Title: How the health of contemporary hunter-gatherers is a victim of ‘civic-colonial’ policies and politics?

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Abstract

Hunting-gathering is considered the oldest mode of subsistence strategy. It combines hunting animals, fishing and foraging for wild foods and nutrients and mobility as a sustenance mechanism. During colonial times, there can be seen a trend of undermining hunter-gatherer's identity, culture, belief, worldview, practices by implementing various policies e.g. capitalisation of nature as a natural resource, displacement led development, etc. It has not only marginalised the hunter-gatherer community socially, culturally, economically and politically but also affected their health adversely. It has been observed worldwide that the post-colonial government has not only renewed colonial marginalisation politics and policies but also legalised it in the name of development, service, national obligation, legislation, institution, nationalism, civic responsibility, citizenship, and morality. This act of local government has been described as civic-colonisation. The civic-colonial policies and politics have used the western capitalist framework, technology-led development in the livestock area, politics of nomenclature etc. as a roadmap for the politics of reconciliation. These policies and politics have categorised the hunter-gatherer as an ethnic minority and cost their land, culture, health and identity. In this article, I have discussed what is civic-colonisation? and how civic-colonial policies are linked to health problems of the present-day hunter-gatherer's community?

Keywords: health, civic-colonisation, hunter-gatherers, marginalisation, development

Introduction

In colonial times, hunter-gatherers were seen as a social fossil for the reconstruction of past socio-cultural history. With the end of colonialism, the local government (around the globe) in power have implemented various welfare and developmental programmes and policies to integrate hunter-gatherers' communities with the national developmental goals. Though this approach was exemplary towards the better understanding of the hunter-gatherers' culture and society in comparison to colonial smears and isoelastic policies motivated by economic and social pursuits. But the nation-states integration model somehow waned the complexities of the issues and fall flat to see the larger outcome of the policies on the front of identity, culture, belief, health and human-nature associations.

Over time, there can be seen a change in the approach towards policy-making with a trend of bottom-up-approach and motif of involving the perspectives from the community in the policy draft. But this supplementary approach of policy making still has disseminated unbridged trenches of colonial legacies viz. treating nature as natural recourses and control over spaces and species. For example, the hunter-gatherers used to cater for all kind of needs through the sustainable exploitation of nature but with the creation of an additional space out of the nature called "forest" - as a nation-state property, the colonial government had fenced the autonomy of hunter-gatherer within confined geography. For reference, in India, the additional space as "forest" was introduced by the colonial government in a memorandum issued in 1855 [Click or tap here to enter text.](#) (Suresh, 2020).

The hunter-gatherers of the post-colonial era are still bound to follow the colonial demarcation and regulations over the additional space of “forest” like regulation over hunting and gathering of species, controlled movement within forest spaces, forced settlement to certain geography of the forest etc. These policies engendered umpteen number of issues within the hunter-gatherer community like conflict over natural resources, various kinds of health issue, identity crisis, the disappearance of traditional knowledge, onto-epistemic confusion in life philosophy, distress in the livelihood pattern and living condition, the problem of negotiation with the environment, proximity with animals, and displacement of beliefs, logic and worldviews. The above-mentioned nation-states governing policy in post-colonial times underpinning the colonial bequest of supervising and civilizing hunter-gatherer as a subject can be comprehended as ‘civic-colonisation’¹. It has both the elements of the colonial rationale and Jean-Paul Sartre’s neo-colonial component of economic-cultural imperialism (Sartre, 2001) (Nkrumah & Nkrumah, 1965). Besides forcing present-day hunter-gatherer to abandon their subsistence model, which was based on mobility and includes hunting animals, fishing and foraging for wild foods and nutrients, the prevailing developmental policies make them choose sedentarism, agriculture or agricultural labour, and daily wage as an alternative subsistence model. The epidemiological studies have suggested the adverse effect of transition (in subsistence and settlement pattern) on the health of the population (Orman, 1971) (Armelagos, Brown, & Turner, 2005). The numerous reports and pieces of evidence have suggested that despite the pronounced diversity of indigenous community worldwide there exist a considerable amount of resemblance in their health conditions and illnesses and in addition to that it also shows the systematically widening of the health disparities between the majority

¹ The term *civic-colonisation* is introduced by the author and has been discussed (in detail) in subsequent sections.

population and the hunter-gatherer population of the country (Silburn, Reich, & Anderson, 2016).

To explore the link between the abject health condition of the present-day hunter-gatherer community and civic-colonial policies and politics, I have divided the article into five sections. Firstly, I have discussed the structure, nature and components of civic-colonisation. The second sections talk about the status of the hunter-gatherer community in pre-colonial, colonial and civic-colonial times. In section three and four, the dimensions of civic-colonial policies and politics like- politics of nomenclature, the idea of citizenship etc. have been analysed to unravel the complex relationship of civic-colonization and indigeneity debate. Whereas In the fifth section, I have contextualized the prime argument of the article by decrypting the link between civic-colonisation and the health problems of present-day hunter-gatherers. While doing that I have discussed that what health means to the hunter-gatherer community and how the health problem is more critical among the hunter-gather population where civic-colonial politics of capitalisation of nature, displacement-based development, social categorization of hunter-gatherers as ethnic minority etc. are implemented effectively on the name of civic responsibilities, citizenship, millennium developmental goals, national obligation, service, and developed and underdeveloped binaries. In this section, I have also discussed that how the loss of land and other natural resources have dismantled centuries-old traditional culture, knowledge, and institutions of hunter-gatherer population which ultimately resulted in the physical, mental, social, and emotional health problem. In the final section, I concluded this article by highlighting the observation that simple medical intervention is insufficient to bridge the health gap between the hunter-gatherer population and the benchmark population. I have also highlighted the importance of indigenous knowledge to maintain good health, illuminated key areas where immediate actions are required, and urged for an alternative developmental model, which is more inclusive and based on indigenous framework unlike the civic-colonial

western capitalist framework that works in the direction of eliminating or replacing the indigenous knowledge, culture, worldviews and beliefs instead of promoting co-existence. The argument proposed in the article is based on a systematic literature review and reports. We hope that this article will be able to generate a debate in academia and will also be able to simulate an awareness among the policymakers.

What is Civic-colonialism?

Colonialism has been understood as the practice of domination, which involves the act of subjugation of one group of people by another. Scholars have discussed various levels like territory, culture, language, politics, mental and epistemic, economy, and socio-biology at which colonisation can be experienced (Murrey, 2019). With time, colonialism has mutated into neo-colonial means of indirect domination and control using concepts like the transitional corporation and financial aids. From the evolutionary context, the act of colonialism seems to be started with the history of homo-sapiens domination. Whereas, historical studies have shown that world history is full of examples of the powerful group subjugating the adjacent weaker social group. Both the evolutionary and historical descriptions oppose the idea of colonialism as a modern phenomenon (Kohn, Kavita Reddy, & Margaret, 2017). But at the same time, it is also important to consider that the above-mentioned act was more like territorial conquest because of annexation, unlike colonization in which a country controls the political and economic decisions of another country. But in a post-colonial context, literature seems silent to define the act of domination of a group, who are having distinct subsistence strategy, historical association with geographical spaces and are an inhabitant of the land since the pre-colonial times, by the local government in power on the name of progress, service, national obligation, developmental goals, legislation, institution, nationalism, civic responsibility, and

morality. The above-mentioned act of subjugation of a group, who is socio-economically distinct, culturally different, and politically autonomous, by the local government in power can be described as the civic-colonization. The subjugation of indigenous or nomadic people by the locally elected government are good examples of the civic-colonization.

In civic-colonization, the domestic government in power fosters an incipient relationship of dependence and subservience unlike servitude but rather through the doctrine of national obligation. This phenomena is not customary to a specific country or region but are in practice throughout the globe. It has been documented in the case studies of Australian Aborigines, New Zealand's Maori, Canadian First Nations, African Bushman, Indian Tribes and American Indigenous people (Béteille, 1998) (Ring & Brown, 2003) (Willis, Jackson, Nettleton, Good, & Mugarura, 2006) (Kunitz, 1996) (Stephens, Porter, Nettleton, & Willis, 2006) (King, Smith, & Gracey, 2009) (Gracey & King, 2009). For example, In India, National Housing Schemes enforced the nomadic and hunter-gatherer tribes to change their settlement pattern and opt to live in the permanent colony within the confined geography. The other example can be the prohibition of hunting-gathering of species which left hunter-gatherers with no choice but to clutch schemes like Public Distribution Systems (PDS) as obligatory and shift their food habits. These schemes led enforce transition and displacement has eventually resulted in (a) destruction of the knowledge system, worldviews, life-philosophy, native beliefs and logic; (b) health problems; (c) altered relationship with environment and proximity with animals; (d) identity crisis; and (e) inter-generational conflicts.

Before delving deep into the consequences of civic-colonisation it is important to contextualize and analyse the practice of civic-colonization first. In the post-colonial context, there can be seen a wave of politics of assimilation and reconciliation towards the indigenous/hunter-gatherers group. This wave of politics involves the institutional accommodation of hunter-gatherers by recognising them as ethnic minority citizen of a nation-

state. Underlying this politics of assimilation and reconciliation there exist two problems. (a) it is always loaded with the idea of either ethnocentrism or xenocentrism that ultimately upraise the social problems created by cultural lags, and (b) it is guided by the logics of western capitalist approach and structured by its attendant hierarchies that oppose the hunter-gatherer's historic practice of being politically autonomous and economically independent. Audra Simpson (2014) in her book *Mohawk Interruptus: A Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States* has discussed in details that how the politics of reconciliation arises the struggle for self-government and the chaotic problem of refusal (Simpson A. , 2014). The scholar like Taiaiake Alfred (2005) in his book *Wasáse: Indigenous Pathways to Action and Freedom* states has discussed that how the capitalist approach made the western liberal framework fail to integrate indigenous and nomadic hunter-gatherer community with so-called mainstream society (Taiaiake, 2005). Whereas, Leanne Simpson (2011) in *Dancing on Our Turtle's Back: Stories of Nishnaabeg Re-Creation, Resurgence and a New Emergence* has argued for the bottom-up approach, which includes the reestablishment of pre-colonial history and customs and reintroduction of the tradition of governance, for reconciliation (Simpson L. , 2011).

On the other hand, scholars like Frantz Fanon and Glen Coulthard have challenged the politics of reconciliation (Coulthard, 2014) (Fanon, 1952). Coulthard took the reference of the Canadian Indigenous population to describe that how the current politics of reconciliation 'tend to dehistoricize and neutralize acts of dispossession, violence, and displacement of Indigenous peoples from their lands and cultures' (Coulthard, 2014) (Kohn, Kavita Reddy, & Margaret, 2017). These practices are not limited to the indigenous population of Canada. It can be seen worldwide in Africa, Asia, New Zealand, Australia, and North and South America. For example, In the context of Indian tribes, the local government promotes indirect dependency and limit the practice of political autonomy by imposing the forceful settlement, dispositioning hunter-gatherer group from the traditional land, implementing forest and other regulations and

devising aids and schemes e.g. housing-scheme, PDSs, financial aids etc. These acts are the features of the ongoing process of colonisation, which has been defined as civic-colonization i.e. a type of colonization facilitated by the local government in power.

In nutshell, the civic-colonization can be encapsulated as a form of subjugation of a socio-cultural group or sub-group, who have a distinct subsistence strategy, historical association with geographical spaces and are an inhabitant of the land since the pre-colonial times, in the name of progress, service, institution, national developmental commitments and priority by the domestic government in power. Some of the characteristics have been identified below but it should be made clear that all the attributes may or may not be profound in every action of civic colonization. The main attributes are as follows:

- Inflicting uniform by-laws by the domestic government in power over a group or sub-group with discrete socio-cultural practices, distinct subsistence strategy and are anomalous compared to so-called “civilization”
- Devising and implementation of policies that serves the national developmental promises and ignores group/sub-group historicity, code of ethics, cultural beliefs & rites, rights, worldviews, philosophy of life, livelihood pattern and palpable relationship with nature
- Renewal of policies that were made to serve the peculiar motives of the colonial government
- The subjection of politically autonomous and economically self-sufficient group/subgroup, who are having a distinct name and exhibiting a strong sense of belongingness or identity, on the name of citizenship and civic responsibilities
- Western capitalist framework for the politics of reconciliation

- Inducement of indirect dependency over government aids via regulations and deposition of cultural imperialism

Hunter-gatherers in pre-colonial, colonial and civic-colonial times

The hunter-gatherers are a group or sub-group of people whose primary subsistence strategy combines hunting animals, fishing and foraging for wild foods and nutrients. Hunting-gathering is considered the oldest mode of subsistence strategy. It intertwines the people with their land (natural resources) and culture. The evolutionary history of hominids shows the record of the hunting-gathering mode of subsistence practice that exists from the human origin to the present. Present-day's hunter-gatherers sometimes combine foraging with agriculture and animal husbandry. In past also many cultures have shown shreds of evidence of a combined strategy of foraging, agriculture and animal husbandry but approximately 12000BP (before the emergence and popularization of agriculture in Southwest Asia and Mesoamerica) all humans were uniformly hunter-gatherers (Wright, et al., 2014) (Zizumbo-Villarreal & Colunga-GarcíaMarín, 2010). Since hunter-gatherers had/have not relied on agriculture, therefore, they use mobility as a survival strategy. Mobility as a surviving strategy could be one of the reasons for the nomadic lifestyle of hunter-gatherers.

Hunter-gatherer communities are scattered around the globe. Therefore, it becomes extremely difficult to articulate the status and necessities of the present-day hunter-gatherers because of their distinct subsistence strategy, political practices, language, life philosophy, beliefs, and logic. Roger Blench (1999) has described that how do present-day hunter-gatherer's preferred subsistence strategy (i.e. hunting and gathering) directly collide with the conservation philosophies of modern governance and their traditional land of sustainable practice falls within the protected areas of a nation-state (Blench, 1999). The last few centuries

have witnessed the birth of conflict and rapid transformation in political structure, which have forced hunter-gatherer communities to become marginalised. It has started with the excessive competition over natural resources, development and implementation of technology in the area of livestock production as well as making use of the ease of transport and communication to reach out to the less explored area for exploitation of the natural resource. European colonial politics is one of the best examples of this conflict which have cost hunter-gatherer communities not only their land and traditional practices but also their status and identity.

Whereas, the colonial influx of genetic-cultural superiority gives birth to socio-biological politics of ethnicity that subsequently introduced the idea of civilizing others e.g. hunter-gatherers or indigenous population. In the wake time, the politics of ethnicity has instrumented the 'politics of nomenclature'. The politics of nomenclature can be understood as politically motivated classification of group and sub-group under a specific name that connotes their social category. These politics have resulted in the bracketing of nomadic hunter-gatherer and another habitant of the land under the umbrella terms like aboriginals, indigenous, tribes etc. The politics of ethnicity coupled with the politics of nomenclature have bred the braided stream of terms like tribes, First nations, ethnic group, indigenises, aboriginals, races, nationality etc. The additional domains like language, caste, and religion were added subsequently.

For example, In ancient India hardly any hunter-gatherer group were designated with the generic term which associates these groups with a social category as tribes, indigenous group or aboriginals nor there were any vernacular equivalent for the above-mentioned terms. Though the terms like *Vyadha/Lubdhaka*, *Pulinda*, *Vhabara*, *Vanechara*, *Akhetaka*, *Kirata* and *Janas* can be found in ancient Sanskrit text denoting the hunter-gatherers/nomads of the forest but were not used in the context of social category. Over the years, numerous terms have evolved such as *Matanga* (a man of lowest caste), *Adivasi* (forest dwellers), *Girijan* (Mountain

dwellers), *Pahari* (hill dwellers), *Vanyajati* (Forest caste), *Adimjati* (primitive caste), *Janajati* (loosely translated as caste) (Apte, 2020) and Qabilawale (a Persian term vaguely referring tribes. Colonial governance has confused the co-existence of living by differentiating the population into tribes or indigenous groups and the mainstream population. Whereas, in post-independent India, the umbrella terms i.e. Scheduled Tribes (i.e. the tribes and communities listed in Constitution of India), which includes sub-categories like The Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs), Ex-Criminal or the De-notified Tribes (DnT) and the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs), has been coined for social categorisation. The introduction of the term scheduled tribes through constitutional provision is an administrative concept of the civic-colonization.

In the pre-colonial context, the hunter-gatherer's groups have their term of reference and reference for outsider viz. Adi of Arunachala Pradesh is known as Abor by outsider whereas they know themselves as Miyong, Padam or Bori (Anonymous, 2016). The proponent of colonial politics of nomenclature and genetic-cultural superiority having the motivation to serve the ostensible objectives of colonial administration has tried to justify the unthoughtful exploitation of nature as natural resources that has cost hunter-gatherers their land, lifestyle and culture. Anthropological literature of colonial times also falls in the same line of colonial interest and was active to set the ground out for the colonial object of the exercise. For example, Morgan (1818-81) and Taylor (1832-1917) used the socio-economic evolutionary scale to describe the contemporary hunter-gather and designate them as “primitive” or “early stage of social evolution”.

The colonial politics of nomenclature has confused the age-old tradition of co-existence. It arises the issue of identity or self-introduction among hunter-gatherers and habitants of land. Though, the scholars have tried to resolve the identity crisis of these group by answering the questions like, who is the original inhabitant of the land?, Can the hunter-gatherer or nomadic groups/sub-group be called indigenous people of the land? and who are indigenous people?

But the answers to these questions call for the conceptualization of social dynamics from the historical perspective. Scholars like Bêteile (1998) have advocated for historical perspective and argued (in the context of the tribe) that only after knowing the predecessors of a group one can assign a social categorical term (Bêteille, 1998).

The civic-colonialism and the indigeneity debate

As per estimation, around 370 million indigenous people are spread in 70 countries worldwide (Horton, 2016). No single definition can accommodate such a vast diversity. Before going into details, it is significant to mention that the use term indigenous is debated but to avoid the perplexity of names term indigenous has been used. The other reason for choosing the term indigenous is that it is being used by the United Nations. Scholars have outlined a few common characteristics of the Indigenous people which may and may not apply to all. The characteristics are as follows:

- The historical continuity of inhabitation over a specific geographical space or territory
- Self-identification as with a distinct name and exhibit a strong sense of belonging or identity which is accepted by both the individual as well as the community
- Having a discrete belief system, language, religion and socio-cultural practices
- Politically autonomous (i.e. the tendency to manage their affair separate from the government) and economically self-sufficient

The above-outlined eligibility indicates that the concept of indignity is a dependent term and can only be comprehended through binaries and comparative terms like outsider, colonizer,

dependency, autonomy etc. . Since the term ‘indigeneity’ is the progeny of the idea of genetic-cultural superiority and politics of nomenclature, therefore, the notion of indigeneity is intricate and contested. It becomes even more intricate when one decides to consider an individual’s identity from the population instead of the population. It poses the question that isn’t we all indigenous to some land where we born? In the Indian social hierarchical context, the question of individual indignity become exceptionally complicated because of the idea of caste: which is understood as a social hierarchy assigned to the individual at birth like indigeneity. F.G. Bailey (1961) has proposed the theory of “tribe-caste continuum” which substantiates the evidence that tribal society has both the attributes of tribes and caste (Bailey, 1961). Whereas, Surajit Sinha (1965) has proposed a parallel hypothesis of the tribes-peasant continuum in India (Sinha, 1965). The terms like vanyajati (Forest caste), Adimjati (primitive caste), and Janajati can be understood in the tribe-caste continuum context.

The Kalahari revisionist debate added another chapter of intricacy in the concept of indigeneity by posting an argument against Lee and DeVore’ traditionalist or isolationist explanation of Kung people (Lee & DeVore, 1984). Scholars like Edwin Wilmsen and James Denbow contended that Kung people were never in isolation and the scholars have adduced the archaeological pieces of evidence for a substantial relationship of Kung people with the Bantu-speaking agropastoral community throughout the historical trajectory (Denbow & Wilmsen, 1986). A. R. Desai has advanced the revisionist argument and proposed the theory of “tribes in transition”. According to him, due to the continuous interaction with non-tribal communities tribes of India were never static rather tribes are always in the process of change and adoption (Desai, 1977). Though Desai has postulated the tribes in transition theory in the Indian context it portrays the lifestyle of all indigenous community though out the globe viz. Kung & San of Kalahari, Mursi of Ethiopia, Karoha, Bushman And Botswana of Amazon forest, Onge & Jarawa of Andaman, and Cholanakkian and Kattuniakkian of India.

With decolonization, local government in power attempt to slam the door for politics of nomenclature by leaving the window ajar. Over time it has paved the path for the politics of nomenclature getting integrated with the idea of indignity with additional dimensions like the idea of citizenship, voter, nationality etc. and transformed itself into the politics of representation. Tatu Vaananen (1991) in his book *Politics of Ethnic Nepotism* has discussed in details that how the Darwinian natural selection is the core of politics and the 'consciousness of ethnicity and ethno-social self-identification' conflicts with politics of socio-biological identity or representation (Vanhnen, 1991). The conceptualization of the idea of the Scheduled Tribes and their sub-categories (PGTs, DnTs and PVTGs) in post-independent India can be the ideal example which over time got integrated with the dimensions like the idea of citizenship, voter, nationality etc.

The foundation of civic-colonial policies is based on the argument of civic-responsibilities. Whereas in the core of the debate of civic-responsibilities and politics of representation lies the idea of citizenship. Therefore, it becomes important to analyse the idea of citizenship in the context of hunter-gatherer (in details) to contextualize the debate of civic-colonialism. The concept of citizenship can be cognized as the outcome of the process of decolonisation and transition to the independent nation-state. Hannah Arendt had expounded the idea of citizenship as "the right to have rights" (Arendt, 1961). Whereas, T. H Marshall (1893-1981) has pointed out the sociological function of citizenship and described it as the status of "fully belonging to the community" (Marshall, 1950). According to B. S. Tuner, Marshall's idea of citizenship was utilitarian and intended to use it as a tool to achieve "a balance between entitlement and provision, allocative and integrative requirement of society" (Turner, 1993). In political anthropology, the discussion on the changing experience of citizenship has posed an intense debate. There is no compressive paradigm to summarize the idea of citizenship in today's

debate. Scholars have pondered on various dimensions of the meaning of citizenship viz. from juridico-legal to socio-cultural to symbolic meanings. Though the scholars have tried to capture the fluidity and diversity of socio-cultural flux somehow the discussion on citizenship seems to be centred around the cosmopolitan politics and ceased to consider the experience of groups/sub-groups like nomadic and hunter-gatherer, who were and are (to some extent) politically autonomous, economically self-sufficient group/subgroup and exhibits a strong sense of belongingness or identity.

The debate on experience on citizenship has largely talked about “multicultural citizenship” (Kymlicka, 1995), spatial citizenship (Ferguson & Gupta, 2002), transnationalism and migration between nation-states, population and cultures (Basch, Schiller, & Blanc, 2005) and genetic citizenship (Heath, Rapp, & Taussig, 2007). The discourse on citizenship is fascinated by the questions of rights, claims, territoriality and nationalism. Aihwa Ong has added a new dimension of freedom in the debate of citizenship (Ong, 1999). However, in the context of globalization, the proponents of ‘techno-migrants’ ask for a global citizenship right that can transcend the question of territoriality, nationalism, an immediate difference of culture and race. But on the other hand, one can hardly find any literature dealing with question i.e. can nation-state impose the citizenship compulsion over a group/sub-group within a nation, who have a long temporal history than the nation-state, and are having discrete code of ethics, cultural beliefs & rites, rights, worldviews, philosophy of life and livelihood pattern?

To contextualize the citizenship debate in the milieu of hunter-gatherer or nomadic group three significant questions are needed to be reconsidered. (a) Who are hunter-gatherers or nomadic groups?, (b) What is citizenship?, and (c) why is the question of citizenship important in the context of hunter-gatherer or nomadic group? It is important to note here from the above description it can be stated that there is no unanimous answer for the first two questions. In this

article, the attempt made to do a review of the popular views on the first two question and contextualize the answer for the third question.

The models in the favour of the imposition of citizenship over hunter-gatherers cite the example of civic responsibilities by being an active member of politics, right to choose self-government, developmental goals and participation in collective decision making and policies formation. But the problem with these models is it only performs well in the context the nation-state philosophy. As Patricia Mindus has rightly described that the concept of citizenship is a key component of democratic principles and is effective based on the principle of affectedness i.e. people must have a right to participate in decisions affecting them (Mindus, 2009). Whereas, it seems to me the idea of citizenship is a spatial phenomenon and ought to bound with a certain geographical space or sense of boundary/borderline; defined as territory of a nation-state. Unlike the nation-state sense of territory, hunter-gatherers are having a different concept of territory. Georges Sauvet (2017) describes territory as a culturally encoded abstract concept that can have a separate meaning for the settled group and nomadic group (Sauvet, 2019). He has also argued that since hunter-gatherer subsistence strategy is based on the idea of mobility, therefore, the model of nation-state territory fails to resonate with the hunter-gatherer model of territory. Even the minimal definition of “supply territory” is also inapt because of the constant change in geographical space over time and an exchange network or social network with other adjacent group or community for the resources and cultural goods (Sauvet, 2019).

For Sauvet (2017), there were three kinds of network among the upper-palaeolithic hunter-gatherers i.e. local, regional and super-regional network. It will be inappropriate to compare the models of the present-day hunter-gatherer network with upper-palaeolithic hunter-gatherer because of the spatio-temporal gap and dissimilarities in situation and conditions. But the sense of territory is somewhat similar to all hunter-gatherer group because of mobility based

subsistence strategy (constant change in geographical space). Though, the combination of ease of transport, technology and communication media have the advanced model of network among the present-day hunter-gatherers. But the outreach of this combination is still limited among people living near or in fringe area (where technology are being used), who are having easier access and can make use these opportunities, compared to people who choose to live distant in dense forest and inaccessible terrain.

In nutshell, it can be stated that the sense of territoriality among hunter-gatherer/nomadic group is associated with space which satisfies their needs than the idea of nationalism. Therefore, slamming of citizenship and civic responsibilities over hunter-gatherer/nomadic group by a nation-state seems inappropriate for the following reasons (a) the hunter-gatherer have a long temporal history with the land than the idea of nation-state formulation, (b) It undermines the historicity, traditional cultural expression, and autonomy of hunter-gatherer/nomadic group and (c) It promotes the idea of civic-colonization and indirect dependency (over developmental aids of local government in power) among present-day hunter-gatherers.

Decoding the encrypted link: civic-colonisation and the health problems of contemporary hunter-gatherers

To make sense of the sub-heading, four questions are needed to be explored and answered (in the context of hunter-gatherer). The questions are as follows: (a) what is health? (b) Is health a biological phenomenon or socio-cultural phenomenon?, (c) how is hunter-gatherer' health affected by the transition in lifestyle? and (d) what is the link between civic-colonialization and health problems of the present-day hunter-gatherers? To answer the first question first it

becomes important to explore the question i.e. how do hunter-gatherer perceive health? For hunter-gatherer land, food and health are interlinked and health is understood as a resource of everyday life. Their perception of health is grounded on the supernatural and natural explanation of the cause of health problems. It includes their cultural experience, native beliefs, logics, worldview, values, and imagination unlike the western bio-statical calculation of health problem.

The Literature dealing with indigenous health has discussed in details that how cultural factors like racism, loss of language, connection to land, environmental deterioration, identity, and spiritual, mental and emotional disconnectedness are affecting the health of indigenous as well as hunter-gatherer community (King, Smith, & Gracey, 2009) (Gracey & King, 2009). Scholars have also delineated the various levels of the experience of health and wellness viz. bodily, mental, spiritual, emotional, family, and community. They have highlighted that how the relationship among mental, physical, emotional and environmental health is significant in the context of the hunter-gather/ indigenous community. The minimal alteration in any of the factors is capable of bringing change in socio-cultural practice which in turn can result in physical and mental health problems.

But it is also important to consider that disease is a physical phenomenon (to some extent) and it exists in the physical body which makes hunter-gatherer's perception of health bio-cultural phenomena. It is discussed in the above section that the perception of health among the hunter-gatherer/indigenous community is situated in local cultural experience and their ethno-philosophy of health exhibit a disparate characteristic concerning the western notion of health. Not only the hunter-gatherer's perception of health is diverse from the western framework of health but their healing mechanism is also different from the western approach. The hunter-gatherer healing method incorporates the knowledge of plants, animals, and landscape as well as a special set of skills, faith in natural and supernatural power. The hunter-

gatherer's model of health is associated with their subsistence practice and their knowledge of plant and animals are mostly stored as collective knowledge in the ecological context, in the absence of script for documentation. Whereas, the process of healing includes self-medication, alteration of food and diet, application of ecological knowledge, caregiving and faith healing. In nutshell, to answer the second question it can be said that health in hunter-gatherers/indigenous community is neither a biological phenomenon nor a socio-cultural phenomenon solely but an amalgamation of both i.e. a bio-cultural phenomenon.

Before answering the third question it becomes important to discuss the health status of present and past hunter-gatherer/ indigenous community. The epidemiological data suggest that numerous present-day indigenous group are suffering from the burden of chronic diseases. The health disparities are widening between the benchmark population and the indigenous population of the country. The Lancet-Lowitja Institute collaboration report (2016) has published a detailed study entitled A Global Snapshot of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples' Health on the health status of the indigenous population worldwide. The report has incorporated results of New Zealand: Māori People, Australia: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, Brazil: Indigenous Peoples, Cameroon: The Baka, Canada: First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples, Chile: The Mapuche, China: Dai People, China: Tibetans, Colombia: Indigenous Peoples (multiple groups), Greenland: The Inuit, India: Scheduled Tribes, Kenya: The Maasai, Myanmar: Mon People, Nepal: The Sherpa, Rai, Magar and Tamang, Nigeria: Fulani Nomads, Nigeria: The Ijaw, Norway: The Sami, Pakistan: Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) Tribes, Panama: Kuna Yala, Emberá–Wounaan, Ngäbe Buglé Peoples, Peru: Indigenous Amazonians, Russia: The Nenets, Sweden: The Sami, Thailand: Ethnic Minority Groups, United States of America: Native American and Alaska Natives, United States of America: Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders (Silburn, Reich, & Anderson, 2016). The report shows that despite the pronounced diversity of indigenous community there exist a

considerable amount of resemblance among in their health and illnesses. Which compels to ask questions like (a) what is wrong with the government policies? (b) Why across the world the health disparities is wide instead of shrinking? and (c) Are the policies appropriate to overcome health inequalities?

Michel Gracey and et al. find the reason for indigenous health inequalities in poverty, malnutrition, population growth beyond the carrying capacity of a region, poor hygiene and environmental contamination (Gracey & King, 2009). But it seems that the root cause lies in lifestyle transition i.e. moving from traditional and nomadic lifestyle towards permanent settlement and modern lifestyle. The transition in settlement pattern and subsistence strategy had caused diet shift, brought a change in living condition, relationship with environment and proximity with animals. The shift from nomadic life to permanent colonies might expose the people of the colonies to disease originated from poorer waste management and contaminated water, the shift from a traditional diet to modern food might increase the risk of nutritional imbalance, chronic diseases and rapidly acquiring lifestyle disease like obesity, cardiovascular diseases, and physical-social-mental disorders (Armelagos, Brown, & Turner, 2005) (Orman, 1971). For example, Page and et al. have shown how the promotion of sedentism worsens the health outcomes of the Agta foragers of the Philippines (Page, Minter, & Migliano, 2018). Whereas increased population density can provide a robust medium for spreading infectious and contagious diseases because bigger social network viz. spreading of COVID-19 virus can be one of the examples that how a social network can facilitate a medium for spreading of infectious diseases. Therefore, it is safe to say lifestyle transition can not only introduce new disease but also able to expand the outreach of diseases to the larger population. Similarly, the changing relationship with the environment and proximity to animals can increase the risk of zoonotic and bacterial diseases. For example, shifting from hunter-gatherer to forest labour or animal husbandry can increase the risk for zoonotic diseases due to the sharing of common

space in the colonies. It is not like that there was no risk of zoonotic diseases in the nomadic lifestyle. There were/are high risk of getting the zoonotic and bacterial disease in hunting-gathering lifestyle also e. g. during eating contaminated food, taking prey to home etc. but the other associated risk was low because of constant change in place and weak social network.

It is clear from the above description that change in the hunter-gatherer/indigenous lifestyle has expedited the health degeneration process. Now, to establish the prime argument of the article and answer the fourth question of this section it is critical to explore the hunter-gatherer health and their lifestyle in a historical context. Studies have suggested that colonization have an adverse effect on the hunter-gatherer/indigenous physical, mental, social, emotional and spiritual health. It is well established in the literature that hunter-gatherer's subsistence strategy and traditional lifestyle makes them careful custodian of the environment. They tend to protect their local environment to get a long-term supply of food and shelter that makes their practice sustainable too. The colonial competition over natural resources choked the traditional practice of hunting, food gathering, fishing and forced them to depend on food and lifestyle that were unfamiliar by imposing acts and regulations over natural resources. It has not only forced the hunter-gatherer/indigenous societies to alienate themselves from their traditional root and way of living but also introduced micro-organism borne diseases of which these traditional groups were not exposed and were susceptible e.g. smallpox, measles, tuberculosis into the Australians Aboriginal (Campbell, 2002). The reasoning behind colonial intimidation has been discussed in detail in the preceding sections. Michel Gracey (2009) in the review series on indigenous health, published by Lancet, has discussed that how the undermining and suppression of traditional lifestyle, which consisted of thousand years old traditional law, language, religion, ritual, rituals, healers and remedies, has caused a long-term effect on mental, physical, emotional and social health (Gracey & King, 2009) (King, Smith,

& Gracey, 2009). It has marginalised the hunter-gatherer/indigenous community socially, culturally, economically and politically.

After the decolonization, not only the local government in power has failed to achieve a successful reconciliation but rather stepped on colonial policies and politics and legalised the subjugation in the name of institution, development, national obligation, rights, and services. The politics of nomenclature, cultural imperialism, social categorisation of hunter-gatherers as an ethnic minority, the indigeneity debate, slamming citizenship and civic responsibilities over nomadic people (discussed in detail in the above section) are few examples of civic-colonial politics and policies that have not only continued marginalization hunter-gatherer community the at social, economic and political levels but also accelerated its pace. The civic-colonial policies have left no choice in front of the hunter-gatherer community but to change their subsistence and settlement pattern and live their lives on the unproductive land of colonies, towns and cities. The proponent of civic-colonial politics put forward an interesting debate of developed and underdeveloped to justify the approach reconciliation and integration opted by local government in power, which is nothing but the capitalist approach of the western liberal framework.

Development is a very contested term. The anthropologists have very strong and diverse opinions about development. Marc Edelman and Angelique Haugerud (2007) have discussed the debate of development in detail. The debate of development will not be analysed here because it's a subject of another separate article and outside the scope of the current article. But to contextualize the debate of developed and underdeveloped in the discourse of hunter-gatherer health, it becomes necessary to present a cost-benefit analysis of development in that context. Development on one hand signifies the improvement in life standers, wellbeing, opportunities. whereas, on the other hand, it becomes a tool or a medium for a nation-state to legitimise the unwelcome strategies (Edelman & Haugerud, 2007). Though over time it seems

that the neo-classical unidimensional measure like GDP was replaced with the Sen's Happiness indexes and UNDP (United Nations Development Indexes) measure which consists of health indicator, life expectancy, literacy, formal education, political participation, access to the resource, and human rights. But still, the parameter seems to be exclusive towards the hunter-gatherer/indigenous community because it downplays their worldviews, knowledge system, customs and culture, lifestyle and values. Therefore, the application of the UNDP parameter for the categorization of the hunter-gatherer/indigenous community under the label of developed and underdeveloped is problematic and meaningless. Scholars have discussed the inadequacy of development in the post-development context and tried to find the answer for widespread poverty, suffering and all-pervasive inequalities at various levels e.g. social, health, opportunity etc., hunger, operation in the narratives and approaches of development. Hereby no means, it is intended to discredit the development efforts but the sole purpose of the argument is to highlight the unthoughtful formulation and execution of the developmental programme in the context of the hunter-gatherer/indigenous community.

Let's analyse that how the inconsiderate implementation of developmental policies maximizes the health risk of the hunter-gatherer community. From the above description, it is clear that the hunter-gatherer community's perception of health is a dynamic mixture of culture-specific knowledge, experience, belief systems, empirical apprehension and worldviews which includes physical, emotional, spiritual, social, cultural and environmental wellbeing. The transition in the hunter-gatherer lifestyle, subsistence and settlement pattern led by the civic-colonial developmental policies (discussed in the above section) has brought a change in socio-economic practices, demography, and social relation because of bi-culturalization, cross-border exchange and geophysical relocation. It has metamorphosed their experience and cognitive processes on which their health and healing model was grounded and transmuted the meaning, experience, values and belief system which end up engendering

various health problems, confusion, emotional & social dis-functioning and cultural drift. Scholars have highlighted the following worldwide health problems among present-day hunter-gatherer/indigenous community.

- High young and child mortality
- High mental morbidity
- The heavy burden of infectious and rapidly acquiring lifestyle diseases
- Malnutrition related diseases
- Diseases related to addictions
- Diseases caused by environmental contamination
- Zoonotic diseases

These diseases are prevalent among the hunter-gatherer/indigenous community because of multiple reasons. For example, high infant and child diseases are because of poor living condition, inadequate nutrition, exposure to infections. Similarly, there are different factors associated with a health problem at a different age. For example,

Population types	Factors
Child	Substandard hygiene, nutrition, immune system, heavy exposure to microbial contamination like- contaminated food, water, breastfeeding etc.
Adolescent	Little knowledge of determinates of health and diseases risk because of experience of transition, excessive use of harmful substance like

	alcohol, tobacco, drugs etc., high risk of sexual activities, violence, trauma, rapidly acquiring lifestyle diseases like obesity, cardiovascular diseases etc. and mental and emotional disorder
Women	Undernutrition during pregnancy, unsupervised delivery, maturational hygiene etc.

But the in-depth inquiry traces the link of hefty diseases burden on present-day hunter-gatherer/indigenous to the civic-colonial developmental policies. The following panel will expose the relationship between the health problems of the hunter-gatherer community and the injudicious enforcement of civic-colonial developmental policies and politics. It is also important to mention here that by no means this article is trying to establish the statement that the developmental policies are solely responsible for the health disparities among the hunter-gatherer community. After analysing the pros and cons of developmental policies it seems that civic-colonial policies and politics instead of bridging the gap of health inequalities intentionally or unintentionally widened it by opting for the western capitalist framework for policies formulation and enforcement. Some of the examples which show the link between civic-colonial policies and health problem among hunter-gatherer/indigenous community are as follows:

Civic-colonial develop	Effect of civic-colonial	Domain of Health	Relationship with health	Possible victims	Risks	Ref. for all
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mental developmental
policies policies
and
politics

Land appropriation and forest regulations	Forced to change subsistence strategy and food habit Increased competition over resources lead to inter and intra- community violence	Physical, mental and social	It causes nutritional imbalance led diseases, chronic diseases and rapidly acquiring lifestyle diseases like obesity, cardiovascular diseases etc.	Infant, young, adults, old, pregnant women etc.	High mortality, malnutrition , mental morbidity, premature birth, low birth weight, immature growth, anaemia, the problem of social cohesion etc.	
Promotion of settlement	Expose people to disease originated from poor waste	Physical, mental	It changes the social dynamics and network and	All population	Chronic infections, gastrointestinal	

nt colonies	management and contaminated water Change the relationship with environment and proximity with animals	and social	increases the risk of infectious and zoonotic diseases. Examples, microbial contamination from poor waste management, contaminated food, water, utensils, person to person etc.		infections, renal diseases, skin diseases, respiratory diseases, Illnesses caused by identity deficit because of renegotiation with land and environment, mental health, suicides etc.	(Willis, Jackson, Nettleton, Good, & Mugarura, 2006) (Kunitz, 1996) (Stephens, Porter, Nettleton, & Willis, 2006) (King, Smith, & Gracey, 2009)
Develop-mental Aids	Promotes indirect dependency over government aids which in	Physical and mental	It leads to a change in settlement pattern and subsistence strategy. For	Though all population are vulnerable but	Apart from the risk listed in the above two-section diseases led	(Gracey & King, 2009) (Page, Minter, &

	turn lead to stop traditional practices and cause a health problem.		example, the Public distribution system led to a change in diet and created a health problem. All kinds of health problem discussed in the first two sections are common for this category.	mostly adult male are the prime victims.	by addictions like alcoholism and other addiction are widespread, depression, anxiety are also common because of the absence of work and motivation after stopping the traditional occupation	Migliano, 2018) (Orman, 1971) (Armelago s, Brown, & Turner, 2005)
Politics of nomenclature and	This resulted in cultural alienation, identity deficit,	Physical, mental, emotio	It creates self-doubt, racism, marginalizati	All population	depression, anxiety, Illnesses caused by	

social categoriz ation	loss of language, knowledge etc.	nal and social	on, inferior self-imaging, the victim of blaming ideology etc.		identity deficit, mental health, suicide, the problem of social cohesion, violence etc.	
Unthoug ht plans like- residenti al schools	Disruption of families and communities carry over physical and social abuse, loss of culture, language and knowledge system	Physica l, mental, emotio nal and social	It resulted in a health problem caused by cultural alienation, identity crisis, violence, abuses etc.	Mostly young populatio n	PTSD, depression, anxiety, mental health, suicide, addiction etc.	

Discussion and Conclusion

The argument presented here illuminates local government in power has extended the colonial experience by administering the civic-colonial policies and politics using the capitalist approach of the western liberal framework as a future roadmap of politics. It has not only

resumed the marginalization of hunter-gatherer/indigenous community at social, economic and political levels but also affected their health adversely. The outspread health gap between the benchmark population and hunter-gatherer/indigenous population is needed to replenished but simple health intervention can't iron out the problem. The underlying factors like violent land appropriation, displacement, forced settlement, discrimination, stereotyping of culture are needed to be addressed.

The hunter-gatherer communities health knowledge system is understood as a state of equilibrium among human beings, nature and the supernatural powers. In another word, it can be stated that it is a nexus between mind, matter and experience that commands the state of spiritual, communal and ecological wellbeing. Their holistic idea of health and healing mechanism is centuries old tried and tested medical system. The technology-based development, industrial modernity, displacement-based development and capitalisation of nature have collaboratively disrupted the equilibrium of indigenous health that ultimately translated into the loss of indigenous health knowledge at an unprecedented scale. It has created a health divide between hunter-gatherer/indigenous communities and other population. Therefore, there is a desperate need for improvement at social, economic, political and bio-cultural levels. The improvement will be a daydream until the following persistent problem will not be eradicated absolutely or minimised at the nominal level.

- Undermining indigenous socio-cultural practice, knowledge system, food habit, the authority of elders and ethno-philosophy
- Poverty induced by indirect dependency and financial aid
- Environmental contaminations
- Malnutrition
- Widespread prejudice about the inadequacy of indigenous health mechanism

- The false expectation that medical intervention can alone solve the indigenous health problem because its approach is curative rather than preventive.
- Bureaucratic mishandling of culturally sensitive issues

It is not like the government have not achieved any success in bridging the health gap between the hunter-gatherer community and the benchmark community. Government effort in the direction of vaccine-preventable diseases like- polio, improved pregnancy outcome and reduction of death due to infectious diseases are commendable. But at the same time, it can be seen that civic-colonial policies of millennium developmental goals e.g. providing a house for families and public distribution system increases the risk for diseases, interpersonal violence and emotional and mental illness. It has been discussed in detail in the preceding sections. This millennium developmental goal is critical because of two reasons. Firstly it is a top-down approach of development and neglects circumstantial requirement of hunter-gatherer communities and secondly, it targeted to achieve the national goal even if it cost indigenous life. Whereas, the practice of the politics of nomenclature and social categorization of between hunter-gatherer community, slapping civic-responsibilities on the name of citizenship, and labelling as underdeveloped has dismantled the historical context of the health knowledge system.

The hunter-gatherer communities despite their small population have contributed largely to the world's cultural, linguistic and intellectual diversity. They are not the only custodian of the environment but also participate in global well-being. For example, 75% of the 121 drugs perception used around the world have been discovered from the Traditional Knowledge (Sen & Chakraborty, 2017) and the genesis of the medical system like Ayurveda, Siddha, Chinese traditional medicine or Japanese traditional medicine directedly or indirectly linked to the hunter-gatherer/indigenous communities knowledge system. Unfortunately, the ideology that

governs the modern nation catalogue this culturally situated health knowledge system as an alternative practice. The civic-colonial politics of knowledge based on scientific structuralism has not only cut the embryonic link with nature but also tries to replace their way of living through undermining of their culture, belief system, values, practices and logics.

Scholars have tried to develop several models to ensure equity at the level of health, opportunity, social, economic, political, judicial and decision making but all the model are designed using a capitalist western framework which includes centralized, top-down, and one model for all. Therefore, the models seem paradoxical in approach. The search for inclusive alternative developmental policies requires the reorganization of the underlying problem at the first and then required the structuring of an indigenous culturally appropriate framework. As is mentioned earlier also simple medical intervention is an insufficient model of redressal mechanism. Though scholars have talked about the idea of medical pluralism as an alternative model. It is certainly a welcome approach but it not an efficient solution when health hunter-gatherer/indigenous community victim of civic-colonial policies and politics.

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