“Socio-Economic Impact of Beef Ban in India: A Critical Analysis”

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Abstract: Since time immemorial, the cow has been regarded as a holy figure in Hindu culture and beliefs. Taking this into account, the slaughter of cows is widely debated and controversial topic in India. The beef ban is a topic of national importance and concern. The research paper includes data collected from various journals, research papers, newspapers and websites. In its essence analyses topics regarding social and cultural impacts of the beef ban and its economic effects and impacts on value chain. This research paper aims to connect, two aspects i.e. Social/Cultural and Economic, so as to highlight their interdependency and to shed light upon the impacts of one aspect on the other.

Keywords: Beef Ban, Socio Cultural effects, Economic impacts, Interdependency.

INTRODUCTION

The sacredness of cows in India is deep rooted in the history of Hinduism. The cow is divinely associated with Krishna, the cowherd and considered a mother figure because of the milk it gives. The ban on beef greatly affects the restaurants both big and small. It imposes restrictions on what the dishes that can be served by restaurants the reason being the ban of beef. The laws have affected more than just the restaurants. Countless butchers and vendors have lost their mode of sustenance as the sale of beef is banned. The leather industry is also on the brink of turmoil. In the backstreets of Agra’s Muslim quarter, where shoes have been made for centuries, small-scale manufacturers are firing workers and families are cutting back on spending as a government crackdown on cattle slaughter ripples through the community.

How has the beef ban affected the unemployment rate?
What are the culturally fuelled aspects relating to the beef ban and its economic effects?
What are the socio-economic impacts of the beef ban?
Whether the beef ban is justified or not?

Beef is consumed not only by Indian Muslims and Christians, but also by many low caste Hindus, for whom it is an essential source of affordable protein. Experts are also concerned that the religiously charged public disturbances and conflicts surrounding the consumption of beef could undermine the secular ethos of the country.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Anhad S Miglani “A SOCIO-LEGAL PERSPECTIVE OF COW SLAUGHTER IN INDIA” (2012)
Miglani in his research paper highlights the debate on cow slaughter as a deep social, political and legal issue which involves large number of people and stakeholders. The findings in this research paper indicate the rift in the society caused by the implementation of the beef ban on various fronts in India.

Aparna Tripathi “BEEF BAN: EFFECT ON INDIAN FARMERS” (2013) (Aparna Tripathi)
Tripathi has covered the situation of farmers and people who were into the cattle industry and the effects of the beef ban in the economy of India. Tripathi takes the cases of individuals such as farmers and businessmen to shed light on the practical implications of the beef ban in the various states of India.

Hanibal Goitom “FALQs: BEEF BANS IN INDIA” (2015)
This article spreads light on the scenario that led to the implementation of the beef ban in India and also mentions the constitutional provisions which apply to laws relating to cattle slaughter. It also inspects closely the differences between the various state level laws banning or restricting cattle trade and slaughter.

Shivraj K Mahendra “BAN ON BEEF AND THE POLITICS OF FOOD: AN INTERCULTURAL ANALYSIS” (2016)
In his study, Mahendra highlights the serious socio-cultural implications of the beef ban in various Indian societies. He also closely inspects the issues created by the beef ban on the basis of politics, economics, religious, ecological and environmental perspectives to give a new insight into the current Indian scenario.

Alwyn Sebastian “THE RIGHT TO STEAK: A CONSTITUTIONAL PERSPECTIVE” (2015)
Sebastian studies and reports his findings on the issue of the beef ban purely on the basis of constitutional and legal perspectives after a careful scientific analysis of the need of such food in the human body. This study presents an unbiased legal view of the issue of beef ban in India.
Maurice Landes, Alex Melton, Seanicca Edwards “FROM WHERE THE BUFFALO ROAM: INDIA’S BEEF EXPORTS” (2016)
This report presents a fair view of India’s beef exports with the help of statistical figures and graphs, in comparison to its competition. It also examines India’s water buffalo sector and its growth in the previous years. The report also inspects the domestic demand for beef within India and explains how the beef industry in India is export oriented in nature.

Mohsin Khan, Abuzar Nomani, Mohd Salman “IMPACT OF BEEF BAN ON ECONOMY AND MEAT PROCESSING INDUSTRY OF INDIA: A COMPLETE VALUE CHAIN ANALYSIS” (2016)
The impact of the beef ban on the Indian economy as a whole is presented in depth in this paper. It studies the Indian buffalo meat sector and analyses the changes in its structure and trend to analyse the impact on the domestic and foreign market demand. It also looks at the impact of the beef ban on consumers, employment, and trade and on the leather industry in India.

Prabhash K Dutta “CATTLE SLAUGHTER ECONOMY: HOW BAN ON SALE OF CATTLE FOR KILLING MAY AFFECT INDUSTRY, EMPLOYMENT” (2017)
This news article studies the impact of the beef ban on the cattle industry after a thorough analysis on the current population of cattle in India. It analyses the beef ban in Kerala as a separate case with different impacts, and also talks about the regulation of beef in India.

Manil Suri “A BAN ON BEEF IN INDIA IS NOT THE ANSWER” (2015)
This news article briefly analyses the religious reasoning’s and social impacts of the beef ban in the various states of India. It also examines the case of the beef ban in Maharashtra, and comments on whether the impact of the beef ban remains positive after a period of time.

This paper extensively inspects the beef ban on a legal and legislative perspective with several examples of cases in various states of India. It comments on how many individuals have tried to taint the scenario with religious colours and also comments lightly on balancing rights and principles regarding the beef ban. It briefly mentions the economic impact of the beef ban as well.

Ajaz Ashraf “A SHORT ACCOUNT OF INDIA’S LONG HISTORY OF HYPOCRISY ON COW SLAUGHTER LAWS” (2017)
This article talks about the religious reasoning in history that led to the beef ban, commenting with the help of examples of states such as Maharashtra. Though the article mentions the economic rationale behind the imposing of the beef ban in India, it also talks about how it is a cover for targeting a religious minority in India – Muslims.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Research Gap
There have been numerous research papers and articles commenting on the beef ban and the history that revolves around the scenarios that lead to its implementation. Such articles have reasoned as to how and why India is either affected on cultural and religious fronts. Such papers also comment extensively on the legal and legislative perspectives and elucidate the provisions and rights of people in various states regarding the trade and consumption of cattle.

Other research papers have been conducted on various economic fronts, extensively on the economic impacts and effects of the beef ban in India. These articles mention how demands for cattle and carabeef have been affected on the basis of demand, trade and other factors. Such articles also talk in great detail about the downfall of the carabeef industry due to the impact of the beef ban. Many studies also present the fall in the volume of exports from India compared to its many competitors on this front.

Our research paper aims to connect these two frontiers of the issue of the beef ban in India by analyzing its socio-economic impacts and how it affects India on various aspects. It attempts to connect the social and cultural aspects of the beef ban to reason with the relative economic changes within and outside India. Such a bridge between two research concepts would provide valuable insight into the interaction between social and economic factors and establish the cause and effect relationship between social and economic effects of the beef ban in India.

Research Objectives
1) To study the social and cultural aspects of the beef ban and explain its various impacts within India.
2) To study the past and present economic conditions to analyze the changes due to the implementation of the beef ban within and outside of India.
3) To study the figures of demand and supply to explain the various changes in the export of beef in comparison to other beef exporting countries.
4) To bridge the gap between the social and economic aspects of the beef ban and present an interconnected cause and effect relationship between the two fronts.

ANALYSIS 1: SOCIAL & CULTURAL IMPACT

In this section, we try to analyze and present a fair and unbiased view of the social and cultural impacts that were caused due to the Amendment of the Bill banning the slaughter of bulls and bullocks as well, apart from cows which were already banned earlier.

Approximately 25% of the country – inclusive of but not limited to Muslims, Christians, Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Casts and other sects – are beef eaters. This is especially true in the states of Kerala, West Bengal and most of the northern regions, where beef is widely consumed as a common dish for many of the sects, which makes beef a commodity attached to the culture of a state.

The major implications of the beef ban in India are as follows:

1) The beef ban is alleged to be a well-orchestrated attack against the cultural food habits of different cultures, namely Muslims, Christians, and the Dalit communities in various states of India. It is widely understood that beef is not the sole source of food for these communities, and the fact that the Hindu community does not consume beef at all. But thoughtful consideration is required on the fact that beef is an essential cultural commodity to these communities, and taking it away would be a clear violation of rights. Many claims point to this being a part of the Hindutva India ideology, and their intimidation of minorities and subsequent separation and instilment of conflict, in order to establish Hindu rule in India.

2) Evidently, the beef ban has raised conflicting emotions in many communities across India, turning this into a platform for communal violence on countless occasions, with only a small percentile of it making it to the eyes of the public. In the manner, the issue has provoked violent actions from many communities and groups, resulting in heavy losses of life and property, which in turn affects the economy of those involved. The issue has turned into a deep social, legal and political issue with numerous stakeholders involved, the main one being religion. The beef ban has impacted the field of religion in such a way that it has put the former under a different light in front of the citizens of India, with some questioning if this was a cover up in order to promote Hindutva fascist ideology within the secular lands of India.

3) Through an economic lens, we can observe the downward trends in employment and trade of minorities involved in the entire value chain of such beef. Although the beef ban primarily indicates a loss of national loss of business and economy, a greater impact can be seen in the lives of the weaker sections of the society. A ban on the beef industry is then effectively a ban on the livelihood of many citizens – butchers, shop owners, dealers, and others – without a plan to provide job for the jobless.

Even though there is other implications that were caused by the beef ban in India, such as legal reconsideration, religious debates, communal enmity, the above mentioned are the most highlighted. These have impacted our culture and society in such a way that it leaves a mark even after considerable time of the issue being subsided.

The next section would discuss the purely the economic effects of the beef ban, particularly the trends in the import and export of the same.
ANALYSIS 2: ECONOMIC EFFECTS

The economic effects of the beef ban are far too widespread in nature to be discussed upon, so we shall stick our focus to certain areas which pertain connections regarding social aspects, as per the final aim of this paper. The effects that we discuss upon would include but not be limited to value chain details and export analysis.

Value Chain

The domestic value chain for production and distribution of beef in India consists of a large variety of stakeholders working within different stages from point of production to consumer distribution. The network of the value chain includes livestock producers, traders, butchers, wholesale meat dealers and retailers, along with commission agents and municipal authorities in specific areas. It is important to understand that there have been raising demands for cattle slaughter in areas such as Kerala, Maharashtra and West Bengal, which indicated the rising consumer demand in the market for buffalo meat and beef.

The two major value chains involved are (a) Large-scale production for export, and (b) Municipal Slaughterhouse system for domestic consumption, apart from local slaughterhouses and smaller ‘backyard’s in remote areas. The longer value chain begins at the stage of large scale production for export purposes, where the beef ban has made a negative impact on each of the segments separately. A typical example of the value chain is given for reference.

The whole supply chain has been disrupted due to the implementation of the beef ban. Impact can be seen in areas starting from cattle procurement, processing, deboning, and packing to the point it reaches the consumer. Also, the effect has spread out into allied industries such as leather, pharma and pet food industries. The most important element of the value chain that gets impacted is the farmer who rears the cattle and provides the source of all the commodities that are to flow through the value chain.

The important aspect is the size of the value chain and the different stakeholders involved in it, so that we take into consideration the variety of the population that is affected by the beef ban.

Effect on Export

Moving onto the export side of the impacts of the beef ban in India, it is clear from various trends in the export data available that the downtrends are caused by the regulations and laws introduced with the same regard. The following briefly explains the aforementioned.

In a span of over 40 years, the quantity of meat exported from India has been on a steady rise, and the target countries are increasing in number simultaneously. As of now, India has been exporting beef and buffalo meat to about 64 countries. The growth projection of the buffalo meat industry indicates that the potential for rapid growth is high, owing to the fact that domestic consumption has reduced due to various impacts as discussed over the previous sections.
India currently accounts for 1/5th of the global supply of beef, including to markets in Africa and South East Asia. In the latter, Vietnam is the country which imports the highest quantity of meat from India. For example, India exported 1.89 million tons of beef, having jumped up approximately 50% in a span of 5 years. The main reason behind the exponential growth rate is the subsidies provided by the government for a variety of fields such as transportation and plant modernization. As compared to the previous years, India represents an increase of nearly 23% rise in buffalo meat exports.

**FINDINGS**

**CONNECTING SOCIAL & ECONOMIC ASPECTS**

Moving onto the major aspect of our research paper, we aim to connect the social and economic aspects of the issue. From the image, it can be understood that the implications of the beef ban has reduced the quantity of exports from Indian states, particularly UP and Maharashtra, causing a negative effect on our economy. Focusing on such changes in exports of beef and buffalo meat from India, it can be seen that there is a downwards trend in aspects such as ranking of India in the global market, and decrease in growth rates of production of beef in the domestic market. Given below are the statistics which indicate that such social effects have affected the beef industry as a whole.

![Global Beef Export Scenario](chart.png)

![Indian Exports of Buffalo Meat](chart2.png)
Another perspective for the beef ban in India is the fact that the beef and buffalo meat industry was on a steady and rising growth rate in India, and in terms of its exports. Such a growth rate was clearly stinted by the beef ban in India and reduced the country’s economic potential to become the world’s largest exporter of beef in the global market. Data pertaining to such stinted growth rates of exports of beef in India are given as follows:

Data 1: Country-wise Beef Exports; Before Beef Ban in India
(in ’000 Tonnes*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries/ Years</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>609</td>
<td>917</td>
<td>1,268</td>
<td>1,411</td>
<td>1,765</td>
<td>2,082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>1,596</td>
<td>1,558</td>
<td>1,340</td>
<td>1,524</td>
<td>1,849</td>
<td>1,909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>1,364</td>
<td>1,368</td>
<td>1,410</td>
<td>1,407</td>
<td>1,593</td>
<td>1,851</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>878</td>
<td>1,043</td>
<td>1,263</td>
<td>1,112</td>
<td>1,175</td>
<td>1,167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>514</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>503</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>529</td>
<td>579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraguay</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>326</td>
<td>378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>5223</td>
<td>426</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>332</td>
<td>378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uruguay</td>
<td>376</td>
<td>347</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Union</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>445</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>7,449</td>
<td>7,794</td>
<td>8,072</td>
<td>8,138</td>
<td>9,126</td>
<td>10,003</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Carcass Weight Equivalent Source: US Department of Agriculture

Such a stinted growth rate has forced India to step down as the World #1 exporter of beef in the global market. This is clearly evident from the following data.
CONCLUSION

Considering all the above mentioned, it can be clearly seen that the social aspect and the economic aspect of the beef ban in India are closely related and connected to each other. By bridging this gap, we can say that any similar issues which create a significant impact on Social/Cultural aspects will also have its impacts on the Economic field due to their interdependency.

Throughout the duration of this issue, we have seen and examined the various legal and economic perspectives provided to us by news and other media coverage. The economic impacts of such amendment of the bill were not highlighted in the same media. Thus, we aim to serve the purpose of connecting the social and economic aspects, in order to bring into perspective how social aspects can impact the economy either positively or negatively.

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