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On The Coast Of French Indian Territory: Rememorating The Development Of Sociology In Puducherry

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Abstract: *Against the backdrop of one hundred and five years of the history of Indian Sociology - constituted largely of the British Indian territory, this article endeavours to draw attention to the largely less known share of South East India by documenting the dawn and development of sociology in the French Indian territory, premised on the documentary and field based evidences from Puducherry, Karaikal, Yanam and Mahe, While Presenting the colonial, post-colonial and contemporary phases in the diffusion of Sociology curriculum and teaching in arts, paramedical and professional courses and the distinctive sociological research contributions, it articulates the emergence of a unique Indian sociological perspective as well as the birth of a new specialization 'Sociology of Water' in celebrating "Puducherry model of Indian Sociology".*

Keywords: Pondicherry/Puducherry, History of Indian Sociology, Indian Sociological perspective of Sri Aurobindo, French Indian territory, Sociology of Water.

Background:

I evinced interest in chronicling the advent of sociology besides the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian sea in the Union Territory of Puducherry not just because its unique political history¹ of being the

French Indian territory (Antony, F.C, 1982) that crafted the genesis of a distinct 'Indian Sociological Perspective', but also this tiny geographical Indian territory (492 sq. km) comprising Tamil belt of Puducherry and Karaikal districts bordering Tamil Nadu, and the Telugu speaking Yanam district surrounded by Andhra Pradesh beside the Bay of Bengal, as well as the Malayalam cummerbund - Mahe district surrounded by Kerala on the shores of the Arabian Sea are experience peculiar challenges in the development of sociology in this region . In this backdrop, I endeavour to recounting the trajectory of colonial, post-colonial and contemporary phase of the development of sociology both as a discipline and its specializations aiding the promotion of various professions as well as its research contribution, especially the genesis of a new specialization of 'Sociology of Water' invigorating the distinctive 'Puducherry Model of Indian sociology'.

The French Colonial Legacy

In contrast to the large proportion of India colonized by the British that experienced freedom struggles for Independence from the colonial rule, Puducherry had largely remained as the French colony since 1816 with amicable coexistence of the French and Tamil/Telugu/Malayalam communities, culture and people (Anthony, F.C, 1982). Retrospectively, whereas colonization of Puducherry commenced with the arrival of Portuguese in 1497, with the arrival of Bellanger in 1673 the French colonial regime was established by the French East India Company in 1674. Under the governorship of Francois Martin, the tiny fishing village originally called 'Podouke' was transformed into a planned port town and was named as 'Puducherry' by the French colonial administration (Chakrabarty et al., 2018). While Dutch conquered in 1693, as Pondichéry was returned to French in 1699, the French governors viz Lenoir, Dumas and Dupleix constructed and expanded Puducherry town from 1726 to 1754. Although during the second half of 18th century and till the first decade of the 19th century Pondicherry was a source of war between French and the British East-India Companies, the stable French colonial regime from 1816 in Puducherry not only facilitated the

enunciation of French institutions such as syndical agriculture, case communes as well as French schools both for boys and girls (Philip, A, 2014) but also evolved a unique amalgamation of French with Tamil culture in Pondicherry and Karaikal, French / Telugu in Yanam and French/Malayalam in Mahe (Rai, A, 2008).

Despite the French superiority that manifested in the spatial segregation of Puducherry into white town versus black town that demarcated cultural, religious and administrative separation between the hegemonic colonizers against the natives (Balachandar, 2018), the French colonizers accorded due respect to the native rights and recognized their usefulness in production, trade and civil works for ensuring French foothold in Puducherry. While the upper caste especially the Brahmin maintained social distance from the *mlecchas* (inferior) French people (Thomas, M, 2002), the backward caste comprising the trading class and nobility evolved socio economic and cultural relationship with the French. For instance, vital ceremonies of the trading caste's households included European dishes and French invitees (Thomas, M, 2002) while the French policy of legitimizing the French men marrying Pondicherrian women resulted in creolization and the birth of Franco-Pondicherrians (Kabir, A.J., 2022). In a similar vein, the French administrators and missionaries also accorded significance to the Indian caste hierarchy by upholding the superiority of right caste over the left caste both in church congregations and administrative services. Indeed, French administrators acknowledged the Hindu observances and rituals even in their administrative routines and accorded dual citizenship (Raffin, A, 2022) to the natives who are known as the Franco-Pondicherrians. Such congruence of French culture, people and institutions with Tamil culture, people and resources culminated in the creation of an amicable and peaceful Indo-French coexistence in Puducherry (Suman, S. 2016). Concomitantly, in contradistinction to the British colonizers encountering anti-colonialism and struggles for freedom over a century, the French Puducherry concurrence persisted not only during colonial regime but beyond liberation from France in 1954 and accession of Puducherry with India in 1963 (Neogy, A. K., 1997).

Nonetheless, as the principles of equality, liberty and justice of French revolution that reconstituted the French society failed to have a bearing on the French colonial rule over the people of Pondicherry (Raffin, A, 2014), the celebration of France as the birthplace of sociology did not seem to have affected the introduction of sociology in the French colonial Puducherry. On the contrary, the constellation of geopolitical and historical uniqueness of the French British hostility in the first half of the 20th century - especially with the arrival of Sri Aurobindo to the French colony in his mission of combating British rule - largely crafted the genesis of sociology in Puducherry. In his pursuit of retracing the relationship between the individual and the society, Sri Aurobindo emphasized the role of sociology along with psychology, philosophy, etc. that not only invited a critique of the occidental sociology but also inaugurated the oriental sociology and more precisely, the Indian Sociological perspective on self, society, and culture (The Human Cycle, The Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo). Such transformative exposition of Indian sociology of Sri Aurobindo was institutionalized in an informal educational setting in Puducherry with the children and youth who migrated from West Bengal who took refuge in the French colony from 1943 consequent to the outbreak of the Second World War (Sri Aurobindo, 1997). This informal institution of education turned into a formal set-up with the establishment of the Sri Aurobindo International University Centre (SAIUC) by the Mother in 1952 (Ashram, 2002) for transacting the curriculum prescribed by Sri Aurobindo including sociology in the Higher Course and in the Specialized Course (SAICE Curriculum) as well. Thus, Sri Aurobindo under the aegis of the French colonial regime inaugurated the institutionalized premise of learning sociology in Puducherry.

The Post-Colonial Phase

With the liberation from French colonial rule in 1954² SAIUC was renamed as Aurobindo International Centre of Education in 1959 (Ashram, 2002), that carried forward the legacy of critically engaging with sociological traditions in the light of sociological

insights from Sri Aurobindo's writings as well as venturing beyond sociology by drawing inspiration from Sri Aurobindo's ideas and perspectives. Subsequent to the merger with British Indian territory in 1963 (Jørgensen, 2023), Puducherry gave birth to the dawn of modern sociology in French schools under the Tamil Nadu state board system of education. Subsequently, modern sociology found a place in the curriculum of diploma program in nursing at Jawaharlal Nehru Institute of Postgraduate Medical Education and Research (JIPMER) since 1974. Similarly, responding to the agitation by the higher secondary students of Calve College school (Majumdar, M, 2017) demanding the inclusion of sociology in higher education institutions³, the Government of Puducherry incorporated sociology as one of the allied courses of the graduate programs in Philosophy, History, and Psychology taught at Tagore Government Arts and Science College (TGAS)⁴, affiliated to University of Madras in 1978. In this scenario, the enactment of the Pondicherry University Act (1985) not only lent credence to the allied course of sociology in TGAS in affiliation to Pondicherry University (PU) till 2012, but also the commencement of B.Sc. Nursing and Bachelor of Physiotherapy (B.P.T) in 1991 at Mother Theresa Postgraduate & Research Institute of Health Sciences⁵ affiliated to PU with teaching of sociology as a course in nursing and physiotherapy programs of paramedical institutes.

Contemporary Phase

Against this incipience, the establishment of a full-fledged independent department of Sociology in 1993⁶ marked the edifice of sociology as a discipline with teaching, research and extension activities in the higher education system of Puducherry. The post graduate program in sociology in the academic year 1993-94 and the PhD program in sociology in the academic year 1994-95 were launched. Nevertheless, the M.Phil. program launched in 1995-1996 was continued till 2011-2012 and M.A. Sustainable Development in collaboration with the Department of Ecology and Environmental Science had its existence from 2006 to

2008, while the PG Diploma in Rural Development was offered from 2009 to 2017.

Whereas Prof. Mangaiyarkarasi as the founding faculty of this department initiated the teaching specialization of Industrial Sociology, the founding head of this department, Prof. Subbiah Gunasekaran led the department from 1993 to 2005 (Dasthagir, K.G, 2019). Indeed, this department witnessed an unprecedented development under nine years of Headship of Prof. B.B. Mohanty during which period the department gained national ascendance with the enrolment of students from across India and abroad for PG and Ph.D. programs. Currently, the stewardship of Prof. Aruna, the department has gained strength in terms of enrolment of students and research scholars from all over India, besides the expansion of various teaching specializations.

At this juncture, it is pertinent to delineate the andragogy of sociology in the University Sociology Department. The students admitted to post graduation in sociology in this department in 1993-94 academic year were offered three specializations viz. Human Resource Development, Sustainable Development, and Social Welfare Administration. The syllabus for this program has been revised and updated from time to time incorporating the contemporary trends in the development of the Discipline and its emerging thrust areas. The PG Syllabus is being revised once in three years i.e. 2009, 2012, 2015, 2017, 2020, and 2023 with the introduction of new courses viz. Sociology of Irrigation, Sociology of Migration, Sociology of Health, Sociology of Culture, Sociology of Globalization, Sociology of Disaster, Sociology of Medicine, Social Networks, and Sociology of Consumption.

The five-year integrated M.A program in Sociology is being operationalized since 2012. The syllabus for the same designed in 2012 was periodically updated in 2015, 2017, 2020 and 2023. This program, besides, synchronizing with the PG courses, offers certain new courses at the pre post graduate level viz. Family and Kinship, Health and Society, Industrial Sociology, Gender and Society and so

on. M.A five-year Integrated Program with semester-specific soft-core courses was launched in 2015 and the final batches under this program will be completing the course in the academic year 2023-24. Whereas the M.A five-year Integrated Program with revised curriculum became operational from the academic year 2020-21. At the same time the curriculum for M.A Program in Sociology effected revision with a cluster of softcore courses and implemented since the academic year 2020-21.

In a span of three decades, the Department has trained a fairly large number of talented post-graduate students drawn from different parts of the country. From its inception, the Department has focused on understanding the complexities of modern social life through the application of advanced sociological theories and methods within an interdisciplinary framework. Besides, the instructional methods used in transacting the curricula pay special attention to developing skills in use of computers not only for data analysis but also as a tool for sourcing information and internet. Further, the students are encouraged to acquire critical reading and data analysis skills through rigorous training.

Moreover, the crafting of the sociology curriculum premised on Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) facilitated inclusion of applied and skill-based courses along with core courses in sociology, both in undergraduate and postgraduate sociology programs since 2017, has not only enabled students to gain rigorous training in sociology but also equipped them to crack competitive exams and enhanced their employability. Thus, the Department of Sociology by inaugurating postgraduate (PG) teaching and doctoral research in sociology, institutionalized the discipline status of sociology in Puducherry. Concurrently, alumni are employed in reputed governmental as well as corporate sector organizations, while some have found lucrative employment abroad. This department under the Headship of Prof. Dasthagir celebrated the Silver Jubilee by organizing the National Symposium on Contemporary Sociology in India: Emerging Trends and Challenges as well as World Water Day (Dasthagir, K. G, 2019)

On the other hand, Considering the need for promoting sociology as a discipline at the first-degree level, the undergraduate department of sociology, affiliated to PU, was established by the Government of Puducherry in the TGAS in 1995 as a non-semester program which was converted into a semester program since 1996. This department is effectively functioning with four faculty – all of them holding doctoral degree in sociology and more than hundred and fifty students.

In this backdrop, with the promulgation of the National Education Policy (NEP, 2020), the PU has launched BA (hons.) in sociology in both the university department and in the TGAS College. The syllabus for the certificate, diploma, degree and degree (Hons.) as per the NEP guidelines is implemented since 2023. Based on the NEP syllabus, the Graduate Programs are offering Sociology with new set of courses including Social Skills for Sustainable Water Management, Data collection skills, Digital Sociology, Sociology of Water, Citizenship and Pluralism in India, Historical Sociology and Social inequalities and Marginalization.

Accordingly, the sociology curriculum transacted in Puducherry cover regional, national and global issues, transformations and developments. The contemporary thrust areas of the curriculum in the light of program outcomes of the NEP as well as sustainable development goals (SDG) include Environment and Society, Sociology of Globalization, Gender and Society, Sociology of Disasters, Health and Society, Sociology of Water, Sociology of Migration, Sociology of Ageing, Economic Sociology, Sociology of Development and Tourism and Society. Similarly, Contemporary issues and Trends are incorporated in the curriculum through the courses on Urban Sociology, Rural Sociology, Agrarian Social Structure, Tribal Society, Sociology of Caste, Sociology of Religion and Sociology of Social Movements.

Contemporary Phase Of Sociology In Professional Education

Concomitant to the genesis of undergraduate and postgraduate departments in the capital city, sociology witnessed further

development with its inclusion in various paramedical and professional courses in the institutions of higher education in Puducherry, Karaikal, and Mahe. As Table 1 depicts, sociology being offered as a course in diploma and undergraduate programs of paramedical institutions viz. nursing and physiotherapy, greatly contributed to not only imparting the use of knowledge of sociology in paramedical practices but also promoting the visibility of sociology in the health sector in Puducherry⁷. Accordingly, under the aegis of the PU as well as Sri Balaji Vidyapeeth Deemed University (SBV)⁸ and Vinayaka Mission's Research Foundation Deemed University (VMRF)⁹ sociology is taught as a one-semester course in the second year of B.Sc. Nursing in 12 colleges, Post Basic B.Sc. Nursing in 7 colleges, D.A.N.M. in 6 colleges, D.G.N.M. in 9 colleges¹⁰ and B.P.T. in 4 colleges¹¹. Such inclusion of sociology in paramedical courses facilitated the diffusion of sociology across Puducherry in educating the paramedical personnel as well as enhancing the employment opportunities of trained sociologists.

Table 1: Teaching Sociology in Paramedical Institutions of Puducherry

No.	Program	Course/Component	Number of Colleges
1	B.Sc. Nursing	General Sociology	12
2	Post Basic B.Sc. Nursing	General Sociology	7
3	Diploma in Auxiliary Nursing and Midwifery	General Sociology	6

4	Diploma in General Nursing and Midwifery (D.G.N.M.)	General Sociology	9
	Total		34

As a corollary, Sociology has largely gained prominence in this region with its incorporation in the curriculum of various professional courses, i.e. education, law, medicine, pharmacy, veterinary science, agriculture and social work in terms of number of institutions and their intake of students to whom sociology is being taught. As it is discernible from Table 2, medical sociology is taught in medicine, sociology of health in pharmacy, rural sociology in and veterinary sciences, sociology of education in graduate and postgraduate programs of education, sociology for social work practice in undergraduate and postgraduate programs of social work, and sociology of law in bachelor's degree in law. Thus, the inclusion of sociology in the curriculum of professional education to a greater extent contributed to the emergence and development of specializations within sociology.

Table 2: Teaching Sociology in Professional Institutions of Puducherry

No.	Program	Course/Component	Number of Colleges
1	M.B.B.S.	Medical Sociology	8
2	Bachelor of Pharmacy (B. Pharm)	Sociology of Health	1
3	B.Sc. (Hons) Agriculture	Rural Sociology	1

4	Bachelor of Veterinary Sciences & Animal Husbandry (B.V. Sc. & AH)	Rural Sociology	1
5	Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.)	Sociology for Education	15
6	4-year Integrated B.Sc. B.Ed.	Sociology for Education	2
7	4-year Integrated B.A. B.Ed.	Sociology for Education	1
8	M.Ed.	Sociology for Education	1
9	Bachelor of Social Work (B.S.W.)	Sociology for Social Work Practice	2
10	Master of Social Work (M.S.W.)	Sociology for Social Work Practice	2
11	5-year Integrated B.A. LL.B.	Sociology of Law	1
	Total		35

Contemporary developments in sociological research

Sociological research was inaugurated by the studies conducted by the faculty as well as research scholars of the department of sociology, Pondicherry University since 1993. The founding faculty of this department - Prof. Mangaiyarkarasi with her doctoral research on sociology of ageing in Puducherry and research projects on urban poverty and women workers, pioneered sociological research in Puducherry (Dasthagir, K. G,2019), while, the founding head of this department, Prof. Subbiah Gunasekaran promoted quantitative research in sociology and significantly contributed to research in social demography and medical sociology. In fact, Prof B.B Mohanty's internationally reputed publications including seminal

volumes involving sociologists across the world enhanced the visibility of Puducherry's contribution to sociological research in National and International arena. At present the department of sociology of Pondicherry University is endowed with four professors, one Associate Professor and two assistant professors (Hierarchy of faculty of the Dept. Sociology). Each faculty enriches academic output of the dept. by contributing to distinct areas of specializations. In so far as development of research specializations and academic progress in this UT can be deciphered through the contributions made by the faculty, I would like to provide briefly – the research contribution of the teachers of the department. Whereas Prof. B. B. Mohanty is an internationally renowned expert in Sociology of Agriculture and Economic Sociology, Prof. Dasthagir pursues research in Sociology of Water, Rural Development Sociology and Dalit and Religious Minority's' studies. In contrast, while Prof. C. Aruna is interested in Social Network Analysis, Social Capital and Social Gerontology, Prof. Pradeep Kumar Parida is an expert in Sociology of Disasters. Similarly, Dr. Vishal Gulabrao Jadhav focusses on Historical sociology, Political Sociology, Sociology of Knowledge, Sociology of Sports, Governance and Development studies, Dr. Mansy M on Sociology of Health, Migration Studies, whereas Dr. Imtirenla Longkumer on Sociology of Culture and Sociology of Religion. On the other hand, while Prof. B.B. Mohanty, Prof. Pradeep Kumar Parida and Dr. Vishal Gulabrao Jadhav specialize in Sociology of Development, Prof. Dasthagir, Prof. Aruna and Dr. Imtirenla Longkumer in Sociology of Gender.

Thus, the faculty of the department have dedicated their services by conducting national and international seminars, workshops, conferences, research projects and are consistently bringing out publications resulting in the promotion of various conventional and contemporary specializations in sociology such as sociology of water, sociology of disasters, sociology of consumption etc. In consonance with such development of research specializations, the PhD program in sociology launched in 1994-95 has been instrumental in producing doctoral thesis not only reflecting the specializations of

faculty of this department but also capturing the contemporary policy, theoretical and methodological advancements in sociology. The research areas undertaken by students, research scholars and faculty cover wide range of issues of public concern like the effects of economic development on society and culture, problems of weaker sections, sociology of aging and gender, natural resources and disaster management, migration, media, health and society, social movements, etc. Currently, under the stewardship of Dr. Aruna Prof and head the department has gained strength in terms of enrolment of research scholars from various states across India, besides the expansion of various academic specializations. I would like to present an overview of the development of distinct specializations of PU Sociology Department in a chronological order to show case the distinctive contribution of 'Puducherry Model of Indian Sociology'.

Sociology of Social Capital and Social Networks: In consonance with the evolution of the discourse on social capital by Lyda Judson Hanifan, Pierre Bourdieu, James Coleman and Robert Putnam, the founder head of the dept. embarked upon launching a new specialization on Sociology of Social Network by recruiting a fulltime faculty Dr. C Aruna for PU department in 2000. The field-based work on disaster management of communities affected by Tsunami in 2004-2005 in Pondicherry, indeed, accentuated the social and policy relevance of social capital discourse and research not only around the university but also across South India. The National Seminar on "The concept of Social Capital and its relevance for Theory, Research and Policy" organized in March 10-11, 2005 not only projected the potential of sociological discourse on social capital and networks, but also by enlisting the participation the French institute of Pondicherry, M.S. Swaminathan Foundation, Vector Control Research Centre and several Universities across the country on the themes of Health, agriculture rural development etc., reiterated the centrality of the PU Department of Sociology in promoting Sociology of Social Capital in India. Further, several Doctoral research with the focus on social capital and networks have been produced in the areas of child labour, disability studies, school education, disaster preparedness, social

gerontology and so on under the guidance of Prof C Aruna. Moreover, premised on the knowledge generated through empirical studies, a course on Sociology of Social Capital is being offered at post graduate level which is being chosen by students from various disciplines such as Anthropology, South Asian Studies, Political Science, Psychology etc. and Sociology alike as part of their PG degree from PU. In addition, research projects on social network of rural elderly women, implications of health and well-being, parental involvement & peer group support for Academic performance and migrant women in unorganized sectors funded by ICSSR, Azim Premji University and NCW, respectively enabled the department to work closely in the local communities to understand the relevance of social capital. Currently several faculty and students of PU pursue research on social capital.

Sociology of Agriculture: Research in this area focuses on the social consequences of agrarian transformation during colonial, postcolonial, and neo-liberal periods. It documents the development experiences of different rural-agrarian communities and their responses in the context of ongoing significant changes in rural economy. Combining national with regional experiences and economic with non-economic aspects, the objective is to provide an inclusive account of a wide range of issues afflicting rural economy and society. Research in this area intend to identify the new dynamics in agrarian political economy and present a comprehensive account of diverse aspects of capitalist transition both at theoretical and empirical levels.

Sociology of Disaster: One of the emerging vibrant areas in social science research that deals with the development of knowledge on societal response to hazards as well as sheds light on the risks people encounter and the reasons for their susceptibility to hazards and disasters is sociology of disaster. Examining how disasters can be perceived within the larger designs of society and how such investigations aid in the formulation of policies that can reduce disaster consequences and mitigate hazards, this specialization articulates why disasters should not be separated from routine living and exhibits how the risks involved in disaster must relate to the

vulnerability created by many people through their everyday existence

Genesis of sociology of water: In the hundred years of history of Sociology in India, it invariably failed to advance discourse on sociological aspects of water. Indian sociology celebrates the birth of the new sub-discipline of sociology viz. ‘Sociology of Water in India’ in Puducherry. Sociology of Water endeavours to examine the relationship between water and society both as a historical phenomenon and a contemporary challenge as well as an opportunity for the future. It enquires into how water mirrors society across space and time with key focus on how caste, class, gender (Dasthagir, K. G., 2016) and power dynamics, rural-urban and industry-agriculture contestations, interregional and transnational development cooperation, disputes, conflicts, and wars affect water governance. In this backdrop, Sociological discourse articulates how water forms the social premise in shaping and reshaping society, how neo-liberalism, nation-states and local communities craft water institutions, how competing demand for water for drinking, domestic use, irrigation, industry, cities and development spawn issues, inequalities and transition in contemporary society. Concurrently, it serves as reengineering to craft sociological acumen for designing, implementing and evaluating policy, plans and programs for the sustainable management, conservation and development of water resources. Dr. K Gulam Dasthagir, Prof of this department was instrumental in pioneering this specialization through his research projects funded by UGC and ICSSR resulting in publications on water in Indian Journal of Gender Studies (Dasthagir, K. G, 2021), South Asia Research (Dasthagir, K. G, 2024), International Journal of Water Resource Development (Dasthagir, K. G, 2024) etc., besides Doctoral research work on sociology of Irrigation in Sri Lanka and South India as well as Urban Water Governance in South-India and North-India. A course on Sociology of Irrigation, for the first time in India, was launched in 2017 and with the arrival of NEP, Social skills for water management for BA (Hons) and Sociology of Water for Post Graduate program in sociology are being offered by

this department, these courses provide a coverage of contemporary thrust areas including gender and irrigation, participatory water management, water governance, hydraulic bureaucracy, and the interface of water dynamics with social stratification and change. Consolidating the work produced by Post Graduate students under the guidance of Prof Dasthagir a book entitled Water and Society in South India: Case studies on caste, gender and power dynamics in sustainable development is published in 2024 (Dasthagir K.G et al, 2024). This chapter is an earnest invitation to the faculty, researchers, scholars and students of sociology to pursue research on or related to Sociology of Water in India.

Contemporaneously, the Department of Social Sciences founded in 1988 by the French Institute of Puducherry¹² has been instrumental in engendering doctoral research projects and publications with sociological insights in addition to the conduct of workshops and seminars, especially contextualizing society, economy, and culture of Puducherry. Recently, some private schools with CBSE curriculum teaching sociology at the senior secondary level have joined this endeavour.

The Path Ahead

The development of sociology in Puducherry is not phenomenal due to factors like the relatively late beginning of teaching sociology in colleges and schools as well as the establishment of a department for post graduate teaching and research just three decades ago. Further, there has been less focus on research compounded by the fact that there has been limited sociological research around the social, cultural, economic, and political milieu of this region. Evidently, there has been a dearth of dedicated sociological research institutes manifesting the centre-periphery dialectics wherein apart from the capital city, there is a conspicuous absence of sociology departments in the Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam regions. On the other hand, inadequate faculty in terms of numerical strength in the departments of sociology not only impedes their eligibility for availing Special Assistance Program, but also considerably limits the advancement of sociology in this Union

Territory. Curiously, language barrier emanating from Tamil as the alien language encountered by the faculty, research scholars and students stationed in Puducherry from several non-Tamil states of India pose challenges in pitching their research in the context of Puducherry.

Above all, a vast majority of schools in Puducherry of state and central board as well have conspicuously excluded sociology in their primary, secondary and higher secondary level of education, especially because the private schools have not found sociology to be lucrative enough against the demands of job market, that to a large extent forfeited the opportunity of inculcating sociological perspectives in the young minds, while constraining the employment avenues of sociology graduates in Puducherry.

This panoramic sketch of the historicity of sociology along the east and west coast of the French Indian territory of Puducherry showcases the presence and the potential of sociology in several professional, paramedical and arts degree programs that reaffirms the primacy of 'sociology for all', while the underdevelopment of sociology in Puducherry is plausibly perpetuated by its horizontal expansion of inclusion at the first-degree level across curricula, rather than emphasizing on its advancement along linear levels in terms of inclusion at postgraduate teaching and doctoral research across institutions. Therefore, the prospects of sociology would entail the creation of Postgraduate and research departments of sociology and teaching sociology in schools in periphery viz. Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam, as well as extending beyond the diffusion of teaching sociology into expanding the horizon of sociological knowledge with empirical and theoretical inputs generated from the research on society, culture, and economy of Puducherry.

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Notes:

1. <https://puducherry-dt.gov.in/history/>
2. <https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateraldocuments.htm?dtl/5302/Treaty+establishing+De+Jure+Cession+of+French+Establishments+in+India>
3. Interview with Dr Martin Silvaraj, former Head of the Department, Tagore Government Arts and Science College, Puducherry.
4. <https://tac.py.gov.in/>
5. <https://mtihs.py.gov.in/about-us>
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7. <https://www.pondiuni.edu.in/syllabus/>
8. https://www.ugc.ac.in/deemed_uniinfo.aspx?id=120
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12. <https://www.ifpindia.org/research/social-sciences/>

Hierarchy of Faculty of the Department Sociology, PU

- Professor B.B. Mohanty
- Professor K. Gulam Dasthagir
- Professor C. Aruna
- Professor Pradeep Kumar Parida.
- Dr Vishal Gulabrao Jadhav
- Dr Mansy M
- Dr Imtirenla Longkume

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Exploring New Dimensions in Indian Sociology: Social Construction of Identity Formation of Gender Non – Conformers (with reference to Delhi)

#Poornima Jain & Tarun Joshi

Abstract: *The world has been undergoing changes, as a part of the globe, sociology is immensely affected by the challenges of time. In August Comte's terms, sociology has been evolving with the advancement of the human brain. Sociology has been shaped by the development of society. Development of sociology as a discipline is also strengthened by research, development of curricula, seminars, symposiums etc. simultaneously, to promote research on specific themes, various public and private agencies start granting funds. For instance, as the professions developed, sociology of profession emerged, similarly when Transgenders got legal and Constitutional status, people's attention was drawn to research on TGPs.*

The TGPs remain suppressed, marginalized, and excluded from the larger society and suffer from atrocities, violence, stigma, shame, and separation due to restrictions on access to various opportunities which are available to others. They are usually scared of revealing their identity due to non-acceptance by significant others, hence, their identity formation becomes a challenge.