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Saffron and Red Education and the Reproduction of Development Models:

An analysis of the use of state curriculum to reproduce societal hierarchies present in the Gujarat and Kerala Development models

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Abstract

This paper uses Critical Policy Analysis to analyze how hierarchies in the Gujarat and Kerala models of development, dictated by state ideology are reproduced and reinforced by the education curriculums of either state. Gujarat has followed the trajectory of Neoliberal growth under a Right wing Hindutva government whose policies cater to a Savarna Brahmin-Bania-Patidar social base. This manifests in a curriculum that predominantly carries an upper caste Brahmanical understanding of state and society. Kerala on the other hand, has followed a trajectory of inclusive Socialist development with a beneficiary base which appears to include marginalized and minority communities or what the Communist party view as the 'working class'. This has resulted in a curriculum which includes varied representation. Studying the common trends and themes in the class ten social science books of both states' education boards, the paper attempts to study the curriculum as the site for the reproduction of societal hierarchies. The group that controls the reigns of 'knowledge' in the curriculum are the ones who are the beneficiaries of their respective developmental models.

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Introduction

In 2020, The Union Government of India under the Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) released its proposal for enacting a new education policy; the National Education Policy 2020. This policy has radically changed not only the very structure of the education system but even the contents of what is to be taught; that is, the curriculum. A three part study carried out by the Indian Express which scrutinized 21 current history, political science and sociology textbooks for classes 6 to 12, showed how using the directives of the NEP 2020, the BJP is changing the contents of the National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT); particularly pruning out minority and marginalized narratives.

Unsurprisingly, this altered vision of education of the BJP government is tied with its Hindutva agenda which mirrors the National Curriculum Framework of 2000 and is inextricably linked to the Gujarat model of development; exclusionary neoliberal growth at the expense of minority and marginalized groups. It is an attempt to divide the country, through the education system into 'deserving' and 'undeserving' beneficiaries, exactly how it has successfully been implemented in what Spodek (2010) describes as the 'laboratory of Hindutva'. While this is a policy enacted by the centre, the state governments of India; many of whose ideologies do not align with that of the BJP are being forced to tailor their regional education policies in line with the Gujarat model. In India's federal-unitary set up, Central policies in education are bound to have an impact on state policies . Education falls under the Concurrent List, which means that both the Union government as well as individual state governments have the right to legislate on education policies (Banerjee et. all 2014, 46). Therefore, a Hindutva ideologically backed central education policy will have repercussions for non BJP states too. As the NEP has shown, the curriculum is the main arena in which this tussle plays out. At the Union level the NCERT devises curriculums and textbooks which are used by schools across India that are affiliated with the Central board. Individual states have their own state education board prescribed textbooks. However, the NCERT is important to the discussion because it is seen as 'determining curriculum standards for the whole of India' (Anand et all 2022, 83).

The most vocal dissent against the BJP's attempt to replicate its Gujarat model has come from the CPI (M). The Kerala model; a stronghold of Communist ideologues has for long been seen as an alternative to Saffron growth, preeminently by renowned economist Amartya Sen. This means that both Communist and Hindutva narratives of state and society coexist in

Indian textbooks across the country at the same time. Under the current regime, where a constant attempt is being made for a more unitary state with a push to diminish federal liberties; alternative models of development which Kerala provides is coming under threat too. This was the exact fear that was articulated in a document released by The Kerala State Higher Education Council, in response to the implementation of the NEP 2020. The document asserts the "excessively centralised structure of authority" of the NEP and criticizes the Central government of failing to recognize the Constitutional power of individual states in education policy, virtually robbing the states of their rights (The Kerala State Higher Education Council and Thiruvananthapuram, 2020).

The BJP's Hindutva ideology in education, is dictated by the slogan 'Indianise, nationalise and spiritualise' (Mohan 2016). Whereas, the Kerala state education board sees its vision as "Leading school education through research, development and training to develop competency, creativity and scientific temper in students for fulfilling the aspirations of a society that is based on the principles of sovereign socialist secular democratic republic" (SCERT, Kerala). With the installation of the NEP 2020; the attempt is to push for the former at the expense of the latter; that is, a Gujarat model as an all-India model.

It would be inaccurate to discuss the impact state ideology in the curriculum has on replicating the social hierarchies present in the Gujarat and Kerala models of development without locating them in a broader contemporary context. The aim of this paper is to study how the curriculum of the two states dictated by the Communist and Hindutva ideology reflects the knowledge system of the beneficiaries of the states' developmental models. To study this trend ; I have divided my analysis into two chapters. The first titled Red and Saffron Development- Who are the beneficiaries?, elaborates on the alternate routes of developmental trajectories taken by Gujarat and Kerala influenced by Hindutva and Communist ideologies. Examining pre-existing secondary literature, I try to deduce who the beneficiaries of these models are and which groups are left out. The second chapter, State ideology and the social science curriculum- who is invisibilized?, draws from the first chapter to understand how the beneficiaries of either model aided by the state, (re)produce their hegemony in society through invisibilizing the narrative of certain communities and perpetuating the dominance of their identity in the state curriculum.

Literature Review

In the preface to his book *What Is Worth Teaching?* Krishna Kumar, highlighted a fracture which haunts the discourse on the study of education policies in India. This is the divide between different interest groups; the pedagogue, the sociologist, the economist, the planner, the historian and the philosopher. There has been a limited coherent amalgamation of all these different approaches in education policy to link exclusion from curriculum and policy

to actual exclusion in access to education and society at large and the role state ideology plays in this process.

Following Kumar's observation, I would like to divide my literature review into two broad methodological themes which I believe reflects this aforementioned fracture; that is, one which views education policy through the lens of cultural hegemony in curriculum and the other which understands education policy within the developmental debate.

Cultural Hegemony in Curriculum and What Counts as Knowledge

Apple in his work *Education and Ideology* highlighted that the liberal approach to understanding the merits of education would have one believe that it acts as a social emancipator and that through equal education opportunities the rigid societal hierarchies can be erased. This in turn, perpetuates an attitude of taking for granted that curricula are neutral as well as the myth that education 'creates and sustains social change' (Apple 2004, 16). Therefore, historically, studies on education policy have focused primarily on issues of educational inequalities in access and outcome without giving adequate attention to the role ideology and cultural hegemony play within the domain of education in perpetuating and reproducing these inequalities (Scrase 1993). Since the 1970s-80s, however, Marxist critical educational research has attempted to bridge this gap by theorizing ways in which power and ideology playout in educational institutions in replicating inequalities that persist in the capitalist world (Scrase 1993, 48).

Apple's (2004) and Scarse's (1993) works which are influenced by Neo-Marxist critical education theories have used the curriculum as one way of analysing hegemonic power narratives by drawing on Antonio Gramsci's (1971) usage of cultural and social hegemony as an effective theoretical framework for understanding how dominant ideological groups maintain and (re)produce their control in society. According to this rendering, hegemony is seen as something that is constructed; it is not forced but consensual. In this essay, I too borrow from this theoretic framework and see education policies as a way of consensually exerting cultural and societal domination and inequality. Apple (2004) examines how the 'form and content' of the curriculums in schools are inescapably linked to the social interactions not only within these institutions but also those reproduced in the larger society. Scrase (1993, 10) drawing on Bourdieu and Passeron's notions of cultural capital and

Gramsci's concept of hegemony contended that school knowledge in India reproduces the culture of the middle classes further perpetuating the social inequality present in Indian society.

In the Indian context too, textbooks and curriculums have been used to study this hegemony. Irrespective of state ideology, the upper castes and classes have maintained their hegemony in the domain of education not only with regards to what should be taught but even in gatekeeping access to education (Kumar 2004, K.P. 2019). Marginalized groups in India often find themselves as well as their knowledge systems excluded from state textbooks.

Krishna Kumar (2004) believed that it was within the realm of education that some of the 'unscrupulous games of global control' would be played. Hegemonic discourses in education dictate what can and cannot be taught, as well as what counts as knowledge. According to him, what counts as knowledge depends on the 'selection made under given social circumstance' (Kumar 2004, 8). The narrative of the subaltern seems to be missing and the curriculum has been used by dominant groups to 'phase out certain voices and make them inaudible' (Kumar 2004, 13).

The ideology that a state adopts also has an impact on the contents of the curriculum and what counts as knowledge. It has been observed that the altering of the curriculum with change in political regime, in accordance with the ideology of the new ruling dispensation is a frequent trend in India. With the ascend of the BJP at the national level, saffronization; a socio political process of altering the education system and bringing it in harmony with a Hindutva narrative of state and society has increasingly been seen as a means of cultural hegemony (Anand et. all 2022, Bhatty et all, 2020; Westerfield 2019). One of the earliest critique of this trend was done in light of the 'textbook controversy' of 2001. The contents of the NCERT curriculum emerged as a heated topic of debate in 2000, when the BJP led National Democratic Front government erased portions from the humanities textbooks because they believed under the Congress government, Marxist scholars were given free reign. Raising the question of the 'handling of knowledge' against the backdrop of the deletion of passages from the NCERT History textbooks ; Romila Thapar (2001) explained how pressure from the RSS led the BJP to amend its schooling curriculum and conform it with the RSS *Shishu Mandir* curriculums and use these as models for state schools. Additionally in providing an explanation for the reason of saffronization of the curriculum,

Bipan Chandra (2001) enumerated how ‘no ideology- based movement can survive if its core is successfully challenged’.

In 2010, The Textbook Regimes; a feminist critique of the curriculum in the social sciences of the Gujarat state; addressed the way societal inequalities and communalisation was fostered through education policies. This was carried out through a critical valuation of the Gujarat State School Textbook Board’s and *Vidyabharti Akil Bhartiya Shiksha Sansthan’s* (RSS affiliated schools) social science textbooks. According, to this report, Hindutva politics were ingrained into the social fabric of the state through the education system. Communal identities and fissures prevalent in society which resulted in the Gujarat riots of 2002 (which saw the most heinous crimes against the Muslim minority), were in fact a manifestation of the education system.

Westerfield (2019) carried out a comprehensive study of NCERT as well as BJP ruled state textbooks from 2002 to 2018 to study the extent of textbook manipulation by the BJP. She concluded that these textbooks have been used to indoctrinate as well as create a cadre loyal to Hindutva and perpetuates a culture of “backward thinking in terms of gender, caste and religious acceptance.” (Westerfield 2019,13) .

More recently, Anand et all (2022), focusing on how citizenship and the categories of the Self and Other are formulated by textbooks, brought to light the Hindutva ideology reflected in the National Education Policy of 2020 and the free reign given to the RSS in education. Bhatty et all (2020) views education as a site of cultural hegemony and enumerates how through education, the BJP seeks at creating a *Hindu rashtra*.

State Ideology and Alternate Models of Development

Education policy cannot be delinked from the developmental discourse. There is a wide body of literature on Gujarat and Kerala as alternative developmental models. These works use education as one of the many developmental indicators and emphasize the link between a particular state ideology and the developmental trajectories. The Gujarat model and Kerala model are seen as exhibiting indexes of the opposing ends of the ideological spectrum (Parwez, 2016). The drastically opposing tendencies of these models have been exaggerated by the debate between two economist who have taken obstinate stances in defending their position without appropriately criticizing where these models fall short; primarily with regard to the rights and freedoms of marginalized groups. The Sen and Bhagwati debate has

dominated most spaces on the Kerala/Gujarat model and largely focus on the exceptionalism of either state (Parwez 2016, 110-111). In doing so, they undermine the inherent discriminatory trends. As Kjosavik et all (2011) explain, studies on how development models contrastingly affect members of a stratified society are rare and the focus has been primarily on the success of the models on a macro level.

Kerala emerged as a model state in the 1970s when economists associated with the Centre for Developmental Studies in Thiruvananthapuram recognised a peculiar trend of high human indexes without complimentary growth in GDP (CDS 1977). Since, then studies conducted ascribed Kerala's high Human Development Indicators and educational success to the ruling Communist government and the active role played by the government through direct intervention in bringing about social change as well as, the inclusive participation of minority groups in the political process headed by the Communists (Franke et all 1994 ; Jeffery 1994;Parayil 1996; Ramachandran 1997).

However, a new body of literature has emerged, questioning the model's ability to challenge social hierarchies and traditional inequalities. This group asserts that although, marginalized communities might fare better in Kerala than the all India average, these communities do not have equal levels of progress when compared to the rest of the population (Devika 2011, Kjosavik et all 2011, Kurrien 1995).

The Gujarat model of development emerged in the early 2000s ; when the state witnessed high growth indexes facilitated by Hindutva neoliberal policies (Hirway 2017). The Gujarat model has been hailed by economist as a success story in high GDP and growth. However, it has also been at the receiving end of extreme criticism for its exclusionary characteristics . Dreze (2017) questioned the feasibility of calling Gujarat a model and mocked the development route labelling it the "Gujarat muddle'. In his criticism of the Gujarat model, Jaffrelot (2016) referred to it as one of 'growth without development'. He is critical of this system for its exclusionary traits and views Muslims, Dalits and Adivasis as the 'casualties' of such a political economy (Jaffrelot 2016, 820). Public policies in Gujarat have reproduced and exacerbated existent inequalities and education is one of the fields in which this plays out. In a similar line, Sud (2020), Desai (2011) and Shah (1998, 2017) have analysed the gaps in the Gujarat model by focusing on who the beneficiaries of this model are. Bobbio (2012) studied the creation of a subnational Gujarati identity which was essentially upper caste Hindu being as the beneficiaries of the model.

The wider two themes discussed above have received great attention however the gap I propose to fill through my paper is the link between the two; that is, attempting to address the larger question of the reproduction of inequalities present in the development model through the state education curriculum. My goal is to infer who the beneficiaries of these development models are and analyze the curriculum to see if it reflects the knowledge system of the beneficiaries.

While there has been extensive work carried out on the Kerala and Gujarat model as alternative ideological models for state organization that provide contrasting developmental stories, there is a dearth in a comprehensive comparison of these two models with regard to the role education policy plays in perpetuating exclusionary trends of the respective development models. Furthermore, even within the two above mentioned approaches there exists both a deficit and glut of literature on certain themes. While Kerala's education model as a developmental ingenuity has been carefully and intricately studied, little to no attention has been played to the contents of the curriculum and the ideology it espouses because of its seemingly unproblematic nature (the only criticism to Communist ideology in curriculum are by to borrow Ravish Kumar's terminology, WhatsApp University graduates). On the other hand, intense examination of the Hindutva ideology in Gujarat's curriculum is abundant ,at the same time there is limited literature on Gujarat as an educational model.

A serious analysis on the education curriculum, must take in account the interconnectedness of economy, ideology and culture in (re)establishing hegemony. It is a fact that society is structurally unequal. Therefore, irrespective of state ideology, marginalized groups are subordinated; the question is then not on whether there is exclusion or not but rather of degree and kind. This is the base of the analysis of my study.

Methodology

Apple (2019, 276) explains that, 'Critical policy analysis is grounded in the belief that it is absolutely crucial to understand the complex connections between education and the relations of dominance and subordination in the larger society—and the movements that are trying to interrupt these relations.'

In this paper I draw from Critical Policy Analysis (CPA) to examine the influence the curriculum guided by differing ideological development models has in the reproduction of social hierarchies. CPA allows for an interdisciplinary holistic understanding of the implications of education policies (Diem et all 2018). It cuts across humanities and social sciences in studying inequalities (re)produced in society as well as the hegemonic control of dominant groups. Therefore, it is an ideal methodology to use to bridge the gap mentioned in the literature review. CPA fulfils the two of my primary concerns. Firstly, it explains 'the distribution of power, resources, and knowledge as well as the creation of policy "winners" and "losers".' Secondly, it helps understand 'social stratification and the broader effect a given policy has on relationships of inequality and privilege' (Diem et all 2018, 6).

Additionally, the benefit of employing CPA lay in the fact that while being the foundational methodology, other methods of analysis such as discourse analysis can be used to generate a deeper insight (Apple 2019, 281). Therefore, while analysing the class ten social science textbooks to investigate which section of societies knowledge system is prioritized, I employ a Foucauldian approach of discourse analysis. I view the curriculum as the official discourse of the state. This means that the political ideologies of the states are reflected in each state's official textbooks. Therefore, I see the curriculum as a chief determinant of how the state creates, maintains and institutionalizes its hegemony.

The first part of my analysis requires me to infer who the beneficiaries of the state's developmental models are. To do this, I am drawing from secondary literature; mainly scholarly work, news articles, blog posts. For the curriculum, I am analyzing the English medium social science textbooks of the state boards of Kerala and Gujarat for class ten. For Kerala that is the class ten social science book released by The State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT). It is divided into four textbooks and I analyze two of these, which focus on History, Sociology and Political Science. The textbook I use for Gujarat is issued by the Gujarat State Board of School Textbooks. The existence of different textbooks

and curriculums in these states deepen the complexity of which textbook to analyze. The choice I made was in accordance with what was prescribed by the SCERT, Kerala and the Gujarat Secondary and Higher Secondary Board. Anyon (1978, 40) claims that "knowledge which counts as social studies knowledge, tend(s) to be that knowledge which provides formal justification for and legitimating of prevailing institutional arrangements". This is the reason I choose to analyse the social science curriculum in particular, while seeking to study reproduction of societal hierarchies.

I find it imperative to state that Kerala curriculum was tedious to analyse as I was unable to find any secondary literature which links the curriculum of the state to the ideologies of the LDF alliance headed by the CPI (M); a Communist ideology. I therefore carried out my own analysis. For this, I used the CPI (M) party Programme available on their official website. I saw this document as reflecting the basic foundations as well as goals of the party.

Saffron and Red Development: Who are the beneficiaries?

According to Article 46 of the Constitution of India, it is the duty of the states to protect and promote the 'educational and economic interest of the weaker section of the people, and in particular, of the Schedule Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs)'. In spite of this, in

reality this is far from enforced. In a document titled the 'Situational analysis of SC and ST education in India' carried out by the National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights, it was found that "caste, tribal, class and gender discriminations continue to haunt educational institutions". Although, India's education system backed by the Constitution, prioritises access to opportunities irrespective of caste, class, gender or religion; the beneficiaries of social benefits often depend on who the state views as 'deserving' which is foremost determined by the ideology it follows. The Kerala and Gujarat model provide an interesting framework to analyse this marginalization trend linking this exclusion from the developmental model to state ideology.

For a nuanced understanding, both models need to be located in a particular historical context to trace the divergent routes each took with regard to development. Gujarat has followed the path of neoliberal growth without inclusion under a Right wing neoliberal Hindutva government, while Kerala on the other hand provides an exemplar story of sustained social development with 'apparent' inclusion spearheaded by a persistent Communist ideology. In both cases, ideology has been used by dominant groups to sustain these developmental models. Seeing education as one of the indicators of development, this chapter deals with the question of who the beneficiaries of these ideologically backed developmental models are.

Saffron Development

Gujarat's post-independence politics was marked by restricted participatory democracy and idealizing of a strong centralized government under the '*sarvocch neta'*. Big businesses and industrialists funded and supported the independence struggle in Gujarat, therefore, post independent Gujarat saw a nexus between the state and local capitalist resulting in a neo-liberal developmental model built on this alliance (Sud, 2020). Yagnik (2005) observes, that the elite centric development model of Gujarat was promoted by political parties irrespective of their ideological affiliations.

Since 1992 the BJP has enjoyed undisputed power in Gujarat. Billboards across the state, labelling the state '*Hindu Rashtra'* made it clear who the beneficiaries of the Gujarat model were (Sud 2008, 1269) . BJP came into power by not only capitalizing on the state-capitalists nexus, but by the advancing of a more aggressive Hindutva neoliberal model of growth complimented with the creation of a new middle class identity. This exclusionary subnational

identity which is unique to Gujarat's developmental model is created through the coalescing of the Gujarati-Hindu-middle class identity. This goes hand in hand with exclusion of certain communities which do not belong to this identity and as an extension do not fit into this model of development. Hindutva neoliberalism is therefore linked to the Gujarati ethos based on the mercantile community dictated by a Hindu upper caste Brahmin and Bania identity.

The 1980s in Gujarat saw the ascendancy of the Hindu Right under the Sangh Parivar politically represented by the BJP. Disillusioned with Congress (O)s KHAM[11] politics and militantly opposed to the reservations proposed by the Mandal Commission, the Savarnas of Gujarat who comprised of the upper middle class/caste; namely, Brahmins, Baniyas and Patidars, feared the loss of their power and the rise of the *Pachchat* (Backward) classes (Yagnik et all 2005, 235). Their grievances were backed and given voice politically by the Sangh Parivar's political wing, the BJP. Post 1985 however, fearing the alienation of a majority of their vote bank, the BJP became more ambivalent in their stance on reservation (Jaffrelot 2016, 831). A new identity was in the making under the slogan of 'one nation, one culture, one people' (Sud, 2022, 107). The BJP aided by the Sangh Parivar used the Hindutva ideology to accommodate all segments of 'Hindu' society utilizing the age old tactic of protecting Hindu *dharma* from the Muslim 'other' (Jaffrelot 2016, Sud 2000; Sud 2008, 1262). In order to propagate this 'Hindu Brahmanical culture' schools were opened in Adivasi areas and Dalits were included in *rath yatras* where previously they were not allowed (Sud 2008, 1263).

The success of the BJP in incorporating lower castes and Adivasis within its fold can be seen in the participants of the riots which broke out in Gujarat, where Dalits and Adivasis were the main aggressors against the Muslims (Yagnik et all 2005). In 2007, Ashish Nandy writing in *The Times of India*, explained this trend:

"[This] class has found in militant religious nationalism a new self-respect and a new virtual identity as a martial community the way Bengali babus, Maharashtrian Brahmins and Kashmiri Muslims at different times have sought salvation in violence. In Gujarat this class has smelt blood, for it does not have to do the killings but can plan, finance and coordinate them with impunity. The actual killers are the lowest of the low, mostly tribals and Dalits. The middle class controls the media and education, which have become hate factories in

[1]KHAM , that is, Koli Kshatriya, Harijan, Adivasi and Muslim, was a political identity based category fashionedby the Congress to garner votes in Gujarat. It resulted in a loss of power of the Savarana Bania-Patidar- Brahmin dominance.

recent times."

When in formal control of the state machinery, development in Gujarat became embodied in the government's slogan; 'minimum government, maximum governance' (Jaffrelot 2016, 822). Increased capitalist appeasement meant reduced budgetary allocations towards the social sector. According to a 2010 report by the Reserve Bank of India; Gujarat only allocated 5.1 per cent of its annual budget towards the social sector between 2005-2010 (Jaffrelot 2016, 822). Although this decreased the governments capability to carry out social developmental projects, they continued with an altered beneficiary base. The worthy beneficiaries were the Guajaratis.

But who were these Gujaratis? While carrying out field research, Sud (2020) found that state officials increasingly began describing Hindus as 'quams' or community and only quam were seen as being Gujarati. Other religions were considered as non Gujarati. Gujarati thus became synonymous with being Hindu and deserving of state incentives. The 'us' versus 'them' narrative was achieved and it strengthened the Gujarat development model.

The Gujarat model is intricately linked to the subnational identity of being a Gujarati and one who is worthy of being a beneficiary of the state. Bobbio (2012, 660) witnessed that, "what makes the construction of an idea of 'Gujaratiness' unique is its equation with propaganda around economic development in the frame of the rise of Hindu extremism in the state" (Bobbio 2012, 660). By providing an ideological base for the unity of Hindu propertied upper and middle caste/class groups, the BJP was able to create a neo middle class Gujarati identity fostered by economic growth and vested in a very upper caste Hindu identity which endorses a culture of violence against all those excluded by this model of development and by extension from the 'Gujarati' identity (Desai 2011, 365; Bobbio 2012, 664).

Subscribing to the trend of 'secularizing of caste' [2]and portraying the neo middle class as an aspirational secular Hindu identity, the BJP has been able to create a situation where lower castes and Adivasis have been assimilated within the larger Hindu identity, without challenging the caste framework (Shah 252). This has led to a substantial blurring of caste and class identities in favour of a majoritarian Hindu one (Jaffrelot 2016, 831). However, it is

[2] [2] Seth describes secularization of caste as a new postcolonial political process which has led caste to becomede-ritualized groups allowing horizontal competition of members of different castes to enter into the middleclass.

crucial to note that in spite of its ostensibly 'secular character', the neo middle class identity is steeped in a Brahmin-Bania-Patidar Savarna rhetoric. In spite of the engineering of this all-encompassing Hindu identity, Hindutva does not claim to be casteless. Therefore, the BJPs Gujarat model presents us with a strange contradiction of on one hand, garnering the support of the lower castes and Adivasis under a unified Hindu identity while at the same time embodying policies which do not translate into actual benefits for them. This has led Jaffrelot (2016, 820) to label Dalits, Adivasis along with Muslims (who constitute 30 per cent of the population), as being the 'casualties of the Gujarat model'. Although, they subscribe to the Hindutva model, they are not the beneficiaries. The upper and middle caste/class continue to remain in power.

Red Development

Access to equal and inclusive education in Kerala, predates the Left Democratic Front (LDF) led Communist state and was the result of social reform movements (Ramchandran 1997, Jefferey 1992). Kerala had some of the worst forms of caste discrimination in the subcontinent; untouchability, unapproachability and unseeability were rampantly practiced. At the top of the caste hierarchy were the Brahmin Namboodris. While the slave castes, aboriginal tribes and the Izhava were at the bottom (Ramachandran 1997, 274). Social reform movements for the expulsion of caste and the establishment of a more egalitarian society dominated the mass movements. In pre independent Kerala indiscriminate education was supported by missionaries, local rulers of the princely states and involved the vocal assertion for rights by marginalized communities (Ramachandran 1997, Jeffery 2003). Ramachandran (1997, 211-313) notes that since their inception in the public domain in the 1930s, the Communist Party co-opted this tradition and was an active mobilizer of mass movements in the states and the primary agent of politicization of these masses. The Kerala People's Science Movement (1963), The Total Literacy Campaign (1989-1991), the *Granthashala* (library) Movement, all had Communist participation and leadership (Ramachandran 1997, 313-315).

When in 1957, the Communist Party of Kerala became the first democratically elected Communist government in Asia, this inherited tradition of social inclusion was formally institutionalized in the states championing of strengthening the public distribution system. Due to this inherited tradition of prioritizing social development, the Communist ideology has had an enduring presence in policy making even under non Communist Congress

coalitions (Harikrishnan 2021; Ramachandran 1997, 211). Unlike Gujarat, the CPI (M), in Kerala has not held hegemonic political power for the past two decades. Their ideology however, has become an integral part of policy making- this can be attributed to their participation in public led initiatives for governance. In this way the Left has been able to make its agendas a part of the 'broad social consensus in the state' even when it does not occupy formal control of the state (Ramachandran 1997, 313). Every government is made to conform to policies with a Communist tint; prioritising education and implementing a system of equal public distribution.

In such a set up, the beneficiaries of social benefits came to be an inclusive group including marginalized and oppressed groups which found through the Communists an agency to voice their grievances and demands. The development model that emerged in Kerala then, was a sum total of all these trends. It is a result of social movements which emphasized on inclusive access to public spaces and was marked by a strong anti-caste movement supported by a Communist ideology.

The Communist see their support base as being the 'working class'. In its Programme on its official website , the CPI(M) tries to define this 'working class'. Dalits, Adivasis, as well as labouring classes and all those groups who face oppression by the oppressive bourgeois landowning classes are mentioned as being recipients of the state's policies; or target group. However, in spite of these achievements and due to the restrictions of organization under a 'working class identity' in a Communist state, the beneficiaries of the Kerala model are not as inclusive as one would assume.

In actuality, the fruits of development are not distributed as equally as one might think and in the words of Ramchandra Guha (2020) "Kerala is by no means perfect." It is also important to assert that inclusion within the system does not translate to equality. The Kerala model to borrow Kurrien's terminology has many 'outliers'. These outliers include Adivasis and the lower castes. Ramachandran (1997, 253) observed that although Kerala's achievements were impressive from an All-India perspective, the 'traditional patterns of inequality and deprivation' persisted. The 1991 Census of the state showed that the literacy rate of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes to be below the general level of the state (Ramachandran 1997, 264).

Traditional patterns of inequality aren't only existent in Kerala's society but are at times

perpetuated and patronized by the CPI(M) for their socio political gains. While Communist in India have generally preferred to see oppression in terms of class, in Kerala the CPI (M) realised the importance of mobilizing among caste identities in order to have a support base, however more often than not, a Marxist understanding of class has been the working principle on which communities have been recognized by the Communist state, leading to inequalities in the distribution of the gains of Kerala's development model.

Kurrien (1995, 87) observes that the social movements of the 19th century which left an indelible impact on the politics of the state thereafter were largely restricted to the Hindu agrarian sector and only those who were able to politicize reaped the benefits of the development model. Tribes of the hills and the coastal fishing communities were left out of the politicisation process. While the Communist government saw all workers as their support base, beneficiaries of the model of development were only those who were able to collectively organize to demand their dues from the state. While coir, toddy, cashew and beedi workers were able to form organisational labour workforces and demand collective benefits for their respective communities, the fishing communities were not (Kurrien 1995, 86). The traditional artisanal fishermen, who were largely 'petty producers' came to be the outliers of the Kerala model of development. This was because they were seen as an 'unstrategic' group to mobilise. Literacy rates among the fisherworkers, although higher than the Indian average were lower than that of the state as a whole (Kurrien 1995).

Kjosavik made a similar observation when studying the status of Adivasis within the Kerala Model. The 'proliterization' process for the Adivasis was very different and hence they could not be fully accommodated within this working class and benefit fully from the developmental programmes that catered to this 'labouring classes (Kjosavik et all 2004, 242). However, while Adivasis are 'outliers', they are not excluded from the development model (Kjosavik et all 2004, 264). In a Communist state therefore, being a part of an unorganised labour force, and being unable to organize along the working class identity hinders the ability of communities to be beneficiaries of the state's developmental model.

Devika, (2010) questions the 'egalitarian developmentalism' that the Kerala model personifies. She claims that the leaving out of Dalits from the development model was not 'incidental' as many scholars claim but a deliberate move by upper and middle caste Hindus who found it politically strategic. Questioning the Lefts' assimilation of marginalized communities she asserts that the Communist state reduced them to mere recipients of social

benefits and that the anticaste struggles were ‘driven by upper-caste political agency’ and ‘through the extension of public services to Dalit ‘(Devika 2010, 808). The upper caste dominated Communist party attacked only those aspects of caste which would act as an obstruction in class formation (Devika 2010, 805-807).

These arguments clearly highlight the failure of the Communist state in being as egalitarian as it claims, at the same time one could argue that the Communist ideology was able to create among marginalized communities the ability to articulate and demand services from the state. Although, Brahmin and Nair domination continued in the leadership and decision making of the party, which translated in unequal distribution of resources, the Communist ideology has enabled lower caste members to enter these spaces and alter the upper caste hegemony. The fact that the first Chief Minister of the CPI (M) EMS Namboodripad, was a Brahmin, while the current Chief Minster, Perriyar Vijayan is from the Ezhava caste of toddy tappers who were once considered an untouchable community, shows that the Communist ideology provides a space for altering and questioning hegemony and perhaps even making the beneficiary base increasingly inclusive.

State Ideology and the Social Science Curriculum: Who is invisibilised?

'Indian school curriculum only focuses teaching about Gandhi, Nehru, queen Laxmibai, hindu gods and festivals. It is difficult to associate with the history classes that focused solely on the history of the oppressors written by the oppressors for the oppressors, especially when you know that you are the oppressed."

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Apple (2004, XI-XII) explains that there is a "very real set of relationships" between those who have eco-socio-political control of society and the way in which education is conceptualised. Therefore it is no surprise that the beneficiaries of the state development model described in the previous chapter are the ones who control education and use it as an important 'ideological state apparatus' to maintain power and legitimacy. It is their knowledge that is of 'most worth' and that finds its way into the curriculum. Textbooks in India are a reflection of the state's articulation of what it means to be Indian and state ideology and identity politics plays an integral role in conceptualising this (Anand et all 2022, 77). Both the BJP and the LDF, use textbooks as a means of 'political communication'. The curriculum to borrow Apple's (2004, XX) phrase, is a 'political football' of sorts where state ideology dictates notions of 'legitimate' and 'illegitimate' knowledge and this further sieves what knowledge is chosen to be made available. The concept of 'selective tradition' as propounded by Williams in interesting in our understanding of hegemony in the social science curriculum of Gujarat and Kerala. According to this, the culture of the dominant group is always seen as "the tradition or significant past" which is worth teaching (Apple 2004, 5).

Following this the inequalities present in the development model are reproduced through the curriculum. Gujarat provides us with a study on how textbooks help in the construction of identities where a Hindutva worldview has been perpetuated by the state for over twenty seven years. Kerala, on the other hand seems to provide a more secular rendering of Indian identity following a communist ideology. The broader themes or chapters which the textbooks contain show what is prioritised by the state as 'knowledge'.

Gujarat: Hindu as Indian

The class ten social science textbook of Gujarat perpetuates the Brahmin-Bania-Patidar middle class identity, by prioritizing a Savarna knowledge system through saffronization. My analysis reasserted the claims of earlier scholars on the saffronization trend present in the school curriculum of states run by the BJP. Saffronization of the curriculum can be attributed with certain distinct features; blurring the line between historical and mythical facts and mythification of history, hyper masculinization, exclusion of subaltern groups and minority narratives and voices from the discourse and valorising of Ancient Indian glory (*Textbook Regimes*, 2010). The aim is to create a monolithic Hindu identity which is vested in an upper caste rendering of 'Hindu", to support the states majoritarian ambitions.

The social science textbook of Gujarat focuses primarily on 'Ancient India' and the glory associated with the past. It is replete with examples of Indian greatness ; but this 'Indianess' is specific and exclusionary; it is located in a Hindu upper caste identity; similar to the Gujarati subnational identity.

In recent years, although the RSS has tried to incorporate lower castes within its vision of India, its ideology still remains heavily steeped in upper caste anti Dalit rhetoric. This is because, Hindutva ideology rejects the discrimination present within Indian society and subsumes Adivasi and Dalit identities to the identity to the homogeneous Hindu one. This results in invisiblizing their knowledge structures in favour of a upper caste Savarna rendering of Hinduism. The curriculum is an ideal reflection of this. According to Golwalkar 'all Hindus, to whatever sect, caste, clan, or tribe they may belong, must put down their community as "Hindu" only.' This quote reflects the homogeneous Hindu identity that is perpetuated by the RSS which refuses to see caste distinctions. In doing so, what is portrayed as 'Hindu' is essentially a upper caste Hindu identity.

If the *Sangh Parivar* can be accredited with anything, it should be their unfaltering devotion to the ideology of Hindutva and the precise articulation of ideology into policy. M.A. Venkata Rao in 1960, in his Introduction to Golwalkar's *Bunch of Thoughts* enumerated the bases of Hindutva philosophy and identity in a *Hindu rashrta*:

"The national identity requires that the whole of national society including minorities should

share in the best values of the past. They should appreciate national *dharma* – the code of ethical principles and ways of life enshrined in the best usage. In cultural history, they should all give their mind and hearts whole-heartedly to an appreciation of the best types of Rama and Krishna may be appreciated by non-Hindus as secular examples while the Hindus will see them as full spiritual exemplars (avatars)."

In the above statement there is a conflation between Hindu and Indian and this Hindu tradition is assumed to be 'secular'. This rendering of national identity is codified in the class ten social science textbook of the Gujarat State Board of School Textbooks.

The *Vedas* and *Purans* are Brahmanical religious texts and throughout the curriculum they are used as sources and references of 'Indian culture and tradition'. The Sanskrit language which has a long tradition of being used only by upper caste is employed in the same manner. The first chapter 'Heritage of India in tracing the territoriality of India, uses a quote from the *Vishnu Puran* and employs words such as *Bharatvarsha, Bharatkhand* and *Aryavarta* to be synonymous with India, tracing the modern Indian state to a Brahmanical Hindu origin (Social Science 2019,1). The same chapter, goes on to describe culture of India to be grounded in the philosophies of '*Sat, Chit and Anand*' all hark back to a Brahmanical Ancient Indian philosophy (Social Science 2019, 1). The chapter Literary Heritage of India ; goes on to praise Sanskrit as 'the best language for computer use' (Social Science 2019,).

In 'India's Heritage of Science and Technology', all the contributions mentioned are from 'Ancient India'. Furthermore, mythical Hindu narratives are presented as historical facts. "Brahma, Narad, Bruhaspati, Bhrugu, Vashistha and Vishwakarma have made unique contributions in the field of Vasushastra" (Social Science 2019, 40). The above mentioned names are Hindu Gods. Similarly, while referring to wildlife under Natural Heritage of India, a passage reads; "Our religious belief has given a status of God-Goddesses' vehicle to some of the animals-tiger, peacock, alligators, eagles etc."(Social Science 2019, 2). The tradition of associating animals as vehicles of Gods is a Hindu one. The assertion on the tradition as 'ours', reasserts the RSS ideologue of blurring the line between Hindu and Indian. "Tolerance and equality towards all religions is seen in our culture. In spite of having diversity in religion, life style and values we see unity in our country. We should not forget that, Indian culture reflects unique feature of 'unity in diversity' " (Social Science 2019, 41). In this passage, 'our culture' which is synonymous with Hindu is reiterated as the source of

'unity in diversity'.

'Others' are not completely erased from the narrative but there is a very clear trend to mark them as distinct from the 'native Indian'. They may have adopted aspects of Indian culture, but they are still seen as outsiders. This whole narrative of labelling Ancient Indian culture as a collective 'ours' where the narrative of the minorities and marginalized is missing, others their culture. Any culture that cannot be traced to an Ancient Brahmanical one is automatically othered even if there is no explicate mention as such.

Within the constant glorification of Ancient India there is an absence of the mentioning of untouchability. This falls in line with the refusal of the Gujarat state to accept the existence of the practice of untouchability in the state (Shah 2017, 69). By locating the culture and heritage of the country to a distinctively upper caste Ancient India using specifically Brahmanical sources and examples and the continuous assertion of essentially upper caste narratives as 'ours', the curriculum not only invisibilizes subaltern and minority cultures but also homogenizes the Hindu identity. As Karunakaran (2016) explains ,these Ancient texts "represent a supreme sanction of Brahmanical *dharma* (law/praxis), and this lays ground for the materializing of more rigid, more complex and more oppressive *varna-jāti* religio-social orders". Therefore the curriculum in a sense sanctions and normalizes the hierarchies that the Hindutva state of Gujarat espouses.

Kerala: Inclusive Representation?

If one reads the Programme of the CPI(M) on their official website, it reads as an anecdote or antithesis to the communalist neoliberal Hindutva agenda. There are even passages which label the BJP, influenced by the RSS, as a 'reactionary' as well as 'fascist' party which threatens the composite culture of the country. The Communist, see one of their primary duties as combating this exclusive fascist ideology. The curriculum is seen as one of the sites of this revolution and where the battle against Right wing neo imperialism needs to be fought.

Upholding the secular character of the Indian state as enshrined in the Constitution of India is one such way. Secular principles are extended to the realm of education too where the document asserts that the "secular character of education shall be guaranteed" (Programme 1964, XVI). Unlike in the BJP agenda where secular is drawn from a Hindu tradition of acceptance; the Communist adopt and implement secular as defined in the Constitution of India.

The curriculum reflects a trend of explaining historical facts through a Marxist lens. The Programme, in a section labelled 'Socialism in the Contemporary World', emphasises the struggle against imperialism in the 20th century and sees the October Revolution of 1917 and the Chinese Revolution as 'momentous' events of the same. The curriculum too mirrors this trend. The first chapter, 'Revolutions that Influenced the World' mentions the, Russian and Chinese Revolution as important events. Similarly, the second chapter 'World in the Twentieth Century', explains colonialism, as well as the reason for the First World War, primarily in terms of imperialist ambitions. In explaining neo imperialism, a quote reads, "The multinational companies competed with one another to control the resources and assets of the third world countries. They promoted consumerism in third world countries to sell their products" (Social Science I 2019, 48). These themes reflect anti liberal and neoliberal sentiments which are a very typical Communist characteristic.

The CPI(M) claims as its mission to 'combine patriotism with proletarian internationalism' (Programme 1964, VIII). It sees the Communist revolution as being part of a global class struggle, with the Indian experience being a crucial element of it. The themes of the chapters of the curriculum reflect this notion -'Revolutions that Influenced the World' ,'World in the Twentieth Century', 'British Exploitation and Resistance', 'Culture and Nationalism' and 'Struggle and Freedom'. These situate the Indian Independence struggle as well as Indian nationalism within the broader global context of resistance against imperialism.

While on one hand emphasizing proletarian internationalism and the global working class unity, the Communist do not disregard the local exploitative caste system or try to subsume the caste question within the class narrative. Acknowledging inequalities in Indian society, the Programme views its goal as establishing of a state that is 'democratic and secular' in its outlook. It promises to strive towards ridding society of "caste, gender bias, and communal prejudices and ideas of subservience and superstition." (Programme 1964, XX). Therefore, the Communist see their agenda as creating an egalitarian sate. Borrowing from this

narrative, the curriculum does not shy away from discussing caste along with its oppressive structures in India and Kerala. Izhava, Nair as well as Adivasi representation is found throughout the textbook, across themes. The chapter titled 'Kerala towards Modernity' ; discusses the presence of caste in Kerala and even mentions its 'untouchable and unapprochable' features (Social Science I 2019, 161). It further goes on to discuss the various anti caste movements from the Channar women's protest to caste reformers including T.K Madhavan, K. Kelappan and P. Krishna Pillai. (Social Science I 2019, 162). The role of Communists in the anti caste movement is also highlighted along with a quote by Annie Mascarene envisaging the need of a Socialist Travancore (Social Science I 2019, 166). The 'Self Respect Movement" of E.V. Ramaswami Naicker as well as the Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam by Sree Narayan Guru , both critical anti-caste movements against Brahmanical supremacy also find their place in the textbook (Social Science I 2019, 87). In the chapter, Culture and Nationalism which discusses the resistance against British exploitation, peasant revolts and tribal voices are not silenced (Social Science I 2019, 70). There is reference to tribal rebellions by Santhal, Kurichya, Kol, Khasi and Munda. Minorities are not invisibilized in the narrative. Eminent persons are credited not as representing their community but for their deeds. There is no attempt at homogenizing of identities or hyper nationalizing as is present in the Gujarat text.

Another area of interest and comparison with Gujarat is how the identity of an Indian is articulated. Being Indian is not located in an 'Ancient Indian past' but in the present. Furthermore, this identity is not articulated as a singular monolithic one, but by visibly acknowledging the multiple ways of being Indian. In the Kerala textbook therefore, no community is given a special position in a way that the culture of one is the norm while the rest are 'othered'.

Kerala's class ten social science textbook shows that the curriculum has narratives from oppressed groups. Although traditional societal hierarchies persist, the egalitarian Communist ideology does not translate into the re production of these hierarchies in the curriculum. Lower castes, Adivasis and minorities, through the curriculum are not made to feel inferior or underrepresented. This provides the space for challenging upper caste domination in the larger society.

Conclusion

Through my analysis, I have tried to coalesce two alternate methodological approaches at viewing education in India. Using Gujarat and Kerala as examples, my analysis has concluded that the developmental models which are dictated by particular ideologies use the education curriculum to hegemonize the dominance of those groups who are the beneficiaries of their respective states. The Gujarat Model, a Hindutva stronghold for over a decade, caters to the subnational identity; ' Gujarati'. This identity, is vested in a upper caste Brahmin-Bania-Pattidar mercantile rendering of Gujarati. The class ten social science curriculum of Gujarat prioritizes through the emphasis of Ancient India, the knowledge system of this subnational Gujarati identity. This results in a conspicuous circle of social reproduction and the beneficiaries of the neoliberal state being represented in the textbooks. There is no mention of the marginalized community, whose identity is subsumed within the larger monolithic Hindu one or othered.

Kerala, provides an alternate model. Although having achieved high Human Development Indicators and complete literacy, these gains are unequally divided in society and traditional patterns of hierarchy persist. However, there is a different trend than that observed in Gujarat. The curriculum dictated by Communist ideology does not replicate or mirror the inequalities present in the development model. Voices that might be marginalized in the development discourse find their representation in the class ten social science textbooks. It has been observed that within the Communist ideology there is a gap between egalitarian developmentalism and what is actually practiced; that is, the divide between which groups are represented in the curriculum and who actually benefits from the Kerala model.

While in Gujarat, education is seen as a vehicle of indoctrinating a monolithic Hindu identity, in Kerala, it is used as a means of breaking from caste, class, gender and regional binaries.

Rather than pitting nations against one another and exalt India's supremacy, the Communist curriculum tries to maintain a fraternity of nations by locating values of secularism and democracy to global movements of anti-imperialist struggles. In spite of these dissimilarities in the curriculum, there is a common theme between the two models with regards to the marginalization of lower castes and Adivasis. Irrespective of state ideology, traditional societal hierarchies are perpetuated by both states' models. The Kerala model though provides a more promising case than its Gujarat counterpart. Gujarat's curriculum inhibits

the provision of an outlet for marginalized representation. Kerala on the other hand, is more inclusive in the content of its curriculum.

The reason I find this study important in today's India is because each time the BJP has gained power at the Centre its efforts have been to homogenise the Indian state, not only with regards to forming a monolithic Hindu identity but also in implementing a uniform Hindutva policy across the country. This challenges the unitary federal character of India which is backed by the Constitution and actively endangers alternate models of governance, one of which is symbolized by the state of Kerala. The NEP 2020 which I discussed in my Introduction is a reflection of this. It attempts to homogenise Indian education and by extension society along the lines of Gujarat and replicate for the whole of India, the exclusive Gujarat model.

Through this paper, I have viewed education as a site of conflict and struggle. This provides an optimistic way of looking at it not as a scene of control but rather a possible place of renegotiation and challenging hegemonic discourses. As Karunakaran (2016) reminds us,

"Those with sovereignty in a system of oppression can think of that system as stabilizing, but those condemned to the slavery of the system — will view it for what it is — exploitative and destabalizing."

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