact of eco-friendliness on online buying behaviour remains uncertain based on the available data, and the hypothesis of a positive effect is not supported. This aligns with Haws *et al.* (2014) and Tobler *et al.* (2011) studies, which also found a strong correlation between eco-friendliness and online buying behaviour.

#### **Conclusion**

Mauritian businesses can harness the potential of SMM to enhance online purchasing behaviour by highlighting the value and benefits of their products and services. Demonstrating how their offerings effectively address customer needs and preferences is key to improving online buying behaviour.

To improve the online shopping experience, businesses should focus on simplifying e-commerce. This includes enhancing the user interface and overall user experience on social media platforms. Key elements for improvement encompass intuitive navigation, clear product descriptions, and a user-friendly checkout process. By doing so, potential barriers and complexities that might discourage Mauritian customers from making online purchases can be minimized, fostering a seamless and hassle-free shopping experience.

Mauritian businesses should consider offering multiple online purchase platforms, including responsive websites and mobile applications, to cater to the diverse preferences and behaviours of the Mauritian population. Additionally, providing flexible payment options, reliable shipping methods, and responsive customer support ensures a convenient and trouble-free online shopping experience.

In Mauritius, businesses can enhance online buying behaviour by collaborating with local influencers in the realm of SMM. Partnering with credible influencers who have a strong presence in the Mauritian market enables businesses to effectively target and engage the local population. Leveraging the followers of these influencers extends reach, credibility, and impact, ultimately driving online sales.

Businesses based in Mauritius must prioritize trust and security in online transactions. Implementing robust security measures such as secure payment gateways, encryption protocols, and privacy policies is essential

to instill trust. Clear communication and demonstrations of commitment to customer data protection and online security can alleviate concerns and encourage online purchases.

Mauritian businesses should actively promote eco-friendliness through SMM campaigns. Highlighting eco-friendly practices, sustainable sourcing, or green initiatives can resonate with environmentally conscious consumers in Mauritius. Emphasizing the environmental benefits of online purchases, such as reducing carbon footprint or minimizing packaging waste, can be particularly effective.

To stay competitive, businesses in Mauritius must continuously evaluate and adapt to the evolving nature of the market. Regular monitoring and analysis of the impact of SMM strategies on online buying behaviour in Mauritius are crucial. Staying updated with changing consumer trends, preferences, and technological advancements is essential for adapting marketing approaches accordingly. Incorporating feedback from customers and stakeholders helps refine marketing strategies for improved results.

Businesses can further enhance online purchasing behaviour by providing personalized and customized services. Employing data-driven personalization techniques to offer tailored recommendations, offers, and advertisements to Mauritian individual users is a powerful strategy. Leveraging social media platforms to gather user insights and preferences enables businesses to deliver more relevant and personalized content, ultimately increasing the likelihood of online purchase

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# The Mind Behind Success: Unveiling Entrepreneurial Psychology through Expert Insights

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## Abstract

Entrepreneurship and psychological dimensions are intimately connected with each other for overwhelming success of entrepreneurial ventures. The literature on the psychology of entrepreneurship emphasizes on the critical role in understanding entrepreneurial behavior, and delves into how psychological factors influence entrepreneurial ventures and their outcomes (Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. 2000). Understanding these psychological aspects can guide the development of effective entrepreneurial training programs and strategies for fostering entrepreneurial success. This research paper delves into the intricate relationship between psychology and corporate entrepreneurship, seeking to uncover the fundamental factors that contribute to the success of a business. Aligned above, the authors have conducted an in-depth interview with a Chief Financial Officer (CFO) from ABCD Pvt. Ltd. who has played a pivotal role in successful financial management of his organization. Ten of the pertinent aspects of the financial corporate entrepreneurship were taken in consideration for the in-depth interview analysis. Through this qualitative analysis, we explore the cognitive and behavioral aspects that entrepreneurs and their financial leaders must navigate. The findings highlight a synergy between the entrepreneur's mindset and financial management, demonstrating how strategic decision-making, risk tolerance, and resilience profoundly influence business outcomes. Furthermore, the paper underscores the significance of adaptability and innovation as key drivers of success in today's dynamic business landscape. By incorporating insights from the interview with a CFO, this one to one interview analysis research paper provides valuable insights into the psychology of entrepreneurship and offers practical guidance for aspiring and current entrepreneurs. Understanding the interplay between psychological factors and financial acumen is essential for fostering business success in an ever-evolving market environment.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurship, Psychology, CFO, Financial Management, Financial Acumen.

**Note:** The name of the organization and the CFO have not been revealed as per the ethical boundaries and considerations.

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## Introduction

In today's rapidly changing business landscape, the relationship between corporate entrepreneurship and psychological dimensions has become increasingly significant. This intricate connection is a vital component in understanding the cognitive and behavioral aspects that entrepreneurs and their financial leaders must navigate to achieve success. Adaptability and innovation stand out as key drivers in this dynamic environment, while the interplay between psychological factors and financial acumen shapes the direction of corporate entrepreneurship.

Corporate entrepreneurship, often referred to as "intrapreneurship," involves the development of entrepreneurial activities within established organizations. This approach to business represents a departure from traditional, risk-averse corporate structures and requires a mindset that blends entrepreneurial spirit with corporate stability. In this context, the psychological dimensions of individuals within the organization play a crucial role.

One of the fundamental cognitive aspects that entrepreneurs and financial leaders must navigate is risk perception. The willingness to take calculated risks is a defining trait of successful entrepreneurs. Psychologically, this involves a complex interplay of factors such as risk tolerance, perception of uncertainty, and the ability to make informed decisions. Financial leaders and entrepreneurs must

collaboratively assess risks and rewards, aligning their cognitive processes to ensure that calculated risks contribute to the organization's growth and not its downfall.

Behavioral aspects come into play as leaders guide their teams through the entrepreneurial journey. Communication, leadership, and motivation are key behavioral elements. Entrepreneurs and financial leaders must effectively communicate the vision and goals of the entrepreneurial initiative, inspire their teams, and motivate them to perform at their best. Understanding the psychological dimensions of team members, their individual motivations, and how they respond to different leadership styles is essential for successful corporate entrepreneurship.

The significance of adaptability in the context of corporate entrepreneurship cannot be overstated. In today's dynamic business landscape, adaptability is the ability to pivot swiftly in response to changes, whether they are external market shifts or internal organizational modifications. Psychologically, adaptability requires a mindset that is open to change and innovation, rather than resistant to it. Entrepreneurs and financial leaders need to foster a culture of adaptability within their organizations to thrive in an ever-evolving market.

Innovation is the lifeblood of corporate entrepreneurship. In a world where the rate of technological advancement is exponential, companies must continually innovate to stay competitive. The cognitive aspect of innovation involves creative thinking, problem-solving, and the ability to generate new ideas. Entrepreneurs and financial leaders must encourage and nurture these cognitive processes within their teams.

However, innovation is not solely a cognitive process; it also encompasses behavioral aspects. Entrepreneurs and financial leaders must create an environment that encourages experimentation, where individuals are not afraid to fail and learn from their mistakes. This requires fostering a psychological safety net within the organization, where employees feel secure in taking risks and contributing innovative ideas without fear of retribution.

The interplay between psychological factors and financial acumen is central to the success of corporate entrepreneurship. Financial leaders are often tasked with allocating resources to entrepreneurial initiatives, and the psychological factors they consider are multifaceted. They must assess the potential risks, rewards, and financial feasibility of each project while keeping the broader organizational goals in mind.

Psychological factors also influence the decision-making process. Emotions, biases, and cognitive shortcuts can impact financial decisions, sometimes leading to suboptimal outcomes. Financial leaders and entrepreneurs must be aware of these psychological biases and work to mitigate their effects, making more rational and informed decisions.

Moreover, the interplay between psychological factors and financial acumen is evident in negotiations and partnerships. Building successful partnerships often relies on understanding the psychological dimensions of the parties involved, identifying their motivations, and aligning interests. Negotiating skills, coupled with financial acumen, are critical to forging productive collaborations in corporate entrepreneurship.

Therefore, the relationship between corporate entrepreneurship and psychological dimensions is a multifaceted and dynamic one. Cognitive and behavioral aspects, including risk perception, communication, leadership, motivation, adaptability, and innovation, significantly influence the success of entrepreneurial initiatives within established organizations. Adaptability and innovation have emerged as key drivers of success in the ever-changing business landscape. The interplay between psychological factors and financial acumen shapes resource allocation, decision-making, and negotiation strategies, ultimately determining the trajectory of corporate entrepreneurship.

In conclusion, corporate entrepreneurship is not solely about business strategies and financial decisions. It is equally about the individuals who drive these initiatives and their cognitive and behavioral processes. Understanding and harnessing the interplay between corporate entrepreneurship and psychological dimensions is essential for thriving in the complex and evolving world of modern business. By embracing adaptability, nurturing innovation, and integrating psychological factors with financial acumen, organizations can navigate the challenges of corporate entrepreneurship and pave the way for sustainable success in today's dynamic business landscape.

Incorporating insights gleaned from an in-depth interview with a Chief Financial Officer (CFO), this one-on-one interview analysis research paper delves into the intricate relationship between corporate



entrepreneurship and psychological dimensions. By exploring the CFO's perspectives and experiences, this study provides valuable insights into the psychology of entrepreneurship, shedding light on the cognitive and behavioral aspects that entrepreneurs and financial leaders must navigate. It is through these insights that practical guidance emerges, offering a compass for both aspiring and current entrepreneurs as they embark on their journeys in the ever-evolving business landscape. The interview underscores the critical importance of comprehending the interplay between psychological factors and financial acumen, a fundamental knowledge base that is essential for fostering business success in today's dynamic market environment.

## **Review of Literature**

Corporate entrepreneurship, often referred to as intrapreneurship, is a strategy where established organizations encourage entrepreneurial behavior. Shane and Venkataraman (2000) highlighted the importance of understanding the psychological dimensions of individuals within organizations. They emphasized that a culture fostering an entrepreneurial mindset within the constraints of a corporate structure is essential for the success of corporate entrepreneurship. This includes encouraging risk-taking, innovation, and creative thinking among employees.

Cognitive aspects are integral to the decisions made by entrepreneurs and financial leaders. Notably, Kahneman and Tversky (1974) introduced the concept of cognitive biases in decision-making. These biases, including the availability heuristic and anchoring, can significantly affect entrepreneurial decisions. It's crucial to explore how these biases impact the assessment of risks, resource allocation, and financial strategies within corporate entrepreneurship.

Behavioral aspects such as leadership, communication, and motivation are critical for guiding teams within entrepreneurial initiatives. Bass and Riggio (2006) have extensively studied transformational leadership, which is highly relevant in corporate entrepreneurship. Effective communication of the vision and goals of an entrepreneurial initiative, inspirational leadership, and motivating teams to excel are behavioral elements that drive success in this context.

Adaptability and innovation are key drivers of success in today's dynamic business environment. Clayton Christensen, in his book "The Innovator's Dilemma," has underlined how innovation is essential for maintaining a competitive edge. Furthermore, Kotter (1996) emphasized the significance of change management and adaptability within organizations. This includes being able to pivot swiftly in response to market shifts and internal organizational changes.

The interplay between psychological factors and financial acumen is central to corporate entrepreneurship. Kahneman and Tversky's "Prospect Theory" (1979) provides insights into how psychological factors, like loss aversion and overconfidence, influence financial decision-making. Within corporate entrepreneurship, this interplay is evident in resource allocation, decision-making, and negotiations. Financial leaders must understand the psychological dimensions of individuals involved in deals, identify their motivations, and align interests to foster successful collaborations.

## **Methodology:**

### **The Research Model**

An in-depth interview was conducted with a Chief Financial Officer (CFO) from ABCD Pvt. Ltd. who has played a pivotal role in successful financial management of his organization. Ten of the pertinent aspects of the financial corporate entrepreneurship were taken in consideration for the in-depth interview analysis. By incorporating insights from the interview, this one to one interview analysis research paper provides valuable insights into the psychology of entrepreneurship and offers practical guidance for aspiring and current entrepreneurs.

### **Instruments for Data Collection**

The instruments for gathering data were semi-structured interview questions. The interview was chosen as the best data gathering tool because it is a process of reciprocal and interactive communication based on the manner that questions are asked and answered for a serious and intended objective. Chief Financial Officer (CFO) from ABCD Pvt. Ltd. was interviewed for a total of 10 questions. It is acknowledged that the participant's responses to the interview questions convey the same meaning.

## **Reliability**

The reliability of the research conducted in the interview with the CFO of ABCD Pvt. Ltd. is influenced by several critical factors. These factors ensure the accuracy and consistency of the findings and their reflection of the true reality of the company's financial strategies and decision-making.

To enhance the reliability of the research, an experienced CFO with a formal, accredited education program and degree relevant to finance or accounting, was asked to code the interviews, and the consistency between the researcher's and the field analyses was used as the reliability coefficient. This comparison helps ensure the accuracy and consistency of the interpretations derived from the interview.

Furthermore, to bolster the research's reliability, a portion of the interview data was shared with an expert in the field. This expert's insights and opinions were sought, contributing an additional layer of validation to the findings.

The researchers diligently reviewed the written transcript of the interview multiple times to ascertain their accuracy and completeness. This rigorous review process was conducted to eliminate any potential errors or misinterpretations.

To prevent bias from influencing the data interpretation, the researcher took precautionary steps. These steps included consulting relevant literature and seeking the expert's opinion, all of which aided in maintaining an objective and unbiased analysis.

The coding process, which involved categorizing the obtained data into main themes and categories, also underwent rigorous review and validation procedures. This step helps ensure that the data is accurately represented and reliably categorized.

Furthermore, for additional verification and as a means of maintaining transparency, the voice recordings of the interviews, conducted with the CFO's permission, were securely stored. These recordings, along with the written records, were retained for examination purposes, allowing for potential future verification of the research findings.

## **Validity**

To ensure the validity of research, it is important to consider factors such as the data collection process, data analysis, and consistency in data interpretation. Additionally, the reflectivity of research results and their applicability to other situations can further increase validity. A detailed explanation of all stages of the research is necessary to achieve this. In this study, various practices were implemented to increase validity, including recording the interview with the CFO using a voice recorder and clarifying any unclear information. Continuous comparative analyses were conducted to ensure consistency.

## **Data Analysis**

The qualitative pattern was used to analyze the data through grounded theory. The analysis process involved three steps: open, axial, and selective coding, following Strauss and Corbin's methodology from 1998. In the first step, the interviews with participants were transcribed, and notes were taken by the researcher. The conceptualized ideas were then organized into categories and subcategories, which were further refined in the axial coding process. The findings of the study are presented in detail for the problems. In selective coding, the categories and subcategories were re-evaluated based on their progressive and dimensional characteristics, resulting in the identification of main categories. The last objective presents the psycho-competence development model that was derived from the main categories.

## **Results and discussion**

The interview provides insights into the professional journey and experiences of a corporate leader in a prominent company, XYZ, and how they relate to the concepts of corporate entrepreneurship and psychological factors. Following key themes were emerging from the interview.

## **Career Development and Loyalty to the Organization**

The interviewee's career trajectory at XYZ illustrates a remarkable journey characterized by a deep sense of commitment and loyalty to the organization. Their professional life began after acquiring the Chartered Accountancy qualification, and the interviewee's first job at XYZ, known for voucher and meal coupon services, marked the initiation of a 16-year-long corporate career. The interviewee's dedication to XYZ was consistently evident as they described their progression from the role of an account executive to their current position as the Chief Financial Officer (CFO).

### **Discussion:**

The findings underscore the significance of personal commitment and loyalty in an individual's career development within a large organization. The interviewee's alignment with the organization's values and culture allowed them to thrive and contribute to the growth of XYZ. This commitment has been pivotal in sustaining a successful career and nurturing a sense of belonging to the company. The interviewee's journey serves as a compelling example of how long-term loyalty and dedication to an organization can result in opportunities for professional growth and advancement (Ballout, 2009).

## **Factors Contributing to Business Success**

Several factors were identified as contributors to the success of XYZ, including the interviewee's commitment, dedication, and integrity. They emphasized the importance of maintaining honesty and integrity as core values within the organization. In their words, "If we are honest to ourselves and if we are honest to our organization, it helps you improve at every stage." The interviewee's career at XYZ, which has seen the organization's revenue grow from 100 crores to 27,000 crores, exemplifies the growth trajectory facilitated by these factors. Furthermore, they emphasize the importance of alignment with the organization's culture and values, open communication, and collaborative work culture.

### **Discussion:**

The interviewee's insights shed light on the psychological and ethical aspects that contribute to business success. The commitment to core values, such as integrity and honesty, creates a foundation of trust within the organization, which is pivotal for its growth (Russell, 2001). The alignment of personal values with those of the organization fosters a shared sense of purpose and responsibility, promoting a culture of dedication and collaboration. The findings emphasize the role of personal characteristics, ethics, and organizational culture in driving business success, and they resonate with existing literature on the importance of ethics and values in corporate entrepreneurship. (Sharma, Agrawal & Khandelwal, 2019)

## **Job Satisfaction and Challenges**

The interviewee discussed job satisfaction and the challenges they face in their role. Job satisfaction was derived from being involved in key decision-making processes, contributing to the growth trajectory of the organization, and the positive impact on society through the creation of employment opportunities, especially for first-time workers. Challenges in the role were primarily related to safety concerns, working capital management, and ensuring safety practices at the organization's numerous locations.

### **Discussion:**

The interview highlights the multi-faceted nature of job satisfaction and the inherent challenges in the role. The sources of satisfaction mentioned by the interviewee are both intrinsic and extrinsic. Their involvement in key decision-making processes reflects an intrinsic source of job satisfaction, as it aligns with their personal and professional growth aspirations. The positive societal impact through employment of first-time workers contributes to their sense of purpose and fulfillment, reflecting an extrinsic source of job satisfaction. (Tang & Gilbert, 1995; Wernimont, 1966)

The challenges identified, particularly those related to safety, working capital, and geographical diversity, underscore the complexity of managing a large organization. These challenges are consistent with the intricacies and demands of corporate entrepreneurship. The interviewee's emphasis on safety aligns with the

psychological aspects of risk assessment and mitigation in entrepreneurial decision-making, underlining the importance of safety protocols and training in the organization.

### **Personal Characteristics and Strengths**

The interview sheds light on the personal characteristics and strengths that have played a pivotal role in the interviewee's career at XYZ. Commitment and dedication are highlighted as essential traits that have shaped their professional journey. In their words, "I am committed to my job, so I deliver the time and dedication that it requires." Additionally, the interviewee places a strong emphasis on humility and the ability to collaborate effectively within a team.

#### **Discussion:**

The interview reveals the significance of personal characteristics and strengths in the context of corporate entrepreneurship. Commitment and dedication are emphasized as intrinsic motivators that have driven the interviewee's success. These qualities align with the research on the importance of personal commitment in entrepreneurial endeavors, where a strong sense of dedication often results in better performance and the ability to overcome challenges.

Humility emerges as a valuable trait in promoting effective collaboration within the organization. The willingness to take responsibility and share both the burden and the success with the team fosters a sense of trust and camaraderie. The findings resonate with existing literature on the importance of humility and teamwork in corporate entrepreneurship.

### **Financial Strategy Formulation or Strategic Planning**

The interview provides insights into the interviewee's role in financial strategy formulation at XYZ. The interviewee underscores the importance of market conditions and client performance in shaping the company's financial strategies. They state, "Once we have our clientele doing better, we will do better." The interviewee also emphasizes the significance of understanding the demand, organizational capabilities, and the need to align investments and upskilling with the organization's evolving needs.

#### **Discussion:**

The interview offers valuable insights into the process of financial strategy formulation within a large organization, highlighting the psychological and analytical aspects involved. The interviewee's focus on market conditions and client performance underscores the importance of external environmental factors in shaping financial strategies. Their emphasis on demand forecasting and aligning investments with client requirements aligns with established practices in financial strategy development.

The findings accentuate the role of adaptability, as organizations need to respond to evolving market dynamics. The interviewee's emphasis on upskilling and technological enablement reflects the importance of a learning organization that can remain competitive in a rapidly changing business landscape. These insights are congruent with the literature on financial strategy and the need for agility in strategic planning.

### **Management Style**

The interviewee's management style is characterized by their self-description as a team player. They emphasize the importance of collaboration, stating, "we need to collaborate with the team and gain trust." The interviewee underscores the significance of supporting team members' career progression and sharing knowledge.

#### **Discussion:**

The interviewee's management style aligns with a collaborative and people-centric approach, which is central to effective management in corporate entrepreneurship. A focus on teamwork and the development of trust fosters a positive work environment and can lead to increased motivation and innovation within the team. This echoes the tenets of transformational leadership, which emphasizes the importance of building trust and nurturing the growth of team members.

The interviewee's approach to sharing knowledge and supporting team members' career progression underscores the role of mentorship and knowledge transfer within the organization. Such a management style is often associated with effective leadership in corporate entrepreneurship, where mentorship can lead to better decision-making and the development of a skilled workforce.

### **Innovation and Risk-Taking**

The interviewee's emphasis on innovation and calculated risk-taking emerges as a critical theme in the context of corporate entrepreneurship at XYZ. They underline the need for continuous innovation, saying, "The days are gone when you need to just focus on creating a balance sheet or posting numbers." The interviewee highlights the importance of keeping pace with market trends and leveraging technology for in-depth analysis. They also stress the significance of upskilling the team to comprehend emerging trends.

#### **Discussion:**

The interview findings underscore the pivotal role of innovation and risk-taking in corporate entrepreneurship. The interviewee's emphasis on innovation as a response to evolving market dynamics aligns with established practices in entrepreneurial organizations. In a rapidly changing business landscape, innovation becomes a driving force for seizing new opportunities and staying competitive.

The interviewee's focus on technology and upskilling is consistent with the need for organizations to adapt to the digital age. The ability to leverage technology for data-driven decision-making and to equip the team with the skills required to navigate a technology-driven world is crucial for success. These insights echo the literature on innovation and risk-taking as fundamental components of corporate entrepreneurship.

### **Resilience (Setbacks and Learning from Failures)**

The interviewee's acknowledgment of setbacks and the importance of learning from failures is a prominent theme. They view failures as valuable learning experiences and emphasize the need for resilience. They shared their experiences, stating, "We need to learn from our mistakes and be patient and be ready to take new challenges again."

#### **Discussion:**

The interviewee's perspective on resilience and learning from failures offers a valuable lesson in the context of corporate entrepreneurship. The ability to bounce back from setbacks and view failures as opportunities for growth is a critical psychological trait for entrepreneurs. Resilience enables individuals to navigate the uncertainties and challenges inherent in entrepreneurial endeavors.

The interviewee's emphasis on learning from mistakes aligns with a growth mindset, where failures are perceived as stepping stones to success. This mindset is crucial in corporate entrepreneurship, as it promotes a culture of continuous improvement and innovation.

### **Work-Life Balance**

The interviewee's insights into work-life balance emphasize the importance of maintaining a healthy equilibrium between personal and professional life. They shared organizational initiatives aimed at supporting work-life balance, such as reducing the workweek from six to five days and introducing dedicated no-meeting days.

#### **Discussion:**

The interviewee's emphasis on work-life balance reflects a growing awareness of the psychological well-being of employees in the corporate world. In today's fast-paced and demanding work environment, maintaining a healthy work-life balance is crucial for reducing stress and preventing burnout.

Organizational initiatives to support work-life balance, such as reduced workweeks and no-meeting days, exemplify the role of corporate policies in promoting employee well-being. These initiatives align with research highlighting the positive impact of such policies on employee satisfaction, retention, and overall organizational performance.

## **Stress Management**

The interviewee's insights into stress management shed light on their personal strategies for coping with stress in the corporate entrepreneurship context. They express a preference for listening to music as a stress-reduction technique, emphasizing its effectiveness. Additionally, they mention the use of technology and smart devices to monitor stress levels and take breaks when necessary. They also discuss the importance of utilizing office spaces, breakout areas, and green spaces to alleviate stress and recharge.

### **Discussion:**

The interviewee's stress management strategies offer valuable lessons for individuals engaged in corporate entrepreneurship. Stress is a common companion in high-pressure environments, and the interviewee's focus on music as a relaxation tool aligns with research highlighting the therapeutic benefits of music in stress reduction.

The interviewee's use of technology and smart devices as stress management tools reflects the role of technology in promoting well-being. Employing technology to monitor stress levels and remind individuals to take breaks demonstrates the potential for leveraging technology in stress management and self-care.

The interviewee's emphasis on office spaces, breakout areas, and green spaces emphasizes the role of physical environments in promoting stress reduction. This highlights the importance of well-designed workspaces that offer employees spaces for relaxation and rejuvenation.

## **Lessons for the New Generation**

The interviewee draws upon their experiences to offer valuable lessons for the new generation of professionals. They emphasize the significance of commitment and dedication to the organization, stressing that unwavering commitment can lead to career growth and opportunities. They also underscore the importance of humility, collaboration, and taking responsibility in building trust within the team.

### **Discussion:**

The interviewee's lessons for the new generation align with psychological principles and practical wisdom in the context of corporate entrepreneurship. Their emphasis on commitment and dedication echoes the idea that a strong sense of commitment can drive career progression and personal development. Commitment to the organization's values and culture is foundational for long-term success.

The interviewee's stress on humility and collaboration reflects the importance of these traits in building effective teams and fostering positive working relationships. The idea of taking responsibility in times of both success and difficulty underscores the role of personal accountability in leadership and teamwork.

The interviewee's experiences offer valuable insights for the new generation of professionals looking to excel in corporate entrepreneurship. The lessons provided underscore the importance of personal characteristics, values, and teamwork in navigating the complexities of the modern corporate landscape.

## **Implications**

The case study research based on the interview with the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of XYZ provides several implications for corporate entrepreneurship, organizational leadership, and employee well-being. The interviewee's commitment to the organization and alignment with its values has played a pivotal role in their career growth. This implies that organizations should focus on fostering a culture where employees can align their personal values with those of the organization, thus promoting commitment and loyalty.

The interview underscores the importance of integrity and honesty as driving factors in corporate success. Organizations should prioritize ethical leadership and create an environment where honesty and integrity are valued and encouraged. The interview highlights the importance of innovation and calculated risk-taking in corporate entrepreneurship. Companies should encourage a culture of innovation and support risk-taking endeavors to stay competitive and seize new opportunities.

Emphasizing the value of setbacks and learning from failures suggests that organizations should foster a culture of resilience and a growth mindset. Leaders should encourage employees to view failures as opportunities for growth and continuous improvement. The interviewee's insights into work-life balance emphasize the importance of corporate policies that support employee well-being. Organizations should consider implementing policies such as reduced workweeks and dedicated no-meeting days to reduce stress and prevent burnout.

The interview provides practical strategies for stress management, including the use of music, technology, and well-designed office spaces. Organizations should consider creating environments that promote stress reduction and offer resources for employees to manage stress effectively.

### **Future Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the case study, future research could delve deeper into the psychological factors that influence loyalty, innovation, and resilience in corporate entrepreneurship. Exploring the impact of personality traits, emotional intelligence, and cognitive approaches on success would provide a comprehensive understanding of the psychology behind corporate entrepreneurship.

Long-term studies tracking employees' careers within organizations can provide valuable insights into the factors that contribute to their loyalty and success. Researchers should consider conducting longitudinal studies to better understand how commitment and dedication evolve over time. Organizations should consider implementing mentorship programs that encourage experienced employees to guide and support the professional growth of their colleagues. Mentorship can foster a culture of collaboration and knowledge transfer.

As highlighted in the case study, organizations should continue to develop and implement flexible work policies that support work-life balance. Such policies can contribute to employee well-being and reduce stress. The role of technology in stress management and well-being is significant. Future research should explore the development of technology-based stress management tools and their impact on employee health and performance. Leadership development programs should place a strong emphasis on ethics and integrity. Organizations should invest in leadership training that focuses on fostering ethical leadership behaviors.

In conclusion, the case study offers valuable insights and practical recommendations for both researchers and organizations looking to enhance their understanding of corporate entrepreneurship and improve their leadership and employee well-being practices. Future research and strategic actions should consider the psychological aspects highlighted in this study to promote success and sustainable growth.

### **Conclusion**

The relationship between corporate entrepreneurship and psychological dimensions is intricate, impacting various cognitive and behavioral aspects for entrepreneurs and financial leaders. Factors such as risk perception and cognitive biases influence decisions. Effective leadership, communication, and motivation are vital behavioral aspects. Adaptability and innovation are key in the dynamic business landscape. Additionally, psychological factors affect financial acumen in resource allocation, decision-making, and negotiations. Understanding this interplay is essential for success.

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# **An Analysis of Mauritius's Covid-19 (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2020 in Light of the Post-COVID-19 New Normal and its Implications for Business Excellence**

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## **Abstract**

Had the Mauritian government not stepped in with administrative, political, and economic measures and regulations, achieving business excellence in Mauritius would have been nearly impossible in the face of pandemic problems. It's possible to argue that these steps have been vital even though they haven't always avoided criticism from different parties. The Covid-19 Act, which was passed in 2020, brought about a number of legal reforms, one of which has been implemented. In order to protect the interests of Mauritius businesses and, more importantly, to allow them to keep moving forward toward achieving business excellence, this paper examined the amendments made to the laws pertaining to employment, corporations, insolvency, banking, and financial services. This article aims to emphasize the correlation between corporate excellence and regulation, among other related problems.

**Keywords:** Mauritius, Business Excellence, Legislations, Covid-19, Post-Covid Challenges.

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## **Introduction**

Located in the Indian Ocean around 2,000 kilometers off the southeast coast of Africa is the island nation known as the Republic of Mauritius. Agalega, St. Brandon, Mauritius, and Rodrigues comprise the Republic of Mauritius. With a population of over 1.3 million, the 2,040 square kilometer country contains an exclusive economic zone spanning 2.3 million square kilometers. In 2020, Mauritius was ranked as a high-income country by the World Bank, making it the second-richest country in Africa after the Seychelles. In 2019, the gross national income (GNI) per person was US\$12,740, up 3.8% from 2018 (Bank of Mauritius, 2021).

Mauritius is a multiparty parliamentary democracy (Kasenally & Kadima, 2005). The four main constitutional pillars that are either expressly or implicitly incorporated in the Constitution—which is the ultimate law of the land—are the separation of powers, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. Because of the Constitution's supremacy, even the legislature is subject to its provisions. Despite having benefited substantially from the Westminster model during a British colony, Mauritius' legislative autonomy is not entirely in line with British practice. In a nutshell, Parliament is sovereign as long as the laws it passes are compliant with the letter and spirit of the Constitution.

Mauritius disclosed its first four cases of the COVID-19 pandemic on March 19, 2020. After contact-tracing tests, the number of cases quickly rose to 81 on March 26, 2020, and as of April 1, 2020, 1703 people were being detained in quarantine. By the end of June 2020, there were 341 registered cases, 10 of which were fatal. From this point on, the number of cases climbed by tens every day (World Health Organisation, 2021). A lockdown was implemented between 19 March and 29 May 2020, and it was lifted on 30 May 2020 when the number of cases had drastically dropped to three in more than a month, all of which were quarantined passengers (Government of Mauritius, 2021). The Mauritius government agreed to remove all restrictions on commercial and economic activity two weeks later, on June 12, 2020, with the exception of the requirement to wear masks in public areas. In addition, the government began to reopen the borders for international travel to and from Mauritius with a required 14-day quarantine.

On March 10, 2021, further contaminated incidents were discovered across the nation. The second wave resulted in 1,709 contaminated cases and 18 fatalities, forcing the government to proclaim another lockdown that would last until May 4, 2021 (Africa news, 2021). Since then, no lockdown has been put in place. In actuality, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), there were 786 fatalities and 70,862 confirmed cases as of January 31, 2022 (WHO, 2022). In reaction to the outbreak, the government formed a National Communication Committee. The executive branch has been crucial during the epidemic under the prime minister's direction, especially with the National Assembly closed during the lockdown.

By forming a National Communication Committee, the government of Mauritius has assumed leadership in the country's response to the pandemic. Especially when the Parliament was not sitting during the lockdown, the executive, under the Prime Minister, played a significant role during the pandemic. All decisions pertaining to the economy, society, law, and politics were made by this branch of the government. The particular obligations or duties of the executive during a pandemic or a state of emergency are not outlined in the Mauritian Constitution. The President, acting in accordance with the Prime Minister's advice, may delegate to the Prime Minister or another Minister duty for the conduct of any business of the Government, including the management of any department of Government, by giving written instructions. Section 62 of the Constitution is the only general provision on the duties of Ministers.

There is no doubt that the pandemic severely affected lives of Mauritians and the normal routine of the country in unprecedented ways. Business, of a domestic and international nature, was also severely impacted with effects that are still being felt till date. Measures had to be taken by the government to counter the ill effects on business by the pandemic. As a result, measures and policies of an administrative, economic, political as well as legal character were taken in order to ensure continuity and excellence of business. This paper aims at assessing the legal measures taken, specifically through the Covid-19 (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2020 of Mauritius (hereafter referred to as the Act), in relation to business. In particular, it focuses on the corporate and insolvency sector, the financial and banking sector and the employment sector. It is argued that these sectors are key to achieving business excellence and therefore undertaken such an assessment is justified.

### **The nexus between business excellence and law**

For business, the rule of law is essential. One can hardly contemplate trying to do business without any ability to form reasonable expectations of the actions and behaviours of others. In addition, without a legal framework and enforcement mechanisms, property rights and pecuniary interests of business would be highly challenging to achieve, thus endangering BE. In the absence of a rule of law system, there would also be no defined procedure for resolving a dispute. There would be anarchy in the workplace without the rule of law. Commercial ties with debtors and creditors are likewise governed by the rule of law. Also, under our bankruptcy law, firms may approach the court for safeguard from creditors if financial affairs do not turn out as planned. This enables businesses to safeguard their real estate from bankruptcy or confiscation by creditors as they regain financial stability. This is again crucial in realising the aim of BE and growth.

Business Excellence (BE) is the process of improving an organisation's management systems and procedures in order to boost productivity and provide value for all parties involved. BE is much more than just putting in a quality system. BE is about attaining excellence across the board for an organisation (including leadership, strategy, customer focus, information management, people, and processes), with the main focus being on maximising financial performance (Mann et al, 2021). BE is intrinsically associated with core values and concepts such as visionary leadership, customer-driven excellence, organisational and personal training, valuing workforce members and partners, agility, focus on the future, managing for innovation, societal responsibility, focus on results and creating value and systems perspective (Mann et al, 2021. pp.4).

Though sometimes implied, the function of law and its significance in attaining corporate excellence are crucial. According to Talwar (2011), business excellence models must be in line with legal requirements. Additionally, it has been stated that the implementation of universal rules can lead to multifaceted corporate growth and excellence (Sharma & Talwar, 2007). According to Shihata (1996), law is essential to the process of business development in general and to the expansion of private enterprise in particular. A crucial component of moral decision-making has also been acknowledged to be the law (Christensen, 2008: 451).

While law plays a crucial role in building businesses and helping it to achieve BE, it can also be argued that law can help sustain BE and growth especially in dire times such as the pandemic period. Indeed, many countries around the world did make use of legislations in order to help in support businesses locally and internationally from firstly collapsing, and secondly, moving again towards excellence and growth after having been hit by the ill effects of the pandemic. For example, necessary amendments in labour law in Germany has been able to decrease the effects of the pandemic on business structures (Adam & Schuller, 2020: 292). The same argument seems to be applicable in Mauritius whereby legislations have played a crucial role in protecting business during the pandemic period and they are still supporting them to now re-achieve business excellence and growth in the new post-covid normal era. The next section will focus on specific provisions of these legislations in a thematic manner with the aim of underlining their role in the achievement and sustainability of BE in Mauritius.

## **Evaluating the Act's success in attaining business excellence**

Although the administration did enact laws through delegated legislation, which was mostly the purview of the executive branch, the first thing to do once the Mauritian Parliament resumed after the lockdowns was to pass the necessary legislation. In order to address the issues brought on by the pandemic, the Covid-19 (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act (the Act) amended a number of laws. The purpose of the Act was to lay forth interim measures that the government wanted to put in place in order to lessen the pandemic's negative effects and consequences on several levels, particularly with regard to corporate, insolvency, financial, regulatory, and employment issues. The "Covid-19 period" has been defined in the Interpretation and General Clauses Act as the time period beginning on March 23, 2020, and ending on June 1, 2020, or such later date as may be prescribed by regulations by the Prime Minister, due to the current uncertainty regarding Covid-19 on a global scale in relation to its duration and cure (the Act, section 28). This section examines a few significant changes made to a few selected areas and its impact on BE in Mauritius.

### **Employment**

In view of achieving BE, the labour force or employees of a particular business is of great importance. Job security and job satisfaction are closely linked with BE (Tutuncu & Kucukusta, 2010). During the pandemic period, employments and jobs of Mauritians were at stake either through the threat of their changing nature or through the threat of contracts of employment being terminated because of economic reasons. According to the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, If the government responds to the pandemic impacts by firing workers and altering their employment contracts to replace full-time employees with part-time and/or temporary ones, the quality of living and employment chances may also decline. This could have a negative effect because their contributions to medical assistance, provident funds, retirement plans, and other benefits that accrue to permanent employees might decrease as a result (UNECA, 2020).

The Mauritius economy has not escaped the pandemic and the resulting economic crisis. As of May 2020, the number of employed people increased by approximately 129,400 units, or roughly 24 percent, and the unemployment rate has begun to rise significantly (Statistics Mauritius, 2020). This is a long cry from the anticipated 12,208 new jobs for the tourism industry that were anticipated prior to the outbreak. The ministry of finance predicted that Mauritius' unemployment rate could increase by up to 150% in 2020 as the pandemic outbreak continued to spread across the globe.

The most significant changes that have been made to the employment rules in response to the epidemic have as goals to introduce new measures on a variety of fronts. The Workers' Rights Act of 2019 is the primary statute at issue here. According to the Act's section 57(b), an employer may now demand an employee to work from home if at least 48 hours' notice has been given to the employee. Now, a worker can ask for flexible hours from their company. Prior to this change, only employees who had to provide care for a kid under the age of four or a child who had a disability could use flextime (the Act, s. 57(c)). However, the ability to work flexibly has been broadened to apply to all employees, with the new Workers' Rights Act criteria requiring employers to offer at least 48 hours' advance notice. An employer may agree to a worker's request to work flextime unless there are good reasons to reject it (Mondaq, 2020).

Due to the new change made by the Act, shift workers who work the night shift during the pandemic are not eligible for any compensation (and such further period as may be prescribed). A worker who works from 23 March 2020 until such further duration as may be stipulated and is employed in the manufacturing industry, stone crushing & associated sectors, block making, construction, and other sectors covered by the Factory Employees (Remuneration) Regulations 2019, other than a watchperson, may be paid as follows: For work done on a national holiday, at least twice (previously three times) the basic hourly rate per supplemental hour of work; and for services done in excess of 45 hours or any other agreed-upon number of hours in any week (excluding hours of work executed on a national holiday), at least 1.5 times the basic hourly rate per extra hour of work (the Act, s. 57(e)). As such, it can be argued that the Act made provisions to ensure that job satisfaction is more or less maintained with appropriate rewards for work done, thus maintaining business excellence and growth in the country.

The following provisions of employment law are among those that are prohibited by the Act: discrimination in the workplace and profession; the prohibition on hiring children is not upheld; when the terms of the compromise agreement are not adhered to; The rules governing overtime are not followed: The principle of equal pay for equal work is not followed: Provision of compensation to the employee; Payment of extra compensation; Payment of an end-of-year bonus; and the power of Ministry of Labour to enquire. The Act,

Section 57(g), prohibits the termination of an employee's employment during any month for which the employer is receiving financial help, including through the wage support program. Any such dismissal by the employer during that given month is inherently unreasonable. Regardless of whether or not an employee received financial aid during a specific month, an employer may nevertheless terminate the employee's employment contract for wrongdoing. The Minister may preclude employers from following the procedure for workforce reduction set forth in Section 72 of the Workers' Rights Act. These employers are known as "Exempted Employers" and include, among others, those in the following service sectors: hospitals, air traffic control, airport and civil aviation, energy, customs and hospitality services sectors (Dentons, 2020).

The Redundancy Board should receive written notice from Exempted Employers at least 15 days (as compared to 30 days) prior to any proposed temporary or permanent decrease in staff or closure of the business. After notifying the Exempted Employers, the Redundancy Board must now wrap up its actions in 15 days (as opposed to the previous 30-day limit) (the Act, s. 57(k)). The aforementioned delay cannot be extended in the case of the Exempted Employers by the Redundancy Board. The Workers' Rights Act, as revised, presently allows for the following potential outcomes by the Redundancy Board, namely: If the Redundancy Board determines that the motives for the reduction or closure are unfounded, it shall order the Exempted Employers to pay the worker severance allowance at the rate of 3 months' salaries per year of service (the Act, s. 57(j)). If the Redundancy Board determines that the causes for the reduction in staff or closure are valid, the Board shall either: order the payment of 30 days' salaries to the employee as indemnity in lieu of notice; or, in lieu of termination, upon the proposal of an Exempt Employer and with the employee's consent, order the employee or category of employees to move ahead on leave without pay for the duration that the Exempt Employer specifies, with the requirement that the reinstatement of employment be on novel terms and conditions (including pension benefits).

The Act also makes changes to the Employment Relations Act. In the past, the Commission for Conciliation and Mediation (CCM) had the authority to listen to parties in a labour dispute, urge them to reach a settlement or not, present a report to the parties within a specified timeframe, and, upon complaint, transfer the case to the Employment Relations Tribunal. However, during the Covid-19 period, the President of the CCM shall immediately refer any labour dispute arising out of any of the following service sectors: air traffic control, civil aviation, airport, customs, electricity, health, hotel services, and hospital (among others) (the Act, s 15).

Also, the time frame for the Tribunal to investigate a labor dispute and issue an award has been reduced. The Tribunal had until 90 days (or an additional period) had passed since the date of referral before the changes to investigate and make a decision about the labour dispute. The Tribunal must now intervene within 30 days of the referral to investigate any labor disputes that arise in the following service sectors: hospitals, air traffic control, airport and civil aviation, energy, customs hotels and health services (among others) (the Act, s. 15(a)).

The Workers' Rights Act distinguishes between employees earning a basic monthly pay of MUR 50,000 or less and employees getting a basic monthly salary of more than MUR 50,000 per month, making it imperative to emphasise that the measures do not apply consistently to all workers. All employees have the option to work from home, however only those making MUR 50,000 or less a month can take advantage of flexitime, non-payment of night shift pay, annual leaves, overtime pay, and paid time off policies. It is highlighted that even though they are merely palliative measures, the existing protections against redundancy, less favourable employment terms following the transfer of undertaking, or resumed work after a period of leave without pay in place of termination, among others, are being suspended. Additionally, the Act has made it illegal to violate some rules, and the penalties imposed for these offences are being applied retroactively. According to the government, the revisions to the Workers' Right Act were implemented to prevent business closures and to protect as many job as possible.

### **Corporate and Insolvency Law**

The Insolvency Act, the core statute that unifies the legal framework for individual and corporate insolvency, has undergone numerous modifications in an effort to reduce the number of bankruptcy and insolvency cases, which have a considerable negative impact on businesses and people. It might be argued that the government limited the liquidation of firms and the appointment of receivers by amending the Insolvency Act in light of the pandemic's adverse consequences, which are anticipated to affect trade and businesses. Under the new administration and thanks to the revisions, there are more and better opportunities for company rescue. It appears that by delaying their immediate closure, businesses who are experiencing

financial difficulties due to the epidemic are being given an opportunity to achieve BE and growth, especially by supporting them to sail through the sea of challenges because of the pandemic.

The amount of debt needed to serve a debtor with a bankruptcy notice has raised from USD 1140 to USD 2280 (the Act, s. 27(a)), in an effort to decrease the number of individual debtors who are declared bankrupt. Also, under the Act's section 27(c), an individual debtor will now have 28 days starting from the service date to abide by such notice. The Act altered the Insolvency Act by nullifying any winding-up resolution passed by a firm or by its creditors during the COVID-19 period in an effort to prevent any new instances of voluntary winding-up during the pandemic (the Act, 27(g)). It is important to remember that a business with a Global Business License is exempt from this restriction. This modification may encourage businesses to choose administration over liquidation as a last resort, which is unquestionably in the best interests of creditors and employees.

The Act's section 27(i) rendered invalid the directors' duties under the Insolvency Act, including the requirement to summon a creditors' meeting in the event of a creditor's voluntarily winding up during the pandemic period and within three months of the same period. The amount of the debt, which was changed from USD 2280 to USD 5700 as a need to issue a statutory demand on a firm (the Act, s. 27(j)), is another crucial provision that must be emphasised. Also, the Act revised the time frame for compliance with a statutory demand, which was formerly one month to two months, to assist businesses experiencing financial hardships during the epidemic (the Act, s. 27(j)(ii)). In this method, business debtors are given some relief to fix their cash flow problems and meet their financial obligations.

### **Banking and Financial Services**

Financial institutions are up against a significant hurdle as a result of the pandemic. The Bank of Mauritius Act 2004 has undergone numerous revisions with the intention of providing the government with financial support. The Act, s. 2(a)(i), grants the Bank of Mauritius the authority to lend the Government any sum that may be agreed by the Board in order to support the Government's efforts to stabilise the Mauritius economy. According to the Act's section 2(b), the Bank of Mauritius may invest any sum of authorised foreign reserves that the Board determines in any corporation or firm that has been established with the goal of promoting economic development. According to the Act's section 2(c), the Board may also authorise a grant out of the Special Reserve Fund to support the Government's efforts to stabilise the Mauritian economy.

Although these actions seem appealing in the midst of the pandemic, it might not be a wise policy choice for the Bank of Mauritius, which serves as the nation's central bank, to fund government spending. The Bank of Mauritius must continue to operate independently of the government in order to fulfil its crucial duty of maintaining price stability. This will guarantee that its goal is not compromised by short-term political considerations. It is crucial that the Central Bank take caution while putting these policies into effect.

All facets of the Mauritius economy are experiencing uncertainty as a result of the pandemic, including the financial services industry. A number of reforms are being advocated in order to ease the functioning and operations of the Financial Services Commission, the unified regulator of the sector of financial services and the international business sector. According to Section 19(a) of the Act, meetings of the Board of the Financial Services Commission may be conducted via audio and/or visual interaction so that all participants and members necessary for a quorum can hear one another at the same time. A written resolution that is ratified by all members who are currently eligible to receive notice of a meeting is also legal, effective, and regarded as having been adopted at a meeting that has been duly called and held (the Act, s. 19(b)). These changes have been made to make the Board's meetings easier to conduct, including the option to do them remotely, and to speed up and improve the effectiveness of the decision-making process.

### **Critical analysis**

#### **Temporary nature of these measures**

Arguably except for the measures regarding the Bank of Mauritius and the fact that it is bound to lend money to the Government whenever required by the latter, the other changes and amendments brought to the law by the Act are commendable. They indeed have the potential of bringing the culture of business excellence to the benefit of entrepreneurs and employees. It should however be noted that these are temporary measures applicable only during the legally defined 'covid period' as discussed above. It is argued that a case has to be made by relevant stakeholders so that these temporary measures could be

assessed in terms of their effectiveness and probably made permanent in case they have proven to be effective and useful. For that matter, it is the responsibility of Mauritian researchers, think tanks, trade unions and the civil society in general to assess these measures and to lobby and advocate for their continuity.

For instance, in the changing economic and business world post covid, it may be a good idea to maintain the new thresholds and time delays for a notice of statutory demand to be served on a company. In addition, the numerous changes brought to the Worker's Rights Act may also be maintained to provide for more protection of the workforce which will enhance business excellence. It may make sense and logic to consider that the pandemic was a mere excuse for these critical work related legal amendments to be brought.

### **Education and sensitisation about the Act and the ensuing amendments that it brought**

It should not come as a surprise to note that many businesses are perhaps not aware of the changes that the Act has brought similar to the workers themselves. As a result, both mentioned stakeholders may not be aware that these amendments, if properly and diligently observed, may enhance business excellence for companies. There is thus a need for educational and sensitisation campaigns regarding these amendments. All stakeholders related to a business must be made aware of these changes and the way they can positively impact businesses. This will no doubt enhance the working relationship among the stakeholders and bear positive results for the business.

The government also needs to take its responsibilities and inform the public in general of which of these amendments discussed above are still maintained and which ones are obsolete with the termination of the covid-19 period. Some clarity, through appropriate communications from the executive or the legislation would be most welcome.

### **The need to legislate on the basis of the concept of business excellence**

Finally, the concept of business excellence should be one which should be more indoctrinated in legislations pertaining to business. In today's multi-disciplinary world, it could be beneficial for legislators in Mauritius to create laws by infusing relevant components and doctrines of business excellence in acts of Parliament and regulations with the aim of achieving business excellence. In addition, the 2016 Code of Corporate Governance could also be revisited and revised under the lens of business excellence. This could enhance the application of governance principles and provide for incentives for business to follow the prescribed provisions of the 2016 Code which is a non-binding and voluntary framework without much legal force.

### **Concluding remark**

The Act has certainly played a crucial role in protecting business during the pandemic period in Mauritius. In some cases, it can be said that businesses that were already performing very well before the pandemic, have got the opportunities to continue in their trends despite the challenges of the pandemic and eventually reach business excellence and growth. While other administrative, political and economic measures and policies from the government have played an essential role, the legal framework created and implemented during the pandemic period and beyond has also been decisive. The paper has shown how changes made to legislations on employment, banking services, financial services, company law and insolvency law have allowed companies to survive and, for some companies, to achieve business excellence.

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# Job Crafting and Job Attitudes: A Study of Individual Outcomes

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## Abstract

Job crafting is a dynamic and innovative approach to the modern workplace, where employees actively redesign and personalize their job roles to better align with their skills, interests, and passions. Although Amy Wrzesniewski and Jane E. Dutton first used the term "job crafting" in 2001, the notion that employees may redesign their jobs without consulting management has been present in job design literature since 1987. In 2010, Tims and Bakker proposed that job crafting be framed within the job-demands resources (JD-R) model to cover this broader scope.

Job crafting is a concept that focuses on employees proactively shaping their job roles to better suit their skills, interests, and preferences. Numerous studies have explored the impact of job crafting on work engagement, Job satisfaction, and Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and Organizational Commitment (OC).

Review of literature shows that JC positively impacts the job attitudes of an individual.

Hence, the study enunciates the importance of Job Crafting which can be used as an intervention to enhance positive Job Attitudes which in turn enhance productivity of individuals and foster growth.

**Keywords :** Job Crafting, Work Engagement, Job Satisfaction, Organizational Commitment, Organizational Citizenship Behaviour.

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## Introduction

Job crafting is a dynamic and innovative approach to the modern workplace, where employees actively redesign and personalize their job roles to better align with their skills, interests, and passions. This concept has gained significant attention in recent years as organizations recognize the importance of fostering employees engagement, satisfaction, commitment and overall responsible behavior of employees. Job crafting empowers individuals to proactively shapes their work experiences, transforming routine tasks into meaningful and fulfilling contributions. In this review study, we will delve into the conceptualization of Job Crafting.

It is well-accepted that Job attitudes play a pivotal role in shaping the overall work experience and are instrumental in determining an individual's job satisfaction. Engagement, organizational citizenship behavior and commitment to their organization (Robbins, Judge, Vohra (2022)). These attitudes encompass a range of feelings and evaluations that employees hold about their jobs, colleagues, superiors, and the workplace environment as a whole. Understanding job attitudes is essential for employers seeking to foster a positive and productive work environment and for employees striving to achieve greater job satisfaction and well-being. Thus, job attitudes have a profound impact on both individuals and organizations. The paper aims to understand the relationship between job crafting and Job crafting as a tool to have positive Job Attitudes thus enhancing workplace happiness and productivity.

## Conceptualisation of Job Crafting :

Although Amy Wrzesniewski and Jane E. Dutton first used the term "job crafting" in 2001, the notion that employees may redesign their jobs without consulting management has been present in job design literature since 1987.

The original research was based on employees working at New York hospital. The researchers divided the employees in to two groups; one

In their initial definition, Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) restricted job crafting to three categories:



- Task crafting: Task crafting refers to the changes made by employees to modify their job duties and responsibilities to fit their motives, preferences and interests. It means the changes individuals make in what they do, how or when.
- Relational crafting: Relational crafting refers to the changes made by employees in the relationships with other individuals with whom they interact as part of their work.
- Cognitive crafting: Cognitive crafting refers to the meaning that the employees attach to their job. It refers to the evaluation of observations and experiences at work in order to better understand how they align with their goals, interests, motives or preferences.

In 2010, Tims and Bakker proposed that job crafting be framed within the job-demands resources (JD-R) model to cover this broader scope. The researchers proposed that job crafting can be seen as a specific form of proactive behavior in which the employee initiates changes in the level of job demands and job resources. Job crafting may be facilitated by job and individual characteristics and may enable employees to fit their jobs to their personal knowledge, skills and abilities on the one hand and to their preferences and needs on the other hand.

Several research studies have highlighted the antecedents of Job crafting. These studies have mainly considered Organizational factors and Personal factors. Studies have shown relationship between organizational factors like perceived organizational support, job challenges, autonomy, skill-variety, task variety, task complexity, role clarity, relations with supervisor, leadership etc. on job crafting behaviour of employees. While studies focusing on individual or personal factors have attempted to assess the relationships between personal or individual factors like self-efficacy, self-monitoring behaviour, personality type, locus of control, self-esteem etc.

Task interdependence, discretion to craft a job, task complexity (Ghitulescu, 2007), and job challenges (Berg et. Al., 2010) are additional predictors of job crafting. According to research (Berg et al., 2010; Ghitulescu, 2007), the difficulty of the task and the difficulty of the job are positively correlated with job crafting. This suggests that the demanding nature of the job encourages proactive behavior. However, it should be noted that task interdependence was found to be unrelated to individual crafting and to inhibit collective job crafting (the extent to which teams crafted jobs).

In a qualitative study on a merger (Kira, Balkin, and San's 2012), it was concluded that among other things, in order to deal with the new situation at work, relational crafting (like asking for supervisory support) and task crafting (like prioritizing) were used as coping mechanisms by employees. Demerouti (2014) concluded that Job crafting seems to occur more often among employees with a proactive personality and promotion focus

Similar to this, job crafting episodes have been linked to flexibility (Lyons, 2008). Changes involving new products were found to be negatively correlated with day-level seeking challenges by Petrou et al. (2012), whereas conflict with new clients was positively correlated with day-level seeking resources and challenges.

There are studies that have also studied relationship between demographics like age, level of education, gender, income-level and Job crafting.

Most of these studies have been equivocal. The findings of the studies differ according to the industry on which the studies were based.

Studies have been carried out to further understand the mediating role of Job Crafting in work-family conflict and sustainable creative performance or LMX and work engagement (Radstaak, Hennes 2017) showed the importance of high-quality relationships with supervisors and were unique in examining the association between LMX and job crafting., personality and boredom at work. The results showed that conscientiousness is negatively related to work-related boredom. This relationship is mediated by job crafting (Oprea, B., Iliescu, D., Burtăverde, V. and Dumitrache, M., 2019.), job characteristics and performance by Sen, C. and Dulara, S.(2017) concluded that job crafting provides a pathway towards better performance by giving the employees' the liberty to modify their task procedures and interrelationships at work and hence, job crafting behaviours serve as a pathway between set standards of tasks and procedures and target output to result in better and improved performance. Organization culture and Employee engagement Dasgupta, M. and Dey, A.K., 2021. Mediating role of job crafting in the relationship between

organisational culture and employee engagement. *International Journal of Indian Culture and Business Management*, 22(1), pp.89-109. Inclusive leadership and Innovative work behaviour to name a few.

### **Individual Outcomes of Job Crafting:**

Job crafting is a concept that focuses on employees proactively shaping their job roles to better suit their skills, interests, and preferences. Numerous studies have explored the impact of job crafting on work engagement, Job satisfaction, and Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and Organizational Commitment (OC).

The review of literature is based on past research studies that are based on the relationship between Job Crafting and Job attitudes like work engagement, job satisfaction, OCB and OC.

Here is a review of the literature with citations to highlight the effects of job crafting on work engagement:

**Tims, M., Bakker, A. B., & Derks, D. (2012)** in their study, "Development and validation of the job crafting scale." introduced the Job Crafting Scale and found that job crafting positively influenced work engagement. Employees who engaged in job crafting reported higher levels of work engagement.

**Wrzesniewski, A., & Dutton, J. E. (2001)** in their seminal work titled "Crafting a job: Revisioning employees as active crafters of their work." provided a foundational understanding of how employees actively shape their work roles. While this study doesn't focus on work engagement directly, it laid the groundwork for subsequent research on the subject.

**Lyons, P. (2008) in the paper titled** "The crafting of jobs and individual differences." explored the relationship between job crafting and individual differences. It found that job crafting was positively related to work engagement, indicating that employees who tailored their jobs experienced higher levels of engagement.

**Slemp, G. R., & Vella-Brodrick, D. A. (2014)** in the research through which they developed a scale to measure the extent to which employees engage in job crafting, also revealed a positive relationship between job crafting and work engagement.

**Tims, M., Bakker, A. B., & Derks, D. (2013)** in their examined how job crafting influenced job demands, job resources, and well-being. It demonstrated that job crafting was associated with increased job resources, which, in turn, led to higher work engagement.

**Petrou, P., Demerouti, E., Peeters, M. C., Schaufeli, W. B., & Hetland, J. (2012) in their paper titled** "Crafting a job on a daily basis: Contextual correlates and the link to work engagement." delved into the daily aspects of job crafting and its impact on work engagement. It found that employees who engaged in daily job crafting experienced higher work engagement.

Job crafting, the process by which employees reshape and redesign their own job roles to better align with their skills, interests, and preferences, has been studied extensively in relation to its impact on job satisfaction.

**Though the primary focus of the seminal work by Wrzesniewski, A., & Dutton, J. E. (2001) titled** "Crafting a job: Revisioning employees as active crafters of their work." Was the process of job crafting, it indirectly highlighted the potential positive impact on job satisfaction.

**Tims, M., Bakker, A. B., & Derks, D. (2012) in their study titled** "Development and validation of the job crafting scale." Developed the Job Crafting Scale. The study found that job crafting was positively related to job satisfaction. Employees who had job crafting behaviour reported to have higher levels of job satisfaction.

**Lyons, P. (2008) in a study titled** "The crafting of jobs and individual differences", explored the relationship between job crafting and individual differences. The study showed a positive association between job crafting and job satisfaction, indicating that employees who tailored their jobs were more satisfied with their work.

**Slemp, G. R., & Vella-Brodrick, D. A. (2013) in their study** "Optimising employee mental health: The relationship between intrinsic need satisfaction, job crafting, and employee well-being." looked at the

connection between job crafting, intrinsic need satisfaction, and well-being. Job crafting was found to be positively associated with job satisfaction and overall employee well-being.

**The research by Petrou, P., Demerouti, E., Peeters, M. C., Schaufeli, W. B., & Hetland, J. (2012) titled "Crafting a job on a daily basis: Contextual correlates and the link to job satisfaction."** focused on the daily aspects of job crafting and its impact on job satisfaction. The findings indicated that daily job crafting positively influenced job satisfaction among employees.

**The research by Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2007) which was not solely centered on job crafting,** the model developed by the researchers posits that increasing job resources can lead to improved job satisfaction. Job crafting, by enhancing job resources and reducing job demands, aligns with this model and can contribute to higher job satisfaction.

Job crafting, a process in which employees proactively adjust their job roles to better align with their skills and preferences, has implications for organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). OCB refers to discretionary, extra-role behaviors that benefit an organization. There is a growing body of literature indicating that job crafting positively influences OCB.

**A study conducted by Tims, M., Bakker, A. B., & Derks, D. (2015) titled "Daily job crafting and the self-efficacy–performance relationship."** investigated daily job crafting and its relationship with self-efficacy and performance. It found that job crafting positively impacted self-efficacy and performance, suggesting that employees who engage in job crafting may be more likely to exhibit OCB.

**The research by Van den Heuvel, M., Demerouti, E., & Peeters, M. C. (2015) focused on a job crafting intervention and its impact on job resources, self-efficacy, and well-being.** Job crafting was found to increase job resources, self-efficacy, and well-being, all of which can contribute to employees' willingness to engage in OCB.

Although the primary focus of the study conducted by **Petrou, P., Demerouti, E., Peeters,**

**M. C., Schaufeli, W. B., & Hetland, J. (2012)** was on work engagement, it highlighted the contextual aspects of daily job crafting. Employees who engage in daily job crafting may be more likely to exhibit OCB as they actively shape their roles to better fit their preferences and skills.

While the study by **Berg, J. M., Dutton, J. E., & Wrzesniewski, A. (2013) titled "Job crafting and meaningful work."** primarily examined the relationship between job crafting and meaningful work, it indirectly suggested that job crafting could lead to more OCB. Meaningful work is often associated with a greater willingness to contribute to the organization, which includes OCB.

**Petrou, P., Demerouti, E., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2015) in the study titled, "Job crafting in changing organizations: Antecedents and implications for exhaustion and performance."**

Job crafting in changing organizations and its implications for exhaustion and performance. While it didn't explicitly focus on OCB, job crafting's impact on performance suggests a potential positive influence on OCB.

Job crafting, the process by which employees proactively shape and redefine their job roles to better align with their skills, preferences, and passions, has garnered attention in the context of organizational commitment. Organizational commitment refers to an individual's attachment, loyalty, and dedication to their organization. The impact of job crafting on organizational commitment has been explored in several studies.

**Petrou, P., Demerouti, E., Peeters, M. C., Schaufeli, W. B., & Hetland, J. (2012) in their research titled "Crafting a job on a daily basis: Contextual correlates and the link to work engagement."** found that engaged employees are more likely to feel a strong connection to their organization, which is a key component of organizational commitment.

**Slemp, G. R., & Vella-Brodrick, D. A. (2013) in their study titled "Optimising employee mental health: The relationship between intrinsic need satisfaction, job crafting, and employee well-being."** Found that Job crafting enhanced well-being, which, in turn, contributes to a stronger sense of organizational commitment.

**Petrou, P., Demerouti, E., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2015)** also suggested that job crafting can influence organizational commitment. When employees have the autonomy to shape their jobs, they may feel a stronger connection to the organization.

**Avey, J. B., Luthans, F., & Youssef, C. M. (2010)** in their study titled "The additive value of positive psychological capital in predicting work attitudes and behaviors." highlighted the importance of psychological capital, including self-efficacy and optimism, in predicting work attitudes and behaviors. Job crafting can enhance these factors, contributing to increased organizational commitment.

### **Conclusion:**

In summary, the literature consistently suggests that job crafting has a positive impact on work engagement. Employees who take an active role in shaping their job roles to align with their preferences and strengths tend to experience higher levels of engagement. This can lead to increased job satisfaction, motivation, and overall well-being in the workplace.

The existing literature also demonstrates a positive relationship between job crafting and job satisfaction. Employees who actively modify their job roles to better match their preferences and strengths tend to experience higher levels of job satisfaction, ultimately contributing to a more fulfilling and positive work experience.

The past studies that were reviewed indicate that job crafting can positively affect organizational citizenship behavior. When employees take an active role in modifying their job roles to align with their preferences and skills, they are more likely to engage in OCB, benefitting the organization through their discretionary, extra-role efforts.

In case of Organizational commitment too, the existing literature suggests that job crafting has a positive impact on organizational commitment. As employees take a more active role in designing their job roles to match their preferences and skills, they are more likely to experience increased engagement, well-being, and attachment to the organization, ultimately fostering higher levels of organizational commitment.

This review study indicates that Job Crafting has a positive impact on work engagement, job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behavior and organizational commitment. This study thus enunciates the importance of Job Crafting which can be used as an intervention to enhance positive Job Attitudes which in turn enhance productivity of individuals and foster growth.

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# Pervious Concrete for Rainwater Harvesting: A review

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## Abstract

Water scarcity along with water logging are one of the major environmental problems in recent years. In a developing country like India, sustainable development is of utmost importance. For the above-mentioned environmental problems, various environment-friendly solutions are given. Pervious or Porous concrete is one of such solutions. It is lightweight concrete also known as No-fine concrete due to absence of fine aggregate. Pervious concrete is an environment friendly solution for rainwater harvesting also as it allows the water to percolate thus, increasing the level of groundwater table. It significantly helps in reduction of runoff and proves to be one of the best alternatives for stormwater management. The porous concrete pavements can be used for parking lots, sidewalks, residential streets, walkways and also for apartment walkways where the traffic load and intensity are quiet low. This review paper includes the previous work carried out in pervious concrete. From this paper it can be concluded that the porous concrete can be used for rainwater harvesting in pavements, where there is minimum traffic load.

**Keywords:** Concrete, Pervious, Porous, Traffic, Walkways

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## Introduction

In an era marked by environment friendly materials and sustainable construction practices, use of new innovative materials and techniques has increased considerably. Among all these green porous concrete has emerged as a promising solution for critical problems like water scarcity, storm water management and urban flooding.

Due to global warming and climate change, many regions across the world are facing unpredictable rainfall patterns which further cause droughts and floods both. Traditional used pavement surfaces in urban areas are impermeable in nature. This property of pavement prevents rainwater from naturally infiltrating in the ground. Due to this groundwater is not getting recharged. Porous concrete plays an important role here to recharge groundwater by collecting storm water and allowing it to seep into the ground thus reducing storm water runoff. Use of green porous pavement can also reduce the effective cost of project. The green porous concrete mixture contains little or no sand; creating voids. It is a very lightweight concrete also known as no-fine cement. The green porous concrete is mainly used for making pavements.

The excessive use of impervious covering has left series with challenges of increase in runoff volume, back erosion flooding, and deputation of water poverty. Today this problem post considerable risk to the sustainable development of cities and suburbs. Permeable concrete is special type of concrete with high porosity use for concrete flatwork application that allows water from precipitation and other resources to pass through it, thereby reducing the runoff from a site and recharging ground water levels. A few new fast draining concrete pavement solution, it rapidly directs excess water away from streets, parking surfaces, driveways and walkways. Unlike conventional concrete, it has a high void content of between 20 – 35%. This allows surface water to drain through in to the sub-strata and dissipate naturally, reducing the risk of surface water flooding and water course contamination. Permeable concrete is a concrete paving solution with improved permeability characteristics compared to convectional permeable concrete. A permeable solution offers significant benefits over traditional solutions. The combinations of trafficking surface and drainage system in a single element creates benefits in construction process and in construction and environmental costs.

## Review on Past Work Done

**Anurag Prabhakar Rangankar, Dr. S. G. Makarande, Prof. R. S. Kedar (2022), “ Making Green Porous Concrete for Rain Water Harvesting and Urban Pavements” International Journal of Advanced Research in Science, Communication and Technology (IJARSCT), Volume 2, Issue 4, May 2022, pp 303-307** have developed a strong pervious concrete. A comparative study between conventional and pervious concrete is also done based on workability, compressive strength, split tensile strength of concrete. Tests are carried out on M20 and M25 concrete on 7 days, 14 days and 28 days. According to them pervious concrete has less strength than conventional concrete by 14.5% for M20 and 12.6% for M25; also, the tensile values are also comparatively lower than the conventional concrete by 30%. It can be ideally used at parking areas and at residential areas where the movement of vehicles is very moderate. No fines concrete is an environmentally friendly solution to support sustainable construction. Presently, there is an acute shortage of natural sand all around. Elimination of fines correspondingly decreases environment related problems. Use of this concrete can effectively control the run off as well as saving the finances invested on the construction of drainage system. Hence, it can be established that no fines concrete is very cost effective apart from being efficient.

**Prof. B.A.Hase, Vaibhav Bhandwalkar, Tejas Dere, Vaibhav Patekar, Sangram Magar (2020) “Making Porous Concrete For Rain Water Harvesting And Urban Road” International Research Journal of Modernization in Engineering Technology and Science, Volume:02, Issue:05, May-2020, pp 411-413** have made cubes of pervious concrete with varying percentage of fine aggregate. The properties of concrete studied is porosity, compressive strength, weight loss in drying and water permeability test. Pervious concrete has no fine aggregate or very little amount of sand used in it. Pervious concrete is also known as porous concrete. It is sustainable construction and no any effect on environment. Many builders can use these pavement blocks for increasing ground water table. Hence, they have concluded that addition of 8% fine aggregates to the pervious concrete will satisfy, both strength of concrete and permeability of concrete.

**C.R.Shah, R.A.Jadhv, S.S.Patil, A.C.Agrawal, S.N.Patil and K.P.Sawant (2017) “International Journal of Modern Trends in Engineering and Research (IJMTER)” Volume 04, Issue 3, March–2017, pp 150-154** They have prepared 3 cubes with the proportion as –1:0.36:2.70 (Cement : Water Content : Coarse Aggregate). We have adopted the I.S standard for mixing the proportion, transporting, placing, compaction, curing for 28 days. To achieve the required strength for M20, marble dust is used as admixture. The average 28-day compressive strength obtained is 24.39 N/mm<sup>2</sup>. The cost of permeable concrete is 25-30% less as compared to conventional concrete due to absence of fine aggregate. In order to increase the strength, they have used marble dust as an admixture which is economical. The problems of water logging faced during monsoon particularly in metropolitan cities can considerably be reduced by use of porous concrete. The surface of porous concrete is not as smooth as the conventional concrete. They have created a model of size (2ft\* 1.5ft\* 2ft) with base as an impermeable layer then boulders are used as sub-base layer. For drainage purpose perforated pipe is used in the subbase layer. On top layer permeable concrete is used. The water from the permeable concrete is collected through the perforated pipe. That water can be stored and reused for various purposes.

**Harshith, ShashivendraDulawat, Dr. Esar Ahmad “Experimental Investigation of Porous Concrete for Concrete Pavement” (2020) International Journal of Engineering Research & Technology (IJERT), Volume- 9, Issue- 08, August-2020** they have used metakaol in as an admixture in the M40 porous concrete blocks. They have done five mix designs based on varying proportions of water and the admixture. The compressive and split tensile tests are conducted on 7, 14 and 28 days. They have concluded that the compressive strength of the pervious concrete is less as compared to conventional concrete. According to them pervious concrete can not be used where the vehicle load is on the higher side. They have suggested using them where the vehicular load is less. Hence, if the compressive quality and flexural nature of porous concrete is extended, it can be used. At present, the utilization of penetrable concrete is limited to light traffic lanes due to its low compressive strength. If the properties are improved with addition of admixtures or changing the mix proportions, it can similarly be used for medium and significant traffic inflexible pavements. Porous concrete helps for groundwater recharging.

**Prof. Pallavi Kharat, Prashant Nagawade, Omkar Jadhav, Sumit Ubale, Vaibhav Chavan (2022), “Porous pavements block for rain water harvesting” Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research (JETIR), volume- 9, Issues- 5, May 2022, pp 763-767** they have made

porous concrete paving blocks with different sizes of coarse aggregate. The three different sizes of coarse aggregate were used, namely passing through 10 mm - retained on 5 mm, passing through 8 mm - retained on 5 mm and passing through 10 mm - retained on 8 mm. Furthermore, a series of tests were conducted in this study such as compressive strength, porosity and permeability. It was found that the size of coarse aggregate affects the strength and porosity of the specimens. The result also shown that PCPB caused in low strength, but high in porosity and permeability compared to the other blocks. All PCPB with different size of coarse aggregate cause a great reduction in the water volume during permeability test. However, differences in this reduction between the samples are depending on the coarse aggregate size and porosity. The permeability results indicate that there are large differences in permeability for all samples when the curing duration increases. Furthermore, the permeability of sample with 28 days curing was lower than the sample with 7 days curing; indicating that age is a factor affecting permeability.

**Raj N, Ranjith V, Subash (2014) “Utilization of Pervious Concrete in Rain Water Harvesting” The Master builder April 2014** According to them, rainwater harvesting refers to the collection of rain water into the ground to raise the ground water level. Harvested water can make an alternative source to reduce the demand for the drinking water. This paper focus on the special type of concrete called as “Pervious concrete” which can take part in the rainwater harvesting system for the effective use of the storm water. In doing so, pervious concrete has the ability to lower the overall cost on the other harvesting practice. They have prepared test specimens based on three trials with varying size of coarse aggregate, varying percentage of fine aggregate and varying w/c ratio. Compressive strength and permeability test are carried out on the prepared test specimens. They have concluded that use of pervious concrete will be an ideal contribution to increase the usage of storm water in recharging of ground water, and sustainable land management.

**S.O. Ajamu, A.A. Jimoh, J.R. Oluremi “Evaluation of Structural Performance of Pervious Concrete in Construction” (2012) International Journal of Engineering and Technology Volume- 2, Issue- 5, May, 2012** In this paper they have carried out a performance evaluation study of pervious concrete. For this, the effects of varying the aggregate size on the porosity, compressive strength and specific gravity of pervious concrete are studied. The study covers the use of pervious concrete as pavement material in the construction of pedestrian walkways and parking lots. Three batches of test specimens were produced from each of the aggregate size representing aggregate cement ratios of 6:1, 8:1 and 10:1 with no fine aggregate. Two different sizes of coarse aggregate were used in this study. The sizes are 3/8-inch (9.375mm) and 3/4-inch (18.75mm). All the materials are hand-mixed to achieve the homogeneity. Total 24 cubes were cast for each aggregate size of varying mix proportions of coarse aggregate and cement. The casted blocks are tested for compressive strength for 7, 14, 21 and 28 day and permeability. They have concluded that the aggregate/cement ratio of 10:1 produced pervious concrete of higher co-efficient of permeability of  $3.12 \times 10^{-3}$  cm/sec and  $3.89 \times 10^{-3}$  cm/sec for aggregate size 9.375mm and 18.75mm respectively. Also, the smaller the size of coarse aggregate, higher the compressive strength along with higher permeability rate. The mixtures with higher aggregate/cement ratio 8:1 and 10:1 are considered to be useful for a pavement that requires low compressive strength and high permeability rate. Further study should be conducted on the pervious concrete pavement produced with these material proportions to meet the condition of increased abrasion and compressive stresses due to high vehicular loading and traffic volumes.

## Conclusions

Most of our states face acute shortage of water in summer; particularly in cities. Use of pervious concrete can prove a boon to smart cities in India. They can be in parking lots, pedestrian walks in green spaces, morning walkways and also in rural areas. Pervious concrete is a cost-effective and environment friendly solution for sustainable development. There is a lot of study carried out by many researchers in past to improve the strength of porous concrete. Greater strength and higher permeability can be achieved by reducing the size of aggregate used. One of the most important component in porous concrete is cement paste binder. Various types of additives are used to strengthen the cement paste binder. Periodic cleaning is important to increase the life of pervious pavement. This can be achieved by pressure cleaning. Pervious concrete is used by many industries for storm water management. For sustainable development pervious concrete is the only way. Energy and resource conservation can also be achieved by use of porous concrete.

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**Prof. B.A.Hase, Vaibhav Bhandwalkar, Tejas Dere, Vaibhav Patekar, Sangram Magar (2020).** “Making Porous Concrete For Rain Water Harvesting And Urban Road” International Research Journal of Modernization in Engineering Technology and Science, Volume:02, Issue:05, May-2020, pp 411-413

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