

Analytical Study of Rising Political Right Nationalism

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ABSTRACT

The article reviews the rising global nationalism during and after the COVID-19 pandemic and its implications globally in general and India in particular. Assess both positives and negatives impact of right-wing political nationalism on the future of the nation. The research methodology adopted is comprehensive secondary literature reviews that include newspapers, articles, journals, and other relevant data sources. There is global acceptance towards the political right, with a decline of left popularity and increasing political aggression, populism, and the divide based on ethnicity, religion, or the other cultural traits that made the issue focus of several political analysts around the world. With India's announcement of make in India (Atmanirbhar Bharat) Researcher here tries to analyze the extent of nationalism through various pieces of literature available on the increasing nationalism and also assess the multidimensional impact on areas like economy, society, international relations, etc.

KEYWORDS - Nationalism, Right-wing, COVID-19, populism, religion, Make in India.

Introduction:

Recently the United Nations meeting takes place on the issue of climate change that made some researchers tried to correlate the effects of climate change fuels the rising nationalism, particularly right-wing. The fellahin community of Egypt is very conservative regarding strict gender roles and norms. Similarly, In India, there are diverse cultures coexist but pandemic disturbs the peaceful existence results in conservatives tend to feel threatened regarding their culture and thus adopt tighter and more strict norms and rules for conservation, Here the most right-wing political parties cash it in through injecting nationalism among the subjects (citizens) through the imaginary political narrative of urgency to save the culture before it goes extinct (Keti 2014).

Although if balanced the positive side nationalism can create common standards and feelings of the people towards their nation and seeks continuous progress and development, but in multicultural societies like India this creates more problems than giving the solutions. However, the most recent studies regarding cultural conservatism show the most obscure side of cultural nationalism. In some cases, it is also evident that rising right nationalism can significantly increase the intolerance towards minorities and people of another gender (Theconversation 2019).

Started in 2010, all the democracy in the world have moved in the direction of the right-wing ideology, choosing representatives that support and pushed for globalization and international collaboration (Annalisa 2019). Therefore, the element of unemployment and poor market performance doesn't affect the popularity of the global right-wing. Foundations of Right-Wing popularity in Central and Eastern Europe was because of the social battle between right and left-liberals. This cultural war Imbalance and complemented with the liberal political elite sections and living among the society doesn't adequately democratize on the part of left leaders, therefore voters turned to conservative right parties (Meraj 2020). On the contrary, the global right-wing based their campaigning on the emotional feeling towards the nation and imaginary superiority through comparison with the neighboring counties.

Background of Right-Wing Nationalism in India:

National Emergency that saw a large number of protests from the right lobby Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) leads an underground development. The event prompted the initiation of Hindutva legislative issues in India and the approval of the traditional gathering of RSS. The assembly had to initiate a strict boycott against the emergency¹.

¹ Andersen, W., & Damle, S. (2018). *The RSS: A view to the inside*. Penguin Random House India Private Limited.

Even though the 'Bharatiya Jana Sangh' the political part of the RSS and the now the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP), used the minor political gains following the National Emergency, it couldn't consolidate its political presence until 1990 when the noteworthy Rath Yatra of L.K. Advani from the Somnath Temple in Gujarat pushed a generally invisible and new party (BJP) to the display and strong alternative to the left-wing within the country².

Recently after the abolition of article 370 from Jammu and Kashmir, the European parliament members visited Kashmir to display the solidarity among the global right. Developing ties between the right-wing in India and Europe, associated with the common aggression toward outsider immigrants and Muslims, and a Similar vision of nationalism brings them closer (EVIANE 2020).

Methodology:

The research methodology adopted is comprehensive secondary literature reviews including newspapers, articles, journals, and other relevant data sources. Apart from this researchers take some qualitative interviews on the topic from the experts in the field like political scientists and political analysts. And value addition has been done through Qualitative literature reviews extracted from Google scholars, shodhganga, and other relevant literature like government reports, magazines, and human rights data.

Objectives of the Study:

The researcher divides the study into three main parts:-

1. To analyze the rising role of the right nationalism in India after the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. To describe the positives and negatives aspect of nationalism globally in general and in Indian context in Particular.
3. Suggests the way forward and future implications of right wing nationalism ideology to balance the aggression and peaceful coexistence among the diversity.

Discussion and Analysis:

i. Right Wing Nationalism After Covid-19

Whenever it comes to dealing with any pandemic the collective population gives priority to the ideological base in the society to shield against the uncertain happenings (Shen 2020). The same is the case with India when the COVID-19 pandemic bumped into India through international travels there is strong discontent showcased by Indian media that reflects into public choice³.

² Sharma, J. (2007). *Secularism and Ayodhya politics in India*. Deep and Deep Publications.

³ Boyne, G. A. (1998). *Public choice theory and local government*. Macmillan, Basingstoke.

Surprisingly Media even went to the extent that it targets some specific religious group as solely responsible for increasing cases of corona and named it ‘Corona Jihad’ and on the other hand majority of them focus their attention on celebrity suicide case and convert it into popular public opinion of majority under the purview of the nationalism (Jayshree 2020).

Subsequently, the public hate and media attention shifts towards the particular religious group and thus fits everyone under the same size in terms of judgment. Furthermore, nationalism during the COVID-19 pandemic results in the marginalization of a specific section of society which in turn even demanded the proof for patriotism for peaceful co-existence⁴.

Therefore the pseudo- Nationalism spread more quickly and efficiently than the news itself which becomes the bone of contention for India’s economic growth which can otherwise utilize the diversity as its strength.

However along with the feeling of discontent and hate towards a specific group of society the nationalism proves strong on the dimension known as deglobalization which allows the collective population to show boycott tendencies towards a certain group of people, items, or the country in this case China (Florian 2020).

Further disputes between the neighboring countries sparked with the call of strong nationalism from both the sides of the border and thus result in increasing conflict and loss of land and lives on the part of soldiers, as long term loss diplomatic ties have been weakened which displays India’s version of nationalism in the negative spotlight (Mihir 2020). Even the nationalist German government in their official statement said that corona is more of a national security issue than a public health issue. Therefore, globally in face of nationalism, we not only witness the separation and isolation of the nations but also the class and religious divide.

Moreover, nationalism which can be utilized more productively for the purpose of showcasing unity in diversity, and positive nationalism which focuses on the feeling of oneness; love, and pride towards the country by its residents expand the scope and achieve the bigger goal together⁵.

ii. Pros and Cons of Right Wing Nationalism for India.

With the increase of the right nationalism in India, people and political analysts witnessed two sides of the phenomenon, first deals with the negative display of nationalism which comes under the domain of polarization and another one is having a slightly positive side of the story if implemented in a phased manner.

⁴ Mukherjee, S. (2020). Disparities, desperation, and divisiveness: Coping with COVID-19 in India. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, 12(6), 582.

⁵ Kaul, V. K. (2015). India’s Diversity and Globalization: Unifying Forces and Innovation. *Emerging Economy Studies*, 1(2), 131-162.

On the negative side of the nationalism situation, Firstly there are political as well as religious polarization of different groups in India in the shadow of aggressiveness among different groups where Right-wing successfully polarized the majority group and left-liberals deny the backward caste and religious-based groups are not able to successfully polarized the population in the secular country⁶.

Secondly, the economic crisis in terms of GDP which is worst in all these years has been further dropped to minus 23 percent goes unquestioned due to overemphasis on nationalism, that degrade the questioning ability of the population which further aggravates the democratic spirit of the Indian nation⁷. Due to lockdown and people subscribe in surplus to all these news platforms thus most media houses cashed in the concept of nationalism and provide rather providing thought-provoking news segments mainstream media serves people what and whom to judge that conversely destroy the analytical ability.

Fourthly disputes between the neighboring countries sparked with the call of strong nationalism from both sides of the border and thus results in increasing conflict and loss of land and lives on the part of soldiers, as long term loss diplomatic ties have been weakened which displays India's version of nationalism in a negative spotlight.

In terms of the positive side of present nationalism, our expert is of the diverse opinion the first most important and common element of nationalism is the projection of Unity in diversity amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and thus with the common fear for the virus, everybody seems to be on the same stage regardless of their caste, class, religious affiliation, etc.

Secondly, nationalism particularly the right-wing nationalism has been proved successful in uniting the scattered sections among Hindus who are already divided by caste politics and stratification systems (Seth 2017).

Lastly, the economic nationalism in form of Atmanirbhar Bharat (self-sufficient India) is the most positive extraction from the current nationalist regime of the NDA government. This provides concrete hope for India to be a world leader soon (Udit 2020).

iii. Future of Indian Right Nationalism Project.

With the enactment of article 370, the bifurcation of Jammu and Kashmir into two union territories and months after the Indian parliament passed the long-delayed and controversial citizenship amendment act. These two instances show the strong decision of the government in the nation having diverse opinions and stands (Tillin 2020).

⁶ Vanaik, A. (1997). *The furies of Indian communalism: Religion, modernity, and secularization*. Verso.

⁷ Singh, M. K., & Neog, Y. (2020). Contagion effect of COVID-19 outbreak: Another recipe for disaster on Indian economy. *Journal of Public Affairs*, e2171.

However (YOGENDRA 2020), in his article considered the new nationalism as a modern-day freedom struggle reason being the transition of Hindu opinions from being secular to support the Hindu Rashtra of their dreams and the author further continuous that the present situation of secularism in India is good as dead. Opposing this viewpoint some political analysts consider the new nationalism as the end of the old policy of minority appeasement and thus talks about equality of treatment and equal privileges to all the citizens of India regardless of their caste or religion.

Recently on International yoga day, the true secularism and positive nationalism displayed in form of minority communities like Muslims, Christians, and Jains joined the united by yoga campaign and campaign headline contains- yoga unites humanity and therefore the progressive sections of Muslims joined the event and thus came forward as the ambassador of real secular India (Mahesh 2017).

When Prime Minister Narendra Modi was chosen in 2014 to lead India with the promise of economic prosperity, end corruption and protect India's territorial boundaries strictly. The nationalism also came as a parcel of his charismatic personality. But later at ground level the only policy BJP successfully functioned is us vs. them (Ashirwad 2020).

The greater religious divide can be witnessed, even though the caste distinction is somewhat similar but the government is successful in bringing all under one umbrella through positive polarization but it cost greater religious divide (Gettleman et al . 2019).

In July 2017, the Hindustan Times, one of India's Reputed and top English-newspaper, launched the Hate Tracker campaign, showcased as India's first information base for demonstrations of brutality dependent on religion, standing, or different markers. In a quarter of a year, the mission closed without clarification (Niha 2017). The case itself showcases the seriousness of the limitations on freedom of expression under the shadow of nationalism.

Conclusion:

Therefore, to assure proper transparency and accountability in a democratic way to deal with the authoritative nationalism post-COVID-19 India needs to separate the important institution from the government control and made them independent thus powerful that raise the voice for the marginalized and deprived. As Marx said many years ago that religion is opium for the masses in similar light we can say that nationalism is the new global religion if you raise the question against any of them it will invite consequences in the democratic society. If we want to gain from history anything, at this point is that hyper-nationalism is not a feasible answer for mankind. Globally, we as a young generation need to develop bridges and not walls. We have to grasp the genuine significance of charity and welfare in wake of such pandemics for future preparedness.

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