



**SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVISM AND SIMULATED  
DEMOCRACIES: A COMPARATIVE EXPLORATION OF  
#FEESMUSTFALL (SOUTH AFRICA) AND #JALLIKATTU  
PROTESTS (TAMIL NADU, INDIA)**

**BY**

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Media and Cultural Studies (2024)**

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**As the candidate's Supervisor, I agree to the submission of this dissertation:**



**Signature**

**Date: 05 May 2024**

***Social Media Activism and Simulated Democracies:***

*A Comparative Exploration of #FeesMustFall (South Africa) and #Jallikattu Protests (Tamil Nadu, India)*

***சமூக வலைதள போராட்டங்களும்  
உருவகப்படுத்தப்பட்ட மக்களாட்சியும்:***

*தென் ஆப்ரிக்காவின் பல்கலைக்கழக #கட்டணம் வீழ்  
வேண்டும் போராட்டமும் தமிழ்நாட்டின்  
#ஜல்லிக்கட்டு போராட்டமும் ஒரு ஒப்பீட்டு ஆராய்ச்சி*

***Ubushosovu Basezinkundleni zokuxhumana kanye  
Nenkululeko Yamanga***

*Ukuhlola Okuqhathaniswayo #FeesMustFall (Iningizimu  
Afrika) kanye ne #Jallikattu Protests (Izwe laseTamil)*

**Kameshwaran Envernathan Govender**

**University of KwaZulu-Natal**

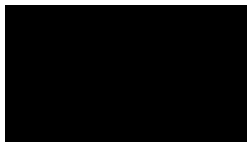
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I hereby certify that I have edited the language usage and referencing in Mr Govender's document in its entirety.

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## **Dedications**

*To all the genuine efforts of activists fighting towards a better world*

## Abstract

Social media's transformation into public spheres has influenced activism and shifted protests and social movements into digital spaces. The #FeesMustFall movement (2015) campaigned for free education in South Africa. #FMF was precipitated by the #RhodesMustFall movement (2015) which called for the removal of the statue of Cecil Rhodes at the University of Cape Town, which represented colonialism. #RMF called for the decolonisation of education and #FMF reiterated the same. In parallel, the #Jallikattu protests (2017) in Tamil Nadu was against the Supreme Court's ban of 'Jallikattu' a 2000-year-old cultural sport with bulls. The protests were triggered by the cumulative grievances of the people of Tamil Nadu against India's union government. The temporal proximity, student-led activism, social media influence of the protests and the nations being post-colonial democracies invoked the interest for this inter-continental comparison of protest cultures. This study explores a unique comparison of democracies via protest movements in South Africa and India. The researcher has collected data from blogs, e-newspapers, e-magazines, online news aggregators, e-editions of mainstream media, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and personal interviews to compare the discourses, which emerged from both these social campaigns. A snowball sampling method and open-ended interviews were used to collect data from student protestors, university faculty, media persons and the general citizenry. Foucault's discourse analysis and Yin's explorative case study analysis were used to analyse the collected data. Giddens' structuration theory provided a theoretical lens to how colourism, police brutality, racism, casteism, sexism, centres of protests, media bias, and diaspora support affected the social movements. Baudrillard's simulacra and simulation theory afforded further analysis of the levels of democracies in both these nations. Drawing from the above events and narratives the researcher posits a simulation of democracy in South Africa and India disrupting normative ideals.

### Keywords:

Social Media activism, simulated democracy, #FeesMustFall movement, #Jallikattu protests, student protests

## Iqoqa

Ukuguqulwa kwezinkundla zokuxhumana zibe yimikhakha yomphakathi kube nomthelela kubushosho futhi kwashintsha imibhikisho kanye nokunyakaza komphakathi kwaba yizindawo zedijithali. Inhlango ye-#FeesMustFall (2015) ibikhankasela imfundo yamahhala eNingizimu Afrika. I- #FMF yagqunguzelwa yinhlangano i#RhodesMustFall (2015) eyayithi akususwe isichuse sikaCecil Rhodes eNyuvesi yaseKapa, eyayimele ubukoloniyali. I-#RMF icele ukuthi imfundo isuswe amakoloni futhi i-#FMF iphinde yasho okufanayo. Ngokuhambisanayo, imibhikisho ye-#Jallikattu (2017) e-Tamil Nadu yayimelene nokuvinjelwa kweNkantolo Ephakeme i-'Jallikattu' umdlalo wamasiko oneminyaka engu-2000 ubudala onezinkunzi. Imibhikisho idalwe ukunqwabelana kwezikhalazo zabantu baseTamil ngokumelene nohulumeni wezinyunyana waseNdiya. Ukusondelana kwesikhashana, ubushosho obuholwa ngabafundi, ithonya lenkundla yezokuxhumana lemibhikisho kanye nezizwe ezibusa ngentando yeningi zangemva kobukoloni kwafaka intshisekelo yalokhu kuqhathanisa phakathi kwamazwekazi amasiko okubhikisha. Lolw cwaningo luhlola ukuqhathanisa okuyingqayizivele kwemibuso yentando yeningi ngokusebenzisa imibhikisho eNingizimu Afrika naseNdiya. Umcwani uqoqe idatha evela kumabhulogi, ama-e-newspaper, e-magazines, ama-aggregators wezindaba eziku-inthanethi, ama-e-editions emidiya evamile, i-Facebook, i-Twitter, i-YouTube, kanye nezingxoxo zomuntu siqu ukuze uqhathanise izinkulumo, ezivele kuyo yomibili le mikhankaso yezehlalo. Indlela yesampula ye-snowball kanye nezingxoxo ezivulekile zisetshenziswe ukuqoqa idatha kubabhikishi babafundi, ubuhlakani benyuvesi, abantu bezindaba kanye nezakhamuzi ezijwayelekile. Ukuhlaziywa kwenkulumo kaFoucault kanye nokuhlaziywa kocwaningo lwe-Yin lokuhlola kusetshenziswe ukuhlaziywa idatha eqoqiwe. Ithiyori yesakhiwo ka-Giddens inikeze ilensi yethiyori yokuthi umbala, isihluku samaphoyisa, ukucwasa ngokwebala, ukubandlulula ngokobulili, izikhungo zemibhikisho, ukuchema kwabezindaba, kanye nokusekelwa kwabantu abavela kwamanye amazwe kuyithinte kanjani izinhlangano zomphakathi. I-simulacra kanye nethiyori yokulingisa ka-Baudrillard inikeze ukuhlaziywa okwengeziwe kwamazinga entando yeningi kuzo zombili lezi zizwe. Ngokuthatha izehlakalo ezingenhla kanye nezindaba ezixoxwayo umcwani umise ukulingiswa kwentando yeningi eNingizimu Afrika nase-India okuphazamisa imibono evamile.

### Amagama angukhiye:

Ubushosho bezinkundla zokuxhumana, intando yeningi elungisiwe, ukunyakaza kwe-#FeesMustFall, imibhikisho ye-#Jallikattu, imibhikisho yabafundi

## **Abbreviations, acronyms and initialism**

#FMF – #FeesMustFall

#RMF – #RhodesMustFall

AIADMK – All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam

ANC – African National Congress

CBD – The Convention on Biological Diversity

CBSE – Central Board of Secondary Examination

CDA – Critical Discourse Analysis

CEO – Chief Executive Officer

D. Film – Documentary Film

DK – Dravida Kazhagam

DMK – Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam

FB – Facebook

FB Image – Facebook Image

LGBTIQ+ – Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer, Asexual and many more

LTTE – The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam

NEET – National Eligibility cum Entrance Exam

PETA – People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals

PCA Act – Prevention of Cruelty of Animals Act

POID – Parti ouvrier indépendant démocratique

RMIT – Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology

SABC – South African Broadcasting Corporation

TNSBE – Tamil Nadu State Board Education

TRP – Target Rating Point

UCT University of Cape Town

UCKAR – University Currently Known as Rhodes

UKZN – University of KwaZulu-Natal

WITS – University of Witwatersrand

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

*Protest beyond the law is not a departure from democracy, it is absolutely essential to it.*

- Howard Zinn<sup>1</sup>

### 1.1 Background

People in India and South Africa live in democracies. The citizens of these nations participate in the democratic process of elections every five years. People with voting rights and the willingness to vote stand in queues and cast their votes in elections. Then they wait for another five years to be part of this process again. However, democracy goes beyond electoral contests and encompasses active citizen participation, accountability and engagement in decision making process. Social movements act as a tool in deepening the democratic process. This research magnifies these steps from two such recent instances of confronting states for better democracy: the #FeesMustFall movement (2015) and the #Jallikattu protests (2017). These movements showcased the power of citizens to raise their voices, express dissent, and demand change from their governing entities. Young citizens took to the streets, demonstrating their commitment to democratic values and their willingness to hold their representatives accountable.

The continuity of the racially discriminative past of South Africa and the ongoing nation-state conflict (hegemony of the union over its states) between India and Tamil Nadu is arguably the key contributing factor to the inequality in both these societies. The #FeesMustFall protest in South Africa (2015) was the voice of the students from various universities in South Africa for free tertiary education<sup>2</sup>. The #FeesMustFall movement took inspiration from the #RhodesMustFall protests (2015) by students at the University of Cape Town for the removal of the statue of Cecil John Rhodes, which represented institutionalised racism (Bosch, 2016:1). The #FeesMustFall movement in South Africa gained significant momentum and visibility through the use of Twitter with 278,859 tweets and 807,775 retweets in October 2015 (Luescher, Makhubu, Oppelt, Mokhema and Radasi, 2021:114). The attempts made by the University of Cape Town to curtail and stop the use of the hashtag #FeesMustFall through court action backfired and grew this movement from a localised one to a global issue (Peterson, Radebe and Mohanty, 2016).

Even after the end of Apartheid, the majority of the previously discriminated Black population of South Africa still suffer from poverty and are excluded from a good life in South Africa. Many

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<sup>1</sup> Howard Zinn was an American historian, playwright, philosopher and activist who focused on race, class and war.

<sup>2</sup> The Fees Must Fall movement was initially started for the reduction of incremental fees in tertiary education, however, it was intentioned towards free education. The name itself suggests fall of fees or fees increments.

live-in shacks with inadequate civic facilities such as water supply, sanitation, road maintenance, electricity etc. Education in South Africa was often inaccessible to Blacks due to racism in the Apartheid era and due to poverty in democracy. The protests for free education, better accessibility, and improvement in residences have always been fought for from before and after the birth of democracy in South Africa. In 2015, these voices were heard loud and received public attention through the #RhodesMustFall movement and #FeesMustFall movement.

#*Jallikattu* Protests (2017) was the outcry of the student community and the general citizenry of Tamil Nadu (India) against a ban on a 2000-year-old Tamil cultural sport with bulls which was imposed by the Supreme Court of India after a petition filed by the Animal Welfare Board of India and PETA India. The protest started in a small village called *Alanganallur* in Tamil Nadu with 200 protestors, and grew massively after they were arrested. The protests attracted the participation of students and common citizens in huge numbers throughout Tamil Nadu through the influence of Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube and Twitter with over 6,00,000 Tweets from January 5<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> (Balaji and Thirumalai, 2017). The ban of *Jallikattu* sport in Tamil Nadu by the Supreme Court of India demonstrated the hegemony of India's Union government on the state of Tamil Nadu. The Union Government of India failed to acknowledge that the indigenous bulls are raised in Tamil Nadu mainly for this sport and breeding purposes. With newer technology such as tractors, bulls are not used in farming as they were in the past. If the sport is banned farmers will be forced to sell their bulls for slaughter and opt for imported artificial insemination. The occurrence will bring extinction to the native breeds. India imposed the ban without consulting these farmers who are the citizens of the nation.

Social media has played an important role as public spheres in the influence of both these movements. Twitter was effectively used to create awareness about the #FeesMustFall movement and it spread from the University of Wits to several university campuses within South Africa. The movement also had considerable support from international activists and student communities. Similarly, the #*Jallikattu* protests were mobilised through the awareness created amongst the Tamil communities in Tamil Nadu and the Tamil diaspora from around the world via Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube and Twitter.

The #RhodesMustFall campaign and the #*Jallikattu* protests started at the grassroots level on social media. The #RhodesMustFall protest was not just for the mere removal of the statue of Cecil John Rhodes, but it was against racial discriminations and inequalities that have been carried over from the Apartheid era into democratic South Africa. The movement also called for the decolonisation of the curriculum in South Africa (Bosch, 2016:1). Hence it led to the #FeesMustFall movement

which was a protest against the prohibitive fees hikes in higher education in South Africa and rolled the ball towards the cause of free education in South Africa.

Similarly, the *#Jallikattu* Protests were not merely for the removal of the ban on the bull sport or banning PETA India. It was the outburst from cumulative grievances which include the following: water sharing conflict between states, farmers suicides, economic depression due to demonetization in 2015 and the lack of efforts taken by the Indian state to stop the genocide of Tamils in Sri Lanka during the end of the civil war (18<sup>th</sup> May 2009). The grievances also included the gradual imposition of Hindi in Tamil Nadu where only Tamil and English are official languages, and the imposition of national-level competitive exams for entry into studies like medicine etc. (Kalaiyarasan, 2017). Even though the movement was consolidated under the banner of the *Jallikattu* sport, these other issues were also discoursed by many groups within the protests (Personal Interview 4, Tamil Nadu, 2020)

Free education (in South Africa) and the removal of the ban on the *Jallikattu* sport (in India) were the major issues discoursed in these social movements. These discourses aimed at bettering democracy within the framework of these nations. In this research, the two protests have been investigated in relation to the responses of governments to these social movements. Further, this research comparatively looks into the other discourses such as colourism, police brutality, racism, casteism, sexism, heterosexism, diasporic involvement and transnational involvement that emerged from the movements and describes how democracy is contested through digital activism.

## **1.2 Research focus**

The thesis is a comparative research study of two student-led grassroots protest movements catalysed by social media: the *#FeesMustFall* movement in South Africa and the *#Jallikattu* protests in Tamil Nadu, India. The main focus of the thesis is to analyse the discourses that were constructed on social media, as well as those supported and contested by legacy media. Qualitative interviews furthered the aims of the research. Critical discourse analysis is used to analyse the data in order to understand how social media activism reveals the simulation of democracies. The various themes of discourses that emerged from both movements include colourism, police brutality, racism, casteism, patriarchy, gender-based violence, heterosexism, the centre of protests, media attention, diasporic support, and transnational political community involvement. These themes appeared parallel in both movements. The research aims to analyse the impact of these themes on the structure and agents of democracy, in order to determine the extent to which democracies are simulated in India and South Africa.

### **1.3 Motivation of the study**

The researcher has lived both in India and South Africa and has witnessed several of the social injustices and inequalities present in both these nations. Further, the researcher was observant of both the social movements: #FeesMustFall movement in 2015 and #Jallikattu protests in 2017. Being a student, both the student led protests invoked much interest and allowed the researcher to look closely into the movements and collect preliminary data. The various discourses which were raised in these campaigns which narrate the injustices and inequalities in both these democracies further motivated the researcher to conduct this research study.

### **1.4 Chapters of the thesis**

The first chapter is the introduction of the thesis, which provides the readers with the background of the two protest movements: #FeesMustFall movement, South Africa (2015) and #Jallikattu protests, Tamil Nadu in India (2017). The chapter explains why the researcher was motivated to conduct this research work. Finally, it orients the readers about the consecutive chapters of this thesis.

The review of literature is the second chapter of this research work, which discusses the existing literature about the two case studies: the #FeesMustFall movement from South Africa and the #Jallikattu protests from Tamil Nadu. The chapter further reviews the literature, which explains the different protest movements from around the globe which have been influenced by social media. The literature on the dual effects of social media, which has positively and negatively impacted social activism has been covered in this chapter. Finally, the literary sources on the statuses of democracies in India and South Africa have been examined to provide a complete context to this research study.

The third chapter is the theoretical framework. This chapter organises the theories, which map the concepts and ideas discussed in this thesis. Baudrillard's "Simulacra and Simulation" is the central theory which has aided the framing of the title of the thesis 'Simulation of Democracy'. Stanley's summation of how fascism works delimits democracy from fascism for a clearer picture of the simulation of democracy. Giddens's theory of structuration is the golden thread, which sews the micro and macro discourses together which affected and influenced the two social movements. Foucault deconstructs the ideas of power, actions of surveillance, and characteristics of governments through his theories of power, governmentality and panopticism. Habermas's conceptualisation of the public sphere, ideal speech situation within the public sphere, communicative rationality, communicative action and critical theory deciphers protest movements, and functions of protestors and citizens in building better civic discourses. Habermas and Fuchs

further contribute to the contestation of the public sphere by legacy media and social media. Freudenburg's and Alario's perspectives on diversionary reframing and Chomsky's manufacturing of consent and propaganda model explain the actions of politicians and powerful establishments in controlling the minds and actions of the people in supporting their agendas. Maldonado-Torres' and Grosfuguel's ideas of decolonisation elucidate the effects of colonisation in the past, present and future and the importance of decolonisation of existing structures of education and democracy in the betterment of people's lives in formerly colonised nations. Fanon's masterwork "Black Skin, White Masks" provides significant insights into the study of decolonisation, racism and colourism. Biko is an important activist against Apartheid in South Africa and his thoughts on Apartheid provide the basis for understanding why the #FeesMustFall movement happened in South Africa. Periyar and Ambedkar are stalwarts of anti-caste activism in India, and their scholarship reflects on the inequalities in Tamil Nadu and India. The attempt in this chapter was to focus on the key global theorists and the relevant regional theorists.

The fourth chapter outlines the research methods and methodologies which structure the research work. The chapter details the epistemological considerations, methodologies of data analysis, the sources and methods of data collection. The data for the study was collected from e-newspaper media, social media such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, blog sites and qualitative interviews from protestors, supporters of the cause and the observers of the protests including students, faculty, media persons, scholars and common citizenry through a snowball sampling technique. The data collected were analysed through Yin's exploratory case study analysis, Foucault's critical discourses, and media quantitative analysis were constructed using technical tools such as Voyant and Microsoft Excel. The chapter concludes with the limitations of the study and reflects on the relative privilege of the researcher in conducting this study.

The fifth chapter showcases the sources of the data collected and presented in this study. The online media sources of data are represented in a tabular form. The social media data was a sample of the number of tweets collected from Twitter related to the #FeesMustFall movement and the #Jallikattu protests, which are represented in a world map by plotting them geographically to the different regions from where the tweets emerged. Further, the number of sample tweets and retweets from the two movements are demonstrated in trend line graphical representations. The number of Facebook pages and groups and the YouTube videos, which emerged from different keyword searches related to the movements and the number of personal interviews conducted for the study are represented in tabular forms. The presentation of data collected attempts to showcase it in a more visual, graphical format.

The sixth chapter guides the readers into the data analysis section of the thesis. In this section, the researcher lists the various themes and discourses such as colourism, police brutality, racism, casteism, sexism, heterosexism, selective media attention/media bias and the diasporic involvement and transnational support, which emerged in parallel from both the social movements, which act as a significant analytical tool in revealing micro discrepancies of democracy within the movements and macro divergences of a simulation of democracies in India and South Africa. The next four chapters (seven, eight, nine and ten) of the thesis are sub-chapters of the data analysis and interpretation chapter.

Chapter Seven deals with the phenomenon of colourism within activism. Colourism is a newer concept in academic scholarship. Even though this phenomenon affects every spectrum of life such as education, employment, marriage etc., there is a dearth of literature available in this area. Colourism in activism outlines divergence of democracy within the #FeesMustFall movement and the #Jallikattu protests. The chapter highlights a novel theory that emerged from this research, the cameraman syndrome and how this has impacted the democracy of the social movements. The chapter deals with the appearance of colourism in social movements, which has affected both the #FeesMustFall movement and the #Jallikattu protests.

Police brutality in social movements is discussed in Chapter Eight. The chapter navigates through brutal stories narrated by protestors and the general citizenry who were affected by the atrocities of the state-sanctioned violence. This chapter is the key to the idea of a simulated democracy as the transition of South Africa and India from apartheid and colonisation to democracies has not changed the colonial structures such as the police force to be people-centric. The police remain to be power centric with functions of surveillance and control of the people. The chapter discusses an original theory of the *werewolf* syndrome, which prevails in the current police structure of new democracies and can be remedied only through the decolonisation of the previous colonial structures.

Chapter Nine is an examination of the narratives of race, caste, gender, centres of protests and media attention that were manifested within the social movements. The chapter reveals the complex structures such as patriarchy, caste pride and gender bias which are embedded in the *Jallikattu* sport and also were demonstrated at the #Jallikattu protests. The Black community in South Africa has been affected when it comes to education, and Black women suffer the most. Education in South Africa is yet to be decolonised and it does not majorly include works, knowledge and history of indigenous communities, people of colour and women. The male members from the #FeesMustFall movement showed hostility towards the problems of women and the LGBTIQ+ community faced

within educational institutions in South Africa. The #FeesMustFall movement was voiced by students of all communities, however, the major repercussions such as arrests and suspensions were borne mainly by the Black students and sexual harassments by the female Black students but awards and appreciations were enjoyed by members of other communities. This chapter vividly showcases the micro and macro discrepancies of democracies within the movements and the nations.

Chapter Ten is the finale of the data analysis. The chapter engages the support contributed by the transnational and diasporic engagement of the Tamil and South African diasporas towards the #Jallikattu protests and the #FeesMustFall movement. The chapter echoes the voices, which were heard around the globe in support of the #FeesMustFall movement and the #Jallikattu protests. The chapter details the participants and reasons for the gathering of people in support of the two movements in international spaces.

The final chapter of the thesis concludes all the ideas developed and discussed in the thesis with philosophical understanding and final thoughts. This chapter also provides the future scope of research that can be conducted using this research as a basis. The conclusion chapter synthesizes suggestions and recommendations to academics and activists in their future work.

## Chapter 2: Review of Literature

*Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.*

- Margaret Mead<sup>3</sup>

### 2.1 Introduction

Digital activism is a contemporary form of activism, which has led to social change and awareness with the use of the internet, social media and mobile phones in protests, social movements, and revolutions in various societies around the world (Chon and Park, 2019:72; Bonilla and Rosa, 2015:4; Gillan, Pickerill and Webster, 2008:150). Critics like Morozov (2011) and Gladwell (2010) have raised concerns through their discussions on 'net delusion' and 'weak ties', highlighting the complexities and limitations of digital activism. Leading thinkers (Kalaiyaran, 2017; Bosch, 2016; Abbink, 2012; Gerbaudo, 2012; Harb, 2011; Morozov, 2011) have accentuated and centralized their thinking on the cases from the Arab Springs for their comparative analyses of different hashtag activism throughout the globe. There is either limited or no scholarly discussions, which compare the Indian (specifically Tamil) and African (specifically South African) perspective on these particular phenomena such as digital activism, student activism, protest cultures, social media as a public sphere in social movements, the functioning of democracies, and the nexus between these phenomena. Therefore, this research work aims at exploring a comparison of two social movements that occurred in Tamil Nadu (India) and South Africa.

This explorative study concentrates on the comparison of two social movements: the #FeesMustFall movement from South Africa in 2015-16 and the #Jallikattu protests from Tamil Nadu (India) in 2017. The temporal proximity of these movements curiously did not raise academic interest in possible points of continental comparison. The #FeesMustFall movement was mobilised for free education to alleviate the exclusion of poor Black students from higher education in South Africa (Cele, 2008:78). In parallel, the #Jallikattu protests, in 2017 was against a ban of a two-thousand-year-old sport with bulls by the Supreme Court of India. The protest reflected public discontent with the hegemonic elements of India's Union government on the state of Tamil Nadu (India) (Kalaiyaran, 2017:12). These social movements are discussed in the first part of this chapter.

South Africa and India are socially, politically, and economically unique nations, however serious academic attention on this intercontinental comparison becomes vital owing to the many common

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<sup>3</sup> Margaret Mead was an American Cultural Anthropologist who focused on social issues, women's rights, race relations, environmental concerns, world hunger and nuclear proliferation.

factors they share. Firstly, both these countries were previously colonised by the British (Oliver and Oliver, 2017:1; Sandhu, 2014:1), and continue to face the repercussions of colonisation (Young, 2012:19). Secondly, the challenges of corruption have become an everyday scenario in India and South Africa (Chatterjee and Roychoudhury, 2013; Raghavan, 2013; Pillay, 2004). The independence of these countries has emerged in the fight against colonial oppression and apartheid respectively. However, large numbers of people remain in the shackles of poverty, and corruption and they have to cope with social injustices entangled in South African and Indian society (Ojha, 2016:87; Mulinge and Lesetedi, 1998:15). Thirdly, the diverse natural resources of both these nations are exploited by powerful transnational capitalists (Pandey, 2018; Hansen, Islar and Krause, 2015). Finally, there is a commonality of long-standing systems of social exclusion in both the nations. In South Africa racism was institutionalized via apartheid<sup>4</sup> which lingers post-1994 (Smith, 2022:168). In India, the caste system<sup>5</sup> existed before colonialism, however, caste and coloniality bind to maintain even more complex systems of social exclusion (Veemaraja, 2015). These social exclusion policies have been unlawful for nearly 27 years in South Africa and 74 years in India, and affirmative action and reservation policies are implemented in South Africa and India to elevate the previously discriminated communities (Deane, 2009; Benatar, 2008). There is a positive discrimination through a quota system/reservation policy in public education and employment to develop socially disadvantaged communities due to the caste system in India (Lee, 2021:1534). The Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) policy is a government policy legislated to advance economic transformation and enhance the economic participation of Black people in the South African economy. In effect, an organization or company is required by law to have a certain ratio of Black to White employees (Musabayana and Mutambara, 2022:75-77). However, the deconstruction of the structures erected through Apartheid, colonialism, caste system etc., and the rebuilding of social mobility and social cohesion amongst the citizens of these nations are still unfulfilled (Fintel, 2015; Munshi, 2015).

The focal points of the study, against the temporal background of the two social movements, will be to explore the continuity of the racially discriminative past of South Africa (Fourie, 2017:7) and the continuity of the nation-state conflict and hegemony of centre on the state (Pandian and Kalaiyarasan, 2013) between India's union government and the state of Tamil Nadu. In South Africa, the Black communities were undernourished with poor education facilities during the

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<sup>4</sup> Apartheid was an institutionalised racial segregation which was practised in South Africa from 1948 to 1990.

<sup>5</sup> Caste system is a form of social stratification which is characterised by endogamy, hereditary transmission of lifestyle, status, occupation, customs, social interaction, and exclusion.

Apartheid rule (McKeever, 2017:119). Similarly, the expensive fee system prevailing in higher education in South Africa continues to bar the poor Black youth to educate themselves and develop their communities (Cele, 2008:78). Currently, the average cost of tertiary education for South Africans is R64,200 per year (Mafilika, 2021).

India is one of the most diverse and multicultural countries in the world (Mishra and Kumar, 2014:66). The cemented federal structure of India comprises unique states with different languages, cultures, food and religious practices (Ghosh, 2020). Instead of celebrating multiculturalism, Indianness is centred on oneness with the imposition of the Hindi language and Hindu culture on all citizens (Aran, 2019:7-9). Tamil Nadu is one among many states in India which has always fought this imposition and hegemony. During the partition of India and Pakistan, the Justice Party of Tamil Nadu also proposed the secession of the southern states as Dravida Nadu<sup>6</sup> from India (UmarSadiq, 2017:6). This idea was legally quashed after the independence and Union of India through the Indian constitution, which prohibits the secession of states. The demands of secession from varied parts of India have always been dealt with violence by India's union government (Hariharan, 2014:22). However, this separatist idea in the southern states gained traction again when a ban on beef<sup>7</sup> was proposed by India's union government in 2017. #Dravidanadu trended on Twitter in May 2017 from Tamil Nadu and Kerala as a protest against a singular cultural idea imposed on the whole of India (Pullanoor, 2017).

The spatial positioning of the researcher through the lived experience in both these countries allows a unique perspective and command in conducting this comparative research study. This thesis aims at understanding how discourses were constructed on social media to influence the mobilisation of the #FeesMustFall movement in South Africa and the #Jallikattu protests in Tamil Nadu (India). Technological progress and the development of social media have impacted the way people gain awareness and support social issues and causes (Meyer and Bray, 2013; Van de Donk, Loader, Nixon and Rucht, 2004; Diani, 2000). Correspondingly, social media has acted as a catalyst, playing a pivotal role in social movements (Loader and Mercea, 2011). This research provides a contextual detail for both the protest movements and explores theorists' appraisal of social media as a viable platform for civic protest as some consider socio-political discussions and protests on social media as a 'social media public sphere'<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> *Dravida Nadu* translates to the country of Dravidians (South Indians).

<sup>7</sup> Beef is a staple food for several communities in India, even Hindus. However, the current political stance in India is against beef eating, as cows are sacred to many Hindus.

<sup>8</sup> The social media public sphere is a term constructed to express the social media sites being used as a public sphere to promote socio-political ideas, which influences protests and social movements.

The second part of this chapter explains the different social movements around the globe influenced by the usage of social media platforms as public spheres. The aim is to understand the transition of social revolution after the advent of social media and to comprehend the portrayal of protests, social movements and social revolutions by social media and online media. The review also will look at the limitations of social media, which is as much subject to twin effects of corporate concentration and government control and surveillance as legacy media may have been. However concentrated, media and media freedom are still seen as a key indicator in democracy indices. Thus, social media freedom is reviewed within the context of protest culture across the globe. The key point here is to ascertain the play of social media protests in regime change and more specifically the advancement of democracy.

The research work will attempt to explore the responses of the governments to these social movements mobilised by social media. Hence, the chapter concludes with literary sources explaining the status of democracy pertaining to the centre-state battle in the Indian Union and free education in South Africa. The review concludes with a peremptory discussion of democracy in the two nations of interest: India and South Africa. A key objective of the study is to gain insight into what social media protest reveals about the functioning of the largest democracy in the World, India (Harlow and Chadda, 2015:672), and the most celebrated democracy, South Africa (Inglehart, Foa, Peterson and Welzel, 2008:275).

## **2.2 Background of the study**

In the following section, the major and relevant literature which deals with the #FeesMustFall movement from South Africa and the #Jallikattu protests from India have been reviewed. The review provides a significant background to the study. Further, it emphasizes the gap in the existing literature which is the comparison of both these movements which started at a grassroots level by students and was mobilised through social media and happened in a close temporal proximity.

### **2.2.1 South Africa: #FeesMustFall movement**

*Only education, self-respect and rational qualities will uplift the downtrodden.*

- Periyar E. V. Ramasamy<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> E.V. Ramasamy was called as *Periyar* meaning ‘the respected one’ or ‘elder’. He founded the *Dravida Kazhagam* in 1944 which has crafted the politics of Tamil Nadu since then. He was a social justice activist against gender and caste inequality.

Koen, Cele and Libhaber (2006) reveal that 25% of South African students drop out of universities because of financial constraints and other forms of exclusions. According to a report on Fundiconnect (2023), currently the university drop outs have increased to 50-60%. Cele (2009) and Postma (2018) claim students are the future of politics and the architects of social change in South Africa but the youth from previously disadvantaged communities are excluded from the realm of higher education. This tends to affect the progress of the nation. Higher education in South Africa was constructed with the bricks of exclusion, marginalization and alienation during Apartheid. A lack of a paradigm shift in this phenomenon has been the reason for the recent uprisings amongst the student communities in South Africa (Chetty and Merret, 2014; Giroux, 2014; Higgins, 2013; Strom and Martin, 2013).

The #FeesMustFall movement was inspired by the #RhodesMustFall movement, which started on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2015, at a grassroots level through Twitter which quickly became a public sphere for protest discourses (Olagunju, Frankish and Wade, 2022:2; Luescher, 2016:1). The #RhodesMustFall protests were staged by the students from the University of Cape Town for the removal of the statue of Cecil John Rhodes, a British colonialist which represented institutionalized racism and a culture of exclusion of Black students (Bosch, 2016:2; Harvey and Fakir, 2016:26). However, the #RhodesMustFall protest was not just a campaign for the mere removal of the statue of Cecil John Rhodes, it was staged against all the racial discriminations and inequalities that have been carried over from the Apartheid era into democratic South Africa. Bosch (2016:7-10) notes the counter-memory that was represented by the statue of Rhodes to the students who come from families who were previously disadvantaged. The campaign changed the identity of a selected memory from the past. She discusses how #RMF on Twitter corresponds with Bickford's (1996) listening across differences or political listening, which is a significant way to contest oppressive symbols because usually, the woes of the oppressed go unheard. The counter memory highlights the remedy and resistance against the continuity of the racial discriminative past of South Africa, which is one of the focal dimensions of this study.

In October 2015, the student community of South Africa raised a collective voice for free tertiary education in South Africa, which became the #FeesMustFall movement (Ndebele, 2016). The movement started when the government proposed an increment in the fee structure of tertiary education in South Africa. The fees<sup>10</sup> were already high and unaffordable for the majority of Black students, hence this increment proposal precipitated the #FMF movement. The spectrum of the

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<sup>10</sup> The average university fee in 2015 was R40,000 and upwards, whereas the average income of a Black person constituted only R2,900 per month (Businesstech, 2016; Baloyi and Isaacs, 2015).

movement broadened to focus on issues of student accommodation, the language of instruction of the courses and the outsourcing of support staff like gardeners, cleaners, and security guards. The #FeesMustFall movement had supportive hashtags like #OutsourcingMustFall and #Shackville<sup>11</sup> (Mavunga, 2019:81-82). The #FMF movement grew rapidly in scale reaching 278,859 tweets and 807,775 retweets in October 2015 (Luescher et al., 2021:114). The #FMF movement was triggered by the #RMF protests (2015) from the University of Cape Town and Stellenbosch University. The #FMF started at the University of Witwatersrand (WITS) and soon spread to other universities in South Africa.



**Figure 2-1: The removal of the Rhodes' statue from UCT in response to #RMF (Source: NBC News)**

The movement shut down many universities around South Africa because it witnessed violent clashes between the police and the students (Sesant, Kekana and Nicolaides, 2015). A march by the students to the parliament of South Africa (Luescher, 2017:2), calling the then President Jacob Zuma to address the issue of free education was dispersed by the riot police with stun grenades, taser guns, coloured gas, riot shields and truncheons (Davis, Swingler and Van der Merwe, 2015). Peaceful protesting was met with force, which is clearly against the freedom of speech and expression of students. Musitha (2018:106) expects democracies to use democratic principles such as participation, discussions, engagements, negotiations, and persuasions to solve the issues in society. Musitha comments that the current democracy in South Africa is no different from colonial

<sup>11</sup> #OutsourcingMustFall was a movement for the permanency of contract workers in university spaces of South Africa. #Shackville was a movement at University of Cape Town for students who became homeless due to lack of space at on-campus student residences.

rule and apartheid rule, where state violence and imprisonment were used to tackle the challenges faced by the government. Musitha uses a literary survey to expose that South Africa used undemocratic means to deal with the #FMF and #RMF movements.

Peterson et al. (2016) discuss the attempts made by the University of Cape Town to curtail and stop the use of the hashtag #FeesMustFall through court action, which backfired and elevated this movement from a localised one to a global issue. The movement received attention and support on social media from the student community in different parts of the world (Whittles, 2015). Peterson et al. (2016) elucidate the situations in which the #FMF movement was created and how Twitter was used as a platform to express the views of the students and debunk news reports that were against the protestors. Social Media Tracking and Analyses Software were used to capture the tweets. They examined the overall flow of the tweets, the geographical distribution of the tweets, and how censorship of actions escalated trending to a global level. This emphasizes that, if social media is used wisely, it can aid in creating awareness and support for social issues from far and wide.



**Figure 2-2: Protest by South African students from the #FMF movement (Source: [theconversation.com](http://theconversation.com))**

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”. These words of Nelson Mandela (2003) can only be realized when the prospect of education reaches every youth from the most downtrodden societies. This will bring an end to the continuity of privilege, which

is enjoyed only by many whites and a few elite Blacks in South Africa (Swartz, Arogundade and Davis, 2014:345).

Postma (2018) uses the protests such as the #FeesMustFall movement and the #RhodesMustFall movement to enunciate the need for the extensive inclusion of youth from previously disadvantaged communities into higher education, in order to deconstruct the social order, which creates social injustices. Moja, Luescher and Schreiber (2015) reason the importance of equity and social justice in education. They also discuss the various other education-based movements in Africa, such as the protests by students from the University of Nairobi in Kenya against the hike of tuition fees and demand for a better learning environment. The student uprising in 2015 at Makerere University of Uganda was against a new tuition fees policy. Another eruption of protests in 2015 occurred against the poor campus infrastructure at the University of Lagos in Nigeria, after the death of a student by a damaged power cable in the university campus. Moja et al. also throw light on other similar protests by students such as the #BlackOnCampus movement in 2015 which was an expression of the under-representation of Black students at universities in the USA. The #RhodesMustFall movement (2015) from the University of Cape Town inspired protests at Princeton University in the USA. The #WilsonMustFall movement (2015) was called for the removal of the name of Woodrow Wilson from the Princeton University campus because of his racist tendencies and policies of segregation. There are some studies (Bosch, 2016; Nel, 2016; Olorunnisola and Martin, 2013) which compare the European, American, and Arab perspectives of social movements with African perspectives, however, there is a lack of literature in the comparison of protests and social movements with the Indian and African viewpoints.

Seifert (1938) claims that a society which is deprived from knowing its own history and indigenous knowledge will cease to exist. The #FMF movement also restates the discourses on the decolonisation of knowledge and the inclusion of indigenous knowledge in the curriculum which was part of the #RMF movement (Butler-Adam, 2016:1). Gibson (2016:579) remarks that the collective of the #studentsmovements of South Africa in 2015 has been the most significant student revolution after the Soweto uprisings in 1976 as it demands serious reforms in higher education which includes the decolonisation of the education system. Luescher (2016:145) says the government's responses to the series of student movements in 2015 were the highest and most immediate that democratic South Africa has encountered. Luescher emphasizes that the 0% increase in fees for the 2017 academic year and the removal of the Rhodes statue from UCT was the preliminary step towards social justice in higher education and beyond. Mangcu (2015) points out that the #studentsmovements have created important historic moments in South Africa. Isdahl

(2016:30) states that the various student activists' movements in both democratic South Africa and Apartheid South Africa have been the reasons for real change and progress in South Africa and condemns the description of student activism in the fallist movements as violent. Daddieh (1996:57) illustrates that the university student communities through their struggles have played a critical role in the democratisation of many African countries. Thus, the rigour in the South African student community paves way towards better politics and the development of democracy in the country. However, it is the responsibility of the government to make sure that the youth of South Africa are nurtured to reach this path, by ensuring reforms in the education system, fees policies and inclusion of the youth from previously disadvantaged backgrounds in the higher education territory.

Next, we will look at the literature pertaining to the second case study of this thesis: the #*Jallikattu* protests from India (Tamil Nadu) which occurred in temporal proximity of the #*FeesMustFall* movement.

### **2.2.2 India (Tamil Nadu): #*Jallikattu* protests**

*The best way to fight an alien and oppressive culture is to embrace your own.*

- African Proverb

#*Jallikattu* protests was the outcry of the student community of Tamil Nadu (India) against the ban on a two-thousand-year-old Tamil cultural sport with bulls which was imposed by the Supreme Court of India after a petition filed by the Animal Welfare Board of India and PETA India (Rajagopal, 2016). The protest started in a small village called *Alanganallur* in Tamil Nadu with two hundred protestors, but it grew massively after the protestors from the village were arrested (Kalaiyaran, 2017:10). The protest attracted the participation of students and common citizens in vast numbers throughout Tamil Nadu through the influence of Facebook, WhatsApp, and Twitter, and it is estimated that more than one million people from all over Tamil Nadu came to the streets in protest (Biswas, 2017). This is the largest social movement that Tamil Nadu has witnessed after the anti-Hindi agitations<sup>12</sup> of 1965 (Kalaiyaran, 2017:12). Raja and Velayutham (2017) discuss how social media was responsible for bringing the issue of *Jallikattu* to the eyes of Tamil diasporic communities in different parts of the world. Raja and Velayutham also discuss the identity, homogeneity and solidarity expressed by the Tamil diaspora, through new media in their sentiments

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<sup>12</sup> The anti-Hindi agitations (1937-40, 1965) were a political protest movement against the imposition of Hindi in Tamil Nadu.

towards *Jallikattu*. The Tamil diasporic communities from the UAE, Malaysia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, South Africa, Europe, Australia, Canada, America, and many other countries staged protests, marches and gathered to show their support for the sport (Moorthy, 2018:190). Jayashree, Arul and Yasmin (2019:22-29) use Facebook posts and pages to discuss how social media was used to rally and mobilise people in protest against the ban of *Jallikattu* sport in India.

*Jallikattu*<sup>13</sup> or *Yeru Thazhuvudhal*<sup>14</sup> has its references in ancient Tamil literature such as *Kalithogai*, *Atchiyar kuravai* and *Malaippadukadam*<sup>15</sup> dating from 400 BC onwards (Gautier, 2001; Raja and Velayutham, 2017:57699). It is part of the Pongal festival (harvest festival in Tamil Nadu), which is celebrated in mid-January (Moorthy, 2018). *Jallikattu* is a bull-taming sport in which bulls are released into a crowd of participants one by one and the goal of the participants is to tame a bull by holding onto the hump of a bull and riding along with the bull until it stops (Raja and Velayutham, 2017:57698; Moorthy, 2018). PETA India<sup>16</sup> filed a case to ban this sport because they viewed the sport to be cruel to bulls (Jayashree et al., 2019:22). The ban of *Jallikattu* without consideration of the reformation of the sport is problematic and demonstrates the hegemony of India's Union government on the state of Tamil Nadu. According to the protestors, the court failed to understand that the indigenous bulls are raised in Tamil Nadu only for this sport and breeding. With newer technology such as tractors, bulls are not used in farming as much as in the past. If the sport is banned, the farmers will be forced to sell their bulls for slaughter and opt for imported artificial insemination, which will bring extinction to the traditional breeds of Tamil Nadu (Kalaiyarasan, 2017:11). The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) adopts an international environmental agreement for the preservation of traditional breeds and their ecosystems (Cbd.int, 1992:6). The traditional breeds are the form of indigenous knowledge and cultural expression of the farming communities. India is one of the signatories of CBD and banning the traditional sport will prevent the preservation of these traditional breeds (Anugula, 2016). Moorthy (2018:215) argues that even though PETA (India) has a point, that there is a certain level of cruelty to the animal because of this sport, and the protestors suspect another agenda at play. Moorthy believes that this particular issue was raised to initiate the entry of foreign corporate powers, who want to take over the

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<sup>13</sup> *Jallikattu* is derived from the blending of two Tamil words *Salli* (coins) and *Kattu* (tied), meaning the prize money tied to the horns of the bull.

<sup>14</sup> *Yeru Thazhuvudhal* translates from Tamil to English as Embracing of the Bull. This is the original name of the sport, which is mentioned in ancient Tamil literary texts.

<sup>15</sup> *Kalithogai* is an anthology of poems written by *Nachinarkiniyar*, and *Atchiyar Kuravai* is a theatre- folklore from the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC and *Malaippadukadam* is a poetic work from before 100 BC (Mudaliyar and Apithana, 1931).

<sup>16</sup> PETA India is the Indian counterpart of PETA, an American animal rights organisation.

commerce of artificial insemination for the breeding process by erasing the traditional breeding practices and exploiting the dairy industry in India.



**Figure 2-3: #Jallikattu protests at Marina Beach in Chennai (Source: Scroll.in)**

Kalaiyaran (2017:10-13) comments on the #Jallikattu protests as the trigger of the built-up anger of people against the continuous destructive policies of the Indian Union government and the corporate encroachment on the natural resources in Tamil Nadu. Kalaiyaran (2017) and Govindarajan (2017) explain that the protest had elements of anti-corporate sentiments where PETA was blamed for being influenced by Coca-Cola and Pepsi who were trying to infiltrate the dairy industry in Tamil Nadu. The protest also demonstrated perspectives of a unique Tamil identity to separate from the Indian union's efforts to bring all states under one identity of being “a Hindi-speaking Hindu Indian” (Cherian, 2017). Kalaiyaran (2017) and Balaji (2017) also account for the fact that social media and instant messaging services enabled the gathering of the student protestors and their families at Marina Beach in Chennai which was the largest gathering in Tamil Nadu for the #Jallikattu protests. Further, Kalaiyaran equates this to the Arab Springs by highlighting the movement referred to as “Tamil Springs” and “Thai Revolution”<sup>17</sup>.

The #Jallikattu protests in Tamil Nadu resulted in a temporary lift of the ban through a special ordinance in the state of Tamil Nadu. This was announced on the 20<sup>th</sup> of January 2017. However, the protestors wanting a permanent solution to the issue continued their protests peacefully at Marina Beach in Chennai (Moorthy, 2018). Despite the peaceful protests, on the morning of 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2017, there was a sudden violent clearance of the protestors from the protest grounds by the police. The quick action could have been to conduct the Republic Day celebrations on the beach

<sup>17</sup> *Thai* is the Tamil month, which falls between mid-January to mid-February and refers to new hopes and opportunities. It does not have anything to do with Thailand or Thai language.

in the next three days. The Republic Day celebrations at Marina Beach on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2017 had poor attendance from the people (Sivaraman, 2017). The lack of attendance of the celebrations could have been due to the police brutality on the protestors and public.

Moorthy (2018) claims that the #Jallikattu protests were not merely for the lift of the ban on the bull sport or banning PETA in India, but it was the outbursts of the suppressed grievances of the people of Tamil Nadu. Some of these grievances include the issues such as the water disputes of the Cauvery River<sup>18</sup> and the Mullai Periyar River<sup>19</sup>. These water disputes have deprived Tamil Nadu of getting enough water. Due to failing crops, many farmers from this region have committed suicide. The efforts of the union government have not resulted in real-time solutions to these problems (Sharma, Hipel and Schweizer, 2020:17).

Next, the thirty-year-long civil war in Sri Lanka between the Liberation Tamil Tigers of Tamil Eelam and the Sri Lankan army ended brutally killing thousands of Tamil Civilians in 2009<sup>20</sup>. India did not intervene in support of the Tamil Civilians in Sri Lanka yet lent its support to the Sri Lankan government. The then President of Sri Lanka, Mahindra Rajapaksa, thanked the Indian government for the support during the war against the Tamil rebel forces (Indian Express, 2009). Then, the introduction of NEET in 2016, an all-India medical entrance examination for students who want to pursue medicine, was being contested. This is in opposition to the already existing system of using grade 12 board exam marks. This has troubled the students from Tamil Nadu, especially from rural areas who find it difficult to cope with a centrally designed examination based on the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) syllabus opposed to their learning from the Tamil Nadu State Board Education (TNSBE). The different exams required students from Tamil Nadu to study a new syllabus, even though the one they completed (TN STATE board) had been deemed adequate for entry into higher education up until this time. The last straw that broke the camel's back was the

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<sup>18</sup>The Cauvery Issue is a river dispute between the state of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. It is in existence since the pre-independence era of India. The government of Karnataka does not permit the stipulated release of water by the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal to Tamil Nadu. This affects the farmers and agriculturists of Tamil Nadu.

<sup>19</sup>Mullai Periyar is a river dispute between the state of Kerala and Tamil Nadu. Tamil Nadu does not get enough water from the Mullai Periyar Dam. The Kerala government refuses to increase the water height in the dam because the dam is more than 120 years old.

<sup>20</sup> The indigenous Tamil minority of Sri Lanka demanded a nation of its own called "Tamil Eelam" in the Northern and Eastern regions of Sri Lanka. This was called for by the Liberations Tamil Tigers of Eelam (LTTE), an armed guerrilla rebel group from 1983. The end of the civil war in 2009 with the defeat of LTTE witnessed a massacre of Tamils, and the disappearance and displacement of Tamil civilians by the Sri Lankan army.

mysterious death of the chief minister of Tamil Nadu J Jayalalithaa<sup>21</sup> on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2016 after she was hospitalised for 75 days. Her visitors were restricted to only medical professionals and her caretaker. Even ministers and politicians from her party were not allowed to see her. Yet the ministers and politicians kept informing the public about the health status of the chief minister and later admitted those were lies sold to them by Jayalalitha's caretaker.<sup>22</sup> (Manasa and Ramakrishnan, 2017). After a month of Jayalalithaa's demise, the #Jallikattu protests happened. Moorthy explains that these series of events frustrated the Tamils and eventually erupted in the form of the #Jallikattu protests. Consecutively, the discussion of the massacres which happened before the #FeesMustFall movement in South Africa and after the #Jallikattu protests in India will provide a glimpse of the status of democracy in South Africa and India and the need for a study of this nature.

### **2.2.3 Marikana and Thoothukudi: massacres in democracies**

Von Holdt (2013:590) and Austin (1994) claim the politics in India and South Africa to be aggressive and violent against social and political activists. Naicker (2016) takes us through the different events that shook the democratic integrity of South Africa, from the Marikana massacre to the #FeesMustFall movement. The massacre was a tragedy, which happened at the Lonmin Mine in Marikana (South Africa) between 12<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> August 2012. The SAPS (South African Police Service) used lethal force on mine workers who were protesting for a wage rise. The tragedy witnessed the killing of 44 people, injuring 70 people, and the arrest of more than 250 people (Boëttger and Rathbone, 2016). The #Jallikattu protests in Tamil Nadu (India) rolled the stone of social movements in Tamil Nadu. It was followed by many other protests and social movements, such as the #Neduvasal protests (2018), which were against fracking projects and the #Sterlite protests (2018) against environmentally deteriorating corporate expansions (Thirumurthy, 2018; Muralidharan, 2017). The #Sterlite protest voiced disapproval against the expansion of the Sterlite Copper plant in Thoothukudi<sup>23</sup> which was polluting their water resources. The protest was not noticed for more than 100 days by the state or union government, hence 20,000 protestors peacefully marched to the Collectorate in Thoothukudi on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2018. Police started a baton charge and opened fire at the protestors with assault rifles because they tried to cross the barricades and enter the Collectorate office. The #Sterlite protests witnessed a massacre of 13 people and the injury of 102 persons (Thirumurthy, 2018). The Tamil Nadu government claimed the shootout was

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<sup>21</sup> J. Jayalalithaa was a politician and a leading actress during 1960-70s. She was elected to be the chief minister of Tamil Nadu 6 times from 1991 to 2016.

<sup>22</sup> V.K. Sasikala was Jayalalithaa's caretaker and friend who succeeded her as acting general secretary of the AIADMK political party from 31<sup>st</sup> Dec 2016 to 17<sup>th</sup> February 2017. Finally, she was removed from the party in April 2022.

<sup>23</sup> *Thoothukudi* is a port city in Tamil Nadu.

unavoidable and was carried out in defence. Journalists in leading Indian news channels using the video footage opined that it was state-sanctioned violence (India Today, 2018; NDTV, 2018). While looking at these events in South Africa and India, it seems there is a similarity in events. Both the events of Marikana massacre and Thoothukudi massacre happened for the benefit of the countries' corporate interests (Hamann, 2019; Pillay, 2018). These events showcase the violence in governance and politics, eroding of democracy in India and South Africa. The violent processes were to stop people from uprising or protesting for their rights. This is against the principles of democracy. The possibility of a deficiency in these democracies raises the curiosity for the researcher to investigate and assess the workings of democracy in India and South Africa. The study will investigate the government's responses and reactions to the case studies of #FeesMustFall in South Africa and #Jallikattu protests in India.

### **2.3 Global protest movements and social media activism**

The review of the literature provides a theoretical understanding of the role played by social media in enabling social protests, movements and even revolutions globally. The social media field has hosted a game of tug-of-war between social activists and capitalistic corporates. The social activists use the social media space to provide awareness on social and political causes, source funding for projects and further mobilize people to campaign, protest, march or even revolt in certain cases for these causes. The corporates use the social media space for advertising, e-commerce, and propagation of political propaganda with profit motives. Hence, it is important to evaluate both sides of the coin to understand the use of social media as a public sphere and a consumption platform. A review of the discussion of global protest movements in the age of social media becomes inevitable for the research agenda of the comparison of the #FeesMustFall movement and #Jallikattu protests which have been substantially enabled by social media in the mobilization and organization of protestors.

#### **2.3.1 Social media public sphere influencing social revolutions**

*Like all technology social media is neutral but is best put to work in the service of building a better world.*

- Simon Mainwaring<sup>24</sup>

Digital technology, which has revolutionized every aspect of human life (Sutton, 2013:4) has also significantly influenced public engagement in the paradigms of social movements and social

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<sup>24</sup> Simon Mainwaring is an author/columnist who has written about how brands and consumers use social media to build a better world.

revolutions (Lovejoy and Saxton, 2012:337; Boyd, 2010; Varnelis, 2008). Social activists from around the globe have used social media as a public sphere to discourse their issues and causes, to spread information and awareness to the public and to organize and publicize social movements (Segerberg and Bennett, 2011:197; Harb, 2011). Likewise, the #FeesMustFall movement and the #Jallikattu protests have reemphasised the opportunities offered by social media in advancing social movements. Social media allows social activists and the public to upload photos and videos, immediately from the grounds of protests (McCosker, 2015; Thorson, Driscoll, Ekdale, Edgerly, Thompson, Schrock and Wells, 2013; Castells, 2012; Gerbaudo, 2012; Hands, 2011) which has exposed the threats and violence by powerful agents against the activists and the supporters of the social movements. Information is directly published on social media by social activists to create critical thinking amongst the general public and expose actual events if suppressed by mainstream media (Boyle and Schmierbach, 2009:1).

According to Fanselow (2008:24) citizen journalism has an impact on legacy media due to its investigative nature and watchdog qualities. Political authority and corporate power have the advantage to control mainstream media. When there is under-representation, misrepresentation, and distortion of news, it will prevent the public from knowing the reality (Davies and Razlogova, 2013:68). Graves (2016:6) enlightens people to refrain from the thought that they do not need their own media voice and believe that mainstream media will entirely showcase the real issues in society. Unlike mainstream media, social media has provided the common citizens with broader opportunities to participate, interact and contribute their views on social issues (Andreas, 2007:2; Iskandar, 2011:1226). Bass (2008:12) says, that with the mere ownership of a modem, the power of the press and news propagation has been transmitted from the hands of the corporations to the common citizens. Social media is easily accessible and affordable to the civil society to bring their issues to light (Stark, Hyll and Behrens, 2010; Benkler, 2006; Bimber, Flanagin and Stohl, 2005; Earl and Schussman, 2003). The researcher has observed that in today's smartphone era, a person is not limited to just writing a commentary or blog on the internet after an issue is over, but can immediately go live on a burning issue using options such as Facebook Live, Instagram Live, Periscope Live and YouTube Live video etc. Cottle (2008:862) underlines the replacement of mainstream media by the internet. The pieces of evidence from protest areas are directly uploaded on social media platforms, which have invited attention to local issues from far and wide (Brodock, Joyce and Zaack, 2009). Lim (2013:637) and Khondker (2011:677) opine that social media promotes democracy by establishing a platform for freedom of opinion. Today, social media is the most common gateway to digital activism. However, the evolution of social media did not begin with activism in mind (Harlow and Guo, 2014:463).

Sheedy (2011) argues that social change is only possible through collective work as an alternative to the usual personal use of social media. Collective work can amplify the awareness of an issue from a local to a global level and help can be given and sought from any part of the world. Correspondingly, this has been evident in the cases of #FeesMustFall movement and #Jallikattu protests, which had global attention influencing protests for similar causes and diasporic and international support for the same. The discourses on the social media public sphere bring immense awareness to the people about their rights, to express their views and to mobilize people to fight for them. Sheedy's research is a consolidation of how social media was used in notable cases such as the Mumbai attacks, in 2008, the Green Revolution in Iran in 2009, Earthquake in Haiti, in 2010, and presents a case study of the Egyptian Revolution, in 2011. The key issues of social media for social change were discussed such as social media policy, cultural differences in social media use, the effects of the strength on motivating policy action, and the digital divide. Shirky (2011:30-32) summarizes that social media is a powerful public sphere for civil society which would be a coordinating factor for all socio-political movements around the globe. Kang (2012:562) concentrates on the 2009 "Boycott Whole Foods" which was against the critical remark<sup>25</sup> that the CEO of Whole Food Market Inc., made on the health care reforms proposed by Obama's administration. The study contributes to how the middle-class population in America, who rarely appears on the front political lines, created a social movement using the social media advantage and the communicative dynamics of the social media public sphere.

From 2011, the Arab nations witnessed uprising amongst the people against the oppressive regimes. These freedoms of expression were constructed by effectively using social media platforms as a public sphere (Dookhoo, 2015:9). The phenomenon of the Arab Springs started in Tunisia after the self-immolation of a 27-year-old street vendor Mohammed Buazizi due to the frustration of his corrupt government. The mainstream media in Tunisia did not cover this news and the government filtered YouTube to hide the video of Mohammed Buazizi. Nevertheless, this went viral on Facebook and resulted in a great social movement demanding political change (Jamali, 2015:12; Cole, 2014). This social media revolution inspired one nation after another in the region, demonstrations and protests were staged for political change in countries like Egypt, Libya, Lebanon, Jordan, Yemen, Syria, and Bahrain (Ghannam, 2011). Brouwer and Bartels (2015:9) address the critique of social media not being a catalyst for social change. They use the 20th

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<sup>25</sup> John Mackey, the CEO of Whole Foods Market Inc, made when he remarked that healthcare is not an intrinsic ethical right and should not be provided for free. He claimed that it is best served only through mutual and voluntary market benefits. He also added that many of Americans' health problems were self-inflicted that two-thirds of Americans are overweight, and one-third are obese. (Keller, 2013)

February movement from the year 2011 from Morocco to show that it was enabled by social media and turned into a massive demonstration. This was the first of its kind in Morocco in size and scale against the dominant regime. Brouwer and Bartels bridge the gap between online and offline activism and explain social media's influence on these new types of social movements. Social media has a multiplier effect, which brings wide awareness of issues and higher participation and support to social movements. However, the new social movement was weak due to the lack of communication facilities in rural areas and high illiteracy rates in Morocco, restricting it to the educated urban youth. The new social movement of Morocco has given the youth confidence to question the dominant authoritarian government by setting up new political parties and student organizations, hence, this shows that even though the social movement failed, the power of resistance of the people has become irreversible (Brouwer and Bartels, 2015:19). While in India, *#Jallikattu* protests attracted both the rural and urban public from all age groups due to the prevalence of a good communication system and internet facilities even in rural settings at cheaper costs. On the other hand, in South Africa, the rural folk did not participate in the *#FeesMustFall* due to high data costs which is a barrier to engagement in social media.

Lim (2013) discusses the effective use of social media in social movements. The attention span of social contrasting characteristic between the users and the platform will improve the usage of social media. She argues that the simplicity of the message and inclusion of the principles of contemporary cultures of consumption are important keys. Further, the association with dominant meta-narratives such as nationalism, culture and religiosity increase the chances of success.

Moscato's (2014) study focuses on how legacy media portrays hashtag activism and how this type of activism influences political and public policy debates using a framing analysis of Canada's *#Idlenomore* movement<sup>26</sup> (founded in December 2012). This movement brought awareness to a Canadian Government bill, which harmed the indigenous people of the country. The study involves a comparative framing analysis of selected articles on *#Idlenomore* from two newspapers in Canada. The frames from the study show that social media works as a stimulant in spreading awareness of social movements. This was taken as a theme by one publication, which aids the legitimization of the influence of social media tools such as Twitter. The research work will concentrate on the influence of social media in the *#FeesMustFall* movement and the *#Jallikattu* protests and the social media discourses that emerged from these social movements.

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<sup>26</sup> *#Idlenomore* movement was founded in Canada by four women, three First Nations women and one non-native ally for indigenous rights and their economic and social equality and against environment degradation.

### 2.3.2 Social media: consumerism, corporate control, and political surveillance

*We are rapidly entering the age of no privacy, where everyone is open to surveillance at all times, where there are no secrets from government.*

- William O. Douglas<sup>27</sup>

The polarized view of freedom of speech on social media creates a binary opposition between the public sphere and the nexus of corporate control and government surveillance. Social activists try to exploit social media to create a public sphere so that social issues may be discussed publicly and awareness within the public may be raised (Gerhards and Schäfer, 2010:145). Whereas profit motives have gradually increased commercial advertisements, business promotions and consumerism on social media platforms (Voorveld, Noort, Muntinga and Bronner, 2018:38). Social media is not a superhero to create a utopian society on its own, but it is merely a tool, which can be used to promote democracy and create a better society but this depends on the motive of the user (Papadimitriou, 2006:318). When social media is used as a public sphere, it is easily visible, but the surveillance, censorship and control of social media are not visible and, hence, make it perilous (Kadivar, 2015:170). The common public will merely be the end user of this tool, whereas the influence on social media by political and corporate interests is hidden and more serious than their influence on mainstream media (Lee, 2018:4095). This makes the analysis and comprehension of social media as a public sphere and the control of it by powerful establishments important. It is essential to re-analyse why not all social movements and protests that have used social media were successful. The studies (Bosch, 2016; Brouwer and Bartels, 2015; Sheedy, 2011) that discuss the successes of social movements with the use of social media are more in number in comparison to the contrary. Failures have not been documented as much as successes, which might create a general perception that usage of social media in protests, will always turn out to be a success.

The involvement of the corporate world with social media does not end with business promotions and advertising on social media but it goes beyond that. Greed is an inevitable attribute of capitalism and the corporate world where money is a strong motive behind all activities. For instance, the European Parliament had laid allegations on Nokia Siemens for selling censorship and surveillance technology to Iran to crush the social movements fighting for democracy in Iran (Schrempf, 2011:95). In another instance, Narus, an American company owned by Boeing sold a monitoring and surveillance software called “deep packet inspection” to the Egyptian Government to control social activists and democratic reformists in the country (Morozov, 2011). Also, large

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<sup>27</sup> William O. Douglas was a jurist at the Supreme Court of United States from 1939-75. He was popular for his progressive and civic libertarian views.

corporations and wealthy individuals fund politicians and political parties in a country. The politicians, in turn, do favours like offering access to the country's natural resources through government sanctions (Navot, 2014:20).

Brantly (2014) exposes how the US government's national security cyber activities harm social activists who advocate for human rights, freedom of opinion and democracy. Social activists who campaign against the government and powerful institutions in the country are threatened. Similarly, Iran is trying to create an internal internet system, which is supposedly being constructed under the pretext of promoting Islamic moral values and safeguarding national cyber security, it is merely a tool of censorship and social surveillance (Reardon, 2012).

According to Tufekci (2014:1-16), who studied the Gezi Park protests in Turkey, social media is useful in spreading information and even responsible to drive thousands of people to protests on the street, but it does not always pose a threat to people in power. Social media aids in creating awareness and mobilizing huge crowds who in most cases stage fragile protests. It is easy to bring people to the streets, but it is difficult to construct compromises and coalitions, which is an important requirement for the organisation of large-scale social movements and change. Habermas refers to 'procedural rationality' that should accompany public sphere activities to achieve anything substantive. The social movements are diverse and reach many, but not all movements are directed with the discipline and perseverance needed to threaten powerful establishments (Zuckerman and LeJeune, 2017). It is also important to note that the results of social movements influenced by social media are strongly affected when the legacy media broadcast contrary narratives (Lim, 2013:650). Social media activism is characterized as fast, thin and many. There are numerous campaigns on social media, which appear and disappear within a short time (Lim, 2013:653). Bell (2014) explains this as a phenomenon of slacktivism as many engage on social media for a cause, but it fades away quickly and does not always translate into an offline social movement or construct success for the cause. Gladwell (2010) believes that complete faith and reliance on social media activism has the risk of replacing real-time protests, social movements and other physical forms of activism, which have historically been more instrumental for social change in the world.

El-Nawawy and Khamis (2012) comparatively research how social media activism, which led to physical protests, was successful in Egypt but not successful in Iran. They used the spin (Segmentation, polycentrism, Integration and Network) model to assess both these social movements. Iran's regime had an upper hand over the protesters because they were savvier in technology and used social media surveillance over social activists and protestors to manipulate the people. The regime and the pro-regime media accused the West of trying to destroy Iran's

national unity by creating a revolution using the internet. Also, Twitter is an open public forum which lacks privacy for planning and organizing. Slacktivism and high participation of only middle-class members and failure to mobilize the working class were some of the significant weaknesses of the protests. El-Nawawy and Khamis explain that Iran's Twitter uprising of 2009 did not meet all the criteria of the spin model, hence it failed. They underline that the Spin Model was used effectively by the civil societies in the Egyptian Facebook Revolution in 2011. Even though there were small numbers of Facebook activists in Egypt, they tactfully acted in getting the message viral and used Facebook to plan and execute the social movement against the regime of Mubarak. El-Nawawy and Khamis (2012) conclude by showing the difference between Facebook and Twitter usage in public revolutions and emphasize that political realism is more functional than cyber-utopianism in assessing social media in social revolutions. In simple terms, the real political activities taken up by social activists contribute more towards social change, rather than the mere spreading of awareness and talking about social issues on the internet and social media.

Morozov (2011) has opined that it is important to look into internet freedom because, while social activists are using social media to bring social change and create awareness, it also reveals their personal information to oppressive powers. He uses examples of failed uprisings in Iran, where the government also used social media to suppress the revolution. It is easier for governments to manipulate people using social media because they have more resources and power than social activists. Oppressive governments have always censored the mainstream media to tailor their benefits (Dragomir, 2018:1131). Hence, the possibility of censorship of social media platforms cannot be ignored. It is important to understand and accept both sides of social media for its effective usage in the construction of social movements for social change and the promotion of democracy.

## **2.4 The decline of democratic ecstasy in India and South Africa**

*Democracy is being allowed to vote for the candidate you dislike least.*

- Robert Byrne<sup>28</sup>

Democracy can be commonly understood as the power in the hands of the people through free and fair elections, protection of human rights, active participation of the public in the political realm and rule of law, which is applicable and equal to all people (Epstein, 2011). If this is the meaning

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<sup>28</sup> Robert Byrne is an American author and billiards player.

of democracy, the characterisation of South Africa and India as democracies becomes more or less ambiguous, hence paving the way for this research study.

Democracy was born in India in 1947 as a result of the freedom struggles and the social movements against colonial rule (Nielsen and Nilsen, 2016:4). However today in India, social activists who voice their opinions for the welfare of the people and express their dissatisfaction against the government are titled anti-nationals by the politicians and spokespersons of political parties (Biswas, 2018). In both South Africa and India, when people come to the streets to protest for their rights, they are attacked, arrested, or even killed in certain instances by the police and other armed forces (Mondal, 2017; Boëttger and Rathbone, 2016). Even when politicians are visibly corrupt in these countries, they still stay in power, run for elections and are re-elected by the people. In India, the politicians bribe the public to vote for their parties in the elections (Nelson, 2011) and further, the government interferes with media freedom (Hirwani, 2020; Jha, 2011). Heller (2009) characterized South Africa and India as societies deeply rooted in social inequalities. The majority of the people in these countries live in extremely poor conditions, yet the political leaders of these nations live in opulence. The politicians have close acquaintances with the richest businesspeople in these countries who aim to plunder the wealth and resources of these nations (Shaffi, 2017; Shai, 2017). While we look at the working of democracies, even though both these countries have their unique position in functioning as democracies, there are several similarities which are one of the major focal points of this research.

Heller (2012) reviews the participatory governance in Brazil, India (Kerala) and South Africa, and highlights the relationship between political parties and civil societies in these countries. He throws light on the importance of political participation in civil society, which promotes citizen information and the proper functioning of democracies. Lindberg and Steenekamp (2017) compare various democracies in the world based on well-being and happiness and found that the life satisfaction of the people in South Africa and India is very low. They found both the people of these countries expect better leadership to resolve their social issues. Lindberg and Steenekamp consider the existence of income equality, political corruption, religious conflict, malnutrition, and gender inequality as major problems in India. Further, they perceive that the racial divide created by apartheid has not ended in the rainbow nation of South Africa where the Black majority still live under poor conditions while the minority whites and a small group of Black elites have economic power and a better life in the country.

### 2.4.1 India: nation-state conflicts

*Rainbows and multicultural societies are alike. Diversity makes them beautiful.*

- Vinita Kinra<sup>29</sup>

Politicians have manipulated situations to establish their agendas within the structure of democracy (Cheminant and Parrish, 2011:31). Manipulation of democracy becomes challenging with multiculturalism and pluralism of ideas in a country. When there is a singularity in religion, culture, language, nationalism etc., it is easier to side with the majority's opinion to covet the votes by supporting their feelings. This singularity is nurtured within a multicultural society by side-lining minority communities, like the Muslims/Christians in India and anyone who opposes this idea of homogenization of nationalism and culture, further labels them as a threat and reason for the issues and problems in the country (Roy, 2017).

After 300 years of Mughal rule (Dale, 2010:266) and 200 years of British rule in India (Stein, 2010:107), 80% of Indians still identify themselves as Hindu (Census of India, 2011), but according to conservative Indian politicians, Hinduism is under threat. They urge the people to vote for the right-wing parties to safeguard Hinduism (Ogden, 2012:22). Austin (1994) says that the idea of Hindutva<sup>30</sup> is dangerous to the peace of India, but still, it is professed to build a politics of Hindu nationalism in India. Multiculturalism is synonymous with India, with the innumerable variance in language, culture, religion etc.<sup>31</sup> (Pandey, 2007).

Even though the majority of Indians are dubbed as being Hindu, the Hindu Marriages Act's definition of this term is "any person domiciled in the Indian territory who is not Muslim, Christian, Parsi or Jew is a Hindu". This shows the plurality<sup>32</sup> that is engraved into the term "Hindu" (Hindu Marriages Act, 1955). The ambiguity of being Hindu started with the Mughal and colonial rule of the country, from where the pluralistic culture of India was brought under the term "Hindu" (Oddie, 2003:156). This process of amalgamation which has brought many communities under one

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<sup>29</sup> Vinita Kinra is an Indo-Canadian of Punjabi descent who is a writer, speaker and activist.

<sup>30</sup> Hindutva is an ideology seeking to establish the hegemony of Hindus and the Hindu way of life.

<sup>31</sup> India has 23 official languages including English. The Indian union has 28 states and 8 union territories which makes a total of 36 territorial entities. Major religions such as Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, and Zoroastrianism have integrated with the different cultures in India. Even though 79.8% of Indians are classified as Hindus, the religion comprises thousands of sects, beliefs and practises.

<sup>32</sup> The term Hindu is more geographical than religious. Each region and each tribe have their own gods and ways of worship. The ambiguity of the term has made it easy to politicise the term Hindu. Patina social cohesion with one nation, one language and one religion does not apply when dealing with caste, then hierarchy applies. Unified, singular identity for political ends, is threatening to subsume the multi-dimensional cultural milieu of India.

umbrella has been useful in creating a Hindu nationalism and majoritarian communalism which favours the hegemonic elements of India (Ludden, 1996:21). Moreover, the Indian constitution does not recognise the various communities of the country such as Tamils, Telugus, Bengalis or Kashmiris as separate ethnic groups. Further, it does not recognise the different states such as Tamil Nadu as the land of Tamils or Punjab as the lands of the Punjabis or any other ethnic homeland within the Indian territory (Constitution of India, 1950). The linguistic states in India were created merely for administrative convenience and there is no special recognition of the different ethnicities within India.

Indian nationalism, the Hindu religion and the Hindi language have served as the conservative nexus of metanarratives which have overpowered the Indian political scene. For instance, the government of India has spent 430 million USD on building the tallest statue in the world for Sardar Vallabhai Patel, in the name of Statue of Unity to boast Indian nationalism to the world (Sengupta and Das, 2018). While ignoring the real issues such as poverty, unemployment and other social injustices and inequalities, the statue was the priority of the political leaders in India. Similarly, a politician in South Africa announced an erection of a 120-meter mega flag for 1.2 million USD in April 2022, however the project was scrapped in September 2022 after a public backlash (Businessstech, 2022).

Jenkins (2011) feels that the Arab Springs have stirred democratic activists from all over India demanding a regime change, even though there is no dictatorship in India. The colonial predecessors provided authoritative powers and control to the Prime Minister and senior officers and placed them above the law. Democratic India inherited the same power structures from the previous Victorian rule. This has eased the establishment and maintenance of hegemony and superiority of power to the union government of India, which overpowers the states and erodes federal rights. The recognition of ethnic uniqueness, protection of local languages, indigenous cultures and religions and national resources of the states are at stake due to the flawed political structure of India. Further, Verma (2018) says the situation for human rights activists is unsafe in India. The repressive counter-terrorism laws adopted from the colonial era are used against critics of the government and protestors are used to suppress the voice of activists.

### 2.4.2 South Africa: contesting citizenships

*Poverty is not an accident, like slavery and apartheid it is man-made, and it can be removed by the actions of human beings.*

- Nelson Mandela

The euphoria of achieving democracy has slowly faded in South Africa (Lindberg and Steenekamp, 2017:20) because there were many hopes when apartheid ended in South Africa, but most of them have not been realised yet. There is a general argument in South Africa that Apartheid ended in 1994, and people should not blame Apartheid anymore for the issues in South Africa. In reality, even though Apartheid has ended, the structures of apartheid appear to be still intact in South Africa. This is because in every societal aspect of South Africa, life is still based on those constructions viz. the location of residence, education, and health care are still not easily accessible to the Black majority who were previously disadvantaged in colonial and apartheid South Africa (Murray and Simeon, 2007:703).

During Apartheid, the residential location of non-white communities was placed far from the cities, with a single entry and exit to these 'locations'. The average one-way commute from the previously allocated areas for Black South Africans in Johannesburg is approximately 80 minutes, and the people from these communities who already have lower incomes, spend more than 35% of their income on their daily travelling expenses (Rospabé and Selod, 2006:265). Now in democratic South Africa, the system of segregating residential areas has been removed, but there is still the question of who can afford to buy or rent properties in residential areas closer to the city and have a comfortable life. Tsheola (2012:165) says that nearly every day there are protests for service delivery and better infrastructure facilities in the Black areas in South Africa. In 2021, there were 900 service delivery protests in South Africa (Martin, 2021). There are no wages/allowances paid for the time taken to travel or special transport facilities provided for the people living in these areas. There is no comprehensive transport network to all people of South Africa, even after three decades of democracy in South Africa. According to Spaul (2013:8) and Badat (1999), the Black schools that were kept dysfunctional during the Apartheid era are still dysfunctional, even in democratic South Africa. Malcolm X (1964) says “Education is our passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs only to the people who prepare for it today” but this passport is still a dream to many children and youth in South Africa who either study in schools with poor facilities or don’t even have the opportunity to go to school. Ardington, Bärnighausen, Case and Menendez (2013) claim that the youth incur high costs to search for employment, which is an irony because without a job it will not be easy to raise money.

The people of South Africa had high hopes for the future of democratic South Africa, but the birth of democracy has not erased the plight of Black South Africans. According to a report by Afrobarometer (2016), 37% of South African citizens perceive their lives to be better socio-economically after the advent of democracy, whereas 24% opine that there is no difference in living conditions, and 38% feel that living conditions have worsened. Lekaleka (2016) reports that 61% of South Africans feel that an alternative political system which will ensure education, health care, housing, and safety for them will be better rather than conducting elections and choosing a government which does not care for them. Karlsson (2021) notes the signs of democratic sliding with corruption, poverty, prevalence of inequality, lack of accountability, lack of proper water sanitation, housing and health care. Veenhoven (2008:12-13) says there are millions of people in South Africa whose basic needs have not been fulfilled. Hence, we can presume that the glory of freedom and democracy achieved by South Africa has not reached every South African and, specifically, the previously disadvantaged.

## **2.5 Concluding thoughts**

The literature review demonstrates the research gap which is the lack of comparison of the two social movements in the #FeesMustFall movement from South Africa (2015-16) and the #Jallikattu protests (2017) from Tamil Nadu in India. These protest movements occurred in close temporal proximity and were started at a grassroots level by students<sup>33</sup> in South Africa and Tamil Nadu (India). The comparison of these inter-continental social activisms is to understand the people's positions in the largest democracy and the most celebrated democracy in the world. Social media enabled these two social movements by creating awareness locally and globally and mobilising people to physically protest for the causes of these movements. Hence, this research work measures the reach of these movements on social media and analyses the discourses which emerged in these social media spaces.

In this literature review, the researcher has focused on scholarly readings from the geographical area of the study which is India and South Africa. Hence, in this chapter, the literature on the #FeesMustFall movement was primarily obtained from South Africa and for the #Jallikattu protests, they were gathered from India. Other literature reviewed the influence of mobilising and enabling protest movements by social media was introduced to give a global perspective. Also, themes such as consumerism, corporate control and political surveillance through social media

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<sup>33</sup> The #Jallikattu protests were originally started by a group of villagers in *Allanganallur* (the hub of the *Jallikattu* sport). However, the pivotal protests made the entire Tamil community and diaspora turn towards the issue when the students started protesting against the ban and arrests associated with it in Marina Beach, Chennai.

which obstructs the growth of social movements in several nations across the globe were discussed in this chapter. This shows the binary opposition between the social media public sphere and social media consumer platform which enables and hinders the reach of social movements and social change initiatives, respectively. The nation-state conflict was observed in the *#Jallikattu* protests where an ancient cultural sport with bulls (*Jallikattu* sport) was banned by the Supreme Court of India (a central judicial body for Pan India). The rise of the *#FeesMustFall* movement was due to the high fees system in South African universities which restricted the access of the majority of the youth of the nation who belong to poor Black communities. The expensiveness of education which bars the majority of the Black youth who come from marginalised families, decolonisation of university curriculum were the key focal points of the *#FeesMustFall* movement in South Africa. Finally, the chapter discusses the decline of the democratic ecstasy in both of these nations by describing the democratic causes which were centralised and fought for by both these social movements. The researcher discusses the political problems derived from the nation-state conflict between India and Tamil Nadu and the grievances of the South African citizens with their governing bodies which have not remedied the injustices of Apartheid by raising the standard of living of the majority of the South Africans.

The lived experience in both these nations, specifically during these protest movements, puts the researcher in a unique position of understanding these protest movements. The presence at these locations during the protests provided an exceptional opportunity to experience both these social movements as a close observer. This was accompanied by the observation of the heat and discussions about these movements on social media like Facebook and Twitter, and the awareness about these protests spread through instant messaging services such as WhatsApp and Telegram. In this rare theoretical twinning of two social movements from intercontinental spaces, it is crucial to understand how protest voices from these different geographies were heard and processed. In the next chapter, the researcher lays the theoretical foundation which constructs a strong base for the arguments of this thesis. These theories from across the globe aim at providing a pluriversal lens to understanding these phenomena.

## Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

*Theory helps us to bear our ignorance of fact.*

- George Santayana<sup>34</sup>

### 3.1 Introduction

The theoretical framework is a map which navigates the different concepts and theories that informs the thesis. This chapter covers a range of theories by sociologists, philosophers, and activists from around the world. The key theories discussed in this chapter are Baudrillard's simulacra and simulation, Stanley's symptoms of fascism, Foucault's concept of power and knowledge, governmentality, panopticon surveillance and the counter theories synopticon and omnipticon, Habermas's public sphere, communicative rationality and communicative action, and Fuchs' ideas on social media activism. The theories also include Chomsky's thoughts on necessary illusions, manufacturing consent and propaganda model, Freudenburg's and Alario's discussions on diversionary reframing, Maldonado Torres' and Grosfuguel's perspectives on decolonisation, Fanon's writings on anti-colonialism and colourism. Steve Biko's thoughts on Apartheid, Periyar's ideology on self-respect and anti-casteism and Ambedkar's masterwork the Annihilation of Caste provides the regional context of the social issues of exclusion and discrimination pertaining to the South Africa and India.

Simulation of democracy is an important synthesis of this research work. Baudrillard's seminal theories of simulacra and simulation and freedom by default provides us the theoretical grounding to the construct of a simulated democracy. Stanley's symptoms of fascism delineate democracy from fascism. To comprehend simulation of democracy better, the researcher discusses the works of Foucault, which is power and knowledge. Foucault's theory of governmentality goes back to Machiavelli's "The Prince" a guide to kings, princes and royal diplomats to uphold their glory, survival and the ability to control their subjects. Foucault's Panopticon and surveillance vividly explains how power structures of state or government control and surveil people. The researcher also points out the theories of synopticon and omnipticon which acts as a counter to the panopticon and explains the paradigm shift of power, control and surveillance to the people. All these theories become crucial tools in understanding protest cultures as in protest and social movements, there is a constant contestation of power between the people and the state or its agents.

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<sup>34</sup> George Santayana is a Spanish-American philosopher, poet and novelist. His popular work includes 'The Sense of Beauty' published in 1896, from where this quote was taken.

The synopticon and omnipticon is manifested in social media in the current era, further social media also acts a public sphere in current society. Hence, next, the researcher introduces Habermas with his popular theory of public sphere. The chapter also includes Habermas's theories of communicative rationality and communicative action which discusses the ability to meaningfully interact in public discourses, a helpful toolkit for activists. Critical theory is discussed as it is an important theory for every social researcher as it widens the horizon of critical thinking. At this juncture, the theory of structuration by Giddens is introduced, which is the golden thread which sews the different discourses which emerged from the two social movements. Giddens theorised structuration to offer a middle ground between the determinism of either structure or agency. Structuration (expanded below) allows one to account for the dialectic interplay of the protest cultures investigated. These different discourses provide the understanding the micro and macro aspects of how democracies are simulated.

Following these theories, Fuchs' thoughts on social media activism, reiterates the concept of social media becoming a public sphere in the current era. Fuchs also discusses the difference between traditional media and social media. He also explains how social media has paved way towards citizen journalism and digital activism. Further, Chomsky's necessary illusion and manufacturing consent and Freudenburg's and Alario's diversionary reframing echoes the grounding for a simulated democracy. These are notable concepts explain how governments and politicians normalise, distract and condition people's minds to establish their ideas, agendas, policies and laws which may be disruptive to the welfare of the people.

Next, Maldonado Torres', Grosfuguel's and Fanon's contributions on decolonisation paves way for an idea which counters the impressions of colonial and apartheid rule in Indian and South African society. Decolonisation theory calls for the deconstruction of the structures which has been established during colonial and apartheid rule. The fight of decolonisation is also against oppressive third-world systems which precede colonial rule. Hence, it disclaims the hijack of the theory by conservative powers in trying to substitute previous instruments of discriminations, social injustices and exclusions in place of oppressive colonial structures. These theories help discuss the decolonisation of education and democracy. Steve Biko was an anti-apartheid activist in South Africa, while Periyar and Ambedkar were anti-caste activists in India. All of their activistic efforts have been prominent and pillars of the social justice in current politics of South Africa and India. These activists from the regions of the social movements: #FeesMustFall movement and #Jallikattu protests provide a context for Apartheid, Caste System discriminative and oppressive systems from

South Africa and India. As important as works of theorists and philosophers are for a research work, the works of activists provides the practical experience of decolonisation.

### **3.2 Simulation of democracy**

Simulation is a copy, an imitation, a mirror, or a dupe of a worldly process. We would have seen simulated versions of a car or a plane which is identical to the vehicle and provides an experience close to the real. Any system or process with a flow of events can be simulated. The thought may be terrifying, but several processes that we undergo and experience in life may be inevitably simulated.

Baudrillard<sup>35</sup> explains the theory through the Borges' tale of mapmakers who create a map of an empire. In order to make the map accurate and detailed, they end up making the map to the entire size of the territory ruled by the empire. When the empire is defeated and gradually loses control over its territory, the map also follows the deterioration. Eventually, there are just a few pieces of the map which are visible in the deserts, decayed like a carcass. The tale exposes the metaphysical beauty of the map (simulation) which is confused with the actual territory (real) as time goes on, and the gradual deterioration of the map shows the destruction of the empire's pride. Baudrillard calls this “the discreet charm of second-order simulacra”. (Baudrillard, Poster and Mourrain, 2002:166-167)

Many worldly elements have been repeatedly simulated, creating generations of simulated models, wherein, the real is simulated, and the simulated is again simulated. This ongoing process of simulation has brought the current version of a worldly element far from its reality and origin, making it hyperreal. Today's simulators use the same imperialistic attitude of the empire from the Borges' tale to create simulations and accord them with the real. The simulation is recreated and reproduced several times, yet there is no question of rationality in the simulated version because it is no longer measured with the real. The real is far gone and forgotten. In the age of simulation, there is no necessity for the duplicating the real, the references of the real are already destroyed and substituted with artificial signs which become the new representation of the real. (Baudrillard et al, 2002:166-167).

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<sup>35</sup>Jean Baudrillard is a French modern philosopher. If he did not classify himself as a sociologist, a thinker, or a cultural theorist, he would have been simulated into a prophet with revelations and there would have been a religion now called Jeanism or Baudism or a religious order formed as the Church of Simulacra.

### 3.2.1 The divine references of images: creating simulated democracies

Simulation cannot be misunderstood as pretending or dissimulation. If one pretends to be sick, they will lie on a bed and pretend that they are sick, but the person simulating sickness will show certain symptoms of the sickness. Further, dissimulation is to pretend not to be sick when one is sick. In the process of pretending and dissimulating reality is only hidden but the process of simulation threatens the entire basis of reality in which the differentiation between truth, false or imaginary is almost impossible. Due to the production of real symptoms of sickness by the simulator, it is a challenge to know if he is sick or not and whether he can be treated or not. If sickness can be simulated, then medicine loses its significance in treating the sickness (Baudrillard et al, 2002:167-168).

Baudrillard explains the Simulacra and Simulation with four stages in its making.

*1 It is the reflection of a basic reality.*

*2 It masks and perverts a basic reality*

*3 It masks the absence of a basic reality ... In the third, it plays at being an appearance: it is of the order of sorcery.*

*4 It bears no relation to any reality whatever: it is its own pure simulacrum*

The first stage is a good appearance, where the process is strictly and sacredly followed. The second stage is an evil appearance and malefic in nature. In this stage, the real process is masked and reflects an obscure reality. The third stage is masking the absence of the reality, the process attempts to act as a faithful copy of the original, however there is no original. It is an order of sorcery, which makes people believe, it is the copy of the real. In the final stage, the real is completely lost and vanished, it is a pure simulacrum. (Baudrillard et al, 2002:170).

When the real ceases to exist, the only thing that remains is nostalgia which provides meaning to the real. The nostalgia increases the stories about the origins and signs of reality. The authenticity of the truth becomes second-hand in nature. The meaning and objectivity of the real are lost in the simulated version. Eventually, the simulations create a chaotic world filled with fear and doubt (Baudrillard et al, 2002:171).

Democracy is currently the dominant world order. At the beginning of the 1900s, there were only 10 countries which were democracies, and in just a century more than half of the world's countries are democracies now (Mandelbaum, 2007:xi). However, Plato thought that the nature of democracy was flawed because it is based on opinion and not on knowledge. Constant indoctrination of people can develop opinions, but real knowledge cannot be manipulated. Plato viewed democracy as a

necessary condition for good governance, yet according to him, the system was still underdeveloped and insufficient (Crick, 2002:1). Even after 2500 years, the system remains to be insufficient. Further, even a dictatorship can pose itself to look like a democracy and the flaws that already exist in democracy aids this simulation. If democracy is simulated, it will become a beautiful mask that covers the ugly face of fascism and dictatorship.

The simulacrum is neither a lie nor a fiction, but it is an imitation of reality (Poster, 1985). The theory of Simulacra and Simulation can be used to vividly define how certain countries that claim themselves to be democracies could have simulated their political systems to exactly resemble a real democracy. The researcher speculates that these political systems may have used certain democratic principles, or simulated versions of them, to make them look like a real democracy, but in reality, they might be nowhere close to how an actual democracy should function. To make this simple, let us take the example of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, where the researcher is not talking about South Korea, but ironically, this is the official name of North Korea which is a totalitarian dictatorship regime. Even though it is one of the most dangerous and brutal countries in the world, North Korea ludicrously conducts elections every four to five years, but the ballot paper contains only one name and 100% of the population participates in the elections (Wiener-Bronner, 2020). Election is an important pillar of democracy and North Korea uses a simulated election to be a so-called democratic nation. The simulation in North Korea belongs to the fourth stage, where there is no trace of the original and only the simulation exists. Of course, India and South Africa cannot be compared to North Korea, but the example shows us that there is a possibility to simulate the principles of democracy. This research proposes to examine protest culture as a signal/representation (or exposure) of the simulation of democracy. Oyedemi (2020:8-10) introduces the idea that protest is a form of communication, which arises when some people in a nation state are rendered invisible, their basic rights ignored. Protest is the only way to raise dissatisfaction and hence it signals democratic fragility.

### **3.2.2 Symptoms of fascism**

At this juncture, it is important to discuss fascism and its symptoms. Fascist politics are built on certain strategies. They dwell in a religious, racial, or cultural purity or superiority which is imagined to have existed in a mythical past. The popular discourses in the state involve a patriarchal family who ruled the nation with vigour and glory in the past and the establishment of a similar type of government in the present. Further, there is continuous propaganda about the remarkable performance of the government and the efficiency of the politicians. The negative actions of politicians are concealed from the eyes of the public. The policies which are harmful and

unacceptable to people are introduced through propaganda and play with language, which eventually makes people support these ideas. Education suffers the highest under this regime. The policies by fascists devalue education, avoid intelligent debates, and discourage rational thinking in the nation. Scholarship and expertise are at bay, and only power and barbaric tendencies surface. The state destroys the information space. Lying becomes a common symptom of fascism. Fascist regimes replace reality and reasoned arguments with intimidation and rage. Equality in society is gradually substituted with a hierarchy based on language, gender, sexuality, race, religion, or culture. The elite and the privileged are always titled as the victims whereas in reality the poor and the oppressed suffer the most in the state. Law and order are at stake, there is an intensification of hate crime and violence. The violence is blamed on the innocent and they are titled misfits or criminal aliens<sup>36</sup>. Rape and sexual violence become weapons and threats in the hands of the fascists but romantic relationships between the chosen ones and the other become a crime. Eventually, ethnic cleansing and genocides become the quintessence of the regime (Stanley, 2018:1-96). The world has seen much suffering in the form of fascism.

### **3.2.3 Freedom by default**

Baudrillard explains that corporate establishments use advertisements to condition the human mind. The advertisers convince people, that buying makes people happy and there is no immorality in spending their money extravagantly. They do not force people to buy their products, but they provide them with conditional freedom and consent to make the buying decisions on their own. Through advertising, corporates free consumers from the guilt of unnecessary buying, free adults from acting like adults and let them feel like children and enable people to find happiness in the desire from buying their products. The freedom by default eventually is to motivate people to purchase a product in order to overcome sadness and frustrations in life.<sup>37</sup> If this happens then the strategy of advertising is a success (Baudrillard, Poster and Murrain, 2002:12-13). This conditioning of people and normalising their buying behaviour is not much different from the normalising power of the state. The state and the corporate world work in similar ways, they have the same aspirations and goals, and they both want to control people and make them live a life that will satisfy governments and powerful corporates' agendas. These thoughts of Baudrillard are reflected in Foucault's concept of normalising power and the panopticon surveillance model.

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<sup>36</sup> In India, the term 'anti-national' and 'anti-Indian' are quite commonly used by right-wing politicians. In South Africa, they are called lazy.

<sup>37</sup> Edward Bernays (Sigmund Freud's nephew) applied Freud's theories on the subconscious to commerce by attempting to influence public opinion (en masse) via advertising, which would appeal to the deep desires of the targeted public/s regardless of whether they needed such products. The effect would be to promote consumerism. (Bernays, 1965)

Foucault has also contributed his thoughts on a utopian society through the idea of governmentality. The next part of this chapter dives into the work of Foucault to understand his take on power, knowledge, control, and surveillance.

### **3.3 Power and knowledge**

Michel Foucault is a brilliant scholar and an academic activist who has lectured around the world with packed auditoriums. He has published immensely on deep topics like politics, power, discourse, sexuality, subjectivity, history, punishment etc. He is considered to be the successor of Jean-Paul Sartre and the French "master thinker". His scholarly contributions popularly known as the Foucauldian concepts shake the foundations of institutions that surround, control, and oppress the people. His works act as a manual for those aspiring for social and political change (Gutting, 2005:1-6).

Foucault argues that in the 19th century, a new type of knowledge was formed, and it was based on the classification of individuals as 'normal and abnormal', 'conforming and non-conforming' to promote social control and surveillance of the people (Foucault, 1983:2). When talking about power, Foucault explains that there are two types of power: repressive power and normalising power. Repressive power is a traditional view of power which is openly oppressive and harsh towards the people. This power gives us an image of control and authority through force and violence either physical or psychological. Normalising power is subtle in nature and it functions invisibly. This power can condition us to act and behave automatically in a way deemed appropriate by society, an institution, or the state. The authority has the people on a leash, and it allows them a certain amount of fun and freedom. However, they will never be able to overstep or run away from the circle drawn around them by authority. The euphemism "normal" helps us build a paradigm to view the world, which shapes our desires, determines our beliefs, and constructs our decisions. It makes us think that the way we live our life is our own plan of action and we are in no way manipulated or coerced to live this way. Repressive power is visible through authoritarian institutions such as the police, military, judiciary system etc. but the normalising power is omnipresent and hidden within schools, universities, hospitals, mental institutions and even the media. To understand the reality of power, Foucault encourages us to analyse these institutions. He argues that power is not in the hands of a few who directly oppress many but has been systematically normalised and subjects everyone under its realm. He suggests that this understanding will give our lives a little more autonomy and the capacity to notice real oppression when it is introduced into society clandestinely (Gijssbers, 2017). Louis Althusser (1970) introduced the idea of ideology and ideological state apparatuses, where he asserted that power is maintained

by the dynamic use of repressive and ideological apparatuses. Ideological state apparatuses were not repressive like the police, however, referred to education, family, religion, cultural and communication apparatuses which work together to support ruling class ideology, by advocating a cohesive set of values that ultimately supports the repressive and other ideological apparatuses.

### **3.3.1 Governmentality**

Governmentality is a Foucauldian concept, in which he discusses the conduct of the government in governing the people. The concept talks about a positive form of power which helps people to be part of the governance by their own will and not by force. The theory addresses the basis of power relations and it deals with the mentality of the government towards its people, the relationship maintained with the citizens and the conduct of its subjects (Vinokur, 2018). The governmentality concept speaks about the art of government from the writings of Machiavelli “The Prince” in which rationality becomes an intrinsic part and the prince (the government) does not take the role of being the controller (lord and master). The concept is not restricted to the state alone but any institution which is governed such as a family, a school, a religious order etc.

The art of government is not static, it is dynamic and always in the directions towards progress. The directions of progress are two: upward and downward. The upward direction is for the person who wishes to govern as it is important that one governs oneself, their possessions, and their heritage. If the person governing follows the above principle, they will be able to engage in governance successfully. The downward direction is for the people, in which they will behave well and be good citizens. However, such behaviour is obligatory for the people only when the state is run well. (Foucault, 1983:204-206). The focus of the ruler should be the common good rather than the advantage to the self. This, in turn, will produce citizens who are lawful, respectful, and dutiful. A good government looks after its people and works towards building a nation of happy citizens to exercise its sovereign power.

Foucault’s coinage of governmentality emerged from the failure of social contract or warfare models to fully account for modern systems of governance (Danaher, Schirato and Webb, 2001:82-89). He argued that modern governance cannot be explained by various sets of state actors and contracts, but a combination of three types of knowledge that produced internal and external stability. The key shift Foucault identified was “a movement from focussing on who has power and influence, to a rationality based on how power can be exercised most efficiently” (Danaher et al, 2001:82-89). This refers to the military, policies and institutions related to internal stability, and economics. The efficient exercise of state power casts the citizenry as a resource to be managed and governmentality thus referred to the technologies of modern governance (military, internal

state institutions and economics). External surveillance was a part of military technology towards external security of the state. Panoptic surveillance became part of the internal technology of governance to manage internal threat and stability (Lemke, 2002:49-64)

### **3.3.2 Panopticon and surveillance: the control of people**

This era experiences a drastic increase in the spaces under surveillance with extensive techniques. A government's surveillance of its people has a dual effect. It can be used to take care of citizens but also to control them. A panopticon is a conceptual tool of surveillance introduced by Bentham in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and later extensively reinterpreted and theorised by Foucault in 1975. Foucault concentrated on the prison panopticon in which the panopticon is an architectural arrangement of a prison. The cells of the prisoners are arranged in a circular form with a tower in the middle of all the prison cells. The prison guard or the inspector lodges himself in the tower from where he can see the activities of every prison inmate, but he appears invisible to the prisoners. So, even if he is not watching the prisoners, there is always a permanent illusion for the prisoners of being watched (Pimenta, 2010:264-265; Lyon, 2006:3-4).

The idea of Foucault's panopticism explains that people are under constant surveillance by the government, like the inmates of the panopticon prison. The governments control, punish, compensate, model, and transform citizens with the aid of this surveillance to create ideal citizens to perform and support the agendas of the people in power and the establishment itself. The normalising power of the government becomes visible with the panopticon structures of society in which the government uses institutions such as schools, universities, hospitals, military, and factories to watch, control, discipline and mould its citizens. The lives of the people are so closely attached to these structures and hence the morals, values, and appropriate behaviours intended for the people by the panoptic paradigm are internalised normally. Foucault explains that the surveillance and control of people make them lose their individuality and leads to them being dehumanised (Galič, Timan and Koops, 2016:10-18; Lyon, 2006:25). The surveillance always descends from top to bottom, with doctors monitoring patients, prison guards watching prisoners or managers supervising workers. Hence, it is the oppressed and marginalised who are under the microscope of the powerful (Lyon, 2006:29).

The idea of the panopticon is not just established by fascism but also by capitalism. The private spaces of individuals, especially online spaces, are highly commodified by corporates. The corporate world monitors the activities of web users and collects various kinds of information from them and uses this information to control them. Before corporates only used surveillance to supervise their workers and the workplace. However, with the advancement of technology, the

common people are also under corporate surveillance (Campbell and Carlson, 2002:586-587). Zuboff (2019:354) emphasises the ownership patterns of transnational corporates over information pathways like satellites, towers, and undersea cables. This signals a move from “ownership of the means of production to the means of behavioural modification” (ibid), expanding governmentality. Surveillance is offered as a solution, a convenience and a certainty. To sum up, the idea of panopticism can only be perilous to society as it is a fantasy of totalitarianism (Scott, 1990:83).

### **3.3.3 Synopticon and Omniopticon: the power shift to the people**

Synopticon is a term developed by Thomas Mathiesen in 1997. It is the opposite of panopticon in which a few are monitored by many. The mass media plays an important role in establishing the synoptic paradigm. The ability of visual documentary is highest now than at any other time in the past, which aids in the scrutiny of the actions of the powerful. The surveillance is ascending, in which the inhabitants of the top steps in the social hierarchy are watched by the occupants of the lower steps. However, the surveillance and scrutiny become challenging, as this drives the powerful to build impenetrable fortresses around them depending on their power and affordability, again leaving the poor, marginalised and powerless subject to more scrutiny (Doyle, 2011:283, Lyon, 2006:29-30).

Omniopticon is a paradigm in which neither the government nor the corporate are the sole and key players in surveillance, but they are one amongst the people, in which everyone watches everyone. Twitter and YouTube play a significant role in creating omniopticism (Kandias, Mitrou, Stavrou and Gritzalis, 2017:308). These platforms have enabled the publishing of content freely by anyone. The publisher needs to conform to the community standards and policies of these platforms, if not the content will be removed from these platforms. Even though the Synopticon and the Omniopticon have their limitations, they have constructed better platforms for the common public to question the powerful and bring awareness to the unaware. This platform of discussion, awareness and scrutiny is called the public sphere, which is a Habermasian concept. Hence, it would be ideal to discuss the thought of the public sphere with the wisdom of Jürgen Habermas.

### **3.4 The ideal public sphere**

Jürgen Habermas, born in 1929 in Germany, is one of the most influential philosophers of the 20th century owing to his interdisciplinary contributions to humanity. His academic journey began from the Frankfurt school and he has been a profound thinker in critical theory. The work of Habermas has been influenced by major political events such as the end of the Second World War and the consequent fall of Nazi Germany in 1945, the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet

Union, the Protests of 1968, the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 etc. Habermas has been vocal and prolific about major global events up until now (Finlayson, 2005; Fultner, 2014:15).

Habermas is a prominent figure in the path-breaking idea of the public sphere (Roberts, 2003:18; Thompson, 1995:69). The public sphere is a metaphorical platform where citizens of a community or a nation can discuss, engage, and exchange their views and ideas about society, politics or public affairs without any intimidation. It is the space where people learn about what is happening in their community, society, or nation (McKee, 2005:4-5). The platform is not exclusive to just a few people, it is open to all the citizens of a nation. Critical opinions about the nation's problems, governance and welfare are freely discussed by the people in the public sphere (Fuchs, 2021:181). The political discussions with our hairdresser at the salon, the chat we have with our friends about general matters in society or politics at a pub, coffee shop or tea stall, participating in a debate show on radio or television, or positing our views on social media etc. all form a public sphere (McKee, 2005:5).

Originally the theoretical contribution of Habermas' public sphere was a private realm controlled by the bourgeois class who had movements in opposition to the state for their own profits and interests. The public sphere here required a private space and resources for it to be organized (Fuchs, 2021:181). In the 17<sup>th</sup> century when the public sphere came into existence, salons and coffee houses played the role of forming places of discussion, but the space was restricted to the elites of the society (Thompson, 1995:70). The bourgeois class consisted of the educated elites, rich men, merchants, and writers who were not part of the ruling class or majorly a part of the parliament (Green, 2010:120). The bourgeois public sphere excluded wage workers, women, the LGBT community, and other ethnic groups. The criticism from the working class and feminists was that the shortfall envisioned in the public sphere was that it was monopolized by the wealthy men in society (Fuchs, 2021:182; McGuigan, 2002:179). While addressing the concerns of the bourgeois public sphere, Habermas terms it as the re-feudalised public sphere (Roberts, 2003:127). This understanding promoted and structurally transformed into the idea of an all-inclusive commoners' public sphere which was then seen as the ideal public sphere. Democracy, multiculturalism, and egalitarianism can be promoted in a society when the public sphere is open to all communities. Hence, an ideal public sphere can exist only in a participatory society with liberal ideologies which provide an individual with freedom of speech, expression, opinion, press, association, and assembly and defies inequality in society (Fuchs, 2021:182-183; McGuigan, 2002:25). The thoughts, perspectives and mentalities in society are pluralistic even if the people belong to the same religion, community, language, or any other unifying element. Therefore, this makes the state of a

multicultural society even more complex. This is where the context of ideal speech situations takes precedence and enhances the understanding of the public sphere.

### **3.4.1 Ideal speech situation in the public sphere**

Habermas defines the ideal speech situation as a model situation in the public sphere where people can interact and communicate with each other and achieve mutual understanding without coercion or deception. He believes that this is a practical and simple way in which reason can be defended (McGuigan, 2002:177). In an ideal speech situation, the factors for distortion of communication are absent and the conditions for free and transparent communication and perfect discussions are demonstrated (Brunkhorst, Kreide and Lafont, 2017:384; Edgar, 2006:64-65). Habermas lays down a doctrine for the establishment of an ideal speech situation in the public sphere. The doctrine emphasizes that the participants of the public sphere should not contradict themselves. If a solution is applied to a problem, the same should be applied to similar problems. When using expressions in speech, different participants should not convey different meanings. The participants should declare their true beliefs. If a participant wants to dispute a decision or a rule, he must provide proper reasons for his actions. It is important that the members of a community or the citizens of a nation who are well-informed should speak and act in the matters and are allowed to take part in the discourses. All the participants have the right to question the assertions, solutions and matters of the discussion. Other participants are allowed to introduce new assertions in the discussions. All the participants have the right to express their feelings, thoughts, requirements, and necessities. No person has the right to intimidate a person to prevent them from participating or exercising one's rights to speak or question in the public sphere. (Habermas, Lenhardt and Nicholse, 1990:86-89)

Habermas distinguishes mere opinions, which stem from culture, norms, traditions, prejudices, and value systems from public opinion which is generated from public reasoning. The idea of reasoning public infers that not all members of a community or a nation are informed enough to reason rationally and legitimize public opinion (Green, 2010:119). Fuchs (2021:182-184) clarifies the requirements of a public sphere being accessible for all citizens without restrictions of assembly and freedom to debate the rules of engagement. However, Fuchs indicates some limitations that contemporary scholars have attempted to address, such as questions around media ownership, political/economic censorship and other forms of exclusion. Hence, to understand the ideas in the generation of public opinion and to establish an ideal speech situation in the public sphere, it is important to look into the concepts of communicative rationality and communicative action, which are discussed in the Habermasian theory of communicative action.

### 3.4.2 Communicative rationality

Communicative rationality means the ability to participate in discourse under the conditions of truth, rightness and sincerity and accomplishing mutual agreement amongst the participants which leads to an ideal speech situation (Dews, 1998). Language is the epicentre of communicative rationality and it is central to accomplish consensus amongst the participants of the public sphere (McGuigan, 2002:177; White, 1995:120). Communicative rationality focuses on the linguistic structure of speech which adds strength to the existing theories of rationality such as epistemic rationality which concentrates on the structure of knowledge and instrumental rationality on objective action of speech. (Brunkhorst et al, 2017:289). We would equate possession of knowledge as rationality, but knowledge may be merely a statement of beliefs; hence being rational deals with the way knowledge is acquired and used rather than simply the possession of knowledge (Habermas, 1981:8). Rational expressions can be characterized as meaningful, action-oriented, and comprehensible in their context (Habermas, 1981:13). Habermas emphasises in his theory of communicative rationality that matters can be settled through knowledge and argument as principal factors in discourse rather than violent conflict (McKee, 2005:226). Furthermore, he opines that discourse is democratised only through the process of communicative rationality (Cammaerts and Carpenter, 2007:3).

### 3.4.3 Communicative action

Communicative action denotes meaningful interactions with people to convey information, establish social relationships and express opinions and feelings. It refers to any act such as gestures, written or spoken aimed at establishing communication between two or more individuals. If the process is not successful, either one or more persons will try to add more language to create understanding. Habermas draws certain presuppositions for communicative action to perform its functions.

- 1) When communicating with each other, people use the same language. Example: Zulu speakers speak the Zulu language (isiZulu) with each other.
- 2) Everyone in the communicating process has the same understanding of the external world. Example: when A tells B to take a raincoat when B leaves the house, it means B understands that it is rainy season and that it might rain on that day.
- 3) They follow the same social norms, customs, and conventions. For example: leaving footwear outside the house in India is a common practice, whereas this is not practised in Western countries. Hugging and kissing on the cheek are considered friendly in Western countries but normally in India, it is considered as an act of intimacy. They

will understand the context of self-expression such as jokes, sarcasm, and irony. For example: using a line from a Tamil movie to express the humour in a situation with fellow Tamil-speaking friends (Edgar, 2006:21).

Communicative action is the performative result of communicative rationality, in which the best possible communication process and interactions between humans are possible. In communicative action, human interactions are directed towards the coordination of objectives and action plans for public welfare through mutual understanding. Habermas adds that communicative action is achieved through rational motivation and not by coercion or deceit (Brunkhorst et al, 2017:499-503).

Habermas discusses the characteristics and behaviour of participants and their arguments formulated by communicative action in an ideal speech situation. Ideally, all the participants must be politically well-informed, active, and educated. The discussions, debates and arguments should be based on public interest and welfare and not on personal agendas. The participants should be flexible and change their views and thoughts if better perspectives and ideas are generated in the discussions. Disagreements should be dealt with within a willingness to redefine ideas to best suit the situation. It is important that the varied perspectives discussed in the forum be backed with rational arguments (Cammaerts and Carpenter, 2007:3-4). Briefly, the theory of communicative actions helps in assessing democratic communications in a society or a nation (McGuigan, 2002:177).

#### **3.4.4 Structuration theory**

Structuration theory is utilised in order to balance deterministic theories. Mosco (2009:193) defines structuration as a “process by which structures are constituted out of human agency, even as they provide the very ‘medium’ of that constitution”. Structuration allows one to consider structure as a set of constraints and simultaneously enabling resources. Structuration also balances the primacy of agency asserted by some cultural theorists. Giddens emphasised that “these systems do not bind their members into some kind of deterministic homeostatic loop. Rather, systems are typically somewhat overlapping, contradictory and precarious” (Whittington, 2010:147). This is due to what Giddens referred to as the “dialectic of control” where structure established over time and space exercises some power over social actors, however, these actors are afforded enabling resources to leverage a relative autonomy over their activities (Giddens 2005:126). Giddens saw this as a dualistic and iterative process. “For Giddens, structuration theory is more a broad orientation or sensitising device than a precise theory in itself”. (Whittington, 2010:157) Therefore structuration

theory can be deployed by political economists like Mosco (2009:187) to explore the duality of structure and action, however, it leaves space for giving “greater weight to power”. It can also be applied to “handle both creativity and circularity, agency and structure.” (Whittington, 2010:155) Hence the overall orientation of structuration allows one to investigate the two protest movements in terms of both structural constraints, enabling resources and protest actors’ agency.

### **3.4.5 Critical theory**

Critical theory is the rethinking, redefining, and questioning of the practices, traditions and norms in culture and society to form a judgement. Habermas explains that it is a reflective theory which enhances the enlightenment of knowledge and understanding which liberates people from primitive thoughts. According to Habermas self-reflection through critical theory emancipates a person from self-objectivity and objective illusion, enhances understanding of their origin and increases awareness of their actions based on their unconscious prejudices (Geuss, 1981:2-70).

Critical theory becomes integral in the architecture of an ideal society. A society which is confined, delusional and frustrated in primitive thoughts will reach enlightenment and liberation through the attainment of self-consciousness of critical theory by its constituents. The critical theory is composed of three main parts in realizing this transition of society. The first step is to theoretically construct the ideas, processes, objectives, institutional changes, and developmental plans for the transition of society from its initial state to the proposed state. Secondly, it involves examining the practical necessities of the transition. The agents identify and understand the social structures which cause pain, suffering, and suppression to all or certain communities. This type of social arrangement is forced upon them through coercion and manipulation. The proposed final state will be free from this coercion and provide opportunities to identify the true interests of the agents. Finally, understanding is needed concerning the importance of adoption and action of the critical theory by the agents self-consciously, in order to build the proposed state from its original form.

The initial state refers to any problems we faced in a society like corruption, capitalism, racism, casteism, and sexism and the proposed state means a plan for a society free from these problems (Geuss, 1981:76). Critical theory encompasses all those theories that stand up against the social structures constructed around us through coercion or manipulation. It includes feminist theories, Marxist theories, LGBTQ theories, deconstruction theories, post-colonial theories etc. (Fuchs, 2016:5). This emphasizes the significance of critical theory in the modelling of an ideal speech situation in the public sphere.

### **3.5 Mass media and public sphere**

Traditional media, mainstream media, mass media or media are interchangeable terms which comprise diverse media technologies used to reach a larger population of people through mass communication (Jamali, 2015:1; Potter, 2009:47). The varied media technologies are further divided into certain sub-divisions which are broadcast media, print media and outdoor media. Broadcast media refers to television, radio, films etc. Print media includes newspapers, books, magazines, journals, pamphlets, comics etc. Billboards, advertisement banners, advertisements on automobiles, planes, hot air balloons, buildings, signs etc come under outdoor media (Paxson, 2010:51-113)

Technically even social media and internet media are mass media, but the fact that they are newer in the domain of media, they are termed as new media (Green, 2010:1). New media also includes the digitalization of traditional media like movies on the internet, newspapers and magazines on the internet or via a mobile application, games on smartphones, and e-book readers etc. (Hess and Constantiou, 2017:77-78). However, the researcher will be concentrating on the new media which comprises the internet and social media in which a commoner or the public has more autonomy in expressing their views and opinions which is much less in the traditional media (Cross, 2011:1). The new media that is dealt with in this study will include microblogging and social networking sites, internet and mobile chatting services and instant messaging services, photo and video sharing platforms etc. (Green, 2010:3).

The advent of mass media has played an important role as a catalyst and significant constituent in forming a public sphere (Deane, 2005:178). In the current era of highly populated societies, newspapers, televisions, radios, and magazines inform on the happenings of the society or nation and act as a public sphere to a larger crowd (McKee, 2005:5). However, Habermas explains that the public sphere is subject to manipulation and influence in a capitalistic society to serve the interests of a few (Fuchs, 2021:183). According to McNair (2002:1), broadcast media influences the political process and molds public opinion through its analyses and interpretation of political events. This may not always satisfy the standard accuracy of information expected in a liberal democracy. Further, McKee (2005:1-3) and McNair (2002:1-4) point out that the mass media has become trivialized and commercialized, and they have forgotten their responsibility of informing people about real issues. Serious reporting has been overtaken by the phenomena of infotainment and trivia. McKee opines that the private lives of politicians are of greater interest to people rather than their political decisions and administrative abilities. Hence, mass media tends to deliver what entertains people more, than the news which is of public importance to develop an informed

electorate. McKee blames the media for divorcing the publics' interest and engagement with politics. Habermas (1989) elucidates that the mass media has reached large numbers of the population in the last few decades, but the quality of the information has degraded because the pursuit of journalism has replaced public interest with profit motives. He says that the liberal public sphere, the product of the American and French Revolution has deteriorated to a media-controlled public sphere in today's world of welfare state capitalism and mass democracy. The danger of concentrated ownership of media by a few giant corporations undermines the public sphere both at a national and a global level (Deane, 2005:178-184).

### **3.5.1 Social media, citizen journalism and public spheres**

Mass media has been a common public sphere for many decades until recently when social media has taken over in creating public spheres (Cross, 2011:26-27). Social media connects an individual to society by providing them with greater autonomy, flexibility, and power to express their political and social views. The publishing and sharing of information have been made easily accessible with the advent of social media. The individual has an array of social tools at their disposal to express personal, political, and social views. Posts can be uploaded with or without pictures on Facebook and Instagram, and detailed accounts on issues can be blogged on various blogging sites or a short message (a tweet with 280 characters)<sup>38</sup> can be microblogged (tweeted) on microblogging sites (Twitter), videos can be uploaded on YouTube, and individuals can be a part of online campaigns or protests. A blog is a site where individuals or a group of people can publish their work, which is arranged in reverse chronological order showing the new posts first. Microblogging is taking blogs to the next level, where people can publish short messages from their profile which are aggregated amongst users who can enable or disable people's messages based on their interests (Fuchs, 2021:179-186).

In the dawn of social media, citizen journalism is rising. With the easy accessibility of the above-mentioned plethora of social media tools, events that happen around the world are immediately published online by the common public. It just takes a few clicks on a smartphone and a few lines accompanying the photos to make an ordinary individual an amateur journalist (Cross, 2011:68). Citizen journalism on social media provides more power to the public and helps the public to challenge the mainstream media. The citizen journalist has a wide range of media such as photos, videos, texts, and voice recordings to back up one's news. In short, ownership of the internet today equates to the ownership of a printing press (Jenkins and Thorburn, 2003:272). In the past

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<sup>38</sup> It was increased to 280 characters from 140 characters in November 2017 (Rosen, 2017)

governments used the media to showcase only their positive accomplishments and restrict their negative aspects, and with social media, the public can view both the positives and negatives (Jamali, 2015:4) except in regimes with a high level of surveillance.

### **3.5.2 Social media and social movements**

In recent times, social media has played an important role in the influence of social movements. The Arab Spring is a phenomenon which brought this influencing capacity of social media to the academic limelight. Following this, many social movements popularly called social media activism or hashtag activism have been staged around the world. There is both optimism and scepticism towards social media public spheres in promoting democracy.

When freedom is denied in life, social media provides a platform for freedom of speech and expression (Jamali, 2015:1). Blogging sites allow people to write about what is happening around them. Microblogging sites like Twitter makes it possible for everyone from a commoner to a celebrity to express their views in a short message. This message can be further shared by others with their Twitter account. Short messages, memes, photos, and posts from social movements can be shared at a rapid pace on social media platforms and instant messaging services such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp, Telegram etc. The contents on social media require a shorter attention span from their audience to view and grasp, hence messages on social media reach a larger audience quickly. Further, social media is free, easy to use and allows the spontaneous expression of one's opinions and perspective on matters. Social activists can promote awareness and an availability of a ready and like-minded audience develops the confidence of the activists to continue their activities towards development, social justice etc. (Cross, 2011:1-4).

On the other hand, social media platforms do not perform social services, and they are profit-oriented entities. They are commercialized and have been reduced to the level of online shopping sites (Chadwick, 2008:235). Further, when a piece of information is uploaded on social media, it is difficult to erase the information or its digital trace. The information gets stored in digital libraries (Cross, 2011:4-5). In recent cases of social movements from Iran and North Sudan, the governments of these countries penetrated social media and manipulated the information to mislead the people. They also used social media to monitor the next moves of the social activists and used the information to curb their moves (Jamali, 2015:2). Fake news on social media is also problematic and misleads people.

Fuchs (2021:186) emphasizes the importance of the engagement of physical presence with activist efforts in networked spaces. The physical gathering of people in public spaces will create a real-time threat to authority and establishment. Therefore, social media spaces can act as a stimulator in creating social mobilization. Cyberspace cannot be a stand-alone phenomenon in protests, social movements, and revolutions. Except in a few cases such as hacktivism in which websites of the authoritative establishments are hacked. However, this is only possible by highly skilled experts and not by the publics.

Online media has both the potential to build and be detrimental to democracy in society, so it depends on the knowledge of the user in order to gain or lose from social media (Chadwick, Howard and Papacharissi, 2008:230). Authoritative regimes will always have an upper hand due to the availability of resources, hence, social activists must not completely rely on social media to promote their causes. They should pay heed to the positive and negative effects of social media on social movements and use it most appropriately to accelerate the mobilizing of people to support their causes. They should also keep alternatives ready in order to extend the life of the movement and succeed in a cause.

With the understanding of the public sphere and the political interferences in its functions through the manipulation of the media and the other structures in society, it would be appropriate to discuss the themes of diversionary reframing, the propaganda model and manufacturing of consent drawn by the power structures that dictate the lives of their citizens.

### **3.6 Diversionary reframing: the politics of distraction**

Diversionary reframing plays a crucial role in the construction of a simulated democracy, in normalizing power in society, in hijacking the public sphere, in the building of the panopticon, in escaping the synopticon and creation of freedom by default. Diversionary reframing is a tool used by politicians, a state, or any other powerful establishment to strategically time the framing or announcing of a controversial policy or law by distracting the public with another event, issue or happening in the country. Powerful authorities devise this tool of diversionary reframing in order to evade or escape the detailed scrutiny of the policy or law by the public. While the public is attentive to the event, issue or happening meant for their distraction, quickly this policy/law/scheme/decision is implemented by the government without much attention from the public (Djourelouva and Durante, 2019). Pellebon (2010:8) describes political distraction as a method used by politicians to process their hidden agendas through fear and intimidation. They blame a marginalised minority group to be a reason for an engineered social crisis and divert the attention of the majority.

Freudenburg and Alario (2007:146-148) claim that diversionary reframing is like an act of magic, in which politicians distract and divert people from questioning the distribution of privilege in society or the legitimacy of the political roles and the governance in the country. Professional magicians do not use force to make their audience believe their acts, but they are experts in enticing people into believing them. The authors argue that, in the same way, when politicians hide something from the public, it is not whether they see the hat or the rabbit, but it is eventually about what they miss. Like professional magicians, there are politicians out there who have efficiently hidden their political mischievousness from the public. Ultimately, their expertise makes them successful in creating a public that seldom questions or who has altogether forgotten the art of questioning. The effective method of diversionary reframing does not remain with just entertaining and distracting people, it strives to create a vague enemy who accepts the blame for the mistakes of the politicians or the state. This strategy provides the state with an object to point fingers at when the common people are looking for a reason for the chaos and problems that they face. The film *Wag the Dog* (1997) is a classic example of how diversionary reframing is used by political powers. In the film, two weeks before elections, the sitting US president is caught in a sex scandal of making advances on an underage girl. To avoid public outrage and distract the people from this issue, the president hires a Conrad Brean, a brilliant spin doctor. Brean gets Stanley Motss, a Hollywood director to shoot footages with actors to fabricate a war in Albania. Now, the war in Albania has taken over public and media attention. The CIA and the rival candidate learning about this hoax report that the war has ended and turn the attention back to the president's sex scandal. Hence, the director invents an American hero "Schumann" who was left behind in Albania and a rescue operation is in need to save the hero. So, a team, goes to rescue this hero and brings back a criminally insane army convict with the same name. However, the plane crashes on its way, however, the team are rescued by an illegal immigrant farmer, whose should be given expedited citizenship to make the story better. Schumann tries to rape a gas station's daughter and he is killed. Using this situation, Motss arranges for an elaborate state funeral for Schumann. This increases the chances of the president getting re-elected and erasing his sex scandal story. Disappointed with no credit for his work, Motss threatens Brean that he will reveal his involvement and the political secrets of the fake way. Brean makes his security detail kill Motss. In the end of the movie, a news report reads, Motss a famous American director dies of a heart attack in his home, the president successfully re-elected for a second term and a terrorist group claimed responsibility for the recent bombings in Albania.

Weber, Roth and Wittich (2013) in *Economy and Society*, talks about how social order can be achieved in society. If not by coercion or by self-thought, it can be implemented by a shared belief

in the legitimacy of the existing relationships. Weber et al believed that legitimation of domination can be implemented in three ways: charismatic, religious, and rational. The leader of a society or a politician of a state uses his<sup>39</sup> charisma to entice the people into believing that he has extraordinary leadership skills. Religion has played a role in politics from the time of its inception, with the involvement of sacredness, there is no competition for the patriarch in authority. Similarly, the scholars of the Frankfurt School<sup>40</sup>, observed the role of culture in the manipulation and control of the masses because it deeply infiltrates the lives of the individuals in a society. It prevents the people from raising questions against totalitarian regimes or capitalistic ideas as it creates a voluntary acceptance of the norms and rules in society and the dominance of the system over the people. In Foucault's panopticon surveillance, he talks about the physical structures of schools, universities, hospitals, the military etc. Yet, there are invisible structures within society such as religion, culture, nationalism etc. which also aids to a great extent of governing and normalizing power structures in society. For example, patriarchal culture normalizes the higher power of a father figure in a family, religion normalises the powers of kings and priests and nationalism normalizes systems like Nazism (Freudenburg and Alario, 2007:149-159). The following quote provides clarity and strengthens the argument of how these invisible structures promote the performances of diversionary reframing.

*You could never convince a monkey to give you a banana by promising him limitless bananas after death in monkey heaven. But why is it important? After all, fiction can be dangerously misleading or distracting. People who go to the forest looking for fairies and unicorns would seem to have less chance of survival than people who go looking for mushrooms and deer. (Harari, 2014:26-27)*

The quote from Harari's *Sapiens* helps us understand how religion, culture, caste, race, gender, nationalism etc. has always been used in political distraction and has helped in creating a public who are always in search of fairies and unicorns. Finally, the rational method involves the amalgamation of legitimacy into legality, establishing domination through legal and bureaucratic processes. This is why former colonies, carry over the laws from colonial times to clandestinely implement domination and play the legal card when questioned (Freudenburg and Alario, 2007:149-159).

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<sup>39</sup>The researcher has deliberately used the pronoun "his" to denote the effect of patriarchy in the power game.

<sup>40</sup>Horkheimer and Adorno (2002:94-137) discuss this idea in 'the culture industry: Enlightenment as mass deception'.

### **3.7 Propaganda model and manufacturing consent: a leash on our thoughts**

Noam Chomsky, an American linguist, is a living legend who has authored 100's of books on linguistics, political philosophy, mass media and war. He has been vocal about American imperialism and the unnecessary wars they have waged against third-world countries. Along with Edward S. Herman, an American economist and media critic, Chomsky developed the propaganda model. This model is used as a tool by American politicians and powerful elites to perfect their public image. There are several factors which go into the making of this model. This involves the concentration of the ownership of media, sourcing of funding from advertisers and sponsors who support the agendas of authority, spreading anti-communist views and developing a bond with the people who have the power to create news for the media. It also involves the preparation of an expert spokes team who will be able to give the right edge to their speeches and interviews on behalf of the authority, to make bad news disappear from the eyes of the public. Politicians also use this evasive technique of brushing off negative comments as conspiracy theories. The corporate tendency and the centralisation of the American media have made it colossal in the entertainment business and has reached every corner of the Earth, and along with it has also travelled the American propaganda. This has helped foreign investments into America and has been a strategic tool in justifying the wars on third-world countries in the name of counterterrorism (Herman and Chomsky, 2008:xi-xx). Even though theorized for the American context, this is no different at home (India and South Africa).

Opinions and decisions which the public might not accept in their normal course of thinking are assimilated into their thoughts through propaganda. This phenomenon of engineering public opinion is referred to as manufacturing consent. Necessary illusions are the key elements used in forming public opinion, based on the noble lies fabricated by the state or other powerful authorities to keep people in line. Necessary illusions are intrinsic in the conditioning of the masses' thoughts, especially in representative democracies (Chomsky, 1988).

After understanding the above concepts, the next issue to tackle is colonialism and its aftermath in third-world countries. Coloniality plays a vigorous role in the grievances of these countries, and this makes it vital to discuss the concepts of decolonisation. Colonialism has shaped the past, present and future of these nations and hence decolonisation works as counter to coloniality and the oppressive systems preceding colonial era and transform societies for a better future.

### **3.8 Decolonisation and colonialism: the past, present and future**

The thought, struggle, and strife for the independence of a colonised country from its colonizer is called decolonisation. In 1960 the United Nations condemned colonialism “*as a serious abuse of*

*human rights*” and accepted the self-determination of a nation as “*legally binding*”, this drastically transformed global politics (Kennedy, 2016:1). Even though this ended colonialism and the previously colonised countries became independent by the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, coloniality is still widely existent even today. Colonialism exists in two different forms. Colonialism has changed its name and lives in other forms such as neo-colonialism, with examples like China’s economic interest in Africa, America’s peace forces in the Middle Eastern countries etc. Even though this thesis does not focus on the existence of colonialism, it is important to understand how, even when one type of oppression is identified and eradicated, it is eventually re-introduced with certain alterations in another form and name by the oppressor.

Even though the colonisers have left the colonised nations, these nations have been scarred by what the colonisers have taken away from them and left behind. The colonisers took the wealth, resources, skills, man power from the colonised nations. And the politics, policies, institutions, and structures of the nation take the lead from their colonial predecessors: education policies, the police force, the state control and surveillance of the people, the law, elitism, concentration of power and resources in the hands of few are all processed with a colonial mindset (Maldonado-Torres, 2016:1).

This thesis focuses on the second form of coloniality which is invisible and still lingers around. The terms "colonisation" and "decoloniality" are always thought of as processes of the past and end with the independence of a nation. But in reality, freedom is just the first step to decolonisation and there is still more work to be done which is even harder than the independence struggle. The years of colonisation have strongly influenced the colonised nations with the colonial thought process and mindset, power roles and ontology. This is called the western modernity or western civilization which is established within the hegemonic institutions and structures of the previously colonised countries. Modernity works just as crudely as colonialism. The powerful and the elite are not interested in the lives of the people around them who suffer from poverty or oppression. The media and the scholars who act as agents of the state silence the voices and the questioning of the oppressed part of the society. Modernity takes its lead from coloniality and conceals its oppressive nature by avoiding any type of questioning or examination by the members of the communities who are at the receiving end of attack, oppression, and violence.

Decolonisation is the fight against the ongoing process of coloniality in order to re humanize the oppressed and previously oppressed communities, deconstruct social hierarchies, create counter-discourses, counter-knowledge and counterarguments and free society from the shackles of imperialism and colonialism and make it a place which accommodates pluralism and

multiculturalism (Maldonado-Torres, 2016:2-10). Decolonial movements around the world are responsible for the creation of a new type of knowledge and critique. They form new kinds of ideas and approaches in their efforts, in which they combine knowledge, experience and creativity, to make this world a better place. Decolonial activism deals with colonialism and dehumanization with inclusivity, communication, support building and organization.

Ramón Grosfoguel, a South American sociologist, has discussed the structural link between colonialism and modernity. He has dealt with the theory of decolonisation in great depth. He vividly explains that decolonisation should not be misunderstood as anti-European essentialism. Decolonisation only unties the bad knots tied by Euro centrism and colonialism in third-world countries. Further, the concept acknowledges that there is some good which is produced by Western modernity and also opposes third-world fundamentalism and nationalism. The fight of decolonisation is also against third-world fundamentalism which defines oppressive thoughts from the periods preceding the colonial era. Hence, conservative or right-wing political authorities cannot hijack the theory of decolonisation in substituting oppressive, discriminative social injustices and exclusive social privileges in the place of colonial instruments of oppression.

Grosfoguel points out that Western thoughts have made themselves the centre of truth and universality and this is the problem for decolonisation. Hegemonic Euro centrism has shaped the world with its philosophy and sciences for more than five centuries. This epistemology is built with colonialism, modernity, patriarchy, and capitalism. There is a universal power structure which is constructed within this world system and “No one escapes the class, sexual, gender, spiritual, linguistic, geographical, and racial hierarchies of the ‘modern/colonial capitalist/patriarchal world-system’”. Truth and universality cannot come from one particular thought or region, it needs to emerge from debates and discourses of varied thoughts and philosophies from around the globe. Hence Truth and Universality cannot be universal, it should be pluriversal. (Grosfoguel, 2011).

### **3.8.1 Decolonisation and democracy**

The atrocities of colonialism are not ordinary, it made distinct classifications between the colonisers and the colonised. The Euro-centric world system has always considered it superior and has forced the world to follow its lead. The system created a global class divide that diversified labour into waged, indentured, and enslaved, who were organized by capital to make unlimited profits in the world market. The political system was backed by heavy militarization by European men, and they were put in charge of colonial duties. A racial divide was made clear, privileging European ethnicity and othering the non-European communities. Gender bias was also clearly defined using European patriarchy, favouring men over women, and sidelining any other forms of gender relations.

Heterosexuality was supported and other types of sexuality were ridiculed and marginalized. Christianity was spiritually superior to indigenous belief systems which were diminished as barbaric. European languages reflected as elite and were favoured, whereas local languages were deemed loud and brash. Eventually, the knowledge from the Western world was preferred and institutionalized all over the world, reducing indigenous knowledge to merely stories and folklore; an act of epistemicide. (Grosfoguel, 2013:74, Grosfoguel, 2009:18-19)

At different periods in history, the colonial mentality has forced people from colonised countries, third-world nations and indigenous communities to accept a set of demands. If people refused to accept these demands, it was either dealt with by torture, rape, killings, or genocide. The people from these places were considered by Europeans as inferior and barbaric. In certain cases, these people were considered as fauna.

*During the last 520 years of the "European/North-American capitalist/patriarchal modern/colonial world-system", we went from "convert to Christianity or I'll kill you" in the 16th century, to "civilize or I'll kill you" in the 18th and 19th centuries, to "develop or I'll kill you" in the 20th century, and more recently, the "democratize or I'll kill you" at the beginning of the 21st century. (Grosfoguel, 2012:97)*

Democracy was born and raised in Europe. Yet, until not very long ago, this idea democracy was monopolized by a patriarchal elite. Even though the conceptualized form of democracy was introduced to the rest of the world by Europeans, it cannot be deemed as the idea of democracy and good governance was never present around the globe before this. Even today, it is only the Euro-American model of liberal democracy which is recognised and the non-European ideas which stem from African, Indian, Middle Eastern, or other indigenous ideas of democracy are rejected by the powerful first-world countries. If their form of democracy is not accepted by the people, they use force to implement and establish it on those people in the name of development and civilisation. Any revolutionary ideas in a community should stem from within, not influenced from the outside. Western women cannot dictate a liberation for third-world women or Westerners cannot expect indigenous people to view progress or civilization in the same way they do. This is why Grosfoguel strongly calls for the decolonising of democracy and redefining it into a trans-modern democracy free from the radicalized and capital-centric Western democracy (Grosfoguel, 2009:28).

The utopian ideas and the movements against repressive systems in former colonies reflect the fight against coloniality which is internalized in these societies. Hence, it is important to create a new leftist idea that fights both the right and the existing left, those which are formed from the colonial

mentality. The existing leftist movements are constructed with the idea of Euro centrism, and it is evident that the left around the world has not radically voiced itself against the social hierarchies. Therefore, democracy cannot be fully integrated into society, if the society wants to provide superiority and privileges to one or few communities and treat the rest of the people as second-class citizens (Grosfuguel, 2011).

### **3.8.2 Decolonising education**

Decolonising education was the central theme of the #RhodesMustFall and the #FeesMustFall movement. The #RMF discoursed the removal of the statue of Cecil Rhodes, a colonialist from the University of Cape Town, and was followed by the #FMF which dealt with the prohibitive expense of higher education in South Africa that directly restricts the majority of Black students from getting educated. These movements also pose the question of why the curriculum in South Africa is Eurocentric and suffers in the absence of the works of women and people of colour (Bhambra, Gebrial and Nişancıoğlu, 2018:111).

Grosfoguelian perspective defines the need for creating a space in South African universities to view knowledge and ethics through a decolonial theoretical lens. This will allow bringing African stories, theories, and knowledge from African scholars into the Universities of South Africa and increase the volume of the Black voice of Africanism in the scholarship of South African higher education. The continuity of the failure to decolonise education increases the educational realm to be a Eurocentric space and restricts the entry of Blackness and the education of Black communities (Grosfoguuel, 2017:2-4).

### **3.8.3 Fanon and decolonisation**

Frantz Fanon is a political philosopher and psychiatrist from Martinique, a French West Indian Island. He died young at 36, but he has contributed immensely towards anti-colonial scholarship and Black uprising. His works have a deep impact on the studies of decolonisation and colourism.

*Youth of Africa! Youth of Madagascar! Youth of the West Indies! We must, all of us together, dig the grave in which colonialism will finally be entombed! (Fanon, 1969:119)*

In his key work, *Black Skin, White Masks*, he speaks about how colonialism dehumanized indigenous communities around the world. The essence of his work speaks about how coloniality urges to erase Blackness or at least cover it with a little whiteness (Maldonado-Torres, 2016:13). Blacks are structurally dehumanised and characterised as problematic, and they are locked inside a zone of absence. No Black person urges to be problematic, the only thing a Black person wants is to escape this zone and be considered a normal human (Gordon, 2002:12). Fanon shows that anti-

Black racism has a Manichean philosophy <sup>41</sup> with dimension to it in which the establishment of whiteness as superior intends to weed out the contaminated Blackness from its system. Whiteness suffers from a god syndrome and feels it has divine attributes to it.

Fanon says, "if you want to know what Blacks want? Then ask that to a Black person, ask the thousands of Blacks, millions, or the entire Black population of the world". Then there might be some answer to undo the atrocities committed against them. Do not let an anti-Black racist decide what Blacks want (Gordon, 1997:70-77). The work of Fanon is just not relevant to African or Black communities, but the relevance of his works reaches out to every indigenous community, colonised country, third world nation or marginalised society around the world. His work also calls for a transnational and intercontinental political affiliation amongst the previously colonised third-world countries (Bose, 2018:671).

### **3.8.4 Biko and Apartheid**

Steve Biko was a social warrior against Apartheid in South Africa. He was at the grassroots levels of several protests and movements staged against Apartheid in South Africa. Biko was arrested for travelling to King William's Town by breaking a restricting order. He was severely beaten up in prison and in a few days, he died in prison at age 30.

Biko was in strong opposition to the anti-apartheid oppositions in South Africa being dominated by white liberals and overshadowing the Black populations who are affected by the Apartheid system. Biko complained that most Black organisations are controlled and directed by white liberals.

*Apartheid--both petty and grand--is obviously evil. Nothing can justify the arrogant assumption that a clique of foreigners has the right to decide on the lives of a majority. Hence even carried out faithfully and fairly, the policy of apartheid would merit condemnation and vigorous opposition from the indigenous peoples as well as those who see the problem in its correct perspective. The fact that apartheid has been tied up with white supremacy, capitalist exploitation, and deliberate oppression makes the much more complex. (Biko and Stubbs, 1978:20-45)*

He highlights the fact that the authority of the scholarship of the culture and lives of Blacks lies with the white world. He says that it is very difficult for the white world to accept that Blacks can have a deep understanding of life, culture or even about themselves. Further, the culture and religion

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<sup>41</sup> Manichean philosophy is an anti-religious view of the world in duality. The worldly elements are divided into good and bad. A Manichean thinker views everything as black and white.

of Blacks have been dismissed and fused with the colonizer's ideas since 1652. This has weakened the Black communities and deprived them of their history and culture. Biko says poverty is a foreign concept and it was not part of African culture. The religion of Africans was part of their life, and it was a thanking of the ancestors for their beer, marriage and work. It is an alien idea to create occasions and build structures to worship. With a strange logic of cleverness, the colonisers called the religions of Africans superstitious and their religion as scientific (Biko and Stubbs, 1978:20-45). Grosfoguel (2013:81) traces the history of four epistemicides in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, unpacking how the idea of lesser or yet to be fully formed beings were conceived as Columbus observed no discernible religion of indigenous people of America.

“...it appeared to me that they had no sect...” this statement by Christopher Columbus opened a debate for the next 60 years (1492-1552). As Nelson Maldonado-Torres (2008a) argues, in the late 15<sup>th</sup> century, Columbus' notion of “people without sect” (“people without religion”) meant something new: “people without a soul” (Grosfoguel, 2013:81).

The construction of *yet to be complete* or *not fully formed* being allowed justification for colonial dominance as a pastoral campaign.

### **3.8.5 Periyar, Ambedkar and anti-casteism**

Decolonisation theories speak about the fighting of third-world fundamentalism along with the battle against coloniality. The caste issue in India is notably one of the most serious fundamentalist threats towards achieving social equality and cohesion. Periyar E.V Ramasamy and B. R. Ambedkar were the stalwarts in India who waged war against caste, the Brahminical ideology of social hierarchy and privileges based on birth and lineage. The struggles of Ambedkar and his contributions to the oppressed communities of India are immense. Ambedkar's *Annihilation of Caste* was his masterpiece, which he drafted to be presented at a forum which was formed to break the caste system. The invitation to speak at the forum was withdrawn because the speech accused the sacred texts of Hinduism of the problems of caste and Ambedkar urged the Dalits<sup>42</sup> to embrace any other religion except Hinduism to escape the shackles of the caste system. Ambedkar converted to Buddhism as well. He describes caste as an endogamous enclosed unit, and he perceived the system as “ascending scale of reverence and a descending scale of contempt” (Roy, 2014:23).

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<sup>42</sup>The Dalit community in India are the most oppressed. They are still considered untouchables. Even though, untouchability is illegal under the Indian constitution. The atrocity against Dalits is a recurring phenomenon in India. This includes honour killing, forced labour into manual scavenging, short payment of wages etc.

The Indian caste system emerges from Hindu mythology, the Brahmins occupying the top of the pyramid are born from the head of Brahma (God) and were classed as priests, scholars, and administrators. The Kshatriyas from the shoulders were kings and warriors and Vaishyas from the abdomen were the business class. The Shudras born from the feet served the top 3 classes. The Dalits were the untouchables who were outside the realm of society. They lived in utmost poverty and worked as scavengers, undertakers, and menial labourers. The system scaled purity from top to bottom, making the Brahmins the purest and the Dalits the most polluted. The untouchables were systematically barred from any privilege enjoyed by the higher castes. They were made to live far away from the living quarters of the privileged caste communities, restricted from using the same water source, wearing footwear, entering temples, changing their professions, getting educated and the list extends. Some regions banned lower caste women from covering their upper bodies. Ambedkar belonged to the Mahar an untouchable caste. The members of the Mahar caste had to tie brooms to their waists to sweep away their impure footprints. (Roy, 2014:23-24). The *Manusmriti*<sup>43</sup> sanctions the caste system and has prescribed drastic punishments such as “the cutting off the tongue, or pouring molten lead in the ears, of the Shudra who recites or hears the Veda” for the non-conformity of the caste laws. (Roy and Ambedkar, 2014:269-270)

The Dalit population was scattered around India and it restricted their political majority throughout India. To contest this challenge, Ambedkar drafted a dual election system with a separate electorate for the Dalits for a period of 20 years to build a constitution for themselves. This was heavily opposed by Gandhi and other congress party members. Gandhi went on a hunger strike (September 1932), which forced Ambedkar to drop this policy (Roy and Ambedkar, 2014:122-125). Ambedkar chaired the drafting of the Indian constitution. He was unhappy with the final draft, however, the only reason that the Dalits in India enjoy at least some rights is because he was part of the committee. Ambedkarism acts as a strong liberation movement in India for the oppressed with the chant of *Jai Bhim* which combats the elitist and right-wing slogans of *Jai Hind* or *Jai Shri Ram* in India<sup>44</sup> (Omvedt, 1994).

Periyar started the Self Respect movement and *Dravida Kazhagam*<sup>45</sup> in Tamil Nadu, to fight against the injustices committed in the name of caste. Periyar professed Atheism, he said if inequality is

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<sup>43</sup> *Manu dharma* (The Laws of Manu) form the Hindu code of ethics.

<sup>44</sup> *Jai Bhim* – Victory to Ambedkar’s ideology, *Jai Hind* – Victory to India and *Jai Shri Ram* – Hail Lord Ram. The right wing claims the golden age of India was under the rule of Ram, a mythical king/god from the epic *Ramayana*.

<sup>45</sup> *Dravida Kazhagam* (Dravidian Federation) was the amalgamation of the Justice Party and Self Respect movement led by Periyar in Tamil Nadu. The current two powerful political parties of Tamil Nadu: *Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam* (DMK) and *Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam* (ADMK) were born from DK.

endorsed by caste, abolish caste, if caste is sanctioned by religion, abolish religion, and if God is the root cause for all this, abolish God sooner. “*There is no god. He who created god is a fool. He who propagates god is a scoundrel. He who worships god is a barbarian*” is a statement of Periyar which is inscribed below all the statues of him installed throughout Tamil Nadu (Manoharan, 2019). The Self Respect movement divorced religion from the politics of Tamil Nadu and promoted rationalism in Tamil society. Manoharan (2016:8) quotes Periyar in his essay and compares his thoughts with Fanon’s idea of working on developing a social and political consciousness amongst the people of a nation, rather than the popular national consciousness, in order to prevent the nation from deterioration and paralysis.

*Puratchi<sup>46</sup> was not launched to destroy the White master and install the Black master. Puratchi was not launched to end White government and bring in Black government. Nor was Puratchi launched to abolish Hinduism and propagate Islam or Christianity. Puratchi was born to make a revolution to end the rule of all capitalist classes and all religions, to ensure that all people live with self-respect and that there is universal equality between the male and female genders. (Periyar, 1933)*

### **3.9 Voicing to authority**

“We are just private individuals here, with no other grounds for speaking, or for speaking together, than a certain shared difficulty in enduring what is taking place” (Foucault, 1983:474). A revolution is standing up against a tyrannical authority when a person, a community, a group, a minority, or the whole population says, “I will no longer obey” without considering the risk to their lives (Foucault, 1983:449). Foucault provides a set of as a motivation for activists to stand against authority in which he emphasises the importance of raising voices against oppression in society and reaffirms that these voices will never go unheard.

Beyond many differences, the world has become one. There is international citizenship for every citizen of this world, and these citizens have some rights and duties. This citizenship encourages people to be open about every misuse of power, regardless of who the establisher of the power is or who the victims of the power are. We all become one community when it comes to the context of being governed and, hence, it is our responsibility to show solidarity towards people who are suffocated under the same system of being governed.

In the pretext of development and welfare, governments trespass into the lives, livelihoods, and happiness of the people. It is the duty of this international citizenship to speak out whenever there

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<sup>46</sup> *Puratchi* means revolution. *Puratchi* was a newspaper launched by *Dravida Kazhagam* in 1933.

is suffering due to the actions of a government. There is no excuse for a policy to exist with the side effects of people suffering. It is our absolute right to stand up against governments and voice our rights loudly when we notice suffering due to the decisions, actions, and negligence of governments.

Division of labour should be rejected in society. It is the right for people to get angry and question a government when it is not functioning properly, and it is the duty of the government to listen and act accordingly. In reality, the ones in power like to talk, own the capacity to talk and do nothing else other than talk. But past experiences teach us only when we talk and raise our voice, things start to change. While addressing these principles, Foucault throws light on the institutions like Amnesty International, Terre des hommes and Doctors of the World which have proved international citizenship and have questioned the monopoly enjoyed by governments. Taking the tasks accomplished by these institutions as examples, it is our responsibility to slowly take away the monopolised power of governments, a little every day (Foucault, 1983:474-475).

### **3.10 Conclusion**

This theory chapter covered different theories by sociologists, philosophers, and activists from around the globe. The seminal theory discussed in this chapter is Baudrillard's *Simulacra and Simulation* was used in the framing of the title of the thesis and construction of the central argument in exposing simulation of democracy. Giddens' structuration theory provided the golden thread to sews the different discourses and themes of the thesis in examining the protest cultures of the #FeesMustFall movement and the #Jallikattu protests in South Africa and India. Stanley's symptoms of fascism delineated democracy from autocracy. Foucault's concept of power and knowledge, governmentality, panopticon surveillance and the counter theories synopticon and omnipticon helped us understand power structures, control and surveillance. Habermas's public sphere, communicative rationality and communicative action provides activists with the knowledge to build better protest movements. Fuchs' ideas on social media activism were crucial in understanding the function of social media in digital activism. The theories also included Chomsky's thoughts on necessary illusions, manufacturing consent and propaganda model, Freudenburg's and Alario's discussions on diversionary reframing, Maldonado Torres' and Grosfuguel's perspectives on decolonisation, Fanon's writings on anti-colonialism and colourism. Steve Biko's thoughts on Apartheid, Periyar's ideology on self-respect and anti-casteism and Ambedkar's masterwork *The Annihilation of Caste* provided the regional context of social issues in India and South Africa. In the next chapter, we will look at the research methods and methodology, the sources of data etc which have been used to collect and analyse research data for this thesis.

## Chapter 4: Research Methods and Methodology

*Research is a formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose.*

- Zora Neale Hurston<sup>47</sup>

### 4.1 Introduction

Research Methodology is an integral part of any research. This chapter outlines the paradigmatic and methodological research frame. This section outlines epistemological considerations and thereafter delineates the methods for the research.

### 4.2 Epistemological considerations

The study takes a qualitative approach with two case studies. The research falls within an interpretivist paradigm as it is mainly interested in understanding two geographically distinct social movements occurring in a similar chronology, namely #FeesMustFall movement in South Africa (2015-16) and #Jallikattu protests in India (2017). In order to explore the multiple realities emerging in these movements, the study will consider a range of related information from online and social media.

In terms of axiology, interpretivism locates truth in context (Babbie and Mouton, 2012:33). The researcher, therefore, carefully reviewed the context of the two social protest movements as case studies, in order to discern similarities, nuances and differences. Much time was spent interviewing key respondents as a means of understanding how individual stakeholders experienced the protest movements. Excerpts of the interviews are included within the texts as this forms an important component to the research project, in that it allows visibility of individual voices.

Blaikie and Priest (2019) state that ontology is a branch of philosophy concerned with the nature of what exists and what constitutes reality. From an interpretivist perspective, multiple realities exist. These realities, though intangible, are “personal, context-bound” (Wagner, Kawulich and Garner, 2012:56). Therefore, the study included in-depth interviews with relevant respondents. However, it was deemed necessary to take a paradigmatic turn to include the critical social science paradigm. This allows the researcher to explore the idea that multiple realities exist in a context where only a few dominate. The critical paradigm allows the researcher to investigate the way in which dominant ideologies maintain and extend systemic conditions of control and oppression while giving space for critique. The researcher juxtaposed dominant media texts (legacy media

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<sup>47</sup> Zora Neale Hurston is an African American anthropologist, author and filmmaker who has portrayed the racial struggles of Africans in America in her work.

from online sources) about the protest movements with the personal accounts of protestors on the *front line*. This highlighted the contrast across ideological formations and individual realities.

### **4.3 Methodology**

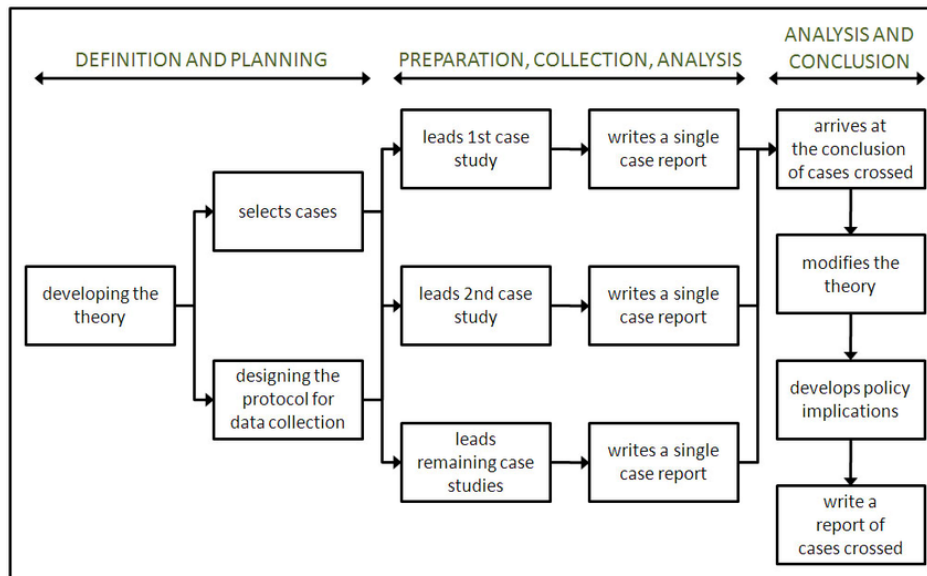
The research methodology includes the sources of data, methods of data collection and analysis. Yin's (2003) explorative case study was used to strategically architect the key structure of the research work. Primarily the data for the study was collected from online newspaper media from India and South Africa and tweets, memes, photos, interviews, documentaries, and protest videos from social media which includes Twitter, Facebook and YouTube. Based on the data collected from the different media, qualitative interviews were conducted with twenty South African students and citizens from Tamil Nadu (India) and South Africa who took part in the social movements of the #FeesMustFall movement (2015) and the #Jallikattu protests (2017).

Further, quantitative data analysis tools such as Voyant and Microsoft Excel were employed to textually analyse the data comprising large numbers. Finally, Foucault's (1972) and Fairclough's (2003) Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) provided the theoretical microscope to qualitatively analyse and interpret the extracted data from varied sources.

### **4.4 Exploratory case study analysis**

Yin (2003:12) explains that case studies act as an empirical investigation of a phenomenon within its real context, especially, when the actual context of the phenomenon is not openly visible. In other words, it can be used to explain an intervention and the context in which the phenomenon occurred. Case study research accommodates multiple sources of evidence to cover data. The triangulation method is used which will be social media analysis, newspaper analysis and qualitative interviews for this research work. The case studies can be conducted and evaluated for different motives, either to explain the case itself or to magnify the case to explain broader concepts. This research work conducted an inter-continental case study of social media activism and the functioning of democracies in India and South Africa. The #FeesMustFall movement 2015 and #Jallikattu Protests 2017 were the cases discussed in this study to analyse student activism, social media influencing activism and the status of the Indian and South African democracy.

Yin (2003:46) suggests that a single case study and a multiple case study should be within the same variant of methodological research. He also highlights that the multiple case study might be time-consuming and, hence, it will make the research study challenging. However, he provides us with the solution of replication logic that can be used to construct research work by carrying the same research on different cases. This method strategizes a wider study by economising time.



Source: (Yin, 2003:50)

**Figure 4-1: A multiple case study method**

## 4.5 Sources and data collection methods

### 4.5.1 E-newspaper and e-magazine media

*A newspaper is much more than a business it is an institution*

– C.P. Scott<sup>48</sup>

Newspapers and magazines are printed materials which are available daily or weekly to the public. They carry important and newsworthy information about what happens every day around us. Newspapers cover news reports according to their scope which can include news about daily events, politics, sports, cinema, global events, weather, business etc. Habermas (1989) conceptualized that newspapers form a public sphere in which popular discourses are produced and broadcast to the public. With the advent of social media and the ownership of mobile phones, there has been a considerable decline in the newspaper media business (Nielson, 2015:10). Nevertheless, newspapers still have a substantial readership and have taken advantage of technology to reach the public via web articles on the Internet or through mobile applications on smartphones.

Newspaper media generally covers local, national and geopolitics daily, hence, it is an important tool to go back to when we need information on the political events which happened at a particular time. Newspaper media reveals the decisions, opinions and actions of the government and it acts

<sup>48</sup> C.P Scott was the editor of the Manchester Guardian in the UK in 1921.

as a crucial device in understanding the stance of the government towards the social movements discussed in this thesis.

The articles from e-newspapers and e-magazines in India and South Africa were collected from online sources. The articles were selected from 2015 to 2020 for the #FeesMustFall movement and the articles from 2017 to 2020 were selected for the #Jallikattu movement. The relevance to the study was used as the basis for the selection of the articles. Online newspaper articles were preferred over print media articles due to their easy accessibility. Further, online media articles have the option to be published on the social media pages of these media companies and, hence, allow the discussion of the public in the comment sections of these articles. Hence, it was easy to gain knowledge of the public opinion on the articles selected, which is not possible in the print media, unless efforts are taken to conduct interviews based on each article.

A judgement sampling method was employed for the selection of the e-newspaper, e-magazine, electronic news aggregators, e-editions of media channels and blog articles for analysis. This sampling technique purposively selects the sample to increase relevance and reduce the redundancy of information in the thesis (Lohr, 2009:5). The articles were chosen with specific keywords like jallikattu, feesmustfall, jallikattu protests, feesmustfall movement, and from the articles generated from the search, the most relevant to the study was selected for the thesis.

The data collected from the online newspaper media was parallelly analysed with the data collected from social media to ascertain the difference between legacy media and public opinion. This helped the researcher analyse journalistic neutrality, freedom of the press and the functioning of the public sphere in India and South Africa. Finally, the gaps in the information collected from online media and social media were addressed with qualitative interviews with the protestors and supporters of these social movements.

#### **4.5.2 Social research on social media**

In the current era, social media has played an important role in mobilising people to participate in protests, social movements, and even social revolutions. The Arab Springs is the standing evidence for this phenomenon (Bosch, 2016:4). This research study aims at contributing towards this knowledge pertaining to the social movements influenced by social media by analysing the two youth-led protests in South Africa and Tamil Nadu (India) and investigating the reactions of the government to these protests.

Social media has developed into a public sphere which allows people to express their opinions, create awareness on social and political issues and help organise people to stand up against the

injustices in society. Social media has become an integral part of society and these public forums are rich in data (Sloan and Quan-Haase, 2017:3-329). There are two ways in which social media can be used for conducting research. The first way is to use social media to collect data for the research study through surveys, polls, interviews, and collecting data through setting up groups or pages on social media. The second way is to exploit the abundant data which is already present on social media (Sloan and Quan-Haase, 2017:19-20). In this study, the researcher has used the data already present on Twitter, Facebook and YouTube. The limitation of the second method was the cost factor in accessing the data from Twitter, yet with the help of the university's funding the researcher was able to overcome this limitation.

Virtual ethnography is a research methodology used in various fields to study objects of research within online or virtual communities. It involves observing participants in virtual or online spaces, helping to bridge the gap between online and offline interactions. Digital ethnography, also known as virtual ethnography, cyber-ethnography, or netnography, explores human interactions within Internet technologies. This includes investigating online fandoms, digital communities, social justice movements, and similar topics. This approach applies traditional ethnographic methods to the digital landscape, offering valuable insights into how people interact with products, services, and each other in digital realms. (Elon University, 2024).

The preliminary field study, literature review and informal interviews with protestors have shown that social networking sites and instant messengers such as Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, Telegram and YouTube have played a crucial role in mobilising people to join the social movements. Virtual Ethnography becomes crucial for this study as the researcher has mined data from Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube and conducted some interviews via WhatsApp for this thesis.

#### **4.5.2.1 Twitter**

Twitter, a microblogging site has played a key role in the #FeesMustFall movement and the #Jallikattu protests. Hence, to understand the influence of Twitter in these social movements, the tweets and retweets during the heights of these social movements were mined using Tweet Binder, a social media monitoring tool. The researcher extracted a large amount of data through the web scraping services provided by this tool. The historical Twitter data reports were generated using the keyword 'Jallikattu' from 8<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> January 2017 from the Tweet Binder tool. Totally 17,379 sample tweets and 11,769 sample retweets were scraped by the tool from a total population of more than 600,000 tweets from the #Jallikattu protests. A tool-based random sampling method was applied to extract these tweets. The tweets related to the #FeesMustFall movement from 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>

February 2016 were obtained from a fellow researcher who gathered the data for another study. Totally 3,504 sample tweets and 127,281 sample retweets were scrapped by the fellow researcher from a total population of 278,859 tweets from the #FeesMustFall movement.

The reports generated from this tool were further analysed and interpreted using the text analysis tools. The statistical data tools helped in the representation of the data statistically to emphasise the language, location and other demographics. Further, the data was comparatively analysed with newspaper media using critical discourse analysis and was used in the construction of qualitative interviews with the participants of the social movements.

#### **4.5.2.2 Facebook**

Facebook was an active platform during the #Jallikattu protests and the #FeesMustFall movement. To understand the influence of Facebook in these social movements, the researcher made keyword searches and has collected information on the various pages and groups that talk about the movements.

Memes, photos, videos, notices, and posts have been collected from public groups to aid in the study. Information on the number of followers and members of these pages and groups has been collected to substantiate the claim of the study. Even though Facebook is a public forum the posts, photos, videos and memes uploaded by individuals were not randomly downloaded for the study. Keeping ethical<sup>49</sup> guidelines in mind, the researcher sought permission from the owners of the information, before using them in the research. This request was made to the interviewees of this research study to share their posts, photos, memes and videos pertaining to these social movements. The contributions made by some of the interviewees have been used in the study. This data was also analysed with the data collected from Twitter and the newspaper media.

#### **4.5.2.3 YouTube**

The development of mobile phones with cameras is a great advantage to social movements in this current time. These camera phones have turned ordinary citizens into amateur journalists. During protests and social movements, people capture the activities at the protest grounds. It becomes a critical tool during the eruption of violence, because the violence is often blamed on the public, and these photos and videos become crucial pieces of evidence to show what really happened. The ordinary public has recorded footage of police violence and atrocities during the #FeesMustFall movement and the #Jallikattu protests.

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<sup>49</sup> Ethical clearance has been obtained from the University of KwaZulu-Natal Research Committee.

These videos were immediately uploaded on Facebook, Twitter and other social networking sites and shared on chat applications such as WhatsApp and Telegram. The supporters of the protests, independent journalists, news channels and the protestors themselves have also uploaded these videos on YouTube. These videos on YouTube were a vital source of data for this research study.

The videos from YouTube were extracted using keywords such as ‘*Jallikattu* Protests’, ‘Fees Must Fall’, ‘*Jallikattu* Protest police’, ‘Fees Must Fall students’ and so on. YouTube is a commercial site and has algorithmic authority over videos and search results. Hence, the search on YouTube was based on relevance and number of views, however, the researcher had taken time to analyse the large number of video results on the site to carefully select the videos for the purpose of the research. Some of the videos uploaded by the ordinary public did not have many views, yet the relevance of them to study was much higher. Hence, again the judgement sampling method was employed to strategise the best results for the study.

The date of upload of each video proves the authenticity of the videos as it is immediately uploaded from the grounds of protests. The content from YouTube helps in understanding the views of the protestors who were directly interviewed by independent media journalists and the videos uploaded by the protestors themselves. Each downloaded video was further scrutinised carefully to remove any fabricated or fake videos. However, it is important to note that there were no fabricated or fake videos found in the scrutiny of the videos uploaded by supporters and protestors of the two social movements. The videos downloaded were recorded in a Microsoft Excel sheet with the details of the number of views, date of upload, name of the uploader, number of subscribers, description, likes, dislikes, location and language.

#### **4.5.2.4 Media quantitative analysis**

The research data extracted from varied media sources were analysed and interpreted using both quantitative and qualitative analytical techniques. Analytical tools such as Voyant were used to perform textual analysis on the data extracted from Twitter. Microsoft Excel was used on the tweets to graphically represent them based on number and location.

#### **4.5.2.5 Critical discourse analysis**

Critical discourse analysis is the umbrella term which refers to the critical usage of the many theories contributed by sociologists, philosophers, scholars and activists in analysing the way worldly things function. The researcher has critically analysed the rich information collected for this study using the various theories discussed in the theoretical framework chapter. Foucault’s (1972) idea of Critical Discourse Analysis focused on the power relations in society and

Fairclough's (2003) Critical Discourse Analysis concentrated on the study of language in the collected research data.

*In analysing a painting, one can reconstitute the latent discourse of the painter; one can try to recapture the murmur of his intentions [or] ... set out to show a discursive practice that is embodied in techniques and effect...shot through with the positivity of knowledge (savoir). It seems to me that one might also carry out an analysis of the same type of political knowledge. (Foucault, 1972:214)*

Discourses are the representation of the physical, social, and emotional positioning of the world. The varied views of the world are because of the different relationships that people have with the world depending on their place, identity and relationships with others. Discourses make it possible for people to understand their differences from others and allow them to separate, cooperate, compete, or dominate others. (Fairclough, 2003:124)

In this study, the online media has been centralised in extracting the journalistic discussion of the #FeesMustFall campaign in South Africa and #Jallikattu Protests in Tamil Nadu (India). Social media has been the epicentre in representing the public sphere of the protestors, activists and the ordinary citizen. The thesis has used the information from both these media to examine the status of the public sphere, the functioning of democracies, the influence of social media in social movements, the status of the right to speak and express, and the independence of the media in India and South Africa.

#### **4.5.2.6 Qualitative interviews with protestors**

Qualitative interviews were conducted with participants, supporters, and scholars of the #Jallikattu Protests and #FeesMustFall campaign. Students, faculty members, common citizenry from both India and South Africa who were involved in the social movements and a few members with knowledge about Tamil society and South African society were interviewed by the researcher. The Interviews were set in a conversational mode with the question framework in the mind of the researcher and open-ended questions were asked to the participants (Yin, 2003:134-136). The questions were structured to retrieve information on how social media acted as a public sphere for both these protests, government and police relations during the protests and the experiences at the protests. The participants were allowed to speak freely, and they were not interrupted or cut short to direct their responses in any particular way. The process of critical discourse analysis was used in the interviews, and the theoretical backing was introduced in the questions in simplified terms

to make them understandable to the interviewees. This process helped in the better construction of the discourses that emerged from the interviews.

The first set of interviewees was conducted with South African students and general citizenry from Tamil Nadu introduced by fellow researchers. The data collection period was during COVID-19 pandemic, hence a convenience sampling method was employed to select the first set of interviewees to start the interview process with the peers and faculty members at the university in South Africa who participated and witnessed the #FeesMustFall movement and the first set of interviews in India was a careful selection of protestors who were contacted through social media networks with high level involvement with the #Jallikattu protests, the members who replied to the requests were contacted to retrieve information about the protest movement. Further, to be more effective, a snowball sampling technique was used, in which the selected interviewees introduced their friends, family, fellow protestors, media persons and scholars who were involved with the social movements. This technique made research more authentic and removed any type of bias in the selection of participants for the research. Snowball sampling method is the most effective in finding respondents for a study from a unique and rare population. (Lohr, 2009:517)

The face-to-face interviewees were conducted through the Zoom application to follow social distancing during the Covid-19 pandemic. Preliminary interviews were done through face-to-face interviews which was during pre-covid time. The recorded interviews in English were transcribed using Microsoft Word online and the interviews in Tamil were manually transcribed and translated into English by the researcher.

Interviews through a chat method were also employed in this study. The WhatsApp instant chatting application was used as an important tool in collecting interview data from interviewees through a chat method. The experiences of the interviewees with the social movements were collected by chatting with them. Chatting on mobile phones has been the norm in today's age and it was easier to convince some interviewees to provide information as they preferred chatting than the tedious interview process in the traditional method. The additional advantage of this method is that it saves time from transcribing interviews, as the chats can be directly exported and transferred via email. They can be downloaded and saved with the other research files. The date and times of the chat are also part of this document.

#### **4.6 Conclusion: limitation and privileges of the study**

Opinion articles, Memes, Facebook posts, Twitter tweets, Videos of Protests, Videos of interviews related to the #FeesMustFall Protests and #Jallikattu Protests were collected from various internet media and social networking sites.

The Covid-19 situation negatively affected the interview process of the research. The initial idea of the research was to conduct face-to-face personal interviews with participants from both Tamil Nadu (India) and South Africa. However, considering the safety of the researcher and participants from contacting the virus, face-to-face interviews were replaced with interviews online via Zoom application and chat interviews on WhatsApp. The travels to personally collect interviews from interviewees in India and South Africa were suspended to avoid unnecessary international travel during the pandemic situation.

English and Tamil were used as the primary languages for the interviews with the participants in South Africa and Tamil Nadu respectively. The transcripts of the interviews are available in English and Tamil. The privilege of knowing both these languages has aided exponentially in this study. French texts have been used in one of the chapters, and they have been translated. The translations from Tamil to English and French to English have been done by the researcher.<sup>50</sup>

The lack of knowledge of Zulu and other African languages was a limitation of the study. The interviews with the participants in South Africa were not able to be conducted in their mother tongues. Even though the interviewees spoke English well, the research missed the privilege of the interviewees expressing themselves in their mother tongues.

The researcher's tuition was free for the first three years and the rest were covered by university bursaries. The research was self-funded by the researcher through part-time employment. While the opportunity for education is an expensive feat for millions in South Africa, this is a huge privilege for the researcher. This was only possible due to the economic betterment enjoyed by the researcher.

The researcher has seriously followed the ethical guidelines proposed by the university. The ethical clearance letter has been attached to the appendices of the thesis. The names of the interviewees are kept anonymous. The audio recordings have been digitally stored at the Supervisor's office under lock and key and no other copies of the interviews are available.

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<sup>50</sup> The researcher is a native Tamil and English speaker. The researcher has a B2 level proficiency in French.

## Chapter 5: Representation of Data Sources

### 5.1 Introduction

The data collected for the research work is represented in this chapter using graphs, tables, bar diagrams and maps. This chapter ensures that the reader has a clear picture of the information extracted from various sources for this research study. Primary sources of data are visually represented in this section of the thesis. The primary data refers to the original data which the researcher collects for intended research work. The primary sources of research data for this thesis were collected from newspaper media, social media and interviews with the student community and ordinary citizenry who participated in the *#Jallikattu* protests and *#FeesMustFall* movement in Tamil Nadu (India) and South Africa. This data was analysed and interpreted to construct the answers to the objectives of this thesis. The secondary sources used in the research include books, scholarly articles, theses and web articles which were sourced from physical and digital libraries. This data was used to build the literature study, frame the theoretical lenses and formalise the methods to undergo this research work. This data is represented in the bibliography chapter of the thesis.

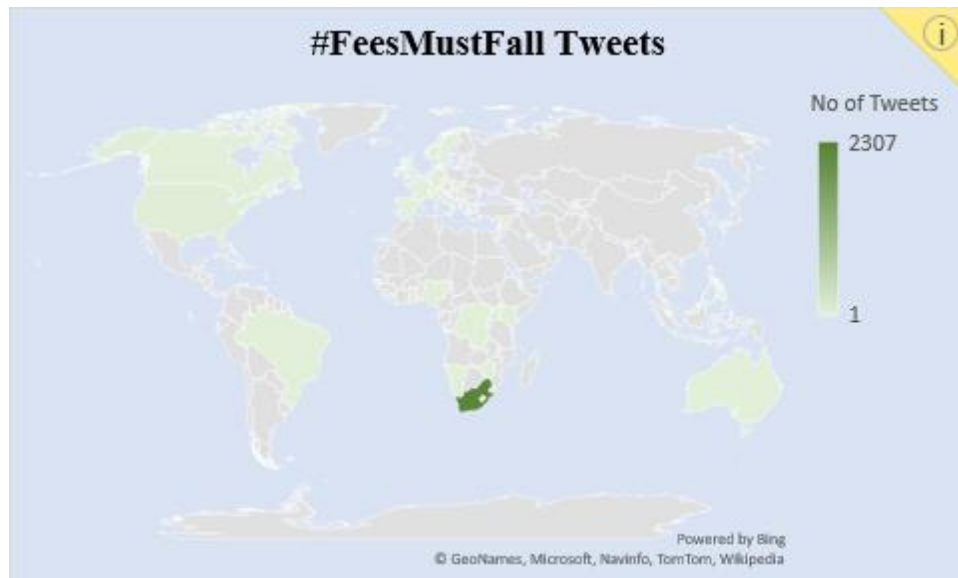
### 5.2 Online media data

**Table 5-1: E-newspaper and e-magazine articles considered for the research study**

Name	Location	Name of the Article	Date	Type
<b>The Wire</b>	India	Why are we ignoring the casteist, patriarchal basis of <i>Jallikattu</i> ?	09/02/2017	News and Opinion Website
<b>LiveMint</b>	India	Forget cruelty to animals, <i>Jallikattu</i> champions casteism and gender bias	23/01/2017	E-paper
<b>BBC News</b>	India	Caste splits Tamils over bullfighting	12/02/2017	Online Magazine
<b>Swarajya</b>	India	The ugly side of the traditional Tamil sport <i>Jallikattu</i>	18/01/2019	Online Magazine
<b>The Hindu</b>	India	SC people demand inclusion in <i>Jallikattu</i> committee	06/01/2020	E-paper
<b>The Huffington Post</b>	UK	White students form a human shield to protect black <i>#FeesMustFall</i> protesters from South African police	22/10/2015	News aggregator and blog
<b>The Conversation</b>	South Africa	Feminism could offer a new way to solve the <i>#FeesMustFall</i> crisis	25/01/2016	E-Newsletter
<b>News24</b>	South Africa	Patriarchy must fall	25/10/2015	E-Editions
<b>The Conversation</b>	South Africa	South African student protests are about much more than just <i>#FMF</i>	27/10/2015	E-Newsletter

### 5.3 Twitter data

**Figure 5-1: Geographical mapping of the sample tweets from the #FeesMustFall movement**

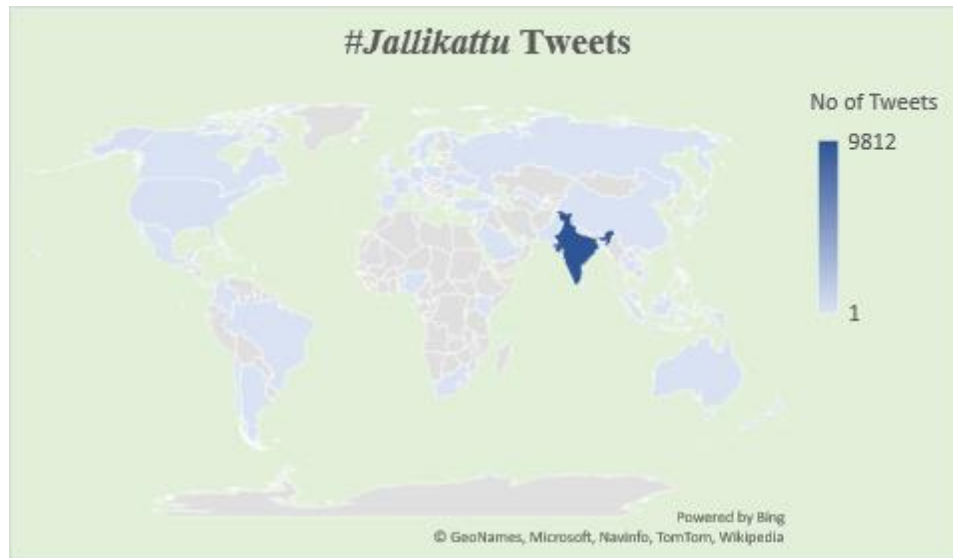


The total sample tweets collected for the research study is 3054 tweets out of which 2307 tweets were tweeted in South Africa which is marked in darker shade of green. The remaining 101 tweets were tweeted in the lighter green shaded geographical areas (Outside of South Africa). The location of 646 tweets is unknown. The No of Tweets in the graph represents 2307 being the highest country-wise tweet count and 1 being the lowest country-wise tweet count.

**Table 5-2: Country-wise tweets from the #FeesMustFall movement**

Country	No of Tweets	Country	No of Tweets
Australia	1	Namibia	2
Brazil	1	Nigeria	1
Canada	2	Norway	1
China	1	Philippines	1
Congo	1	<b>South Africa</b>	<b>2307</b>
Czechia	1	Spain	3
France	2	Sweden	2
Germany	1	Syria	2
Ghana	1	Uganda	10
Hungary	1	UAE	4
Ireland	1	United Kingdom	10
Italy	1	USA	35
Kenya	2	Zimbabwe	3
Malaysia	1	Unknown	646
		<b>Total</b>	<b>3504</b>

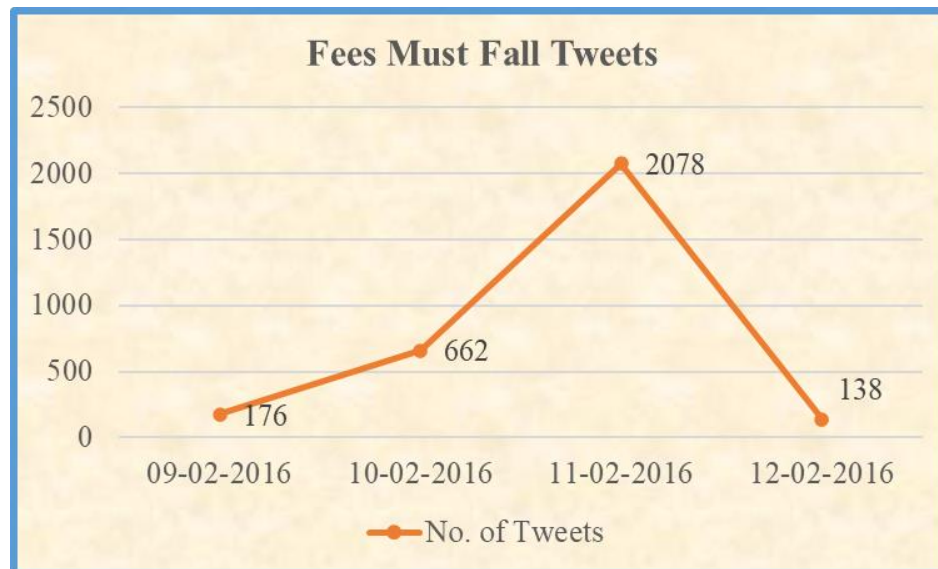
**Figure 5-2: Geographical mapping of the Tweets from the #Jallikattu protests**



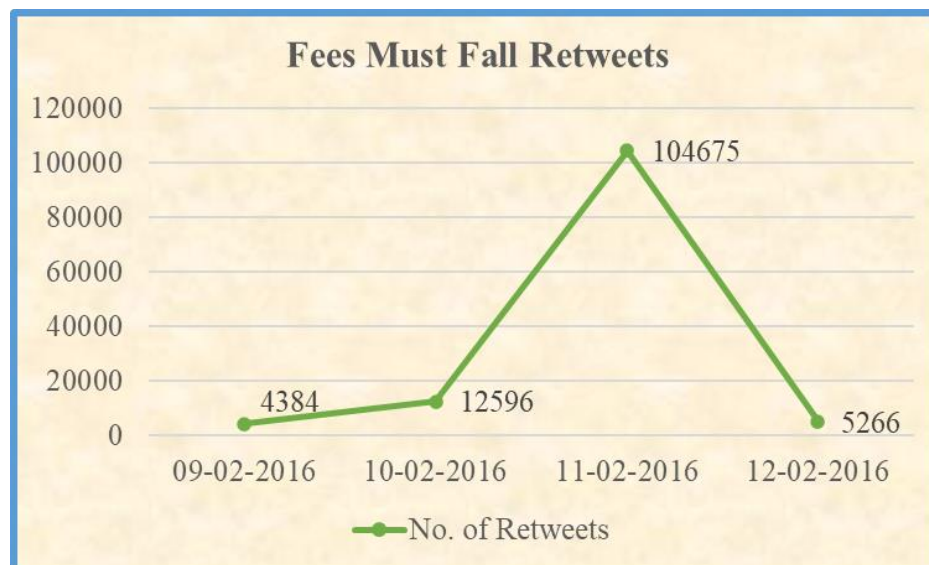
The total sample tweets were 17,379 tweets out of which 9812 tweets from India are marked in a darker shade of blue. The remaining 917 tweets were tweeted in the lighter blue shaded geographical areas (Outside of India). The location of 6650 tweets is unknown. No of Tweets in graph represents 9812 as the highest country wise tweets and 1 as the lowest country wise tweet.

**Table 5-3: Country-wise tweets from the #Jallikattu protests**

Country	No of Tweets	Country	No of Tweets	Country	No of Tweets
Argentina	1	Italy	1	Spain	2
Australia	41	Japan	12	Sri Lanka	88
Austria	3	Kenya	1	Sweden	10
Azerbaijan	1	Malawi	1	Switzerland	10
Bangladesh	6	Malaysia	41	Syria	1
Brazil	22	Mexico	14	Taiwan	1
Canada	31	Nepal	6	Thailand	1
Chile	1	Netherlands	10	Turkey	7
China	7	New Zealand	18	UAE	132
Colombia	2	Nigeria	6	UK	75
Czechia	2	Norway	1	Ukraine	2
France	21	Pakistan	19	USA	192
Georgia	2	Poland	1	Uzbekistan	1
Germany	28	Romania	1	Vietnam	1
<b>India</b>	<b>9812</b>	Russia	1	Unknown	6650
Indonesia	4	Saudi Arabia	12		
Ireland	3	Singapore	71		
Israel	1	South Africa	2	<b>Total</b>	<b>17379</b>

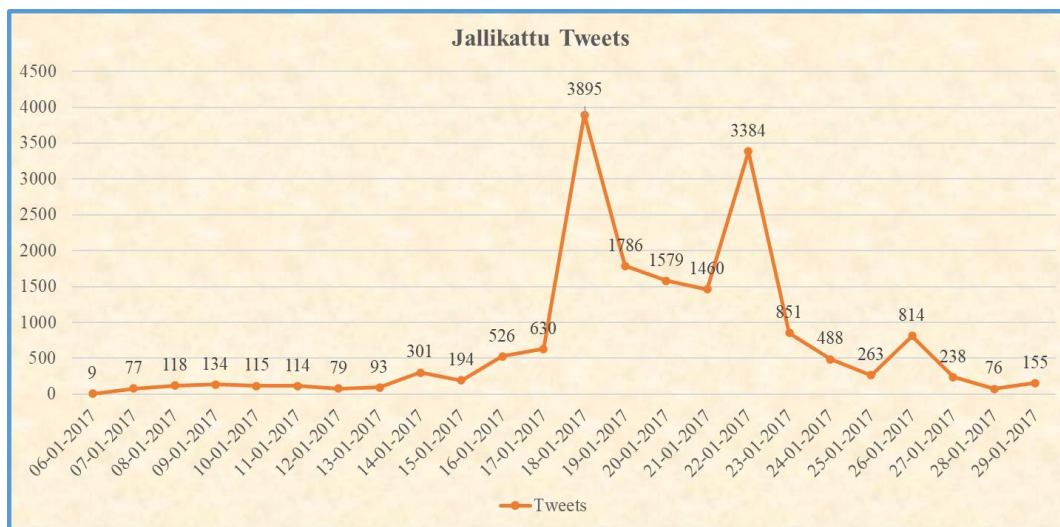
**Figure 5-3: Sample of the Tweets from the #FeesMustFall movement – February 2016**

**Total Number of Tweet Sample: 3,504 Tweets**

**Figure 5-4: Sample of the Retweets from the #FeesMustFall movement – February 2016**

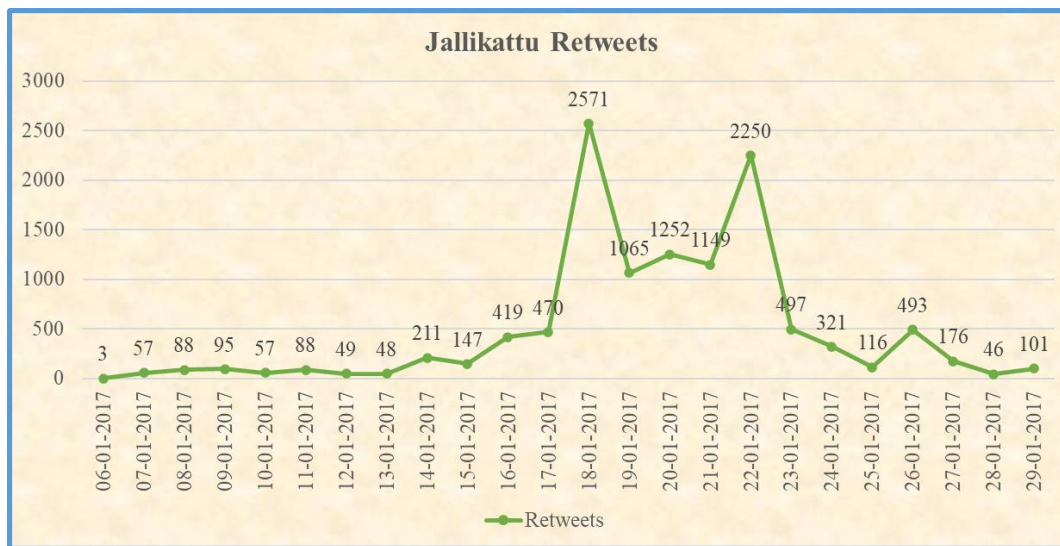
**Total Number of Retweet Sample: 126,921 Retweets**

**Figure 5-5: Sample of the Tweets from the #Jallikattu protests January 2017**



**Total Number of Tweet Sample: 17,379 Tweets**

**Figure 5-6: Sample of the Retweets from the #Jallikattu protests January 2017**



**Total Number of Retweet Sample: 11,769 Retweets**

## 5.4 YouTube data

**Table 5-4: YouTube data considered for the research study**

<b>Search keyword</b>	<b>Number of videos</b>	<b>Language</b>
<b>Fees Must Fall</b>	27	English
<b>Fees Must Fall Police</b>	13	English
<b>Fees Must Fall gender</b>	8	English
<b>Fees Must Fall London</b>	3	English
<b>Fees Must Fall USA</b>	2	English
<b>Fees Must Fall Debate</b>	6	English
<b>Jallikattu Protest</b>	89	Tamil
<b>Jallikattu Protest police</b>	12	Tamil
<b>Jallikattu Police attack</b>	7	Tamil
<b>Jallikattu Women</b>	5	Tamil
<b>Jallikattu Protests USA</b>	7	Tamil
<b>Jallikattu Protests UK</b>	6	Tamil
<b>Jallikattu Protests Canada</b>	3	Tamil
<b>Jallikattu Protests France</b>	3	Tamil
<b>Jallikattu Protests Sri Lanka</b>	8	Tamil

## 5.5 Facebook data

**Table 5-5: Facebook data considered for the research study**

Search keyword	Category	Number of groups/pages visited for the research
<b>Fees Must Fall</b>	<b>Facebook Group</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Fees Must Fall</b>	<b>Facebook Page</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>Jallikattu Protest</b>	<b>Facebook Group</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>Jallikattu Protest</b>	<b>Facebook Page</b>	<b>105</b>

## 5.6 Interview data

**Table 5-6: Interview data considered for the research study**

Case	Type of Interview	Number of Respondents	Country of Respondents
<b>#FeesMustFall movement</b>	Face-to-face (Online)	11	South Africa
<b>#Jallikattu Protest</b>	Face-to-face (Online)	6	Tamil Nadu (India)
<b>#Jallikattu Protest</b>	Face-to-face (Online)	2	France (1), USA (1)
<b>#Jallikattu Protest</b>	Chat method	2	Tamil Nadu (India)

## Conclusion

Next, we will move to the data analysis chapter which is divided into four sub chapters discussing the themes of colourism, police brutality, racism, casteism, sexism, heterosexism, media attention, centre of protests, diaspora and trans-national politics affecting the two social movements: #FeesMustFall movement and #Jallikattu protests. The themes and discourses which emerged from the data sources explained in this chapter is used to examine protest cultures and the status of democracy in South Africa and India.

## Chapter 6: Introduction to Data Analysis and Interpretation

This chapter is an introduction to the critical discussion of the experiences, expressions and discourses that surfaced in the #FeesMustFall movement of South Africa and the #Jallikattu protests of Tamil Nadu (India). The #FeesMustFall movement was the uprising of South African university students advocating for free tertiary education in South Africa. The #Jallikattu protests was the standing up of the people of the state of Tamil Nadu against the ban of a cultural sport with bulls (*Jallikattu*) by the centre. Even though both these movements happened in different spaces and for diverse causes, the researcher has observed similarities within the themes and elements of these movements. Hence, this section of the thesis envisages to tie together the discourses that have emerged from these two intercontinental movements. The next four chapters are the sub-chapters of this section. Each chapter discusses a unique theme and discourse which has parallely affected both the two social movements.

*Tweet: How long will it take for my skin to develop a bulletproof layer as I am more exposed and close to gun shots #BlackLivesMatter #FeesMustFall*

This single tweet is the crux of the next three chapters of the thesis. Colourism, police brutality, racism, casteism, sexism, heterosexism, media attention, diaspora involvement and transnational support are the themes from both the social movements that will be dealt with in chapter seven to ten of the data analysis and interpretation section. These discourses have parallel positions in comparing both #FeesMustFall movement and #Jallikattu protests. The above quoted tweet in just two lines touches the essence of chapter seven, eight and nine which discusses colourism, police brutality, racism and casteism within social movements. Patriarchy, gender-based violence, sexism, heterosexism, media attention and centre of protests in social movements are the other themes of chapter nine. Finally, Chapter ten discusses the involvement and support of diaspora and transnational political communities in the two social movements.

This research work affirms the potential of comparatives research in bringing out parallels of similar phenomena like the #FeesMustFall movement and the #Jallikattu protests. Despite the difference in the geographical, cultural and political definitions of these social movements, the similarities are uncanny. The symptoms of a simulated democracy are reflected in the varied discourses and parallels of this research work. Further, the discourses explore protest cultures and question the deficiencies of democracy in India and South Africa and within the movements itself.

## Chapter 7: Colourism in Social Movements

*We are all brown in this house.*

*Why is this picture*

*in my house? A white baby,*

*blue eyed, swaddled and camera ready.*

- Urussa Malik<sup>51</sup>

### 7.1 Introduction and background

In life, we embrace and enjoy the plethora of shades of colours which have been scattered all around us by nature. Yet, when it comes to skin colour, there is only one colour and the shades closer to that one colour that have an upper hand, even until today. Colourism is a subtler form of racism that operates on proximity to whiteness. In the modern era, the UN charter gave rise to notions of the universality of human rights, which have been qualified and extended for meaningful inclusion of all peoples around the world. Given that these discourses are more prolific, it becomes difficult to be racist in traditional terms. However, old mechanisms of generating subservience persist in disguised ways. The placeholder for racism is replaced with colourism. Colourism refers to discriminatory practises against people with darker skin. Colourism converts racist ideologies to subtler forms. In practice, it means that lighter skinned people are foregrounded and privileged over people who are darker skinned. Colourism, therefore, extends racial classification to an intracategory level (Monk, 2021:78).

Categories like race, class, and gender transmute into hierarchies, which in turn dictate norms, customs and behaviours. These norms and customs can have a disruptive effect on modern life, and their persistence today lies in historical contexts of capital accumulation and division of labour designed by colonial architects. Interestingly, Ramón Grosfoguel (2013) states that colour racism was not the first in racist discourses during colonial times. In order to resolve the contradiction of violence against people in the colonies and theologically troublesome questions around their humanity, they were defined as people without religion/people without soul/people without God (Grosfoguel, 2013:75). The discursive range of soullessness and ungodliness in people from the colonies expanded to include them as dangerous, unethical, and incompetent. This mechanism of rationalising the creation of under classes endured through colonial and apartheid times in South Africa, and, in India, traditional systems of caste became bound up with coloniality.

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<sup>51</sup> Urussa Malik is a poet, playwright and a short film maker from Great Manchester, UK.

When colourism is practiced, the distribution of benefits, opportunities and privileges are inversely proportionate to the shades of the skin colour of a person. The lighter the skin colour, the higher the benefits and vice versa (Nadeem, 2014:224-225). Monk argues that colourism was even prevalent in the US during slavery where lighter skinned slaves were favoured for housework and darker skinned slaves were favoured for fieldwork (2021:78). This led to some level of relative privilege<sup>52</sup>.

*Working in the house as opposed to the field dramatically increased the chance that lighter-skinned Blacks (or mulattos) would be literate and trained in a trade.... [post emancipation] social mobility was far easier and proceeded at a faster pace for those of lighter hues... Economist Gunnar Myrdal...found links between skin tone and occupational status such that light skin tone was highly associated with being a Black professional (such as a dentist, doctor, or businessman). (Monk, 2021:78-79)*

Although techniques like the infamous brown paper bag test<sup>53</sup> (if one is similar in colour or lighter than a brown paper bag, one is deemed hireable), used to determine if a Black person was hireable or not, have ceased, other terminologies persist across the globe in interesting spaces (Kerr, 2005:272). Monk (2021:78) quotes Davis et al.'s (1941) study which highlights that "upper-and middle-class" Black men (of all skin shades) privileged light skin and sought to marry only the "fairest"-skinned Black women. This tendency created a class-based homogamy which persists beyond the US itself.

While much of the literature emerges from the US, other regions are also subject to colourism. In the current Indian context, lighter skin is zealously favoured with accompanying skin-lightening creams and terminologies such as 'wheatish' and 'coffee coloured'. These terminologies are used extensively to describe young women in particular, and even factor into online dating, marriage sites, and the determination of dowries. In South Africa, similar colouring is favoured in African and Indian contexts; however, here, women with this skin tone are referred to as 'nolas'. Nola is a brand of mayonnaise, which is cream coloured, and skin tone can also be a determinant of lobola. In South America, racial classifications extend to identify people of mixed ancestry as 'mulatto' or 'mestizo'. Reece (2019:8) indicates that 'mulatto' was an official census category used by American census until 1920. Worse still were the further stratifications that census enumerators used, which were Blacks, mulattos, quadroons and octoroons (Hickman cited in Reese, 2019:8). While colourism manifests within racial and cultural groups, its origins lie in racist ideologies by

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<sup>52</sup> This does not take into account the harsh sexual violence lighter skinned Black women endured.

<sup>53</sup> A related South African test was the pencil test, which was administered to hair to determine racial classification.

creating stratified subordination across Black and White people, and intracategorically, depending on proximity to whiteness. Terminologies are never benign, they stimulate mechanisms of domination and, hence, they can become very problematic.

### **7.1.1 Literature review**

Despite the pervasiveness of colourism, the topic does not elicit a corresponding quantity in the literature. A standard web of science search of two search terms, ‘colourism’ and ‘colorism’ yielded 219 articles with 90% of these generated from the US. 9 articles were from South Africa and only 3 emerged from India (the 2 regions focused on in this article). The US literature ranged from medically related studies of the harmful effects of skin lightening bleaches to the effects of colourism on education, health, safety and policing, mobility and job prospects, and even marriage. Some of the work dealt with experiential studies using data gathered from African Americans and Latinos in the US. There were also a few studies which dealt with politics and the media, specifically the phenomenon of “whitewashing” (Mitchell, 2020). This is where photographs and politicians or celebrities are digitally lightened for advertisements and publicity materials.

In the South African context, more of the focus lay on skin lightening products and the effects on youth health (Craddock, Dlova and Diedrichs, 2018), and psychology (Davids, Van Wyk, Khumalo and Jablonski, 2016; Fayemi, 2020; Jacobs et al., 2016). Myeza and April (2021) offered an interesting perspective on how emerging Black leaders in industry felt disempowered in leadership due to non-acceptance as a result of their skin tones.

Like South Africa, in the Indian context, Nakray (2018) and Adbi, Chatterjee, Corland and Singh (2021) explored the global beauty industry and its harmful promotion of skin lightening products, while Nagar (2018) looked at the effect of these beauty ideologies on Indian marriages. The pressure to conform to what Hoetink called the “somatic norm image” (quoted in Van Hout and Wazaify, 2021:1) creates many social, psychological and emotional difficulties for the people with a darker skin complexion (Gasman and Abiola, 2016:39).

However, neither South Africa nor India focused on the pervasiveness of colourism in civic protest movements. The only reference relating ideas of protest to colourism was by Osiebe (2021:1) who critically appraises the popular artist’s attempts to speak “matter into Black lives”. Osiebe refers to Beyonce Knowles’s “Brown Skin Girl” and Pharrell Williams’s “Entrepreneur” as popular texts attempting to create an alternative narrative for darker shades.

Two key points emerge from the related literature on colourism. The first highlights a need for developing a unifying theoretical framework that considers structural, historical, and global forces.

The second point is that literature has expanded the taxonomy. Colourism is pervasive, enduring, intractable and remarkably stable. It, therefore, is important to note the expanding discursive field as an attempt to give shape and form to the problematics of colorism. Alice Walker first coined the phrase ‘colorism’ in 1982. strmic-pawl, Gonlin and Garner (2021:290) refer to colorism as intracategories of race and attendant privilege or prejudices. Other variations of the term are skin tone stratification (Keith and Herring, 1991), shadeism (strmic-pawl et al., 2021:290), racial hierarchy (Glenn, 2009), color-class hierarchies (Russell, Wilson and Hall, 2013:27) and pigmentocracies (Telles, 2018).

Many authors reflect on the lack of a unifying theoretical framework for colourism, while also observing that it is difficult to map the influence of structural, historical and global forces. How do we then account for the pervasive nature of colourism? How could we frame the textured experience of colourism across the globe?

Theorists repeatedly argue that we lack the frames through which to view colourism. Reece (2019:4) states that it is through the vital work of critical race theorists, at times using social science methods, that racial inequality was understood in its broader context. That is inequality being “more than the collective pathology of individuals, that there is a ‘structure’ in place – comprised of institutions, policies, and norms – that reproduces and maintains inequality”. Reece argues for a similar treatment of colourism. Like racial inequality, the pervasive and enduring features of colorism signify structural roots, which maintain and reproduce it. strmic-pawl et al. (2021:289) observe that colourism is “both structural and individual as well as contextual on nature”. This necessitates a several-pronged approach, which could include political economy, identity and media theory, psychology and health. Van Hout and Wazaify (2021:1) suggest that although there is an attempt to universalise whiteness as the preferred somatic norm image, understanding ‘glocalised whiteness’ could lend perspective on the skin lightening industry as it relates to social mobility and capital accumulation on a global scale. As mentioned earlier, the majority of studies were from the US, which accounts for the regional specificity of the literature. Hence strmic-pawl et al. (2021:300) call for deepening our understanding of the global and interconnected nature of colourism, which necessitates a consideration of “transnational experiences and hierarchies through comparative work and an analysis of a global culture of colorism”. This article is an attempt to answer this call by investigating two protest movements on two different continents, which share something of a temporal proximity and the curious prevalence of colourism.

### 7.1.2 Towards a theoretical frame for colourism

It is notoriously difficult to develop a theoretical framework for colourism as the concept is bound up in race, class, gender, media, health, psychology and the list goes on. Due to the continuities related to colourism, for the purpose of this article we focus our discussion on origins of colourism in the different regions as well as how it relates to politics and media.

### 7.1.3 Origins

Although Grosfoguel indicated that race was not the first marker for coloniality, the phenotypical proximity to whiteness (Reece, 2019) became the proxy marker for distinguishing power in the colonial era.

*Colorism, via colonization and imperialism, is largely rooted in the global spread of White supremacy where being 'White' and 'light' meant one had the social standing, political standing, and economic standing to be at the top or, at least, the opportunity to be upwardly mobile. A hierarchy based on skin color reified a social, political, and economic structure that benefited the colonizer so that higher status was associated with lightness and lower status was associated with darkness (Chavez-Dueñas et al., 2014; Darity, Dietrich and Hamilton, 2005; Stephens and Fernández, 2012). (Quoted in strmic-pawl et al., 2021:289)*

Some authors account for colourism in terms of the “preference for whiteness thesis” (Reece, 2019:6) which argues that “white people simply prefer people who look similar to them”. While prejudice and preference only accounts for part of the story, it does not tell us why achieving phenotypical proximity to whiteness is so pervasive in regions of the world not dominated by white people, especially as colonisation ended decades ago.

Reece (2019), strmic-pawl (2021) and Davis (2020) argue that colourism is, therefore, not just an amalgamation of preferences or prejudice alone. They emphasise the structural connectedness of colourism to context and individual experience. It has structural and material roots that permeate culture, where the notion of whiteness or lightness is equated with legitimacy, being “better, superior, more worthy, more credible, more deserving, and more valuable” (Davis, 2020:3). Perhaps it is due to these ascribed values that notions of race were so judiciously stratified into regional colour palettes. Industry commodifies this by offering colour swatches with skin lightening creams so that users may test their progress to lightness.

In South Africa, apartheid stratified the population into African, Coloured, Indian and White groupings. The pencil test was administered, if there was any ambiguity in light-skinned coloured

people. Compared with other regions, South Africa’s colonial and apartheid past remains closer in people’s consciousness with race dominantly in the public discourses, but colourism is not.

In Latin America, the disturbing “blanqueamiento” project sought to lighten the population by encouraging race mixing. While this may have led to less distinct racial divisions, colour consciousness is still rife (Van Hout and Wazaify, 2021:1). In Asia, proximity to whiteness was coveted as distance from low class labourers who were darker as a result of work in the sun. In India, the caste system predated colonial and race hierarchies. Caste was also founded on division of labour, which may be similar to Asian notions of whiteness as distance from low caste labour performed outdoors. An additional complexity was the differences between northern descendants of Aryans who were light skinned and the southern descendants of Dravidians who were dark skinned. Caste bound up with colonialism further cemented colourism in India. (Ayyar and Khandare, 2013:71-95)

**Table 7-1: Regional Categories of Colourism Stratification**

<b>Region/Country</b>	<b>Categories of Colourism Stratification</b>				
<b>United States</b>	Black	Quadroon	Mulatto	Octoroon	White
<b>South America</b>	Negro / Chocolate	Mestizo	Moreno	Mulatto	Blanco
<b>India</b>	Dalit/ Dark/ Dravidian	Wheatish	Coffee coloured	Milk White	Brahmin / Aryan
<b>South Africa</b>	Black	Coloured	Indian	Nola	White

Given the complex proliferation of colourism, one wonders if there could be alternative historical narratives. Authors usefully suggest two. In precolonial Congo (DRC), dark skin was preferred to the extent that babies were put in the sun for longer periods of time so that they might become darker (Kerrison, 2020:3). In certain parts of India, one of the most beloved deities is Lord Krishna (Kṛṣṇa), from the epic, the Mahabharata. Kṛṣṇa literally means Black or dark. In order to manage Lord Krishna’s darkness, he is depicted as blue, signifying infinity. Nagar (2018:5) argues that this transformation of colour value is indicative of the global hegemony of whiteness.

#### **7.1.4 Media and politics**

Our discussion moves to the play of colourism in media and politics. Shirley cards are a great example of normative whiteness in the media industry.

*Shirley cards, named after a former Kodak studio model, were images used as the standard for color calibration in photo labs all over the world...Technicians would adjust the color settings to match the model's skin tone. Models for Shirley cards were always white women. (Barco, 2014)*

The manipulation of colour in the media is especially rife in politics where politicians competing against each other deliberately create adverts that portray opponents as darker than they actually are. strmic-pawl et al. (2021:289) list John McCain and Hillary Clinton whose campaign adverts made Barack Obama darker, thus showing how colourism is embedded in the political system. At a micro political level, some interesting nuances may be found:

*However, in the scenario where there was a Black candidate with a light complexion running against a Black opponent with a darker complexion, White respondents showed more voter support for the candidate with a light complexion and saw this person as more intelligent, more experienced, and more trustworthy...Interestingly, [it was found that] Black voters overall prefer candidates with darker complexions, a preference that remains consistent across gender; Black women candidates with dark skin are seen as more favorable than those with light skin. Burge, Wamble and Cuomo (2020:1600) suggest that skin tone is used as an indicator of racial allegiance; they state, this article reveals how important a perceived connection to the Black community is to Black voters . . . these results are not to say that lighter-skinned Black candidates are unable to garner success with Black voters but rather that, because their skin color suggests an experiential difference from many Black people, they may have to do more than their darker counterparts. (strmic-pawl et al., 2021:289)*

The case study of #FeesMustFall (in South Africa) and #Jallikattu (in India) also reveals some interesting findings about colourism in protest movements, which will be dealt with later.

The global media<sup>54</sup> is notorious for promoting North Atlantic success as closely related to whiteness while images of Black people are usually subtly or overtly negative. Kerrison (2020:2) refers to this as a form of cultural imperialism, which through continuous reinforcement, allows internalisation to occur on the part of darker toned viewers. It is then the beauty industry, through skin lightening creams, which invites darker toned viewers to assimilate western ideals of mobility that comes with lightness. Skin lightening industries, through advertising, present harmful

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<sup>54</sup> A regionalised detailed analysis of colourism as it manifests in political campaigns, advertising and prime time viewing would be helpful additions to the literature on colourism.

whitening and bleaching as a means of creating a better version of oneself. This notion suggests a fluidity to darker tones, which are somehow unfinished or incomplete. Interestingly, this idea resonates with Grosfoguel's account of an early definitions of the darker peoples that colonial powers encountered. Being defined as soulless or godless people meant that they were constructed as undeveloped, justifying the civilising mechanisms of colonialization. As colonial powers fell, giving way to a wider acceptance of universal human rights and inclusive discourses, colourism emerged as a subtler proxy for race. Older adverts marketed lightness as desirability, as seen in the Nadinola bleaching cream adverts in Figures 7-1 and 7-2. Hall (2021) states that revenue of skin lightening products spiked in 1967 when the US Supreme Court legalized interracial marriage, hence the advert text invites the darker toned consumer to, "Remove that mask of dull, dark skin and give romance a chance!" Note the shift in expression of the lighter toned subject from that of the 'mask'.

**REMOVE THAT MASK of dull, dark skin and give romance a chance!**

**Be pretty! Be popular!** If you want to give romance a chance, begin with your skin. There is no beauty secret more important than a clear, bright complexion. And there is no surer way to win lovely skin than with NADINOLA Bleaching Cream.

**Brighter, clearer skin can be yours quicker!** Don't let a dull, dark complexion rob you of romance. Don't let oily skin, big pores, blackheads cheat you of charm. Don't let a poor complexion make you look lots older than you are. For a change of face, try NADINOLA! Nothing—absolutely nothing—will improve your complexion so many ways, so fast! Don't keep your beauty a secret!

**Contains wonder-working A-M!** This remarkable medicated ingredient of NADINOLA penetrates the skin cells—works deep down *within* to brighten and lighten your complexion, fade weathered brown spots, combat blackheads and externally caused pimples. Soon your skin feels cleansed and cleared, fresh and fascinating, glowing and glamorous. Your friends will say you look years younger!

**Two types of Nadinola—one is for you!** Regular NADINOLA, in the black box, is for dry skin. NADINOLA Deluxe, in the pink box, is for oily skin. Buy either, with our absolute guarantee of satisfaction. NADINOLA, Paris, Tenn.

**FOR OILY SKIN**  
Nadinola Deluxe is for oily, blemish-prone skin. Buy either, with our absolute guarantee of satisfaction. 75¢ and \$1.25.

**FOR DRY SKIN**  
The original Nadinola is enriched with fine cosmetic oils. 75¢ and \$1.25.

**THE NICEST THINGS HAPPEN TO GIRLS WITH LIGHT, BRIGHT COMPLEXIONS!**

Has your phone quit ringing lately? Perhaps your complexion is to blame. Is it dark, dull and unattractive? Then for goodness sake, do something about it!

See for yourself how quickly NADINOLA lightens and brightens your complexion, loosens blackheads, makes your skin feel softer and smoother, look clearer and lovelier. There are 2 kinds of NADINOLA—both fully guaranteed. Get NADINOLA right away!

**FOR OILY SKIN**  
New Nadinola Deluxe is not only greaseless. Lightens skin and lessens shine. 75¢ and \$1.25.

**FOR DRY SKIN**  
The original, famous Nadinola Bleaching Cream, enriched with fine cosmetic oils. 60¢ and \$1.00.

**NADINOLA BLEACHING CREAM**  
Just one jar will make your complexion brighter, clearer, and lovelier.

**NADINOLA BLEACHING CREAM**  
JUST ONE JAR IS GUARANTEED TO IMPROVE YOUR COMPLEXION.

Figures 7-1 and 7-2: Early Nadinola scripts<sup>55</sup>

<sup>55</sup> Source: Images downloaded from Pinterest and Tumblrgallery.

Hall (2021) estimates that the global skin lightening industry is worth around \$8 billion, generated by a few companies such as Proctor and Gamble, Unilever, L'Oréal, and Shiseido. At first, these products were marketed to darker toned women for only the face, but now, the industry has expanded to include products for men and also the entire body. The interpellation created by skin lightening adverts are vital to this global industry. Interesting, more current adverts have not altered the advertising frame too much, following roughly the same script as those of the early Nadinola adverts.

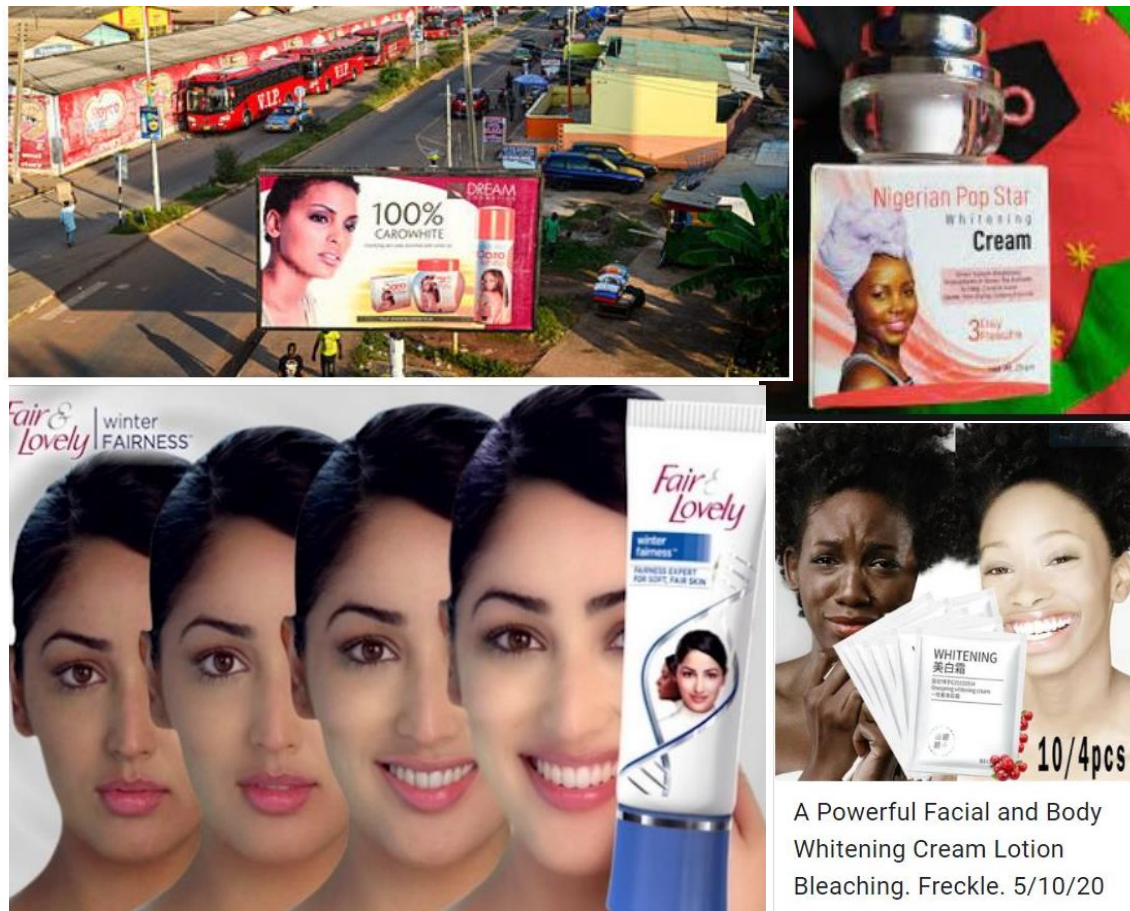


Figure 7-3 Collage of skin lightening advertisements from Africa and India<sup>56</sup>

In Figure 7-3: the top left image advertises Carowhite lightening cream in Ghana. The top right image advertises Nigerian pop star whitening cream, and the below left image shows the Fair and Lovely brand of lightening cream used in India. The last image shows a whitening cream available online in South Africa. The adverts either suggest potential celebrity status, or a graduated shift in expression from the darker toned subject to its lighter toned version.

<sup>56</sup> Source: Images downloaded from Facebook.

The most extreme is the online whitening cream advert from South Africa which portrays the dark toned subject wearing a stressed, unhappy expression, while her lighter toned version is smiling happily and confidently. It is troubling that other sectors of the beauty industry use similar types of frames, however, this is beyond the scope of this thesis. The chapter now moves to analysing two protest movements.

### **7.1.5 Colourism in activism**

Colourism is the act of favouring people whose skin complexion is lighter, even within the same race or community. This phenomenon creates social, psychological, and emotional difficulties for the people with a darker skin complexion (Gasman and Abiola, 2016:39). In a society in which colourism is practised, the distribution of benefits, opportunities and privileges are inversely proportionate to the shades of the skin colour of a person, where the lighter the skin colour, higher the benefits and vice versa (Nadeem, 2014:224-225). Colourism in activism is theorised by the researcher to explain the phenomenon of light-skinned participants of protests or social movements getting better acknowledgement for their participation than their dark-skinned counterparts. The light-skinned participants on the basis of their colour gain positions to represent the movement, get attention from the media and public and become identified as the faces of the movement. This can restrict the exposure of the people who have been personally affected by a social injustice and are active in a movement that fights for it. Briefly, colourism in activism overshadows the people who are the real faces of a movement and silences the voices of the oppressed if they do not belong to the right colour.

It is important to note that colourism is not a stand-alone phenomenon. It also includes beautism within its realm. Beautism refers to a bias based on the beauty standards that the world has constructed. This differs from one place to another, yet the euro-centric standards of beauty are dominant. Lighter skin may be an eye-catcher, but for further recognition, there are other standards to conform such as size, weight, height, hair type, facial features etc. (Corbin, 2013:3).

When speaking of colour, the readers may assume that the paradigm of colourism would have been primarily observed in the Rainbow nation based on its history of racial discriminations and segregations. However, the contextual understanding of colourism in activism was first observed by the researcher in the *#Jallikattu* protests of Tamil Nadu and later an equally substantial parallel was found in the *#FeesMustFall* movement for this theory to be applied. Hence, it would be appropriate to start with the context of colourism in Tamil Nadu and its effects in the *#Jallikattu* protests and then analyse the research analogy in the *#FeesMustFall* movement of South Africa.

## 7.2 Colourism in the #Jallikattu protests

Colourism is a common factor that influences several dimensions of life in Tamil society. The scholarly explorations of colourism in Tamil society have not been dealt in depth, even though the aspects of birth, marriage, mass media, education, job opportunities etc. are affected by the colour of a person's skin (Mishra, 2015:725-750). Hence, there is extensive scope for further research in the area of colourism in Tamil Nadu and Tamil society.

In the Western contextualisation, people of colour refer to the non-white communities (Ashwell and Morone, 2020). Ironically, in Tamil Nadu, the term colour is a colloquial synonym to refer to a person of light or white-skinned complexion. In conversation, when referring to someone who is fair in complexion, people use the English word 'colour' in saying that the person is of good colour (*nalla colour*), and when referring to someone who is of darker pigmentation, they refer to the person to be of less colour (*colour kammi dhan*). The discrimination based on skin colour is not visible because there is no race classification within Tamil Nadu, but there is a certain level of coordination between caste and colour in which, fair or white skin is generally attributed to higher castes and the vice versa (Mishra, 2015:736)<sup>57</sup>. The power dynamics of colourism is not visible in the social structure of discrimination in Tamil society like the Caste system, yet there is a strong opinion in the minds of the people, that lighter skin is superior to darker skin.

A sneak peek into Tamil cinema would give us an idea of how colourism has been normalised and imbibed in Tamil society. Here, the researcher just offers a trailer of colourism in Tamil cinema because the main picture remains in the scope of future research. Comedy in Tamil cinema comprises several slurs and dialogues mocking people with dark skin, the hit men are dark-skinned, and the female leads are almost always fair-skinned non-Tamilian actresses (Alagarsamy, 2018; Kumar, 2017). Here are a few references from some popular Tamil movies: In actor Rajnikanth's movie, *Sivaji* (2007), a father introduces his two dark-skinned daughters to Rajnikanth, and his uncle passes a comment saying, "did you boil them a bit too much" (*romba ponga vechiteenga pola*). In actor Madhavan's movie, *Aarya* (2007), a dark-skinned comedian is attacked by a mob because Madhavan lies that the comedian had embezzled public money. When the comedian denies the accusation and says Madhavans has lied about him, one of the members of the mob says, "a white-skinned person will never lie" (*vellaiya irukuravan poi solla maataan*).

The phenomenon of colourism had not even spared social movements and activism in Tamil Nadu. The #Jallikattu protests evidently demonstrates the mentality of the people of Tamil Nadu in

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<sup>57</sup> Neha Mishra's research covers the effects of colourism in whole of India and not specific to Tamil Nadu.

favouring people of lighter skin. The #*Jallikattu* Protests was the standing up of the people of Tamil Nadu against the State and Central governments to remove the ban of the *Jallikattu* sport (a cultural sport with bulls). The Supreme Court of India had imposed this ban after a petition filed by PETA India. The protest sprouted in the village of *Alanganallur* in Tamil Nadu and when 200 supporters from the village were arrested, it spread like a forest fire within the Tamil communities in India and abroad. The protest attracted the participation of students and common citizens in millions throughout Tamil Nadu and the Tamil diaspora by the influence of social media like Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, and Telegram (Biswas, 2017).

Maria Juliana, a young woman, was one amongst many, who were sloganeering at the protest grounds at the Marina Beach in Chennai during the #*Jallikattu* protests. She was adorned with the title of ‘*Veera Thamizhachi*’<sup>58</sup> by the netizens of the Tamil community. Yet, there were numerous other female participants in the protests from varied streams of life such as students, housewives, professionals etc<sup>59</sup>. There were women who performed *Parrai* (Tamil music instrument), *Silambam* (Tamil martial arts) and in other art forms including singing, dancing, and street plays. The women from the nearby fishing community gave refuge to the protestors who came running from the Marina Beach to escape police brutality. These women were assaulted physically and verbally by the police and their fish market was torched by the police for safeguarding the protestors and finding them safe passage to go back home (Naig, 2017). The difference between the other women who participated in the protests and the girl who was sloganeering was the colour of their skin. The sloganeering young woman was fair complexioned. Hence, she became popular instantly with many phones clicking her picture and videoing her sloganeering. Memes virally flooded on social media during the protests. Eventually, this girl became the unofficial face of the movement. She quickly attained fame at the protests, and this gave her the step into the Bigg Boss<sup>60</sup> season 1 which was a highly advertised reality show on *Vijay TV* (a Tamil channel). This show has one of the highest TRP<sup>61</sup> ratings in Tamil Nadu. Later, she participated in another dance reality show called *Maanada Mayilaada* on *Kalaingar TV*, another popular Tamil Channel. She is expected to act in Tamil films in future (Kumar, 2018).

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<sup>58</sup> The brave Tamil woman. Refer FB Meme 1.

<sup>59</sup> Refer Documentary Film 2 on Page no. 90.

<sup>60</sup> The Bigg Boss program is the Tamil version of Big Brother, a Dutch reality show.

<sup>61</sup> Target point rating – A measure of the amount of viewership of television programs for the use of advertising and marketing.

### 7.2.1 Memes promoting Juliana on social media



Figures 7-4 and 7-5: Memes about Juliana

Figure 7-4 reads: *The Tamil woman grabbed the attention of the Tamilians living all around the world.* Figure 7-5 reads: *The bold voice which grabbed the attention of Tamil Nadu.*<sup>62</sup>

### 7.2.2 Juliana on television and at protest grounds

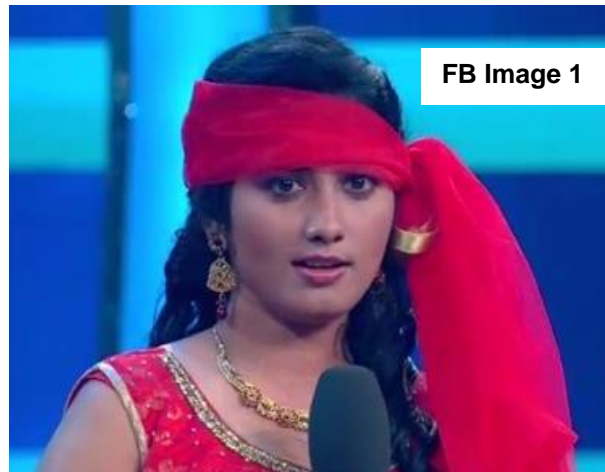


Figure 7-6: Juliana on television

Figure 7-6 is the first episode of the Bigg Boss program aired on the 25<sup>th</sup> of June of 2017, in which Juliana ties a scarf to her head representing the farming community of Tamil Nadu. She was referred to as *Jallikattu Julie* in the show. Figure 7-7 is a screenshot of a documentary of Juliana sloganeering at the #*Jallikattu* protests in January 2017. The translation of the title of Documentary Film 1 is *Jallikattu Protest Girl – The WhatsApp fame girl furious*. A public comment on this YouTube video describes her as “talented, brave, beautiful and powerful communicator”. Beautiful is not a rational description for an activist.

<sup>62</sup> FB Meme 1, FB Meme 2, and FB Image 1 were downloaded from a Facebook group “*Jallikattu Juliana Fans*”.



Figure 7-7: Protest video screenshot of Juliana<sup>63</sup>

### 7.2.3 Women at the #Jallikattu protests



Figure 7-8: Screenshot of a documentary of women at the #Jallikattu protests<sup>64</sup>

<sup>63</sup> Documentary Film 1 is retrieved from YouTube (Red Pix, 2017).

<sup>64</sup> Documentary Film 2 is retrieved from YouTube (NewGlitz, 2017).

Figure 7-8 showcases the real faces of women from Tamil Nadu. These women come from different walks of life. The title translates as *the women who tore apart the politicians: Women show up in large numbers at Jallikattu protest*. The protest was a people's movement. Hence, it is not fair to single out one person as the face of a movement, when thousands have built it together. A protest ground is a place for fighting social causes, but in this case, it was used to gain quick fame and grab the attention of the media.

#### 7.2.4 The social media case of Juliana vs Nandhini



Nandhini is a law college student, who has been jailed several times for protesting against the state-run liquor shops in Tamil Nadu. These shops promote alcoholism amongst the citizens of Tamil Nadu. In 2019, she was jailed for arguing in court that the state-run liquor shops are selling drugs (alcohol) to the public. Her wedding which was scheduled for 5<sup>th</sup> of July 2019 did not happen because she and her father were arrested on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2019. She was eventually provided with bail on 9<sup>th</sup> of July 2019 (Koushik, 2019). Even after these many sacrifices and standing up against a powerful entity, Nandhini has never received the same level of attention and fame as Juliana from the Tamil media. Yet, she has been fighting for the welfare of the people of Tamil Nadu. Nandhini is the real representative of the women in Tamil Nadu, however her dark complexion, and not conformity to the euro-centric beauty standards, has not made her media famous. To be brief, the real activist goes to prison and the beautiful fair activist goes to television.

Figures 7-9 and 7-10<sup>65</sup> were also revolving on social media during the #Jallikattu protests. Both the memes compare Nandhini and Juliana. Figure 7-9 says: *Nandhini has been fighting against the government to ban the state-run liquor shops and she has been arrested many times for her protests. She is the brave Tamil woman. Someone (Juliana) who was making noise in the crowd is not a brave Tamil woman.* The meme exposes the unnecessary hype around one person who did not contribute much more than the millions who had gathered for the cause.

Figure 7-10 reads: *we made a celebrity out the girl who funnily sloganeered at politicians and sent her to television, yet nobody knows Nandhini who has been arrested 49 times for protesting against the state-run liquor shops.*

The memes suggest that Juliana was no real activist, but she was just another enthusiastic youth who participated in the #Jallikattu protests. However, the Tamil netizens took a special interest in her and made her famous. This happened due to her fair complexion of skin and conformity to the euro-centric beauty standards, even though colourism is not systematically organised within Tamil society through culture or a religion like the caste system. The obsession over fair skin has been normalised within the Tamil society, where no one bats an eye when biases in society happen on the basis of colourism.

### **7.3 The cameraman syndrome**

The cameraman syndrome is a theory conceptualised by the researcher in which men with cameras focus on women with light skin and attractive facial features at public events. This syndrome has been evident at cricket matches when the camera focuses on light-skinned and attractive women from the stadium. In the Indian Premier League (Cricket League) hosted in South Africa in 2009, there was a Miss IPL Bollywood contest, which was a search for a South African beauty from the crowds of the stadium. At each match, a face was selected and finally, Dune Kossatz, a white woman from East London won the contest (Ians, 2009).

The patriarchal world has defined the beauty standards of the world. The act of vanity of picking of euro-centric defined beautiful faces from sporting and entertainment events can be overlooked. However, the obsession of media in finding a beautiful face even for protests and social revolutions is unacceptable. The media discussed under the cameraman syndrome does not limit itself to mass media. It also includes social media, because it was the common public who made the young woman from the #Jallikattu protests famous. The men from the protest grounds who captured the photos and videos of the young woman sloganeering made her popular on social media. This is

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<sup>65</sup> The FB memes 3 and 4 were downloaded from Facebook.

evident from the Facebook fan groups for Juliana, with most of the members being male. The appropriation of activism on the basis of colourism and beautism is a betrayal to real activists.

Consecutively, we will look at how the phenomenon of colourism has manifested itself parallelly in the #FeesMustFall movement of South Africa.

#### **7.4 Colourism in the #FeesMustFall movement**

Apartheid in South Africa has played an important role in inscribing the idea of colourism into the minds of the people of South Africa. Even though Apartheid has been abolished in South Africa, it might take some more time to bankrupt the ideas invested by Apartheid in South Africa, including colourism (Mbatha, 2017:12). The case of colourism in activism has not been restrictive only to the #Jallikattu protests of Tamil Nadu. This same phenomenon has also made its occurrence at the #FeesMustFall movement of South Africa. The #FeesMustFall movement was the extension of the #RhodesMustFall movement which demanded the removal of the statue of Cecil Rhodes, which represented colonialism at the University of Cape Town. The statue epitomised the continuation of the exclusion of Black students from the realm of higher education in South Africa. The #FeesMustFall movement exposed the expensiveness of higher education in South Africa which barred the students from poorer communities from educating themselves, the majority of them being Black. The social movement also discoursed the need for the decolonisation of education in South Africa. The #FeesMustFall movement is one of the massive student movements in the post-apartheid era. It was supported by students from all communities: Black, White, Indian, and Coloured. It is important to bring all communities together to fight for social causes. However, when the privileged communities support and stand for the causes of the oppressed, they should stand along with the oppressed and not in front of them and, when handed the microphone, they should pass it to the silenced and unheard.

##### **7.4.1 The case of a Black struggle, a white face, and an international award**

Fasiha Hassan<sup>66</sup> was a student leader from the University of Witwatersrand who was part of the #FeesMustFall movement. Even though the #FeesMustFall movement does not belong to one race, it is important to understand that higher education in South Africa is highly inaccessible only to the Black community. The focus on Fasiha and on selecting her as one of the faces of the movement and awarding her the International Student Peace Prize<sup>67</sup> is the reality of the South African

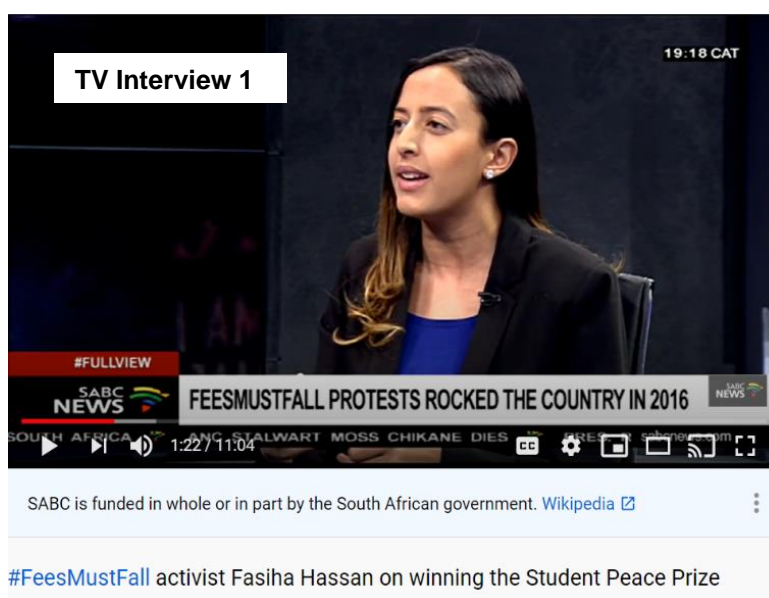
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<sup>66</sup> Fasiha Hassan is currently an ANC politician and the youngest Member of Provincial Legislature in Gauteng province.

<sup>67</sup> The International Peace Prize was awarded to Fasiha by SAIH Norway (Norwegian Students' and Academics' International Assistant Fund).

education scene. This emphasises the continuation of the inaccessibility of the Black students from the realm of higher education and, further, the denial of Black faces to represent the movement. The brilliance from the endeavours and successes of activism should not go to one person when a movement involves the efforts, blood and sweat of thousands.

The research raises a question: “Why in a country with a majority of dark-skinned people, and in a movement most important for the Black community of South Africa, a fair-skinned Indian girl was selected as the face of the movement by SAIH, Norway?” Black students were in majority of those arrested and suspended during the #FeesMustFall movements, but when it comes to awards and recognition there has been a scarcity of Black students in South Africa. Fasiha has been interviewed several times on South African mainstream media to speak about the #FeesMustFall movement. There were no co-invitees in most of these shows. Possibly, the peace prize is an element of international exclusion of Black faces to represent the movement. Then these interviews with one person on South Africa media is a national level exclusion of the larger student community and the oppressed Black community who were part of this movement. (Figure 7-11)<sup>68</sup>



**Figure 7-11: Screenshot of an interview of Fasiha on South African media**

#### **7.4.2 Tweet portraying the women of colour in the #FeesMustfall movement**

Figure 7-12 is a tweet with images from Twitter by Shaera Kalla, a prominent student leader from the #FeesMustFall movement. The first photo shows Fasiha in the centre of the protests. In the

<sup>68</sup> TV Interview 1 is retrieved from YouTube (SABC News, 2018).

second photo, it is difficult to locate her, as she stands one amongst the other women protesting. These other women are majorly Black. The second photo is the real representation of the movement and showcases the faces who are excluded from the realm of higher education in South Africa.



Figure 7-12: Tweet showcasing women in protest at the #FeesMustFall movement

### 7.4.3 The omnioptic vision on play in the #FeesMustFall movement

Figure 7-13<sup>69</sup> is a short documentary on YouTube interviewing 6 students from the University of Witwatersrand. They share their views on Fasiha's winning of the International Student Peace Prize for the #FeesMustFall movement. The interview of the students is listed below.

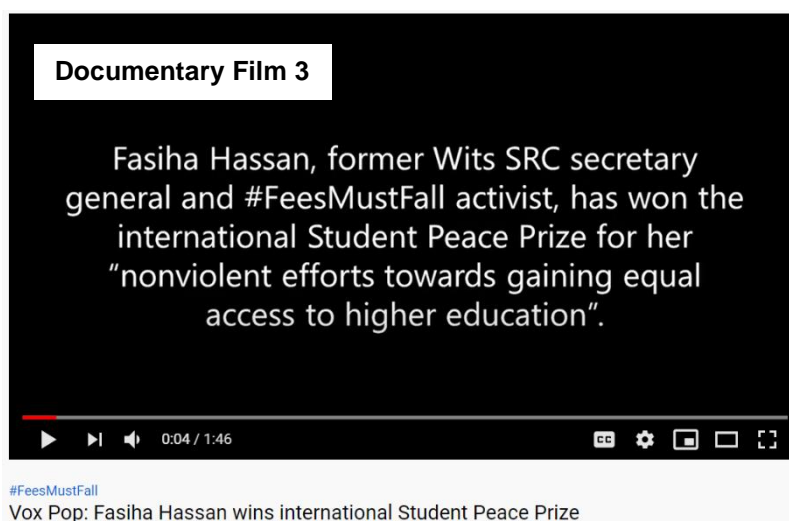


Figure 7-13: Screenshot of a documentary interviewing students from WITS

<sup>69</sup> Documentary Film 3 is retrieved from YouTube (Wits Vuvuzela, 2018).

Student 1 is an Asian female who congratulates Fasiha for empowering women.

Student 2 is a White male who thinks it is a win for Wits and congratulates her.

Student 3 is an Indian female with an EFF (Economic Freedom Fighters – Political Party) beret feels that Fasiha did not deserve the prize. She feels activist Shaeera from Wits was in the front of the protests and she deserves it more.

Student 4 is a Black female who is proud of Fasiha in winning this award.

Student 5 is an Indian male student who says that he never knew her until she won this award because most of the activists in the movement were male.

Student 6 is a Black female who feels that women leadership is recognised in this international award.

### The public comments on ‘Documentary Film 3’ from YouTube

The screenshot displays four public comments on a YouTube video. Each comment is from a user whose name is redacted with a black box. The comments are as follows:

- Comment 1 (User N):** Posted 1 year ago. The text reads: "Someone in this video said this was a dope thing for wits when wits was opposed to fees must fall in fact it is because of wits that many were and are expelled, suspended and jailed for Fees Must Fall. Fasiha does not represent those people. In fact the people who suffered the most from fees must fall are Black Afrikan students. The voices which Fasiha was imposed to represent by the White Liberal Media and The Bourgeois Anti Black ANC and the establishment as a whole who we were fighting against. The awarding of this Peace Award firstly to an individual is opportunist, secondly the awarding of this 'Peace Award' to an Individual whom does not represent the masses of Black and Afrikan students is tantamount to the erasure of Black & Afrikan students and essentially pushes the well known and old racist agenda to place the custodianship of Black Afrikans' interests upon a fairer skin, repeating the sin of the privileged national groups' in this country of believing they have a God given right to be the faces of our pain and the voices of our struggles. This 'Peace Award' is further an insult to and against the spirit of the fees must fall movement which was Fanonian in nature and Decolonial in thought. Lastly, and most importantly. This video in its totality including those who have been interviewed and the misleading narrative that has been tried to be sold here are a deliberate misrepresentation of this movement." It includes a 'Show less' link and a 'REPLY' button.
- Comment 2 (User T):** Posted 1 year ago. The text reads: "Lol... it's like all those people were given a script to read. Thank God there are only around 100 views." It includes a 'REPLY' button.
- Comment 3 (User N):** Posted 1 year ago. The text reads: "The people who were asked here are people who did not even participate in Fees Must Fall. This is nonsense." It includes a 'REPLY' button.
- Comment 4 (User T):** Posted 1 year ago. The text reads: "This narrative is misleading, it's like everyone had a script to read from. It is not fair that she is the only one who is receiving awards while the rest of the leaders are being jailed and suspended." It includes a 'REPLY' button.

Figure 7-14: Screenshot of the public comments on Documentary Film 3

The public comments have been posted by 3 Black students on the ‘Documentary Film 3’ in Figure 7-14. They express that the narrative, of Fasiha as a representation of the movement, is misleading. It is unfair that only one person is receiving awards, while the other leaders are suspended from the universities and jailed for protesting. One person feels that the award is opportunist, as it represents the exclusion of Black African students and re-emphasises the old narrative of placing a white skinned person as a custodian of the Blacks. This establishes the power dynamics of privilege within South African society which appropriates the representation pains and struggles of the Black population.

The narratives in the ‘Documentary Film 3’ and the replies to them in the comments on YouTube is the perfect example of the omnioptic public sphere which has been developed in this platform. Opinions and thoughts can be shared to many as a video on YouTube, and critical commentary can be responded back by the viewer to express their opinions. There is a disabling option of comments in YouTube which restricts the commenting option. However, this ‘Documentary Film 3’ had the option enabled and hence we evaluate these comments.

#### 7.4.4 Defeating the purpose of decolonisation of education

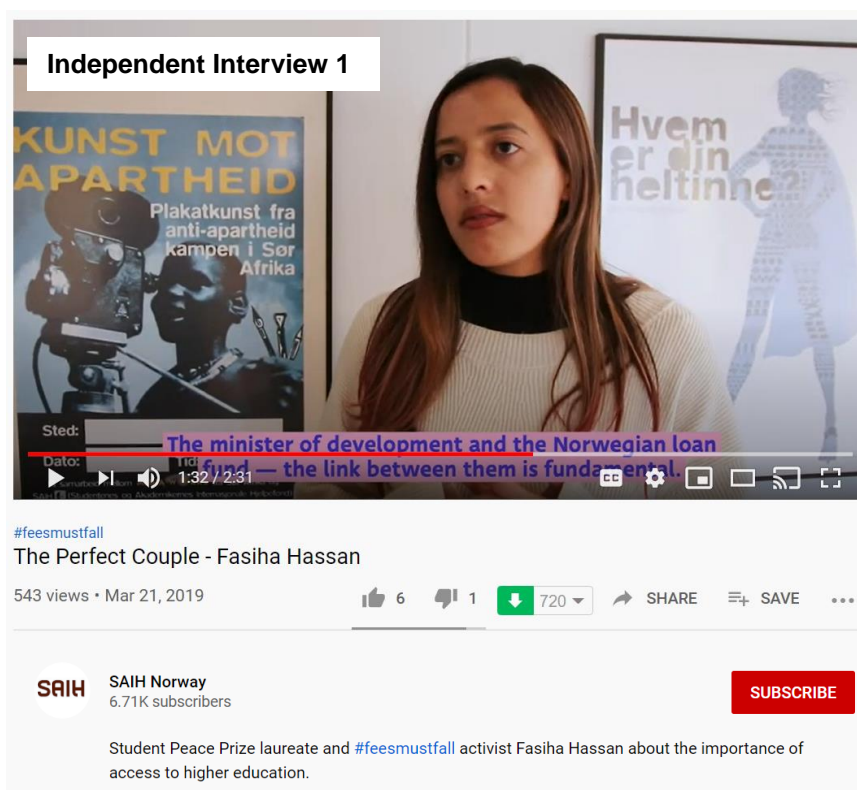


Figure 7-15: Screenshot of an interview of Fasiha

Fasiha was awarded the International Peace Prize by the SAIH (Norwegian Students' and Academics' International Assistance Fund), a solidarity organisation which includes students and academics from Norway (Kaksrud, 2019). In Figure 7-15<sup>70</sup>, an independent interview to the SAIH Norway, Fasiha says, “she is very supportive of SAIH’s political campaign to link the development minister to the Norwegian loan fund ..... Norwegian students and South African students have historically had a very good relationship in terms of social justice.... the Norwegian education system has very very good elements to it, we need to look at benchmarking and putting that into our own education system”.

Free education was the primary motive of #FeesMustFall movement, but it was also a fight for decolonisation of education. South African education system already lacks Africanness and Blackness. The idea of decolonising education in South Africa is the introduction of the Black voice into the realm of education which has been silenced euro-centric curriculum. Hence, the notion of benchmarking South African higher education with Norwegian education system which is another form of whiteness defeats the purpose of decolonisation. The South African education system already suffers from a euro-centric curriculum, the idea of including elements from another European country is only going to move the cause of decolonisation of curriculum far away.

#### 7.4.5 A debate on whiteness in #FeesMustFall movement:



Fees must fall, Wits SRC and Afriforum Live debate on SABC TV

**Figure 7-16: Screenshot of a debate show on the #FeesMustFall movement**

<sup>70</sup> Independent Interview 1 is retrieved from YouTube (SAIH Norway, 2019).

In Figure 7-16, a South African TV Debate show about whiteness in #FeesMustFall movement, Fasiha says “white people need to take a step back”, she further says “it is essentialist to think that stepping back from privilege is giving your physical wealth, but it is not about that.... It is about taking a step back from privilege and understanding the movement is not about me”. Further, Fasiha admits her privilege “as an Indian woman in South Africa that she and her forefathers were not oppressed as much as her purely Black counterparts”. However, Fasiha did not step back from receiving the international peace prize. Hence, it emphasises the lack of Black leaders to represent the movement in the international forum and the awarding of the international peace prize to her is questionable, because it neglects the sufferings of the oppressed majority. In South Africa, it is not only colourism which has neglected other activists, but it is also access, economics and privilege.

In Figure 7-16, Busisiwe says “for her to be liberated and to advance Black consciousness she needs to include other Blacks Biko spoke about like the Indians and coloureds” but she also says for her “whiteness is in terms of pigmentation, culture, beliefs and principles and it is all interconnected”. Fasiha agrees with Busisiwe’s comment in the show. However few years later in 2019, Fasiha receives the international peace prize and not Busisiwe. The prize includes a €5000 cash award, an invite the International Student Festival in Trondheim and a tour in Norway. Is it just a prize for her efforts or her pigmentation?

Below reads the congratulatory note from leaders of the Norwegian Student Organisation. However, the note does not really say on what basis Fasiha was selected from the many students who fought for the #FMF movement.

*#FeesMustFall is one of the most important and effective expressions of mobilization in civil society in South Africa in modern times, according to Nobel Peace Center president Liv Tørres. “When democracy was established in South Africa in 1994, most citizens expected that economic rights, social parity, jobs, and food on the table would follow. That isn’t what happened. South Africans know that there is democratic power in organization and mobilization. In its time, apartheid fell through mass mobilization of civil society. Today, many look to the youth in #FeesMustFall as role models for the future, Torres says.*

*– I want to congratulate Fasiha Hassan with the Student Peace Prize for 2019. Hassan and the #FeesMustFall-movement has reminded the whole world about the political power the students can have. I hope that Hassan’s impressive effort to achieve equal access to*

*education and social justice in South Africa will inspire others to engage themselves, says Marianne Hagen, Secretary of State in the Foreign Ministry*

*– This year’s Peace Prize winner is a strong advocate for critical thinking and an important voice in the fight against inequality in South Africa. The work of Hassan and the #FeesMustFall-movement has a global impact and stands as an inspiration to all. Norwegian students have a long history with solidarity with South African students, and I hope that the prize will contribute to strengthen international student solidarity and show clearly that we stand together in the fight for equal access to higher education on a global scale, says Beathe Øgård, Leader of SAIH and Leader for the Peace Committee.*

*– On behalf of Norwegian students, I will congratulate Fasiha Hassan as laureate of The Student Peace Prize 2019. Her important work towards tuition fees in South Africa builds up under a global student movement for equal education, says Håkon Randegård Mikalsen, Leader of Norwegian Student Organisation and member of this year’s Peace Committee. (Duvholt, 2018)*

As Fanon says, when we try to understand the problems of Black people, it is important to hear them in their voice, so that there will be better understanding and clarity (Gordon, 1997:70-77). We need to engage the oppressed communities in conversation and dialogue. Tamil media promoted Juliana as the face and representative of the #Jallikattu protests, and gave her a chance to be part of a popular television show. From where she created and developed her career in modelling and entertainment media. SAIH Norway selected Fasiha Hassan as the representative of the #FeesMustFall movement. The congratulatory note equates Hassan with the #FeesMustFall movement. The note does not explain why Fasiha Hassan was singled out and selected for the award of the international student peace prize.

### **7.5 Concluding thoughts:**

The cameraman syndrome surely played an active role in the case of Julie as it is observed her photos as memes and videos on social media title as the “brave Tamil girl” spready virally in social media which gave her the opportunity to move to mass media like television and cinema. However, in Fasiha’s case it cannot be evidently confirmed if the cameraman syndrome has played a role. Fasiha was in the forefront of the movement, however there were several others along with her. Also, there were thousands of students from different South African campuses protesting and taking the cause of #FeesMustFall forward in South Africa. Leaders of #FeesMustFall were attacked,

jailed and suspended. However, Hassan was neither suspended at university or jailed by the police. When thousands have endured these pains, the decision of individualising the efforts of #FeesMustFall to one person SAIH Norway excludes the efforts of the other activists, especially the Black students who were majorly affect by the cause of #FMF. Even though we cannot confirm if cameraman syndrome played a role in Fasiha's selection for the international peace prize award, the first image on left in Figure 7-12 shows as if Fasiha is in the centre of the protests, however the second image on right makes it even difficult to locate her amongst the group of protestors. The second image on right from Figure 7-12 shows hundreds of Black women, some of them having their nude bodies painted with protest slogans. In Figure 7-12, Fasiha can be picked out as one of the very few lighter skinned women protesting and the tweet amplifies her image.

This is similar to the comparison of Figures 7-4 to 7.10. Juliana is the only fair-skinned woman compared to the many other women protestors who came from different facets of life to support the #Jallikattu protests. Memes in Figure 7-9 and 7.10 show the failure of not recognising Nandhini, an anti-alcohol protestor who has been fighting against state run liquor shops which has promoted alcoholism in Tamil society. Even though she has been jailed several times, she was never adorned with the title of "brave Tamil woman" on social media, but Julie was praised and her photos and videos of protesting was spread virally on social media. The researcher observes this as relational power dynamic based on colourism, as Julie is fair skinned compared to Nandhini or the other women protestors at the #Jallikattu protests who were mostly dark skinned. Similarly, Fasiha also had a relational power dynamic which secured her the international peace prize which is observed as colourism in this research work.

Finally, the omnioptic platform provided by social media especially YouTube where public comments can be shared on videos provide a conclusion for the idea of comparing colourism in both social movements. A public commentator says "wow ...i can see the fire in her face.... she is talented, brave, beautiful and powerful communicator" The description of an activist as "beautiful" and observation of "fire in her face" is due to the effects of colourism affecting activists. The public comments on 'Documentary Film 3' in Figure 7-14 showcase the opinions of three Black students who opine "the award to an individual who does not represent the Black masses is the erasure of Black students and mirrors the age-old rhetoric of placing the custodianship of Black Afrikans to a lighter skinned person". The public comments on the documentary films on Fasiha and Juliana show how colourism has manifested in social movements.

In the next chapter, the researcher discusses how police brutality has affected the social movements of the #FeesMustFall movement and the #Jallikattu protests. The chapter on police brutality is an

important synthesis to the idea of the simulation of democracy. The chapter includes the violent encounters the protestors endured during the #FeesMustFall movement and #Jallikattu protests. Tweets, Facebook Posts, documentary films and footages from YouTube and the narratives of individuals and communities on the abuse of authority by law enforcement during the two social movements is included in the chapter to explain the discourses of police brutality in social movements.

## Chapter 8: Police Brutality in Social Movements

### - An Epitome of a Simulated Democracy

*Hashtag justice? Who's the real criminal?*

*Hashtag justice? The murderous police*

*Hashtag justice? Who's the next victim?*

*Hashtag justice? Is the law going to stop this?*

*The old lie 'police is your friend'*

*But they lay their hands on you and say 'Give me your money'*

*The hands that bow to the politicians! Please me with a bribe!*

*If you disagree and question! you'll hear 'lock him up'!!*

*Then starts the brutality in the name of custody and investigation*

*The cry for your life doesn't stop them,*

*Inhuman Murders by the sworn in*

*Treat the common man as the enemy of the state,*

*Locked up till death by the Cops!!*

- Arivu<sup>71</sup>

### 8.1 Introduction

A nation's police system is its government's visible arm and, in a democracy, it protects the citizens, in authoritarianism, it protects the regime (Wiatrowski and Goldstone, 2010:79). *Kaaval thurai ungal nanban* is a common phrase in Tamil Nadu which means the police department is your friend. Yet, the problem lies in the friendship being toxic. This toxicity was evident in the #FeesMustFall movement in South Africa and the #Jallikattu protests in Tamil Nadu. In a democracy, the common people can rely on the police for their safety and the criminals will fear the police. However, in a simulated democracy, it is the common people who are treated with intimidation, hostility, and violence by the police.

This chapter does not merely discuss police deviance in which police are corrupt or involved in criminal activities. It also discusses the role of the police as a state agency in protecting the interests of power. In this role, it may appear as if the police are only reprimanding/arresting law-breakers.

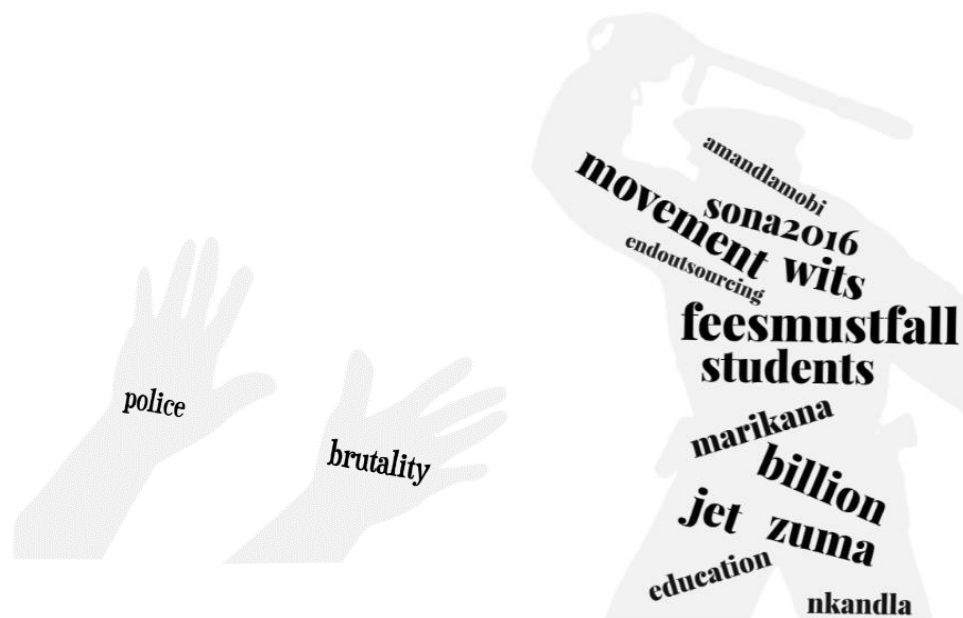
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<sup>71</sup> Arivarasu Kalainesan (Arivu) is a contemporary Tamil rapper who has written songs on Dalit issues, police brutality, fascism and other issues in Tamil Nadu and India. This is the English translation of the first stanza of Arivu's latest song "Hashtag Justice" about the lockup murders in Tamil Nadu during COVID-19. (Neelam, 2020)

However, the laws themselves may be repressive in nature and subjugate people. Colonial powers formulated specific laws, the police, and other armed forces to repress their subjects (Trottier and Fuchs, 2015:17). Further, the excessive power of the police allows them to falsely frame innocents as guilty which also contributes towards this paradigm. Even after democracy, not much has changed in the idea of these laws and the mentality of the police and other forces. Democratisation has not challenged these establishments which continue to play a panoptic role in surveillance and control of the people. These institutions are ticking bombs with remote controls in the hands of power. They explode amongst the people whenever the button is pressed by powerful establishments. The lack of decolonisation of these systems has been a perfect excuse for the power structures of these democracies to clandestinely carry over the repression from colonisation, apartheid, or any other previous oppressive and authoritative systems, even after the democratisation of these nations.

The #FeesMustFall movement was active during 2015 and 2016 and the #Jallikattu protests happened at the beginning of 2017. Hence, in this chapter, the researcher chronologically discusses the violent and brutal involvement of police in these social movements.

## 8.2 The #FeesMustFall Movement and democracy in South Africa



**Figure 8-1: Text Analysis of Tweets from the #FeesMustFall movement**

The term 'police', 'brutality' and 'marikana' were amongst the top 15 words (Voyant Tool Analysis) repeatedly mentioned in the 3504 tweet and 127,281 retweet sample from the

#FeesMustFall movement. The protests led by the students for the cause of the #FeesMustFall movement were peaceful in most instances (Luescher, 2016). The protest was started by the students at the University of Witwatersrand, and soon spread to other universities of South Africa with democratic instruments such as picketing, marching, singing protest songs and boycotting lectures at universities. Yet the responses of the government to the student community of South Africa were neither befitting nor democratic.

In Apartheid South Africa, the Bantu Education Act kept the Black communities at a distance from real education (Tabata, 1960:5). The members of the Black communities were marginalised, criminalised, and dehumanised by the Apartheid government. Even though these communities were crushed to the ground by these forces, they never stayed in the ground. Eventually, Apartheid was defeated by the power of the people. The African National Congress (ANC) was the instrumental force which mobilised the people of South Africa to fight Apartheid. The ANC involved the international community, formed internal resistance through armed forces and led peaceful protests and movements to uproot Apartheid from South Africa. There are 1000s of fighters of Apartheid who were killed or arrested. These people shed their tears, sweat and blood to make South Africa beautiful. “For a South Africa in which: respect, opportunities, resources, freedom, and a right to live will be equal to all South Africans” (Clark and Worger, 2011:84-88).

The people of South Africa have democratically supported the ANC since 1993<sup>72</sup>. Yet the government's loyalty to South Africans is questionable, as the systems installed by Apartheid have still not been completely dismantled from the face of South Africa. In Apartheid South Africa, the police criminalised and dehumanised Black Africans, and the realms of education were racially segregated and the best education in South Africa was available to the white communities. The policy of “best for whites” was also prevalent in health care, housing, employment opportunities and other civic amenities. Even today, this phenomenon has not drastically changed in South Africa. The only difference is that legal racial segregation has moved to a reality of economic and status-oriented segregation. In Apartheid South Africa, Blacks were restricted from the best schools and universities. After democracy, most Blacks are again restricted from these spaces due to their poverty. The police are still violent towards Black communities. The police see a Black person as a potential threat and attack or arrest them without a second thought (Waghid, 2016:1; Dubowy, 2014:76). Here we raise an important question: is the transition of South Africa, from Apartheid to democracy, restricted only to the parliament?

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<sup>72</sup> The year democracy was born in South Africa.

Mandela's dream of a rainbow nation was a progressive ideal which aimed towards social cohesion, justice and equality. The rainbow nation is a real example of Ubuntu, an African philosophy of humanity, oneness, and universal bond. Yet the greatness of this philosophy and thought has not brought light to the lives of the unprivileged, marginalised and poverty struck Black communities of South Africa (Sall, 2018:2).

On 9<sup>th</sup> March 2015, the next progeny who were born in South Africa after 1993 and inhaled the air of freedom, stood up for the removal of the Cecil Rhodes' statue at the University of Cape Town, which symbolised oppression during colonisation. This historic movement of #RhodesMustFall in South Africa introduced the significance and need for the decolonisation of education in South Africa. This further led to an even more powerful movement called the #FeesMustFall movement in South Africa. The movement advocated free tertiary education and decolonisation of education in South Africa (Mavunga, 2019:81). After the Apartheid struggle, this has been the biggest social movement in South Africa (Makalela, 2018:1). The movement has exposed the status of democracy in South Africa. Amongst the various discourses which have emerged from the critical analysis of the #FeesMustFall movement, the researcher attempts to expose the violent and brutal treatment of the students by the state police and the private security forces hired by the universities of South Africa.

### **8.3 The evidence of police brutality on the students of South Africa**

The affordability of a smartphone with a camera in almost everyone's hands has been a crucial tool during protests and revolutions. Awareness quickly spreads through tweets on Twitter, posts on Instagram or Facebook, messages on WhatsApp and videos uploaded on YouTube (Trottier and Fuchs, 2015:229). This has shifted the panopticon power of the state in depicting the protestors of a movement as the perpetrators of violence. The synoptic and omnioptic power of the protestors has also increased in producing evidence against the real perpetrators of violence. These are evidences against the state's police and armed forces who incite violence against activists, students and the common public who stand democratically for their rights.

#### **8.3.1 Tweets on the police brutality on the #FeesMustFall activists**

The tweets captured from the #FeesMustFall movement play an important role in providing evidence of police brutality and violence during the protests. The limited characters of tweets not only take the messages far and wide but also provide us with data in a condensed and self-explanatory form. Here are a few tweets which emphasise the involvement of the South African police during the movement.

*#UKZNprotest police open rubber bullets and stun grenades on students and workers in UKZN. #endoutsourcing #FeesMustFall aluta!*

*The #March2Parliament never ended ... Has always been for #FeesMustFall #EndOutsourcing #StopPoliceBrutality - #SONA2016, we coming for you!*

*there was a homeless woman during #FeesMustFall last year outside parliament and literally hid us from police*

*#RhodesMustFall #FeesMustFall protesters stand before the police with hands raised. #SONA2016*

*@iamjrnkosi @ANCParlament Trying to justify police brutality RE Marikana, #FeesMustFall*

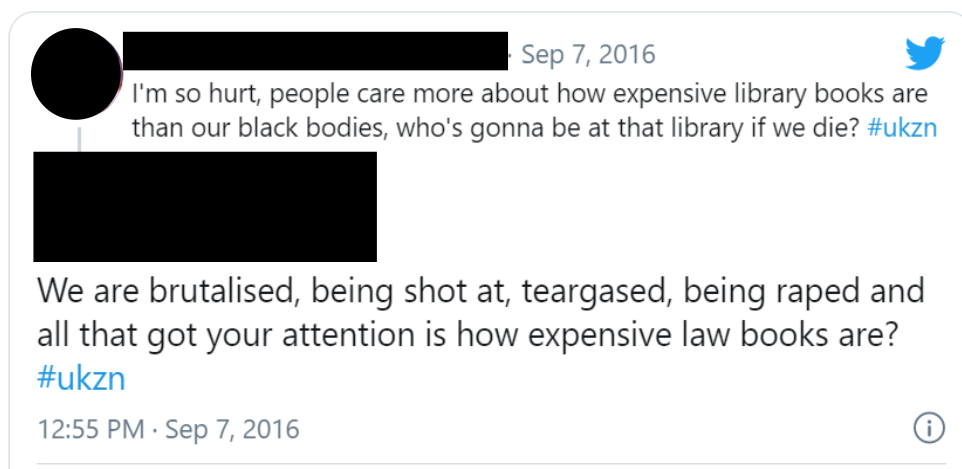
*Marikana? #FEESMUSTFALL? Police Brutality? #SONA2016*

*No #FeesMustFall No R4 Billion jet No #Nkandla No word about the currency No word about police brutality No word about the Guptas #SONA*

The tweets were captured during February 2016. Many of the tweets were directed towards the State of the Nation Address (SONA) presented by the then President of South Africa Jacob Zuma because he never mentioned the #FeesMustFall movement in his speech. The language and tone of the tweets demonstrate disappointment and dissatisfaction of the student community. The #StopPoliceBrutality vividly highlights the instances of police violence and brutality during the #FeesMustFall movement. The tweet: *I've hated black police since #FeesMustFall*, speaks volumes about the students' trauma because even the police who are Black attacked them. The Black police belong to the community which was hit hard by apartheid and its aftermath, yet the Black police never supported or raised their voice along with these students. Instead, they suppressed the Black voices, shot them with rubber bullets, threw stun grenades amidst the peaceful protests, molested, raped, harassed and arrested the students who were protesting, specifically the Black students. *This situation right now at #SONA2016 the police are coming at us, they are protecting their Masters. #FeesMustFall*, this tweet is about the police attack of students who marched to the parliament of South Africa brings back the traumatic memories of Apartheid. In Apartheid era the police served and protected their masters. Even though democracy has been established in South Africa, a police system that protects power has not been dismantled. Marikana was a shocking example of the continuity of the Apartheid mentality in the South African police force. The police brutality in the #FeesMustFall movement with the memory of the Marikana massacre where 44 miners were killed by the police for protesting for a higher wage reminds us of how far we are from democracy in South Africa.

Figure 8-2 is a tweet shared by a student of UKZN in response to the accusation that students were responsible for burning the law library of the university. The tweet exposes the hurt of the student

community by the betrayal of the people of South Africa. The people who were silent during the violence, brutality, and rape of the students, were concerned when a library was damaged. Books are valuable, but isn't a student's life is even more valuable? The armed forces misused their power and took advantage of the vulnerable students. The people were upset about the loss of the books that represent the past of South Africa, yet they never showed their distress about the brutality against students who are the future of the nation.



**Figure 8-2: Tweet shared by a student during the #FeesMustFall movement**

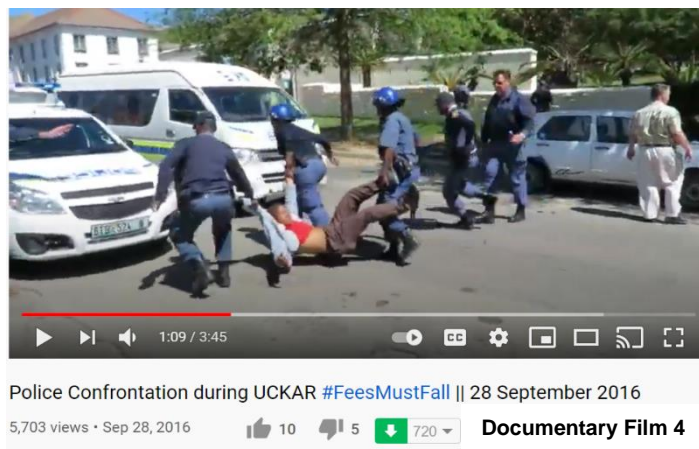
### **8.3.2 Video documented evidence of police brutality on the #FeesMustFall activists**

In protests and revolutions, YouTube has played an important role in creating an omnioptic public sphere. It has also become a repository of videos from protest grounds uploaded by the protestors, activists, common people, and the mainstream media. Other social media like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and instant chat services like WhatsApp and Telegram form an instant public sphere in spreading awareness and messages during the protests and revolutions. However, YouTube has become a crucial tool to relook at past incidents and view the videos uploaded by the many independent journalists, mainstream media and the common public. Out of the many videos uploaded from the protest grounds, the researcher has selected the most relevant through a judgement sampling method to bring out the reality of police violence and brutality during the movement.

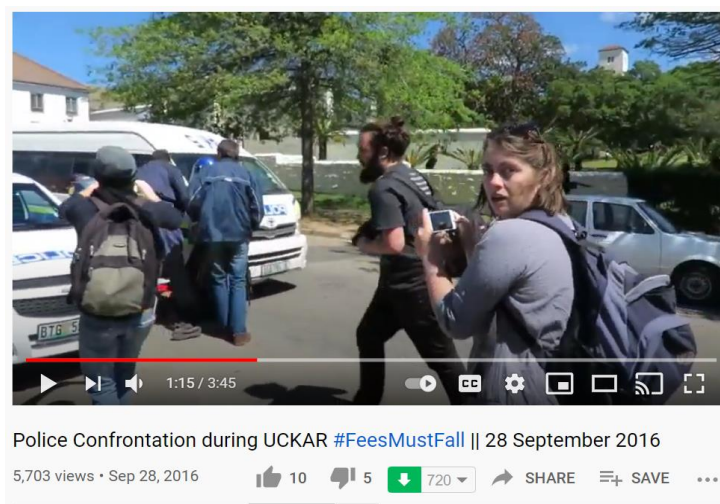
In Figure 8-3, Documentary Film 4<sup>73</sup> reports the violence and brutality of the police at the St. Peters campus at the University currently known as Rhodes (UCKAR) in Grahamstown. The narrator

<sup>73</sup> Documentary Film 4 is retrieved from YouTube (Activate Online, 2016). Activate Online is an independent citizen journalistic news channel.

explains that the police dispersed the protesting students with two stun grenades, shot students with rubber bullets and arrested several of them. In the video, a police officer yells at the students, “throw a rock again, I’ll shoot you”. An angry student cries “do your job according to the law of South Africa”. The students gathered inside the campus and a few stood on the walls and started to chant *Amandla! Awethu!*<sup>74</sup> The students did not make a move, yet the police officers started shooting at the students with rubber bullets and dragged some students to the police van. Figure 8-3 shows the forceful arrest of a female Black student by the South African police. Documentary Film 4 also shows the police dragging another female student who was standing on the pavement just outside the campus.



**Figure 8-3: Screenshot of a documentary showing a protestor forcefully carried away by the police**



**Figure 8-4: Screenshot of a documentary showing white students photographing violence by police**

<sup>74</sup> *Amandla! Awethu!* in IsiZulu means Power! Is ours!

During these arrests and shooting at students, there were some white students who were filming and photographing the incident. They were unharmed by the police. Figure 8-4 shows three white students with cameras and mobile phones in their hands, filming the arrest of the female Black student, who was dragged by the police to the van. The person who filmed Documentary 4 is also a white female student. If this video was documented by a Black student, this footage might have been unavailable because there are high chances that they might have also been arrested. This happened in the case of Biko<sup>75</sup> who was arrested while trying to video record the police brutality at the #FeesMustFall protests at one of the University campuses. This is narrated in this chapter. In the researcher's interview with Timol, he claimed that at several universities during the #FeesMustFall protests, the white students surrounded and gave cover for the Black students, which restricted the police from shooting at the students.



**Figures 8-5 and 8-6: Screenshots of a documentary showing protestors peacefully sitting and singing protest songs and police clearing protestors**

<sup>75</sup> Names of interviewees are pseudonyms. Biko and Timol were undergraduate students during the #FeesMustFall movement. Biko's attack and arrest by the police is narrated later in this chapter.

From Documentary Film 5<sup>76</sup>, from Figure 8-5 shows the students who were singing their protest songs outside on the road leading to the entrance of Wits University campus. The students sat on the ground and continued singing. Without warning or announcement, the police fired a stun grenade and shot rubber bullets at the students.

The police firing lasted for just a few seconds. Most of the students rushed back into the campus, but a few students had tripped and fallen. Figure 8-6 shows a female Black student trying to scramble her things quickly and a Black policeman telling her “don’t be hurry”, “don’t be hurry”. However just behind this girl there were two other Black female students who had tripped and fallen, without giving them a chance to get up, they were forcibly dragged and pushed by one White policeman and later by two Black policemen, they were made to retreat to the campus.

#### **8.4 Violence of Mi7 – a private security force**

Timol exclaims that the students of UKZN knew that they were in trouble when they saw the Mi7 security intelligence vehicle at the university. He says that the university hired the Mi7 to intimidate the students. The Mi7 security force was unpredictable. They would suddenly shoot rubber bullets and fire tear gas at the protesting students at the university campus. He adds that one does not need to be protesting or throwing stones to be attacked by these Mi7 men, it is enough if students are present at the scene.

In Documentary Footage 1<sup>77</sup>, Figure 8-7 shows the students running frantically at the sight of the Mi7 security forces. The Mi7 security forces are the ones with the red head gear. They target the students and shoot them with gas guns. The screenshot above from Documentary Footage 1 shows two security persons firing gas guns at a student who is running away from them. All of the students running away from them were unarmed.

Valliammai<sup>78</sup> says that the Mi7 took full advantage of their access to the university during the movement. They entered the female residences and sexually harassed students. Due to these atrocities, the fellow male students had to keep themselves awake at night and guard the female residences from outside to stop these vile men from the security forces raping their female friends and fellow university students. Biko<sup>79</sup> accounted for something very important, when the researcher asked him, what he thought about the damages committed by the students. Biko reiterates that there

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<sup>76</sup> Documentary Film 5 is retrieved from YouTube (mediaforjustice, 2016).

<sup>77</sup> Documentary Footage 1 was retrieved from YouTube (KidK Mohlala, 2018).

<sup>78</sup> Names of interviewees are pseudonyms. Valliammai was a university staff member during the #FeesMustFall movement. Names of universities are also kept anonymous.

<sup>79</sup> Names of the interviewees are pseudonyms. Biko was an undergraduate student in South Africa.

were some damages done by the students in terms of pelting stones which hit and broke the glass windows and doors of buildings and vehicles. However, he questions how the students afforded to bring in the petrol and gas to burn buildings when the students are checked at the university entrance. He also claims that much of the severe damages at the universities were committed by the security forces. They did these to intensify the issues at the university and lengthen their presence at the universities to earn more money. The vehicles of the security forces were not subject to checks while entering the universities. Further, the minor incidents committed by the students, make the task of shifting the blame of major incidents effortless for these security forces. (Personal Interviews 1, 2, 3, South Africa, 2020)



**Figure 8-7: Screenshot of a documentary footage showing students running from the Mi7 security force**

### 8.5 Police brutality: a narrative from the #FeesMustFall movement

On 6<sup>th</sup> September 2016, Biko<sup>80</sup> had just finished his morning lectures. He was curious about the student movement that had been going on for a few days at the university. He told his friend that he was going to take a few photos and videos of the protest and then go for a swim later. Biko was standing at the cafeteria that was in an elevated area, and it had a clear view of the students protesting. He was recording the student protests on his tablet phone and suddenly heard an exploding sound like a bomb blast. Within a brief moment, the university mirrored a warzone, with multiple gunshots and stun grenades blasting. From peaceful choral and vocal harmony of the protest songs by the protestors, the scene changed to screaming and chaotic running of the students who were now scared to death.

With the tensions raising around, Biko was terrified, and instinct suggested that he hide. He squatted next to a trash can. He kept narrating the scenario around him and threw the tablet phone into his backpack. In a few minutes, a police officer walked from behind and cried sharply “what are you doing here?” Biko was petrified and answered meekly, “I am hiding because of the gunshots”. The officer shot Biko with a rubber bullet which just missed his private parts and hit his thigh. With excruciating pain, Biko fell on the ground, and another bullet hit his back. Now there were few other officers around him. One was kneeling on his back and another was stamping his left hand. While this was happening, an officer’s gun dropped near Biko’s face and a voice started yelling “he’s got a gun! he’s got a gun!”. Not realising that it was an officer’s gun, the police officers started to kick him with their boots. Now, eccentric scenarios started playing in his head, that they might force his fingerprints on the gun, so he clenched his fists and kept them as close as



possible.

**Figures 8-8 and 8-9: The wounds of Biko on his thigh and back caused by the rubber bullets.**

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<sup>80</sup> Same as above.



**Figure 8-10: The deep cut on Biko's left hand index finger due to the brutal attack by the police.<sup>81</sup>**

Biko heard an officer saying in IsiZulu *ngizoku cindezela okweqhatha nosawoti* (press the meat on the salt) meaning that he was going to put pressure on his charges and arrest him. The officers tried to pepper spray his face but Biko quickly covered his face. They were cursing at Biko with vulgar language. Before he could get back his senses, he was thrown into the back of a van. By now the officers had misused their authority to an unprecedented level. Biko was wounded badly and had a deep cut on his index finger. He could feel his finger bone, as it was exposing due to the deep cut.

Biko was taken to a nearby police station. Shaken by what had happened, everything around him was incomprehensible. Biko managed to quickly text his family, but they lived far away. His uncle who lived nearby, managed to come to the police station but was not able to negotiate his release. From there, he was transferred to a prison and thrown into a cell with several others. "The inmates there were like wild dogs waiting for meat". They pounced on Biko and took away his phones, tablet and his wallet. They took the money from his wallet and threw it back on his face. Prison was another world, an unknown culture and far away from anything he had ever known. In the night, he was transferred to a solitary cell. Up until today, Biko cannot stop himself from imagining what more could have happened if he had to spend the night in a cell with the other prisoners.

The next day Biko was taken to court. The charges against him were all false, the police had written a whole new story about Biko. He was accused of burning the cafeteria at the university. Biko claimed that when he was arrested, there were no burnings at the university. The judge asked him if he had a lawyer and he said "no". The judge said he would have to wait for two weeks for a public prosecutor and until then he would be in custody. Biko dreaded to go back to prison. He was taken to another prison along with the other inmates. They were checked at the entrance of the prison, and the inmate who had Biko's tablet and phones was caught by the police. An officer started to roughly interrogate the inmate and hit him hard on his head and blood gushed out from a

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<sup>81</sup> Source of Figures 8-8, 8-9 and 8-10 (Personal Interview 2, South Africa, 2020).

fresh wound. By then, Biko had raised his hand to say that it was his tablet, and seeing the blood gushing out, he was terrified that he had stepped up to speak. Yet, the officer just curtly said: “you can collect it later”. Biko found some other students at this prison who were arrested from another university campus. They were also Black students.

Prison was a space which was horrific, dirty, and timeless. “In there you were either a predator or prey”. Biko could never “take a piss or a poop” at the prison. The prison toilets were beyond dirty, that he felt like germs would jump on him by just entering the toilet. The prison guards were not friendly, and they treated all the inmates with hostility. Inside the prison, everyone was the same. There was no distinction between a student and a burglar. Biko asked a prison guard for the time, and he smirked and replied, “why? where are you going to go to”. The food at the prison was tasteless and bland, and they were fed twice a day. The guards came with the food, and the prisoners would come out like animals from their cages. Biko literally had 20 seconds to finish the porridge, brown bread and half a cup of lukewarm coffee. He had to eat quickly because that is how the other inmates ate. Any delays would make the prison guards angry which would lead to hitting them the prisoners.

Biko was arrested on a Tuesday and on Friday his family managed to raise the money to get a lawyer and bailed him out. The only advantage in favour of Biko was his tablet that had kept recording inside his bag for an hour and 47 minutes until the battery died. This was the evidence that he was able to produce at court to prove his innocence, and on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2017, he was cleared of all charges by the court. After one year of legal battle and the next 3-4 years of post-traumatic stress disorder, Biko has received no compensation and no actions have been taken against the officers who brutally attacked and arrested him on false pretences even though the evidence for it was presented.

Biko says, “prison life can change a person, if I had to stay there one more night, I would have had to become a predator to survive in there”. If Biko’s family had not bailed him out, the state would have made a criminal out of an innocent student in no time, wrecking both the individual and the nation’s future. (Personal Interview 2, South Africa, 2020)

### **8.5.1 Discussions on the narrative of Biko and other evidence of police brutality from #FMF**

Biko’s incarceration was not unfortunate, it was a planned framing by the police. Biko was arrested because he was Black, and they needed a scapegoat. It is only logical to speculate that students were not involved in the burning of the university cafeteria. If Biko was arrested and charged with

almost no evidence, it is likely that other students were also arrested with intent of blaming the fire on them. The video that was taken by Biko just before his arrest showed that the cafeteria was undamaged. It is also important to note that if the tablet had not been recording inside Biko's bag, he would probably still be in prison. The police needed a face responsible for the violence to show the public. Biko's experience mirrors other activists' experiences of intelligence led policing, which resulted in false arrests. Here protesters were arrested and exposed to harsh conditions in jail only to be later released. In the 2015/16 period, Duncan (2021:184) indicates as a result of intelligence gathering by police, "386,732 operational analysis reports were generated". This was followed by arrests but very few convictions.

Students of other races were also part of the protests, but they were not arrested by the police. There could be two reasons for this, most Indians and Whites have an economic clout in South Africa. If they were to be falsely arrested, their parents would have the potential to file defamation against the police officers involved and this would jeopardise their position. The second reason is that South Africa has a history of the police being aggressive towards non-white races, especially Africans. The lack of reforming the police department after 1994, has taken forward the same mentality even in democratic South Africa. This is why the decolonisation of democracy is necessary for previously colonised countries. After the end of an oppressive regime, it is important to start afresh and from scratch by undoing the systems installed by the oppressive systems to carry out their injustices and discriminations

If the arrests of the students were made at the university, it would have been appropriate to have acquired legal precedence to create holding cells within the university. The universities in South Africa are massive in size, a room could have been secured at the university to hold the arrested students. Then later, the students could have been interrogated by the police officers. Then it would have been easy to identify the students and the persons who came into the university pretending to be students. After the proper interrogations, the students, and the persons from outside who were responsible for the violence and vandalising could have been taken to court where they can be dealt with punitive measures.

Biko was accused of being a perpetrator of violence from outside the university, yet he was a registered student at the university. This could have been clarified if the interrogations happened within the university. In Biko's case, the police started with the punishment. Biko also adds that the other students he had met at the second prison indicated that they were arrested by the police from their rooms at the university's student residences. Biko's story is just one that we know of. There could be many more stories out there which could reveal more brutality.

The Minister of Higher Education and Training during the #FeesMustFall movement, Blade Nzimande voiced the government's condemnation of the student's involvement in the violence and damage of university property. He argued that the students did not have any justification in their acts of violence. Yet in these statements, the minister did not condemn the violence incited by the police and the private security forces. He said, "On our side as government and all our institutions, we stand ready to engage and deal with whatever problems we face and we urge all to seek to address problems constructively and peacefully," However, the investigation on the police and private security forces who were involved in violence, brutality, and sexual offences is still pending. (Nxumalo, 2020)

### **8.6 Demilitarisation of education**

Demilitarisation of Education is one of the discourses that emerged from the #FeesMustFall movement due to the violence and brutality of the state police and private security forces in the student community of South Africa. A university is a place of knowledge sharing. Hence, it should be a safe haven for students. Students are young minds, who have taken the decision and initiative to educate themselves in order to build their knowledge, develop their skills and obtain a career in their life. This initiative of the students makes them the future leaders and architects of nation-building. In a nation with a long history of violence and social injustices, there should at least be a few spaces, which are calm and peaceful. These young minds need to be nurtured in an environment of positivity and happiness, which will motivate them to be the best contributors to the nation. Schools and universities are the best places that could create this environment for the children and youth of a nation.

In Figure 8-11, the students talk about the economic sense of free education, as it creates the next generation of taxpayers who in turn will pay for the free education for the next generation of students. They say the rational call for change, which challenges the existing system of white privilege shocks people. The students plead not to turn the university into a police station and provide the freedom for everyone to study. They are disgusted that people care more about inanimate objects such as books and buildings and not the lives of the students. These students reemphasise the well-known causes of the movement: decolonisation and decommodification of education. They shed light on the demilitarisation of education, a significant, yet an academically unexplored discourse, which has emerged from the #FeesMustFall movement.

When we enter a library, we witness signboards saying, 'Silence Please'. Even if there are no signboards, silence is an implicit enforcement. Likewise, a university is a magnified library. It is not a place for the alarming sounds of gunshots, stun grenade blasts and tear gas bomb explosions.

The memories of a student about their university should be filled with moments of normal student life. They should remember their first serious love, the jokes and laughs shared with their peers, the small fights and later making up with friends, pooling up the little money and sharing a meal at the cafeteria, the knowledge sharing with the lecturers and professors, the smiles and greetings shared with the cleaners, gardeners, security guards etc. Unfortunately, the memories of the students of 2015 and 2016 from the universities of South Africa would be getting shot at with rubber bullets, the burning sensations in eyes due to spraying of pepper sprays, the difficulty of breathing caused by the tear gas explosions, the verbal and physical brutality including sexual violence of the police and private security squads. These memories of hatred and violence will be carried over to the next generations of students also.



**Figure 8-11: Screenshot of a documentary footage of the #FMF protestors campaigning against police violence**

The current leaders of South Africa lived through Apartheid and they have the first-hand experience of the atrocities. Even then, they treated the student protestors the same way the Apartheid regime treated activists and protestors against their policies and atrocities. The police forces and private security were never brought into the universities to tackle the rape culture at the campuses, where students were sexually violated by staff members. The #Endrapeculture protests in 2016 at the universities in South Africa emphasised that the policies against sexual violence were ignored. The movement exposed the normalisation of male sexual aggression by the university administration who often engaged in victim blaming. The universities invited armed forces to protect their material resources such as buildings and libraries during the student protests. Yet, they were never brought

into these spaces for the safety and protection of the students who have been victimised year after year by the university staff members. The memory of violence in the form of rubber bullets, stun grenades and tear gas may be restricted to students of 2015 and 2016. However, rape has been a violent memory for innumerable students for several years before and after the #FeesMustFall movement (Orth, Van Wyk and Andipatin, 2020:191).

With the decolonisation of education, it is also important to implement demilitarisation of education in South Africa. Demilitarisation of education is the end to violence within scholastic spaces and the creation of a safe and peaceful environment for the students. There should be policies structured which will prohibit state-sponsored violence within schools and universities. Guns, ammunition including non-lethal weapons such as rubber bullets, tear gas, gas guns and stun grenades should be banned within schools and universities. Students should never be taken to prisons unless they are proven guilty at court. Until then, they must be kept in a holding cell within the university. This will help in the differentiation of students and non-students, and then the non-students can be taken to the police station or court immediately.

The entry of police into the scholastic spaces should be restricted unless for the protection of students. In cases of emergencies and accidents, if police have to enter these spaces, there should be an equal proportion of female and male police persons. It should be illegal for male police persons to arrest and handle female students. Male police should be prohibited from entering female residences. The physical, verbal, and sexual attack of the police on the students should be treated with high penalties and punishments. Even though this research restricts its scope to the #FeesMustFall movement, it is important to consider the #Endrapeculture protests in the spectrum of the demilitarisation of education in South Africa. Demilitarisation does not oppose only guns and ammunitions in educational institutions, it is a tool to fight any type of violence within these spaces. Hence, in the South African context, with its history of rape culture, it is important to relook and revamp the already existing policies of sexual violence in these establishments in the contexts of the demilitarisation of education. In simple terms, Democratic South Africa should not continue the policies and practices of Apartheid South Africa. Also, there is enough violence in the history books at the universities of South Africa, hence, there is no need for the demonstration of real-time violence at these universities. In the next part of this section, we will in parallel to the police brutality in the #FeesMustFall movement look into the police reaction to #Jallikattu protests of Tamil Nadu.

### 8.7 The role of police in the #Jallikattu protests: werewolf syndrome of power

At school, when history taught me about wars and battles from the past, I used to wonder how people managed to live in those violent and atrocious times. I felt safe and privileged to be born in an era where I was unaware about wars, brutality and barbarity. To my child's knowledge, I did not realise that there were wars and brutalism still happening all around the world as I was having these thoughts. It took me years to understand that safety was a privilege. Today, when we still wake up to George Floyd's "I can't breathe"<sup>82</sup> (Samayeen, 2020:4), it makes it clear that the world is not the same for everyone. Even today, if people like George Floyd still died of police brutality, it demonstrates two scenarios for democracy: either it is simulated, or it is deficient. In this research work, we look at the police situation at home. For the researcher, home is both Tamil Nadu and South Africa<sup>83</sup>.

The state police of Tamil Nadu played two different roles in the Tamil people's movement of 2017 for the removal of the ban on the *Jallikattu* sport. During the #*Jallikattu* protests, the police protected the protestors, engaged with the public and many even participated in the protests. They were friendly with the youth and other citizenry of Tamil Nadu. The protestors even shared their food and water with the police. The youth from the protest grounds in Marina Beach shared the duties with the police in easing the traffic on the road situated on the periphery of the protest grounds. However, the police showed the protestors another face, a violent and brutal one. In a matter of few days, the police went from being friends to foes. Even though the movement enticed the commoner within the police, yet the establishment reminded them that they were mere pawns of the state. Hence, eventually they had to play according to the orders of the state.

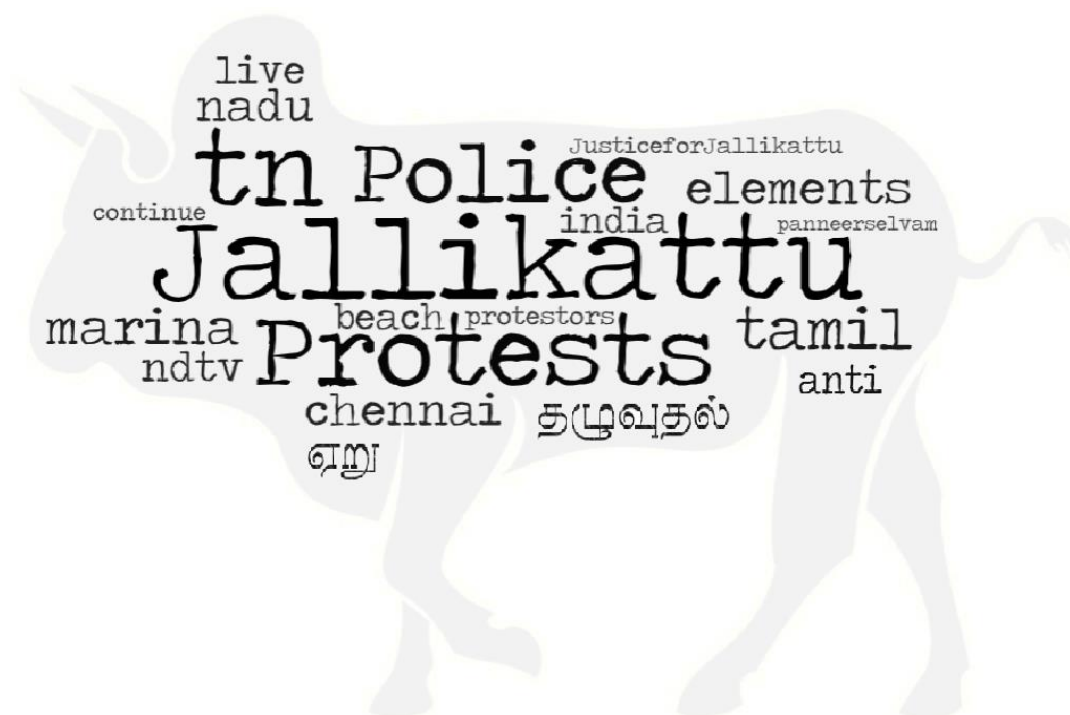
17,379 tweets and 11,769 retweets captured from the #*Jallikattu* protests show the term 'police' as one of the top 20 words mentioned. In South Africa, the police demonstrated a singular behaviour: they were brought to the protest grounds by the powerful players of the state to disperse the protesting students. In Tamil Nadu, the euphoria of the #*Jallikattu* movement made the police realise that they were part of the common public. However, the realisation did not last for long, when power dictated violence, they obliged. They forcefully cleared the protestors from the protest grounds, and their brutal treatment spared neither man nor woman nor child. This dual behavioural

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<sup>82</sup> George Floyd is a Black man who was killed due to police brutality in the USA in 2020. The police kneeled on his neck for 8 minutes and 46 seconds. He died with his last words being "I can't breathe".

<sup>83</sup> The emotional tone of the introduction is deliberate. It is necessary in this section of the research work to bring out the sensitiveness of the issue discussed.

pattern exhibited by the police community at the #Jallikattu Protests is termed by the researcher as the *werewolf* syndrome of power.



**Figure 8-12: Text Analysis of the tweets from the #Jallikattu protests (Top 20 words)**

### 8.7.1 The *werewolf* syndrome of power

The *werewolf* syndrome of power is a paradoxical phenomenon, witnessed at the #Jallikattu protests. The police who exhibited compassion for the protestors and public transformed into a brutal force who violently attacked and dispersed the protestors. The *werewolf* is a fictional characterisation of a human who is cursed to transform into a violent hybrid wolf like person on the night of full moon. The transformation is not voluntary. It is out of the person's control. The police demonstrated a similar behaviour during the #Jallikattu protests, where the public protested for the cause of *Jallikattu*. Initially, they supported and treated the public as fellow community members. However, when the government decided to end this protest, the police acted as their *werewolf*. They transformed their humane behaviour to a brutal one and attacked the protestors. The theory of *werewolf* syndrome of power can be used to explain this contradictory behaviour of the police. In their daily duties, the police involve themselves in the protection of the people, yet they harm and attack the same people if they have to protect the more powerful elements of establishment. The evidence of the conflicting patterns of behaviour from 'support' to 'attack' of

the police in the #Jallikattu protests with the context of the *werewolf* syndrome of power is explained in the following sections of the thesis in two parts.

The videos uploaded by the common public, independent, and mainstream media on YouTube, the comment sections from these YouTube videos, the tweets from the #Jallikattu protests and newspaper articles from 3 leading English newspapers of Tamil Nadu during the movement will be the data used to explain the role of the police at the #Jallikattu protests.

## 8.8 The support and participation of the police of Tamil Nadu in the #Jallikattu protests

The #Jallikattu protests was a cultural revolution. The removal of a ban on *Jallikattu*, a cultural sport with bulls in Tamil Nadu was the sole motive of the movement. Freudenberg and Alario (2007:149-159) have claimed that religion and culture have the power to influence and control the masses. Hence, it can be understood that religion and culture have a great power of organising people. The #Jallikattu protest grew massively because it involved the identity metanarrative of Tamil culture and feeling of Tamil pride. The police of Tamil Nadu share the same sentiments as the people of Tamil Nadu. Hence, they also demonstrated their support for cause of *Jallikattu*, initially. The phenomenon of culture as a metanarrative and organising power in protests and social movements will be discussed in detail in sub-section 3 of this chapter.

### 8.8.1 A policeman delivering a speech at the #Jallikattu protests<sup>84</sup>



Figure 8-13: Screenshot of a documentary of a policeman delivering a speech at the protests

<sup>84</sup> Documentary film 6 is retrieved from YouTube (News7 Tamil, 2017).

In Figure 8-13, a police constable delivered an emotional speech in his uniform at Marina Beach in Chennai, on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2017 supporting the #*Jallikattu* protests. He was surrounded by a large crowd of protestors and a few Tamil celebrities. The speech was simple and straightforward and a significant contribution and motivation to the protestors from the Tamil Nadu police community. The police constable starts the speech by sarcastically addressing the then chief minister of Tamil Nadu, O. Paneerselvam, without naming him, enquiring the result of the CM's meeting with Modi<sup>85</sup> in Delhi regarding the removal of the ban on *Jallikattu*. After this, he proudly claims that the bull has stood with humans, from the first time they decided to till the land. Then, he painfully asks "how we can call ourselves humans or Tamilians if we allow the extinction of our bulls which have been part of our lives for 1000's of years". He further makes these following points in his speech: "There might be babies in the world who have not tasted their mother's milk, but none have grown up not drinking the cow's milk. They say India is an agricultural country, and if there is no importance for agriculture, is this government still functioning? We have already killed our lands with artificial fertilizers instead of natural manure. Now, slowly we are killing our native cows too, in the name of a ban on *Jallikattu*. We beg for water from our neighbouring states. Our farmers are killing themselves due to the shortage of water and the abundance of debts."

He asserts that there are many from the police department who are amongst the protestors in support who are wearing their civilian clothes. He admits that it is true that the police have never been part of any protests before, but if today he is part of this protest, then the people in power should take the issue seriously. He warns that the protest will end silently only if action is implemented soon. He stresses that even though Gandhi was born on this soil, this is also the birthplace of Netaji<sup>86</sup>. This statement implies that the protest which has been non-violent can become militant if the government does not pay heed to the cause. He further states that we have a memorial for Gandhi in Madurai which motivates the peaceful protests. However, Modi asked for votes claiming he is from the birth land of Gandhi, yet how does he not understand this non-violent uprising of the people? While making this statement, the police officer was interrupted, but we do not by whom, but we can presume it was by another police officer. Then he leaves the topic and starts to speak about Tamil pride. He says Tamilians have a bad habit that once they step forward, there is no turning back. He says he will not run away fearing his higher officials. The ones who are calling him back are not doing it because they do not care about *Jallikattu*, but because of the pressure

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<sup>85</sup> Narendra Modi, the prime minister of India from 2014 to present.

<sup>86</sup> Netaji Subash Chandra Bose was a leader during the freedom struggle of India against the British. He had a militant approach opposed to Gandhi who led a non-violent struggle for independence of India.

from their superiors. A media reporter asks him if he is not worried that he might lose his position. The police officer replies, that he is from Madurai, and the crowd roars. He says his native place is Ramanathapuram<sup>87</sup>, and his family migrated to Madurai 35 years ago to survive a famine. He sarcastically asks with the current situation and issues of Tamil Nadu; do you expect us to go to America to survive? After this, the crowd carries him and cheers. He ends his speech by wearing his police cap and saluting the protestors.

### 8.8.2 A policeman performing *Silambattam* at the #Jallikattu protests



**Figure 8-14: Screenshot of a documentary of a policeman performing *Silambattam* at the protests**

Documentary Film 7<sup>88</sup> from Figure 8-14 above shows a police officer performing *Silambattam*<sup>89</sup> amongst a crowd of cheering protestors in *Thanjavur*<sup>90</sup>, one of the *Jallikattu* protest grounds in Tamil Nadu on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2017. The wave of protestors includes youngsters, women, children, and the general public. The participation of this police officer in the protests and his performance to entertain the protestors show the level of support and commitment. This demonstrates the amicable relationship between the public and police which was present during the #*Jallikattu* protests.

<sup>87</sup> Ramanathapuram is a district and Madurai is a city in Tamil Nadu.

<sup>88</sup> Documentary film 7 (BehindwoodTV, 2017) and News Footage 1 (Puthiyathalaimurai TV, 2017) are retrieved from YouTube.

<sup>89</sup> A weapon based traditional Tamil martial art. *Silambu* is a staff made of bamboo and *Aatam* means dance or performance in Tamil.

<sup>90</sup> Thanjavur is a city and Pudukkottai is a town in Tamil Nadu.

### 8.8.3 A police officer interviewed at the #Jallikattu protests

News footage 1 from Figure 8-15 is a news media interview (20<sup>th</sup> January 2017) of a policeman who was part of the #Jallikattu protests at *Pudukkottai*. The policeman emotionally says no one instigated him to be part of this protest, but it is his Tamil ethnicity and the Tamil language that he has studied that motivated him to support the #Jallikattu protests. He asks: when his fellow Tamil people are fighting tirelessly for their rights, how he can be asleep? He further says that he can also protest as he is an educated youth and part of the police department. He demands that the prime minister of India, Modi, should definitely provide what the people are asking in regard to *Jallikattu*. He says this is part of the culture of the Tamil ethnic group and cites section 29(1)<sup>91</sup> of the Indian Constitution, which should protect the same. He says his blood boils and he is anxiously waiting for the ban to be repealed by the Government of India.



Figure 8-15: Screenshot of a news interview of a policeman protesting for *Jallikattu*

### 8.8.4 A policeman speaking and motivating the youth at the #Jallikattu protest<sup>92</sup>

Documentary Footage 3 illustrated in Figure 8-16 is a speech of a police officer in *Erode* to youngsters who were protesting for the removal of the ban on the *Jallikattu* sport (21<sup>st</sup> January 2017). He counters the tweet by Subramanian Swamy, an Indian politician calling the protestors “rogues”: “All Porukkis<sup>93</sup> in Tamil Nadu who have been threatening violence on twitter against PTs should write out their addresses for NIA inspection”. This is a misunderstood remark by Radha

<sup>91</sup> Indian Constitution Sec 29(1) Any section of the citizens residing in the territory of India or any part thereof having a distinct language, script, or culture of its own shall have the right to conserve the same.

<sup>92</sup> Documentary Footage 3 is retrieved from YouTube (Gurumoorthy V2703, 2017).

<sup>93</sup> *Porukkis* means Rogues in Tamil.

Rajan, a PETA activist, who said people will gather for any cause and if the topic was free sex, 50,000 people would gather for it (this made rounds on social media as *Jallikattu* protestors have gathered for free sex). The police officer says he is embarrassed to even utter the words used by Radha Rajan. He says these people have seen our girls go to college or bunk classes to go out, but they've never seen our girls gather in protest and use broom sticks as a weapon<sup>94</sup>. He asks Subramanian Swamy, what rogue behaviour he witnessed with the Tamil youngsters. He says that he had received news that the paramilitary forces had been deployed in Chennai. He admits that he is not sure whether they were deployed for the Republic Day parade or to disperse the protestors. However, he says that the police of Tamil Nadu were given the khaki uniform to safeguard the public. He further assures that if they have a plan to attack or disperse the protestors, they should do what they can, and they (the Tamil Nadu police) would go to any measure to protect the protestors. Ironically, it was the police who attacked and shut down the protests.



**Figure 8-16: Screenshot of a documentary footage of a policeman motivating the youth at the protests**

The emotional and supportive speech of the policemen, the martial arts performances and their friendly approach with the protestors would have developed a confidence and trust of the public on the police. This positive engagement between the police and the protestors was also evident in the tweets of the protestors and the media during the *#Jallikattu* protests.

<sup>94</sup> *Velakumaaru* – Broom stick. The expanded meaning of this term has a patriarchal connotation. The women who use broomsticks to clean know how to use them as a weapon too.

*Youth engaged in jallikattu protests in Marina maintaining extraordinary calm, says Chennai police*

*Unity: Police and Public perform Silambattam at the Jallikattu protests*

*Idhu dhan da police<sup>95</sup>? Electrifying speeches from cops participating in Jallikattu protests*

*Salute to Tamil Nadu Police, especially Chennai City police on handling #Jallikattu protests well*

*#Jallikattu Protests Police Peace*

Even though the majority of the tweets with the police is negative, demonstrating the violence on protestors, these few tweets reiterate the support and positive involvement of the police in the #Jallikattu protests at its inception. In the next section, we will see the transformation of the police from a supportive and friendly entity to a violent and brutal force.

### **8.9 Police violence and brutality at the #Jallikattu protests**

On 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2017, in response to the demands of the protests, the state government of Tamil Nadu issued a resolution to amend the Prevention of Animal Cruelty act. The next evening, (23<sup>rd</sup> January), this was passed in the Tamil Nadu state assembly. The state government of Tamil Nadu exercised their right to pass a special resolution to bypass the Supreme Court's ruling of the ban on *Jallikattu* and allow the sport in Tamil Nadu. The public were not convinced with the resolution so they continued their protests on 23<sup>rd</sup> January and demanded a permanent solution to the ban. The same morning, a police station was burnt near the Marina Beach, which was one of the biggest protest grounds for the *Jallikattu* cause. The police claimed that the anti-social elements who had infiltrated the protests to strengthen their support for the separatism of Tamil Nadu from India committed this crime. However, there was no evidence produced by the police to prove who were involved in this attack. After this, police forces in large numbers were deployed and the protestors from the protest grounds were forcefully evicted (Ravishankar and Kumar, 2017).

#### **8.9.1 A news report on the burning of a police station near Marina**

TV News Report 1<sup>96</sup> illustrated in Figure 8-17 is a national media news report on the burning of the police station on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2017. The reporting of the news was done by a television presenter in Delhi<sup>97</sup> and a ground reporter in Chennai. The TV reporter repeatedly indicated that the protestors were involved in this violent attack of the police station, yet the ground reporter

<sup>95</sup> "Idhu dhan da police" in Tamil means "This the best example of a police officer."

<sup>96</sup> TV News Report 1 is retrieved from YouTube (India Today, 2017).

<sup>97</sup> New Delhi is the capital of India.

kept denying the allegations against the protestors. The TV reporter claimed that the situation was rather grim in Chennai as the protestors set police vehicles on fire.



**Figure 8-17: Screenshot of a news report on the burning of a police station**

The ground reporter said this incident was unfortunate as the protestors were still protesting peacefully at the Marina Beach. The ground reporter added that this would give the police a chance to take harsh actions against the protestors. The TV reporter also claimed that the miscreants locked 10 police personnel inside the police station and burned it, but luckily, they broke a window and escaped from inside. The ground reporter said that thankfully there were no loss of lives. The TV reporter further said that this is tragic and an ugly turn of events and asks why the protestors had to resort to this type of violence. The ground reporter replied it was not the protestors, but the miscreants had come from different areas of Chennai and threw petrol bombs at the police station. The TV reporter again said that his had given a bad name for the protestors and here after there is no way to differentiate the protestors and the miscreants. The ground reporter further stressed that he had been at the protest grounds for the past 5 days and 5 nights and witnessed that the police and protestors were calm and supportive. He also affirmed that he spoke to a policeman at the incident who vouched that the protestors were not involved in these criminal activities, but it was actions of fringe elements who wanted to use the situation to create trouble. The TV reporter interrupted the ground reporter and said she had received breaking news that 20 police officials had sustained injuries due to the incident. The reporter replied that he had just spoken to the fire brigadiers and a few policemen and they had confirmed that nobody was injured at the incident. Even though the reporter denied the injuries of the police official, yet the anchor repeated the that 20 police officials had been injured due to this incident. She kept repeating the words “ugly” and “violent” several times in the report. The TV again asks about the injuries, and the ground reporter

puts the police assistant commissioner on the microphone, and he confirmed that there were no injuries. Finally, the TV reporter said that according to the police commissioner there are no injuries, yet they would still have to confirm on that. The TV reporter ended the report by saying the protestors have targeted the police and set fire to the vehicles.

Even though the ground level reporter insisted that it was not the actions of the protestors and there were no injuries, the TV reporter kept fixating on 20 police personnel who had allegedly sustained injuries due to the incident. She constantly referred to the protestors as perpetrators as opposed to a small fringe element who attacked the police and police station. However, the public comments on TV News report 1 claimed that the police station burning was artificially orchestrated by the police themselves. In a personal interview with a resident of Chennai near the *#Jallikattu* protest grounds, the interviewee explained how the violence at the protests were simulated by the police.

The public comments on TV News report 1 were all against the police and the news reporting, in which terms and phrases like “police conspiracy”, “how much the govt paid you to write like this”, “police created violence”, “they just want to spoil the image of peaceful protestors”, “to get attention and increase TRP rating”, “this was not done by the public” and “stupid media” etc.<sup>98</sup> were used by the commentators. This omnioptic public sphere shows that the protestors and public deny the allegations against them in burning the police station. Also, the news report claims that many miscreants were involved in this incident. If this is true, the machoistic tendencies of the miscreants would have urged them to boast their actions, at least anonymously. Miscreants usually go on a spree and commit multiple acts of violence and do not stop with one or few. There were no responsibilities taken by any so called anti-national fringe elements or the general public in burning the police vehicles or the police station. It was only the media and the police who blamed the protestors for these crimes which raises the suspicion that the police or the government themselves might have been involved in these crimes to dissolve the peaceful protests. It is also important to note, that in 3 days’ time from then, it would have been the 68<sup>th</sup> Republic Day of India - on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2017. The central protest grounds of the *#Jallikattu* protests, the Marina Beach is where the parades and celebrations take place. If the protests continued into the republic day, it would have been a historic embarrassment for the ruling parties. Hence, the violence could have been simulated by the powerful establishments of the nation to avoid political humiliation. This is further reiterated with a personal interview with Snowlin<sup>99</sup>.

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<sup>98</sup> Spellings and grammatical mistakes have been corrected in the comments.

<sup>99</sup> Names of interviewees are pseudonyms. Snowlin is a media person from Chennai who lives in an area near Marina Beach where the *#Jallikattu* protests happened. She visited the protest grounds as a spectator.

### **8.9.2 An insider information about the police situation at the #Jallikattu protests**

Snowlin shares some inside news from the #Jallikattu protests in her interview with the researcher. She says that through her contacts in the media industry, she came to know that the police were going to get into action and violence on the evening before the police brutally cleared the protestors from the protest grounds. She says the ruling party tried to create chaos in the protests by infiltrating it with fake protestors who were making demands of a separating Tamil Nadu from India. She also sheds light on how many of celebrities and familiar faces who were actively part of the protests such as RJ Balaji, Hip Hop Thamizha, Lawrence, Julie etc., were not part of the protest on 23<sup>rd</sup> January. Some of them withdrew from the protests, and others said they were not able to access the protest grounds. Briefly, when the violence happened, they were not at the protest grounds.

She further narrates the story of her caretaker's husband who had confessed that the local boys including him were rounded up from the area by the police and they were paid 150 rupees each. The police demanded these boys to form mobs and shout in support of the #Jallikattu protests at the local protest grounds and throw stones at the nearby glass buildings. She says he shared this with her in the afternoon after the violence, and a few of his friends also reaffirmed this to her the same evening (Personal Interview 4, Tamil Nadu, 2020).

The evidence of police excess with police in large numbers including armed reserves and special battalions from other districts were deployed during the clearing of #Jallikattu protests at Marina beach and protest centres in Tamil Nadu. There are several videos on YouTube uploaded by the general public and independent media exposing the violence and brutality of the police in forcibly ending the #Jallikattu protests. The videos of police excess recorded by the protestors and the common people surfaced in social media during the protests. The protestors were blamed for the violence at the protest grounds. However, these videos act as important evidence of how the police enacted violently in a peaceful protest process. The negative tweets with the term "police" extracted from the #Jallikattu protests are also abundant. The authenticity of the videos covering an instance of police violence and brutality used in this research were tested with the date of upload, as well as other videos covering the same instance and interviews with protestors and public who were involved with the movements.

### 8.9.3 Negative tweets on police from the #Jallikattu protests

The Tweets below were tweeted on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2017, or after, exposing, and questioning the police excesses, violence and brutality on the protestors, supporters and the general public present at the protest grounds and areas nearby:

*The final twist in #jallikattu protests. #Intruders are not from outside, it's from police side*

*There is no anti social elements, porrukis infiltrated at #jallikattu protests. Porruki-ism is done by state police*

*#jallikattu Protests r not politically motivated, Violence is. #shameontnpolice #makkalmovement*

*#WeCelebrateJallikattu #ShameTNpolice*

*#jallikattu #protests Legitimate, Give Explanation for #Police Action, Says #KamalHaasan  
Jallikattu protests end, but Tamil Nadu seethes in anger at Chennai Police*

*Viral video allegedly shows policeman in Chennai setting fire to an auto during Jallikattu protests*

*TrendingG5: Jallikattu protests | Police Attacked Women | Chennai |*

*Today by 5pm at pdy anna statue, PWA stages demonstration against police excesses in #jallikattu protests. #CPIM welcomes u*

*#Jallikattu protests: Police partially clear Marina Beach, protesters forcefully evicted*

*#Jallikattu protests: Police forcefully evict protesters from Coimbatore's VOC Ground*

*#Jallikattu protests: Police forcefully evict protesters from Madurai, Coimbatore and Trichy*

*Chennai Police Stop all vehicle towards Marina Beach to stop Jallikattu Protests*

*All that goodwill earned by TN police during #jallikattu protests got wiped out by brutality they exhibited on last day. Thuggish at best!*

*@BBCWorld @chennaiipolice\_ has committed Human Rights violation during Peaceful Marina Protests. Kindly report in Panorama program.*

*#jallikattu Friends watch news immediately police using their power against marina protests Save Tamil brothers save Jallikattu*

### 8.9.4 A policeman hitting protesting women with a lathi stick<sup>100</sup>



**Figure 8-18: Screenshot of a documentary of a policeman hitting protesting women**

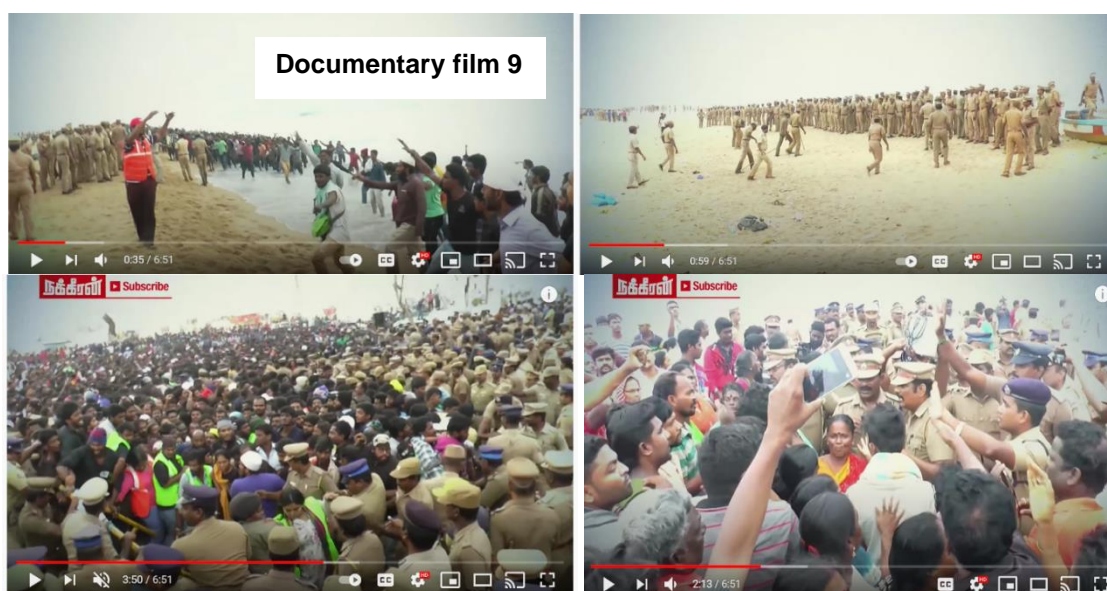
Documentary Film 8 is a compilation of the police violence at *Alanganallur*, the town famous for *Jallikattu*. It shows the forceful dispersal of the peaceful protestors by the police. The police hit the men and women of the protests with the lathi sticks and some men, in retaliation, they threw stones at the police. The image shows a policeman who was angered by the retaliation of the protestors. He harshly thrashes another group of protestors with mostly old and young women and a few men. Even though the protestors were peaceful, and were exercising their democratic right, the police cleared them violently.

### 8.9.5 Police clearing the protestors from Marina Beach

In the 4 screenshots from Figure 8-19, the first image shows the protestors walking into the sea and standing in the water to avoid being removed from the protest grounds. The second image depicts a part of the large mass of police battalion deployed to force out the protestors from the protest grounds. The third image illustrates the crowd resisting the police who were trying to clear the protests. The protestors yell “We want *Jallikattu*” and “Police get out” in Tamil. The police keep announcing “please leave the protest grounds in a peaceful manner” and “please co-operate with the police”. The final image shows a discussion between the public and the police. Many protestors videoed the conversations and one person’s phone is clearly visible. The possession of smart phones by almost everyone is a great aid during social movements, and this promotes citizen journalism

<sup>100</sup> Documentary Film 8 (NewsGlitz, 2017) and Documentary Film 9 (Nakkheeran TV, 2017) are retrieved from YouTube.

and provides evidence for the violence and injustices committed against the protestors. This advantage is emphasised in the research.



**Figure 8-19: Screenshot of a documentary of Police clearing the protestors from Marina beach**

### 8.9.6 A police mob hitting and stamping youngsters during the protests

Documentary Film 10<sup>101</sup> shows a police battalion with helmets and shields, hitting a young boy with pipes and sticks and stamping him with their shoes. The second image is also from Documentary Film 10 and shows the police carrying the boy away who has fainted. The police harshly thrashed anyone in their vicinity and took them away. They attacked and arrested people from the slum areas and fishing communities where the poorer and marginalised communities live. The violence at the #Jallikattu protests were blamed on the people from these communities.



**Figure 8-20: Screenshot of documentary of a police mob hitting and stamping youngsters**

<sup>101</sup> Documentary film 10 (Dalit Camera, 2017).

### 8.9.7 Police burning private property and breaking media cameras



**Figure 8-21: Screenshot of documentary of a policewoman burning private property<sup>102</sup>**

Documentary Footage 4 shows a policewoman with her face covered burns a cloth tied to a stick or rod. After torching the cloth, she runs to a hut in the area, and she burns the hut. This video footage shot on a mobile phone went viral on social media and a few local media channels. The image above is important evidence which exposes that the police had been behind the violence at the #Jallikattu protests. It shows that the police were ready to destroy someone's house to execute their agenda. This is the key advantage of social media during times of protest. Even though police may prohibit the legacy media, they could not monitor and collect all cell phones from citizens who were recording them. Even if they did arrest citizens, these videos could be quickly uploaded or sent to others, not in the vicinity. The police attacked several media persons who tried to video document their atrocities, but they could not find every mobile phone that was recording them. This is the key advantage of social media during times of protest. Even though police may prohibit the legacy media, they could not monitor and collect all cell phones from citizens who were recording them. Even if they do arrest citizens, these videos can be quickly uploaded or sent to others, not in the vicinity.

Documentary Film 11 shows a group of police officers with piles of stones beneath them. They used these stones to pelt the protestors. A cameraman from BBC Tamil was covering this scenario.

<sup>102</sup> Documentary Footage 4 (Nakkheeran TV, 2017) and Documentary Film 11 (Nakkheeran TV, 2017) are retrieved from YouTube.

A policewoman asks, “Why are you filming this, please go capture what the protestors are doing” and then a policeman comes running and hits the camera with a lathi stick and the camera breaks and falls to the ground.



**Figure 8-22: Screenshot of documentary of police officers with stones**

### 8.9.8 The narratives of police violence and atrocities on the innocent public

The following narratives were gathered from secondary interviews, in which the public describe the atrocities and brutality committed by the police on 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 2017. These interviews and the reporting of the atrocities of the police were uploaded on YouTube by the common people, independent media, and regional and national mainstream media. However, the minute details and in-depth interviews were covered by local independent media, local journalism students and the common people. Jhansi is a young woman who was part of the protest in Chennai, and she was attacked by the police. Jayaraj, Fenix and Thamizharasan are young men who were not part of the protest, but they were arrested from their houses, which were near Marina Beach in Chennai.<sup>103</sup>

Jhansi says, “a policewoman grabbed my breast and tried to move me, yet I was not able to move, so she kicked me with her shoes and removed me from the protest grounds”. She says, “We were not allowed to go to road, so we have come to *Nadukuppam*<sup>104</sup> and the people here are helping us”. The others with Jhansi show the stones and say, “the police threw these stones at us”. Jhansi says, “they opened tear gas, threw beer bottles at us, hit us with the lathis and a pregnant woman at the

<sup>103</sup> The names of the interviewees are pseudonyms.

<sup>104</sup> *Nadukuppam* – A fishing community’s residential colony near the Marina beach.

protest ground has had a miscarriage because of the police brutality”. Jhansi exclaims, “they’ve broken my leg, and I saw a guy’s head bleeding” (Tamilfans tube, 2017)

Jayaraj recounts, “I had gone to my friend’s house to wish him for his wedding anniversary. Suddenly 20-25 police knocked at the door, they arrested both me and my friend. They used really filthy language and asked us, how dare we throw stones at them. From the second floor, the police crumbled us like paper and rolled us down on the stairways and hit us with water pipes and sticks. When we tried to deny these accusations, they said if you open your mouths, we will break it. They told us to remove all our clothes, made us naked, checked us and locked us up. Again, they thrashed us, we believed they will let us go, but they booked many other pending cases on us. I am still unaware of what cases I am booked under, because I am not literate. Many people hit me in jail, and there was a person with a mohawk hair style, who is definitely not a police officer. Either he was a prisoner asked by the police to hit us or he was paid and brought from outside. The police officers did not treat us humanely”.

Fenix says, “my father had called for my brother, so I went outside to call my brother. As he went inside the house, suddenly the police came and arrested me. They hit me and accused me of throwing petrol bombs and burning vehicles. I denied these accusations and I told them I was just standing outside my house. Yet, they put me in an ambulance, beat me up and took me to jail. They booked me under 4 cases, attempt of murder, destroying police vehicles etc. I am back home now, but I cannot walk properly, and I have a terrible pain in my ears.”

Thamizharasan says, “I am a senior train ticket examiner at the Mylapore railway station in Chennai. I got this central government position through sports quota. On 23<sup>rd</sup> January morning, when I was in duty, they informed that the trains were cancelled, so I asked permission to leave home early to have lunch. The restaurants nearby were closed due to the chaos. I walked on the tracks from Mylapore to Triplicane station which is around 2.5 kilometres. My house is just 35 meters from Triplicane station, but it was chaotic outside the station. Yet I managed to come home, changed my uniform, and wore a t-shirt and shorts. Some of the protestors who were being chase by the police, ran into our building, and went up to the terrace. The police arrested all the young men from our building, and I was also taken to the police station. The police hit us very hard. Heads broken, blood dripping. I tried to tell them I work for the railways, yet they never listened. They tried to hit my head with a pipe, and I blocked it with my hand. They hit my left hand around 20 times and it is fractured now. I am a swimmer and I have participated in many tournaments, now my future in sports and my job is at stake because of my injuries and the arrest.” (Nakeeran TV, 2017). As we read about the stories of individuals who were attacked by the police from the protests

and nearby residential areas of fishing communities and slum areas, we will next look at how a community was attacked and their livelihood destroyed by the police forces.

### **8.9.9 Looting and burning of the *Nadukuppam* fish market by the police**

The screenshots from Documentary Films 12, 13, 14, 15, 16<sup>105</sup> are testimonies of people from *Nadukuppam*, who allege that the police torched and looted their fish market. The police verbally and physically abused the women and children who were alone at home (as the men had gone into the sea to fish), arrested the youngsters, burnt vehicles, and fired tear gas into the residential spaces. On 23<sup>rd</sup> January, when the police attacked and cleared the protest grounds at Marina Beach, many of the youngsters, in fear, ran to the nearby fishing hamlets. The women at these communities, gave them refuge in their houses, provided them water, and helped them go back to their houses safely. The police attacked the people of *Nadukuppam* and other fishing hamlets near the Marina Beach in Chennai for helping these youngsters.

The images above from the screenshots of the Documentary Films 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 show the distressed women at the remains of their fish market. There are other images of a young boy and two youngsters. The young boy was injured by a bottle thrown at his house by the police and the other two were beaten up by the police. The group photo is an image of the fisherwomen who lost their stalls at the fish market destroyed by the police. The image of a silver medallion is shown by a woman, and it was dropped by a police officer who forcefully entered one of the houses and attacked the people. These testimonies have been compiled into a narrative style in page 145.

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<sup>105</sup> Documentary Film 12 (Vinavu, 2017), D.Film 13 (Dalit Camera, 2017), D.Film 14 (DJC TV University of Madras, 2017), D.Film 15 and 16 (Vettiver Collective, 2017) are retrieved from YouTube.

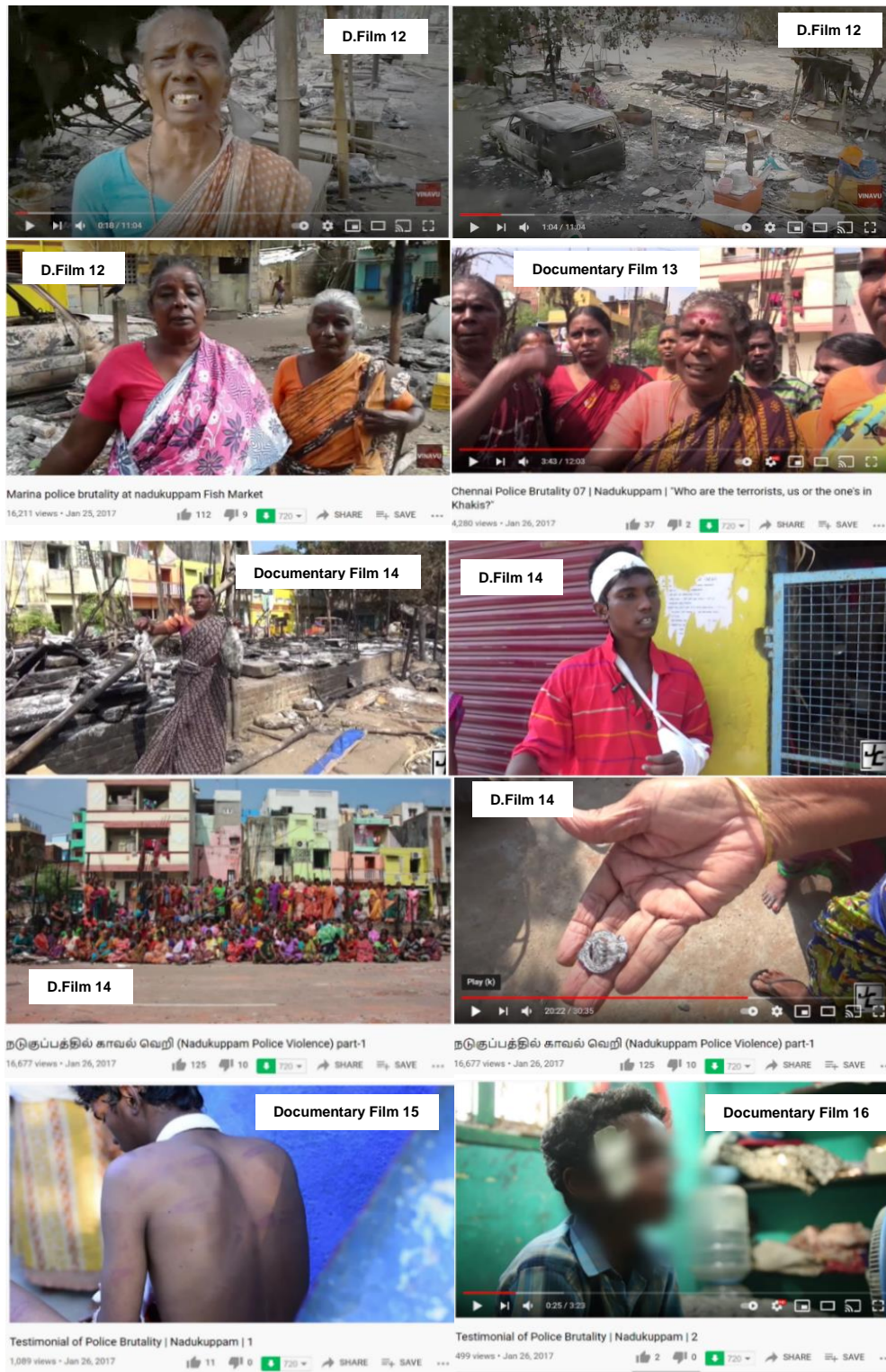


Figure 8-23: Screenshots of documentaries showing the damages at *Nadukuppam*

### 8.9.10 *Nadukuppam* speaks<sup>106</sup>: a collective voice of pain and fear

Our people are helpful, hardworking, and they had a humble life. Life here revolves around fish. The men go into the sea to fish and the women sell them at our fish market. Near our homes, at the Marina Beach, a massive number of students and youngsters gathered in support of a cultural sport called *Jallikattu*. We were in awe of how well they were organised and led their protests peacefully. Their families and us joined them in support for this cause. Many fishing communities including ours brought them food from the sea.

On the morning of 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2017, around 7-7.30 a.m., the police lathi charged these youngsters and in fear of losing their lives, they flocked into our community. Our men were at sea, and only the women and children were at home. These youngsters asked our women for refuge from the police who had turned into blood thirsty *werewolves*. Most of them were wounded and they came running to us with blood dripping from their faces and bodies. We gave them water to drink, treated their wounds, kept them safe for a while and found them safe passage to escape and go back to their houses. We went to the beach and demanded answers from the police on why they had attacked these kids. The police assaulted us with lathis and opened tear gas on us and we ran back to our homes.

The police followed us and banged at our doors and ordered us to let these youngsters out. We refused as they were beating them black and blue and throwing them into vehicles. They usually say, the fisherfolk speak a foul language, but we have never spoken like how these men and women from the police department cursed us. They used the filthiest language, which is absolutely shocking. The police called us prostitutes for accommodating the youngsters who were hurt and scared. We are also mothers, we have school and college going kids, and these kids from the protest grounds came running to us for help. We did not think about anything else, other than helping them. Some of them were wounded very badly, and we are not even sure if they are alive today. The police ganged up and hit these students and carried them away as they fainted. We safeguarded many of these youngsters and after 6 pm they were dropped off in the city by the young women from our area who ride scooters and motorbikes.

The police threw huge stones and bottles at our houses. They fired tear gas at our residences, filling our houses with the fumes. Our eyes were burning, and we lost our vision for a while. One house had two babies, they were choking and coughing, we were scared that they would die. The children

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<sup>106</sup> *Nadukuppam* speaks is a non-fiction narrative form of a collective voice of nearly 49 people mostly women from *Nadukuppam*, which is adapted from 5 secondary interviews by local independent media and local journalism students on YouTube. These interviews were recorded on 24<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> January 2017.

in our houses were crying out of fear and irritation of the tear gas. The police never pitied anyone. From small children, women or old people, everyone was thrashed by them for helping these youngsters. They broke into some of the houses and destroyed everything inside. They said terrorists had infiltrated our area and it was unlawful for us to keep them in our houses. The police are supposed to be protection for us, instead they brutally attacked us. The police called the students “terrorists”, but the police were the ones who acted that like terrorists.

At noon, the police ransacked our fish market when we were resting in our houses. They took away the big and expensive fish to fry and eat them at their camps. A single live fish, which was weighing 20 kilos was just taken away in front of our eyes. They attacked us and stole boxes of our fish, prawns, and crab to eat them. We cannot call them police officers. They are reckless thieves. After the looting, they broke all the cycles, bikes, autos, and cars parked near the fish market, then they burnt them along with the fish market. We tried to salvage some fish and our money from the market, but they fired teargas into the market, and we had to run. Then they threw a chemical powder, petrol and kerosene on the fish market, which quickly intensified the fire. 380 fish stalls, the fish, and our money got burnt. We lost more than 10 million rupees in this havoc and it is not our own money, most of it is debts that we had borrowed from moneylenders. A few of the women ran to ask them why they were burning our market, and the police beat them with their long lathi sticks. Some of these women were over 70 years old.

Fortunately, our houses are made of concrete. If the houses had thatched roofs, like the fish market, they would have burnt our houses too. We switched off the electricity supply in our houses, because the fire was bursting from the fish market, which burnt for hours before only ashes remained. What would have happened if we had been killed?

A police vehicle came to the spot with different weaponry like bags of stones, tear gas bombs, bottles, sticks, metal rods and plastic pipes. It was like a movie scene. The policemen and women used their sports training to throw the stones at our houses from far. There were both men and women from the police force who were part of all the atrocities committed.

When we went to ask for justice from the police, they denied burning the fish market. They asked us to file a report against the students accusing them of burning the fish market and then the government would arrange for compensations. We told them, “It was you who committed this crime, and we will never accuse the kids who came running to us for help.” They call these youngsters “terrorists”, yet they are the real terrorists and thugs. They have visited us several times in the past 2-3 days asking us to sign as witnesses to say that arrested youngsters were anti nationals.

We have been refusing it and they are intimidating us that they will arrest all the men at night from our area if we do not sign this. How can we sign against the innocent students? It is not only them, but they have also arrested the youngsters from our area. They have been threatening us, “Did you not feed these students fish curry and rice? See what happens to all of your men.” For the past few days, we have asked our men to stay in places of friends and relatives, as we are scared that they will also be arrested if they are found here.

The youngsters from the area say, “we were arrested for no reason. If we were sighted by the police, they hit us with pipes, lathis and we were taken away. We were not taken to a police station or a jail. They took us to a nearby Lady Willingdon College<sup>107</sup>. This is where the police had camped to practice for the Republic Day parade. They were frying and eating the fish that they looted from us. More than 15-20 police personnel hit each of us. After that, they told us to write down our addresses. We asked them for water, they said ‘we’ll open our zip, you can drink our urine.’ Then they put us in a vehicle, while travelling, they walked over us. Later they just threw us at a random place. We managed to find some help and took ourselves to hospitals or our homes. We had to get stitches for the head injuries and bandages for the multiple fractures. We might have just passed away if nobody helped us. The women and children from the area were also injured because they were either assaulted by the police or hit by the stones or the bottles thrown at our houses.”

The women show the stones, the broken bottles, tear gas bombs, the badges of the police, which had fallen near their houses and, the broken pipes and sticks used by the police to hit the youngsters. The women show the damaged sticks and ask. If these sticks are in this state, imagine the condition of the students who were beaten up by the police. We need compensation for all their atrocities and damages. The government must take severe action against the police. When the city is flooded, it is our fishermen who take their boats to rescue people and even if a policeman drowns at sea, it is us who saves him. Yet, we have been gravely attacked by the police. Do we deserve this punishment, for just offering water to the thirsty?

A fisherwoman says, “if these police want to wage war against us, tell them to bring their lathis, alone and we will fight them. We respect their uniform, and we keep quiet, if they come without their uniforms, we women from *Nadukuppam* will finish them.” A fisherman exclaims, “you have destroyed our community today titling us as terrorists, but can you (the police) show us proof that we have involved in violence?” He shows his phone and says “but we have proof of all the violence

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<sup>107</sup> Lady Willingdon College is a government run autonomous college in *Triplicane* an area near Marina Beach and *Nadukuppam* in Chennai.

and brutality that you have committed.” Another fisherwoman says, “this is all due to poor governance in the nation, we cannot call this a free country, if the people are not safe. If the educated stand away from politics saying it is filthy, who will change this country. We call forth the students and the educated to politics. You protested for a cause, and now you have scattered away. Organise yourself to build better politics in this country.”

### **8.10 Concluding thoughts: dismantling the police system and decolonisation of democracy**

This story of *Nadukuppam* was highlighted in this research study due to the higher level of damage faced by the people. However, there were several other places, especially the slum areas near the protest grounds, which were affected by the violence and brutality of the police. The people from these areas were intimidated and attacked because the police wanted to execute the lesson plan provided to them by the powerful agents of the government. They wanted to show the people the results of standing up against these powerful entities. The state needed faces for the simulated violence created by the police, and the Dalits from the slums and fishing hamlets of Chennai were targeted for this. The #FeesMustFall movement was a collective initiative of all races in South Africa, yet it was the Blacks who were arrested and tormented in jail. In the same way, in Tamil Nadu, the #Jallikattu protests was a protest by all Tamils, even though the sport is a higher caste culture, the protest was conducted under a single banner of all Tamils without segregation of castes. Yet when it was time for arrests, it was the lower castes who became scapegoats. This will be discussed in the next sub-section of the thesis.

After the chaos at Marina Beach, on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2017, Sec 144 was imposed at the beach for the next few days (Mathew, 2017). Sec 144 of the law prohibits an unlawful gathering of public, it restricts more than 3 or more people to collectively organise themselves. This law was installed by the British colonial forces to stop the people from protesting against their oppressive regime (Vishwanath and Dhapola, 2019). In an independent country, if colonial law is still being used to stop people from using their democratic rights, this speaks volumes about oppression and the clandestine colonial style of governance.

While interviewing Biko about the police brutality of the #FeesMustFall movement, he spoke about the Marikana massacre from 2012, in which 34 miners were killed and 78 injured by the South African police while they were walking peacefully. These Black miners were protesting for a wage rise and lost their lives for demanding a better life. This reminded me of the Sterlite massacre at Thoothukudi in 2018, in which police shot with assault rifles at protestors who made their way to the district collector’s office. 13 of them were killed, including women and minors. They were

protesting for the closure of a copper smelting industry for environmental reasons (Varadhan, 2018). The police behaviour at Marikana, the #FeesMustFall movement, #Jallikattu Protests and #Sterlite Protests is incomprehensible in a real democracy.

The *werewolf* syndrome of police demonstrated in this chapter explains the unpredictable and dangerous nature of the police system. This syndrome emphasises the simulated nature of the democracies in India and South Africa.

Even though these nations boast themselves to be free, the previously oppressed are still oppressed. The police actions in both #feesmustfall and #Jallikattu reveal a continuity of state sanctioned police brutality from previous colonial and apartheid regimes to current democratic regimes. This syndrome of power can be dismantled only when democracy is decolonised, and power restructured in building a real people's democratic nation and not a simulated democracy. In the next chapter, the discussion is taken forward to understand who were the victims of the police brutality in South Africa and India and why they were targeted, attacked and jailed by the police. Chapter nine will discuss how casteism, racism, sexism, heterosexism, centre of protests, media attention has affected the #FeesMustFall movement and #Jallikattu protests.

*This chapter is in memory of Ahmed Timol, Steve Biko, Thillaiyadi Valliammai, Fenix, Jayaraj, Jhansi, Snowlin J, Thamizharasan and many more. The pseudonyms used in this chapter are of activists and innocent people who have been either killed by the police or died in police custody or prison from varied periods of history in South Africa and Tamil Nadu.*

## Chapter 9: Race, Caste, Gender and Media Attention in Social Movements

*The most potent weapon of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed.*

- Steve Biko

*When men are oppressed it is a tragedy, when women are oppressed it is a tradition.*

- Bernadette Mosala<sup>108</sup>

### 9.1 Introduction

The *Jallikattu* sport has been a cultural event in Tamil Nadu for more than 2000 years. Hence, the *Jallikattu* sport was symbolised by the #*Jallikattu* protests as an overarching element of Tamil culture. However, the sport is played only in a few villages of Tamil Nadu. Higher caste men dominate this sport. Dalits and women are not allowed to participate in the #*Jallikattu* sport.

The #*Jallikattu* protests were widely supported by all communities within Tamil society. The oppressed are always the ones to come first when their oppressors or the system of oppression is in danger. Oppression in the form of tradition, religion or culture tends to be valued by the oppressed and makes it acceptable by them via hegemony. Simply put, hegemony refers to the acceptance of ruling class ideology via consent rather than domination. In this sense ruling ideology invites consent from dominated groups by appealing to notions of tradition, religion, culture, identity, law and order etc. Even if such ideologies work against those accepting it, it is nonetheless accepted, because of a perceived sense of virtue (and/or benefit) in the notions above. With time, oppression becomes internalised, hence the oppressed person does not oppose oppression (Jones, 1997). This was the same reason why women and Dalits participated in huge numbers supporting the case of *Jallikattu* as hegemonic cultural relations fashioned *Jallikattu* as an embodiment of Tamil culture and identity.

The Dalits of Chennai made a significant appearance in the #*Jallikattu* protests. Many were from the fishing communities and the slums situated near the Marina Beach. Several Dalit groups lent their musical voice to the protests with songs and *Parai* drums which entertained the crowd. The people from the Dalit community felt it was their duty to support the students who had raised their voice for Tamil culture against the ban of *Jallikattu*. They did not stop with lending their voice, but they also provided the protestors with food prepared at their homes, and they gave refuge to the youngsters and other protestors when they were brutally attacked by the police. Women also

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<sup>108</sup> Bernadette Mosala is a South African author who has written about the struggle of South African Black women in South Africa.

participated in high numbers in these protests. The mothers were proud that their children were protesting for Tamil culture. Tamil women from different facets of life also fought against the oppression of the centre on the state in regard to the ban on *Jallikattu*.

Brahminical patriarchy<sup>109</sup> places Dalits and women on the lowest step of the caste stratum and expects them to be submissive and quiet. Women are forced to act as a carrier of caste to the next generation through endogamy, but their work ends there. They can only carry the caste titles but are not entitled to enjoy all the privileges and benefits that men from the same caste enjoy. (Senanayake and Tringunayat, 2020:176-180)

In spite of being culturally shunned from participating in the actual *Jallikattu* sport, the voice of the Dalits was one of the loudest at the #*Jallikattu* protests in Chennai. When the police needed faces for the violence at the protests, it was not the higher caste members who were arrested and thrown into jail. The Dalits were forcefully taken away from their homes to represent the violence, destruction, and chaos of the #*Jallikattu* protests. Some of them were not even part of the movement. They were taken away from their homes located in the slums and fishing communities near the Marina Beach (echoing scenes from the previous chapter on police brutality). Even though the #*FeesMustFall* movement was a voice of all races in South Africa, when it was time for arrests, it was only Black students who were arrested.

Racism and racial exclusions in South Africa started even before it was officially unified in 1920 and can be traced back to the Dutch colonisation of the South Africa in 1652. This became systematic with Apartheid rule in 1948 which controlled South Africa until 1994 (Oliver and Oliver, 2017:1-8). Yet some people think 27 years of democracy and independence in South Africa has been enough to transform four centuries of the racial injustice (Personal interview 7, South Africa, 2020). Free Education in South Africa would be a remedy for the injustices of its past. That is why the students of South Africa stood up against its government for this cause in 2015.

Racism appeared non-existent within the students who struggled for the #*FeesMustFall* movement. It was a true sign of ubuntu in which all races got together to fight for this cause. Yet, when there was blame for the destructions, hooliganism, and crime at the movement, the fingers were pointed only towards Black students. The Black students were severely attacked and arrested by the police and the female Black students were sexually harassed by the police and other security forces. At ground level in the protest grounds, students from all races were attacked by the police when they

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<sup>109</sup> Brahminical patriarchy is a systematic melange of caste-based hierarchy and patriarchy which subjugates people in both the lines of casteism and gender.

tried to clear the crowds, but when it came to arrests, legal actions and sexual harassments by the police, it was the Black students who were mostly at the receiving end. Even though most of the police officers were Black themselves, they targeted Black students, even using English rather than indigenous terminology, such as “arrest, arrest!” (Personal Interview 2, South Africa, 2020).

Male participation in the protests were higher compared to that of females. This is the result of the patriarchal background of South African society. Nevertheless, there were women in the leadership of the #FeesMustFall movement and many participated in the protests. The serious problems faced by female students such as the rape culture in South African universities was not addressed as part of the protests even though hashtags such as #rapeculturemustfall and #PatriarchyMustFall were raised during the #FeesMustFall protests. (Personal Interviews 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, South Africa, 2020)

Beyond Ubuntu, Race played a role concerning what each community wanted out of the #FeesMustFall movement. Free Education was the cause of the #FeesMustFall movement for the Black students in the universities of South Africa. Even though the protests were not titled as Fees Must Fall, the protest against fees has been a long-time cause by the university students from provinces like KwaZulu-Natal. The movement, which started at the Wits University and followed at Rhodes University and University of Cape Town, which were formally white universities, and still have a high representation of white students, was against the latest fee increments and not free education (Personal Interview 3, South Africa, 2020).

In this chapter, we will look at the caste factor in the *Jallikattu* sport and the #*Jallikattu* protests of Tamil Nadu. In parallel, we will also look at the race factor in education and the #FeesMustFall movement of South Africa. Further, this chapter will also cover how gender bias, patriarchy and centre of protests have affected the phenomena discussed in the study.

## **9.2 Caste and patriarchy in *Jallikattu* and #*Jallikattu* protests of Tamil Nadu**

### **9.2.1 A youngster’s Facebook post on *Jallikattu*<sup>110</sup>**

*I am not for jallikattu or its ban simply because I am a Zoologist who is trying to specialize into ecology and wildlife conservation, and I don't care about an artificially bred animal or the cultural aspect about it. I have more important things to worry about like the climate change for instance. Even though a lot of my friends and close associates have asked me about my views on the issue because I work with animals, I haven't spoken about it reason being that I am not an expert about*

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<sup>110</sup> The Facebook post was collected as part of a personal interview. Anonymity is maintained and permission sorted from the Facebook user to use this post from their personal Facebook page.

*this issue and mostly that I do not care. But recently I saw this photo of a young child holding a poster saying Kaalaiya adakuna than kalyanam pannuven (I will only marry a person who tames a bull) which was highly disturbing. Obviously, it is not her opinion and her parents have big part in that poster just to make it trending in social media. That photo must seem really awesome in this current enthusiastic scenario and pace. But this kind of exposure will affect the kids mentality on gender and society in a long term. I remember I never liked jallikattu from my younger days and once in school when I was in 7th standard, we had a discussion about Jallikattu in Tamil class. I said that I don't like jallikattu because the animals get hurt and stressed out. My Tamil teacher told me that Jallikattu oru Veeramana vilayattu, kozhaingaluku than athu pudikathu (Jallikattu is a brave sport, cowards will never understand it). I was blamed to be a coward by my teacher for not supporting jallikattu in that age. It hurt me that time and my scrawny figure over the next few years made me worry that I will not grow to be one of those brave males in the society (I used to think that a male should be brave and big - thanks to the society). Leave the animal welfare issue. There is more to jallikattu like caste discrimination, gender discrimination and list goes on. Yes, I was a kozhai (coward) in 7th standard and continue to be so because I don't like Jallikattu. I like the fact that people are standing up for their cause and rights. But be responsible in what you teach and expose your kid to especially during protest like these. Certain things can have long term negative effect and it will rot within the mind messing up the thinking and body. Thanks to my teacher, I experienced this as a child, and it is not something a child should go through. Please be responsible with kids. However, forward the society thinks it is going, gender norms will never get broken. (Personal Interview 8, Tamil Nadu, South Africa).*



**Figures 9-1 and 9-2: Children holding placards at the protests<sup>111</sup>**

<sup>111</sup> Source: (Govindarajan, 2017; Lokesh, 2017).

*In Figure 9-1, a male baby is made to hold a banner which says, We are ready to tame the bull, are you ready to marry us? In Figure 9-2, a young girl child holds a banner which says, We will only marry the ones who tame a bull.*

The nature of the *Jallikattu* sport promotes aggressive toxic masculinity. The youngster's Facebook post shows how the discussion about the *Jallikattu* sport during his childhood has been a burden on his mental health. The narratives of toxic masculinity within society had influenced the teacher and it was further taught to the students in the class. In ancient days, the tamer of the bull was presented with the daughter of the owner of the bull. The idolisation of a repressive system in a sport which used to present a woman as a prize for taming a bull, even in today's time, is extremely problematic and it shows how steeped the society is with the patriarchal mind-set. The images above also show the indoctrination of children with patriarchy by their parents and society. The topic about marriage to children and telling them who they should get married to when they grow up is already problematic. The narrative of suggesting a marriage based on taming a bull is not just patriarchal but also primitive and an outright serious threat to the child's mind. This is damage to individuals and later to the society they live in.

### **9.2.2 Dalit narratives from the #Jallikattu protests**

The Dalits in the Indian subcontinent have been oppressed for over a millennium. They have been systematically placed in the lowest cadre of the caste hierarchy, forcing them to do menial jobs for very little or literally no money for a very long time. Due to the impurity defined in their nature by the oppressors, they were made to live on the fringes of society, far from the abodes of the higher caste oppressors, and were denied basic civic amenities like clean water. Also, education was deemed a sin for the Dalits and this restricted any prospects of progress in their life. British governance transformed the lives of a few Dalits who were allowed to educate themselves in the schooling facilities developed by the colonisers. This is one of the handful of positive changes promoted by colonisation against the mass atrocities committed. After the independence of India, the negative discriminations of the caste system such as untouchability etc. were abolished, yet the system and the oppression still continue openly in several different forms in the various fora of the Indian society. Most from within the Dalit community are still challenged with unthinkable difficulties, the revolution to turn around their lives is still yet to come.

The narratives below were collected by an independent YouTube media channel named Dalit Camera from the slum dwellers and fishing communities living near the Marina Beach in Chennai. These interviews were made a few days after the end of the #Jallikattu protests. The interviews are

in Tamil and the researcher has translated them into English. The excerpts of the interviews are below.

**Documentary Film 17**<sup>112</sup>: A resident of Rudrapuram slum says “the central and state government unleashed the police against the people. However, it is the people from the slums who have been badly affected. The people from slums are daily wage workers. They have saved penny by penny from their meagre earnings to buy themselves these bikes and autos. And in our street, the police have burnt 7 bikes, 1 cycle and 4 autos. There is no need for us to burn our own property, the police were responsible, and they burnt these vehicles. We even saw this on tv, they showed the police burning vehicles at Thiruvallikeni<sup>113</sup>.”

In the fight for Tamil heritage and culture, the police have brutally attacked the people from the slums for their support and active participation in the #Jallikattu protests. We consider ourselves Tamils, however the other Tamils have not considered us so. We do not have land. They speak about sharing, yet we do not have a share in the land. Our people have not progressed in education and employment too. Tamils in Tamil Nadu have spoken for a land for the Tamils in Sri Lanka who are living far away from us. However, we are here for 2000-3000 years, and we live in utter poverty and worst living conditions, and no Tamilian who possesses millions of rupees and acres of land has ever thought of giving some to a fellow Tamilian living in these slums”.



**Figure 9-3: Screenshot of documentary of a slum dweller who talks about the police violence**

“If you call us Tamils, then these rich oppressive caste Tamils should create a space for us to live, they have to share with us the land that they have been enjoying for these many years. You do not

<sup>112</sup> Documentary Film 17 is retrieved from YouTube (Dalit Camera, 2017).

<sup>113</sup> Thiruvallikeni or Triplicane and Rudrapuram are neighbourhoods in Chennai near the Marina Beach.

share your wealth with us, yet when it comes to violence and brutality, our people are the ones who have to face it. Only for this we become Tamils and encircled within Tamil nationalism. Let it be any ideology, from Hindutva, Dravidianism or Tamil nationalism, our situations or lives have never changed.

Only people who live can rule, yet we have not even started living. We are daily wage workers, and the police has violently and brutally attacked us. The police and politics have always been against the slum dwellers. The army guards the borders of this nation to protect the wealth of the elite, rich and oppressive and higher caste members of this society. And in Tamil Nadu, the police stand for the same people. Any policy in Tamil Nadu or India as a whole is always against people like us, it is only here their rules and regulations work. They tell us not to steal, not to lie, not to murder and not to rape, yet they oppress us, and the politicians and higher caste members freely involve themselves in all of these crimes. All of the ideologies that are spoken here, it is all against the Cheri<sup>114</sup>, let it be the police, the army, Tamil nationalism, communism, Dravidianism, the entire political society and even international politics is against the Cheri. But everything here been created by us, the people of the Cheri. Once upon a time they used to call Nagas, the indigenous people of this land, we brought civilisation to this country, yet today we do not have clean water to drink. Amidst the garbage, we have built four walls and we live within it. We do not have good drainage system, we do not wear good clothes, we do not even buy fresh vegetables, we buy rejected and rotten vegetables, in which we use the edible remains. We do not have anything in this nation, yet they call us Tamilians, Dravidians. All we want is a share in this nation, we want a share in land, education, employment and in politics. The whole of India is divided into two, there are two parts in every village of Tamil Nadu which is divided into Ooru and Cheri. There will be two cremation grounds, one for the people from the Ooru and other for the Cheri. There will be a separate school for higher caste children and another school for the children of Aadhi Dravidas (Dalits). Two water tanks, one for us and one for them. Like this, India is in two states. If this is the case, give us two Prime ministers, two chief ministers, two member of legislative assemblies, two members of parliaments. Give us our right share in this nation. Speaking a particular philosophy or ideology, or 1000s of social service organisations giving us alms is not the solution to our problems, and they are of no use. So even these protests are against us and the ones who have lost a lot today

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<sup>114</sup> *Cheri* is the residential areas of Dalits. It is a segregation of the Dalits from the main residential areas of higher caste members. *Cheris* are situated far from the living quarters (*Ooru*) of the oppressive castes with very poor civic amenities.

is us. Our roofs are broken, our vehicles have been destroyed. The solution is a share for us in this nation's wealth and politics.

A property holder gets a loan from the bank using his property to develop their life. What do we have if we have to get a loan? Nobody will loan us money. Even if we have to get a loan from TAHDCO<sup>115</sup>, there are several intermediaries and brokers, and we have to pay them bribes and visit the office a million times. Our people supported these protests for *Jallikattu* because we are morally and ethically mature. But destroying our houses and properties for the participation is not acceptable. We see this as a terrorist activity by the police. The government needs to look into this and provide compensation for the people who have lost their properties. The police rampaged our houses, how long will it take us to cross the fences and burn the police quarters. But our people are peaceful and passive, and we do not engage in these types of violent activities. If we were violent, we would have taken over everything in just one day's revolution, but we do not have interest in violence. So, we request this government not to push our peaceful people into violence.”

**Documentary Film 18**<sup>116</sup>: Another resident of Rudrapuram says, “even though we are slum dwellers, we would not speak foully, but the police who are educated graduates used such filthy language at us. All of us who live here are from the scheduled castes (Dalits) here. This is why the police were violent and attacked our properties.



**Figure 9-4: Screenshot from a documentary on the police violence at #Jallikattu protests**

<sup>115</sup> Tamil Nadu Adi Dravidar Housing and Development Corporation Ltd. is a government organisation, which provides economic development schemes for Dalits in Tamil Nadu.

<sup>116</sup> Documentary Film 18 and 19 are retrieved from YouTube (Dalit Camera, 2017).

The police acted against us, as we do not have anyone to raise a voice for us. Do you think this would have been possible in an area where the affluent and higher caste communities live? If they had acted this way in those areas, they would have had to face serious consequences. At night, we are not able to sleep in peace. A policewoman asked my daughter who had just come back from school, “what are you dressed (dolled) up for? Are these words to be spoken to a child?”

**Documentary Film 19:** A woman resident from Rudrapuram says her 18-year-old son had brought her daughter back from school. When they were returning, he was attacked and arrested by the police. Yet, he was not part of the #Jallikattu protests. The police filed 9 cases against him, and the police said she needs a lawyer to get bail for her son.



**Figure 9-5: Screenshot from a documentary on the police violence at #Jallikattu protests**

**Documentary Film 20<sup>117</sup>:** A resident of VP Pillai Street, a slum near Marina Beach, was gravely assaulted by the police. He says 13 of them were arrested from his area by the police. He narrates the atrocities and brutality of the police on them. He shows wounds all over his body. He says one of the men went into a coma due to the violent thrashing by the police. A young girl from the slum says that a policewoman beat them up and verbally abused them near their homes and even when they said that they were school going children, the police still never changed her foul words. She claims that the policemen were even worse, as they used sexually suggestive language to them.

<sup>117</sup> Documentary Film 20 is retrieved from YouTube (Dalit Camera, 2017).



**Figure 9-6: Screenshot of a documentary of man who was brutally attacked by the police**

The man who was arrested says “they took away all our phones and 3 gold chains worn by one of the men. The police needed a certain number of arrests to be made, so they arrested 170 men from Nadukuppam slum and 70 men from Rotary Nagar slum. The protests and the violence happened near our areas, but we were not responsible for them. We were present here during the chaos because this is our home. Are we not Tamilians? For the sake of our fellow Tamilians, were we not patient with the protestors using our space creating traffic congestion in our areas. We stood with the people in the cause, we helped in managing the free flow of traffic. A Tamil celebrity, Raghava Lawrence made a comment saying that the students were not responsible for the violence at the protests, terrorists and rogues infiltrated the protests and created the violence. He one-sidedly defended only the college students. However, the so-called terrorists and rogues are also Tamils. Due to these unnecessary statements, we had to face the brunt of everything. If we are neglected now, why did you call us Tamilians? The protestors got what they wanted, and they have left, but nobody stood for us.”

### **9.2.3 Jallikattu in Tamil cinema: a boost to casteism and patriarchy**

Tamil cinema has glorified *Jallikattu* and casteism in many of its films. In these films, the reflection of casteism and patriarchy within the sport is portrayed vividly. In *Murattu Kaalai* (1980), Sundaravelu, a rich landlord, offers 5 acres of land and his sister in marriage to the one who tames his bull at the *Jallikattu* sport. In *Cheran Pandiyan* (1991), Manicheran shoots his bull dead because it was tamed by his stepbrother Rajapaandi in the *Jallikattu* sport. The hate for his stepbrother was due to his stepmother being a lower caste woman. This does not stop in the era of 1980s and 90s, and it continues up until today’s Tamil cinema. In *Karuppan* (2017), Maayi promises to let

Karuppan marry his sister if he wins his bull in the *Jallikattu* event. After the #*Jallikattu* protests, Tamil cinema has capitalised on it with references to the protests and *Jallikattu* in many recent films like *Eeswaran* (2021), *Bigil* (2019), *Marina Puratchi* (2019), *Mersal* (2017) etc. There are several more films which feature *Jallikattu*, casteism and patriarchal ideas. Like colourism in Tamil cinema, these trends in Tamil cinema will be dealt in the scope of future research.

#### **9.2.4 Tweets on caste and gender in the #*Jallikattu* protests**

There are only a few tweets which speak about caste and gender in the tweet sample collected from the #*Jallikattu* protests. The low number of tweets in the discourse on caste and patriarchy during this social movement shows the lower levels of concern for these issues in society. Moreover, only two tweets speak about the caste and gender in a progressive manner, the other tweets have a negative connotation which overlooks or suppresses caste and gender issues in society. The tweets are highlighted below to magnify into the casteist<sup>118</sup> and gender bias issues within *Jallikattu* and Tamil society.

#### **Tweets in support to the cause of caste and gender bias in society:**

*Jallikattu protests: Jallikattu maintains caste system in villages, says Dalit leader; slams youth for being 'irresponsible'.*

*The peaceful Jallikattu protests are promising. Hope it spreads to peaceful protests for gender issues of rape, abuse, and assault.*

The issue of caste and gender bias in society had only one tweet each during the #*Jallikattu* protests. The caste issue within the *Jallikattu* sport is emphasised in the first tweet. The gender bias within the *Jallikattu* sport was not highlighted in the second tweet. It was merely the reflection of gender issues in Tamil society and an expectation of the tweeter that the protestors would stand for these issues also.

#### **Tweets overlooking or suppressing the cause of caste and gender bias in society:**

*I am dreaming this kind of Jallikattu protests all over India to happen against caste-based reservations too<sup>119</sup>.*

Caste based reservations is a positive discriminative system which provides reserved opportunities for backward caste members in society. This secures them places in government run universities

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<sup>118</sup> A Dalit leader opposed the youth who protested for *Jallikattu* as it is casteist in nature and used as an instrument of casteism in villages.

<sup>119</sup> The comment refers to elite opposition against India's version of affirmative action which is caste based. Such groups argue for income based rather than caste-based reservation quotas.

and government employment through a quota system. The above tweet infers the removal of this system, which helps the people who are discriminated against and marginalised through the caste system. The Dalits and other backward caste members have still not revolted against their oppressors, and the caste system in the Indian subcontinent, yet this person instigates a revolution against the already oppressed and marginalised.

*the world's biggest struggle is #jallikattu\_protests in the past 24 hours. bigger than #womenmarch*

*Trump feeling the heat from jallikattu. Gaining inspiration from jallikattu protests, Women protestors gathering in large numbers in USA*

The #Jallikattu protests was massive owing to the high number of participations of the Tamil community from Tamil Nadu and the diaspora. However, comparing a cultural protest, which had support from all sectors within the Tamil society, to the #womenmarch which was a feminist march against the anti-women statements made by Donald Trump demonstrates a repressive mind-set. The patriarchal mentality instils the mocking of women's issues, challenges, and efforts. Projecting #AllLivesMatter in the place of #BlackLivesMatter, #notallmen during the #MeToo movement, bringing the cause of male rapes when women talk about sexual harassments, etc. all stems from patriarchy and its efforts to safeguard the system. The comparison of #Jallikattu protests to #womenmarch is also on the same lines of protecting patriarchy and belittling women's struggles. There has been no claim from the members of the #womensmarch that they took inspiration from the #Jallikattu protests. Both the tweets are baseless misogynistic assertions that the #womensmarch was smaller and took inspiration from the #Jallikattu protests. This perception reduces the impact of women's protest action as subservient to the main cultural, identity cause of Jallikattu.

*Dignity shown towards women during #jallikattu Protests should continue for ever in TN.*

*Most remarkable thing about the #jallikattu protests is the young women staying at the beach with no fear of harassment. Delhi should learn*

*Guys, no one is going to give you an award for not molesting women at jallikattu protests. It's not something to be proud of.*

The second tweet emphasises the glorification of the fact that women were safe at the protests and they were not harassed by fellow men who participated in the protests. The glorification of a phenomenon shows an overcompensation of it due to its non-abundance in society. The first and

last tweet normalises safety of women. An interview with Maniammai<sup>120</sup> investigating the safety of women at the protest grounds reveals that the glorified safety at the protests was relative, concerns of moral policing of women on what they wore and prying eyes of men on women participants were not absent at the protests. (Personal Interview 4, Tamil Nadu, 2020)

*A Big Salute to the Girls, who take part in Jallikattu Protests. #Feminism*

This above tweet is a misunderstanding of what feminism means. Women will be praised only when they stand for the cause of men. Otherwise, feminism is depreciated as women wanting to drink, smoke and have free sex, and all other causes of feminism are completely ignored.

### **9.2.5 Articles on caste and gender in *Jallikattu* and #*Jallikattu* protests**

*Jallikattu* was in the limelight during the #*Jallikattu* protests. *Jallikattu* was posed as a monocultural metanarrative which drew a large number from the Tamil community in Tamil Nadu and the diaspora around the world in protest against its ban. With many ailments in a casteist and patriarchal society, the pains and tribulations in life pushed the people to stand against oppression. They stood against an oppressive regime endorsing a sport which is casteist, patriarchal, cruel, and primitive in nature. A selection of articles from online newspapers and magazines are summarised below to throw light on the above claim.

**Article 1 (Web Article):** Narayanan (2017) highlights a horrific incident which happened in Tamil Nadu during the #*Jallikattu* protests. A minor Dalit pregnant girl named Nandhini was brutally gang raped and killed by her boyfriend and his friends belonging to a higher caste community in a village from Tamil Nadu. She was pressured to abort her pregnancy and was killed when she refused to do so. Narayanan exclaims that just like other issues of Dalits, this incident was void of appropriate media attention or people's protest. The incident demonstrates the aggressive toxic masculinity portrayed by the higher caste men. The fact that this incident did not receive media attention but the *Jallikattu* issue was taken up in arms is problematic. Further, the #*Jallikattu* protests was linked to Tamil culture and it was portrayed as a monoculture of Tamil society. Narayanan says monoculture is the narrative of the right-wing forces and it limits the level of democracy of the social movement. The story of the *Jallikattu* sport is purely patriarchal and casteist. It just retells the narrative of a society in which the brave man gets the woman. The sport shows the dominance of higher caste men over women and the lower caste members of society. Brahmanical patriarchy which is the root of the caste system is protected through violence, the

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<sup>120</sup> The name of the interviewees are pseudonyms. Maniammai was a young female participant of the protest.

higher caste men show their power through their violence. *Jallikattu* is a violent sport which has been practised for a long time in protecting this narrative.

**Article 2 (Web Article):** Sen (2017) says *Jallikattu* is a sport played by men from the upper caste communities. Bulls are tormented and many men die in this gory sport. Sen says that she would not be allowed to talk about the cruelty to the bulls as she is a beef eater. Yet, she feels it is difficult to digest the fact that a confused and defenceless bull in the name of a sport is opened into a crowd of jeering men who try to tame it by hanging on its hump, jumping on it, or trying to catch its ear or tail. In response to the protests of the people, the government of Tamil Nadu passed a special ordinance which overruled the Supreme Court's order of the ban on the sport. Sen questions its celebration as a victory of democracy as she is surprised that in the year 2017, a literate community came in support of a casteist and patriarchal tradition.

Sen harshly comments that the women who participated in the *#Jallikattu* protest must feel embarrassed and it is due to this mentality that women and the lower caste members are treated as second class citizens in society. The vile tradition of Sati<sup>121</sup> which has been abolished in India is an example of why naming something as a tradition does not make it good for society. The acceptance of casteist and patriarchal ideas are the reasons for many other problems such as marital rape, the dowry system, honour killings, and forced marriages etc. which still linger in Indian society.

This article was published in the Facebook page of an e-newspaper and many commented for and against the article. Below are the comments<sup>122</sup> which ignore the casteist and gender issues in the *Jallikattu* sport and attack Rajyasree Sen, the author for writing the article. The researcher has mentioned the gender that the Facebook commenter has identified with in their Facebook profile to provide more clarity on their comments.

*Male: I don't support Jallikattu, but the logic used in this article is nonsense. Let's say if tomorrow, lower caste people and women are allowed to participate, then will that legitimize Jallikattu? Women are not allowed in armed forces, for the combat role, does that mean combat is sexist. Men are much more violent than women, it is an indisputable fact, backed by science. Even in a feminist utopia, very few women would have participated in such events. The only reason to abolish jallikattu is animal cruelty, not some misplaced sense of casteism and sexism.*

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<sup>121</sup> Sati is an ancient tradition of entering of a widow into the funeral pyre of her husband.

<sup>122</sup> Spelling and grammatical mistakes in the comments have been corrected.

*Male: For your knowledge, go and check Marina beach. You will get all caste and religions protesting. Dare speak such nonsense.*

*Female: Dear Rajyasree Sen & Mint<sup>123</sup>, I am a Tamilian, and I wasn't part of the Jallikattu movement. But I must tell you this article is bullshit and is not factually correct. Women have their tradition in Pongal and men have theirs. Talking so much about gender bias, men and women don't play together in any sport. Men play cricket separately and women play cricket separately. Similarly, women have their set of traditions when it comes to Pongal. Get your facts right before you even begin to talk about something since you clearly do not seem to understand the nuances of what is going on.*

*Male: This article is non-sense. There is no caste bias in jallikattu. Also, some bulls are owned, taken care and brought-up by women.*

*Male: U know what, I don't support jallikattu but u branding casteism and gender identity is truly idiotic I see almost all Tamilians support it.*

Even though three of the comments were from non-supporters of the sport or the movement, they still discourage the questions regarding caste and gender. Traditional repressive ideas which are steeped in the lives of people prevent them from questioning it. The article directly attacks the caste and gender bias within Tamil society. This affects both the ego of Tamil pride and the unwillingness to accept the repression within the Tamil society. It is a functioning of hegemony that identity and culture is bound up with oppressive practices, hence even non-supporters bore the torch to avoid any disruption in the current status of caste and gender in Tamil society.

The commentators, both male and female, clearly support the Brahmanical patriarchal setup in society and take their utmost efforts in safeguarding the present system. The system creates a multilevel cascading oppression in which there are several dimensions of oppressors and oppressed. Except for the first step and last step of the caste ladder, every person within the system is both the oppressor and the oppressed.

**Article 3 (Web Article):** Natarajan (2017) discusses the casteist demarcation of the *Jallikattu* sport from the reach of Dalits. A Dalit villager from Tamil Nadu says 40 years previously, Dalit youth used to participate in the *Jallikattu* sport, yet when they beat the bulls owned by caste Hindus, their community used to be violently attacked. Kumar, a Dalit aged 48, was violently attacked by caste

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<sup>123</sup> Rajyasree Sen is the author of “Forget cruelty animals, *Jallikattu* champions casteism and gender bias” in a e-paper “Mint”.

Hindus in January 2017 due to an argument between the Dalit youth and caste youth during the organising of a *Jallikattu* event in the village. Kumar's attack was a backlash of the argument and he was not even aware why he was attacked until later.

**Article 4 (Web Article):** Subramani (2017) highlights a communal clash between Dalits and a higher caste community as a Dalit youth tamed the bull belonging to a caste Hindu. According to local tradition, the Dalits are not supposed to touch anything belonging to the higher caste Hindus.

**Article 5 (Newspaper Article):** In January 2020, people from the scheduled caste (Dalit) community from near Madurai demanded their inclusion in the *Jallikattu* sport. They claimed that, since 1960, the committee organising the sport was dominated by higher caste Hindus who were excluding them from managing and participating in the event. (The Hindu, 2020)

Even though there was a massive protest for the removal of the ban on the *Jallikattu* sport, there were no efforts taken in reforming the sport. The supporters were apologetic about the violence in the sport which harms both men and the animal and, therefore, no reform in this regard was discussed. Also, the married men who die in this sport leave their wives widowed and children orphaned (Sundararaju, 2019).

Historically, the sport has been highly patriarchal and continues to be so up until this day. Even when women and Dalits supported and gathered for this cause, they did not raise their voices in demands against the caste and gender disparity in the sport. This definitely is a problem in the level of rationality and democracy of the movement. The posing of *Jallikattu* as a monoculture of Tamils also is problematic and undemocratic. The culture of higher caste members in society is easily overarched as monocultural elements, whereas the culture of lower caste members is neglected and ignored.

### **9.3 Culture, centre of protests and media attention**

Culture was the identity metanarrative that weaved the Tamil people together to rise up against the ban on the *Jallikattu* sport. #SaveOurCultureJALLIKATTU was an accompanying hashtag to the #*Jallikattu* protests. The image below from Twitter translates to "Tamilian" *Eru Thazhuvudhal* (*Jallikattu* sport) is the identity of Tamil ethnicity.

Similar to religion, culture has a great influencing power in steering people. *Jallikattu* is a 2000-year-old Tamil sport, hence it was easily accepted by people as the overarching symbol of Tamil culture. Most of the people who protested for the removal of the ban were not personally affected by the ban. Furthermore, as the sport is practised only in a few villages, many of them would not

have even witnessed the sport in their lifetimes. The personal interviewees of this study claimed that they had not seen *Jallikattu* in real life. However, the terms such as tradition, culture and heritage which were linked to the *Jallikattu* sport acted as a crowd puller to the #*Jallikattu* protests. Below are a few selected tweets from the sample of tweets collected from the #*Jallikattu* protests with the term “culture” in it.



**Figure 9-7: An image from Twitter which says *Jallikattu* is an identity of Tamil ethnicity**

*#TamilCulture #Jallikattu ஏறு தழுவுதல் எனது பாரம்பரியம், மஞ்சு விரட்டு எனது விளையாட்டு, ஜல்லிக்கட்டு எனது உரிமை (Eru thazhuvudhal is my heritage, Manju Virattu is my game, Jallikattu is my right)*

*“ஏறு தழுவுதல்” எங்கள் பண்பாடென்று உலகறிய! (The world needs to know Eru Thazhuvudhal is our culture)*

*Pro Jallikattu Protests: Tamil Uprising for Tradition & Culture Stuns India*

*Jallikattu protests: What's fuelling the fire: Spontaneous act to safeguard culture*

*Please understand that TN Jallikattu protests is a direct result of Law / SC trying to tame tradition/culture*

The other predominant factors which were responsible for the growth of the protest were the centre of protests, elitist support, and a higher caste cause. These three elements easily captured the attention of both mainstream media and social media. Chennai is the capital hub of Tamil Nadu, and most of the Tamil media companies have their head offices here. Hence, this played a critical role in turning media cameras towards the #*Jallikattu* protests which were held at Chennai’s Marina Beach. The cosmopolitanism of Chennai drew the city’s elites in support of the protest. If the protests were for the causes of lower caste communities, it would have been ignored by most

people. However, *Jallikattu* boosted the Tamil pride and ego of the people, and they did not feel embarrassed to support this ancient sport as it is the popular culture of higher caste Tamils. This is why a conservative population of families and parents came in support to their college going progeny in the cause of *Jallikattu*. (Personal Interview 4, 5, 8, Tamil Nadu, 2020)

There are several art and cultural loss of Dalit Tamils which have been conveniently overlooked. There is not a tear dropped even for the losses of their lives in activities like manual scavenging which is actually banned in India. As highlighted in this chapter, Nandhini, a Dalit minor's rape and murder did not grab the attention of the people. There arose no protest by the *Jallikattu* protestors against the violent attack on the Tamil fishing communities and the Tamil slum dwellers from nearby Marina Beach by the police due to the *#Jallikattu* protests. Even though the win of *#Jallikattu* protests has been dubbed as the victory of democracy, the lack of questioning and reforming showcases the undemocratic bias hidden within the people's movement. From here, we will simultaneously look at similar discourses of race, gender, centre of protests in the *#FeesMustFall* movement of South Africa.

#### **9.4 Race and gender in education and *#FeesMustFall* movement of South Africa**

When it comes to education in South Africa, the Black community is the most affected and specifically the women from the community. Although the government has provided free school level education to increase the literate population of the nation, apartheid's legacy limits the education dream of many. Research done by Shrober (2014:319-321), which was at a time before the *#FeesMustFall* movement, described the political situation in post-Apartheid South Africa as follows: the external issues like poverty, poor living facilities, inadequate healthcare, unemployment and psychological traumas, and internal issues such as patriarchy take education far away from the reach of many Black children, Black youngsters, and Black females.

Black students have it tough even after the entry into the realm of education. The issues of the exorbitant tuition fees and the improper student residences at the universities of South Africa were the central concern of the *#FeesMustFall* movement. Decolonisation of education also was discussed in the movement which professes the inclusion of African theories, Black lecturers and professors and Black voices into the sphere of South African Education. However, it ignored the issues faced by female students at universities. The rape culture within the universities of South Africa poses a continual threat for female students during the course of their studies. Racial inequality is a visible problem in South Africa, but the gender inequality problem is not as visible as the former. "Invisible" does not mean we cannot see the gender-based issues. It is actually very

noticeable, but it refers to the side lining, silencing and purposeful hiding of issues faced by women and the LGBTIQ+ community.

Patriarchy within society, the male dominance in power and politics have conditioned gender bias in South Africa. #FeesMustFall is an important movement in the history of South Africa, however a fringe group within the movement restricted the gender issues to be brought to the forefront of the protests. They felt it would divert the attention from the movement's main cause (Personal Interview 3, 6, 7, South Africa, 2020). Tweets, web articles, personal interviews, and YouTube videos are used to analyse the race and gender problem within the #FeesMustFall movement.

#### **9.4.1 Racial and gender bias in the #FeesMustFall movement**

Fasiha Hassan, the former secretary general of the SRC at University of WITs was presented with a peace prize in 2019 by a Norwegian Student Organisation for her peaceful efforts in the #FeesMustFall movement. The comments below read from YouTube which has been an omnioptic public sphere platform. The comments highlight the unfairness of this award given to a fair skinned Indian woman from South Africa. The award ignores the efforts of the vast ocean of Black students who contributed their time, effort, blood and sweat to the movement. This has been highlighted in the chapter describing colourism, yet this phenomenon needs magnifying through the comments in Figure 9-8. (Wits Vuvuzela, 2018)

First, the commentators criticize this award being an achievement for WITS, as the university never recognised and supported the #FeesMustFall movement. Further they comment that the movement was supported majorly by Black Africans and it was their struggle in accessing free education. The presentation of an international award to a non-Black African, fair skinned person just awakens the colonial mentality of providing a custodianship to the indigenous community of the nation. Fasiha's contribution and leadership to the #FeesMustFall movement is not overlooked, but as the comments read that the award to an individual who appears opportunistic, and is an insult to the majority of the Black African students who were personally affected by the issues and have been harassed, suspended, and jailed due to their support to the movement.

An award goes to a lightskinned Indian, yet when the police arrested students for the real and simulated violence in the #FeesMustFall movement, it was only Black Africans who were arrested. The entire struggle was for the liberation of the Black community which has been restricted access into tertiary education due to their economic condition. Fasiha, in an interview, says that her ancestors have not suffered as much as her "purely Black" counterparts. Hence, the award which

ignores the efforts and struggles of the Black masses and chooses one fair skinned Indian for her non-violence efforts from South Africa is an insult to the movement.

This can be compared to the reverence of Gandhi in South Africa, leaving out of all the Indian leaders in South Africa with the ancestry from an indentured background<sup>124</sup>, and his statue stands high in South Africa. Gandhi was from an affluent background. He came to South Africa as an advocate to defend the business of a wealthy Indian businessman. Gandhi is respected for his non-violence, but he failed to recognise the struggles of Blacks in South Africa, as much as he ignored and suppressed the struggles of Dalits in India. (Roy, Anand and Ambedkar, 2017)

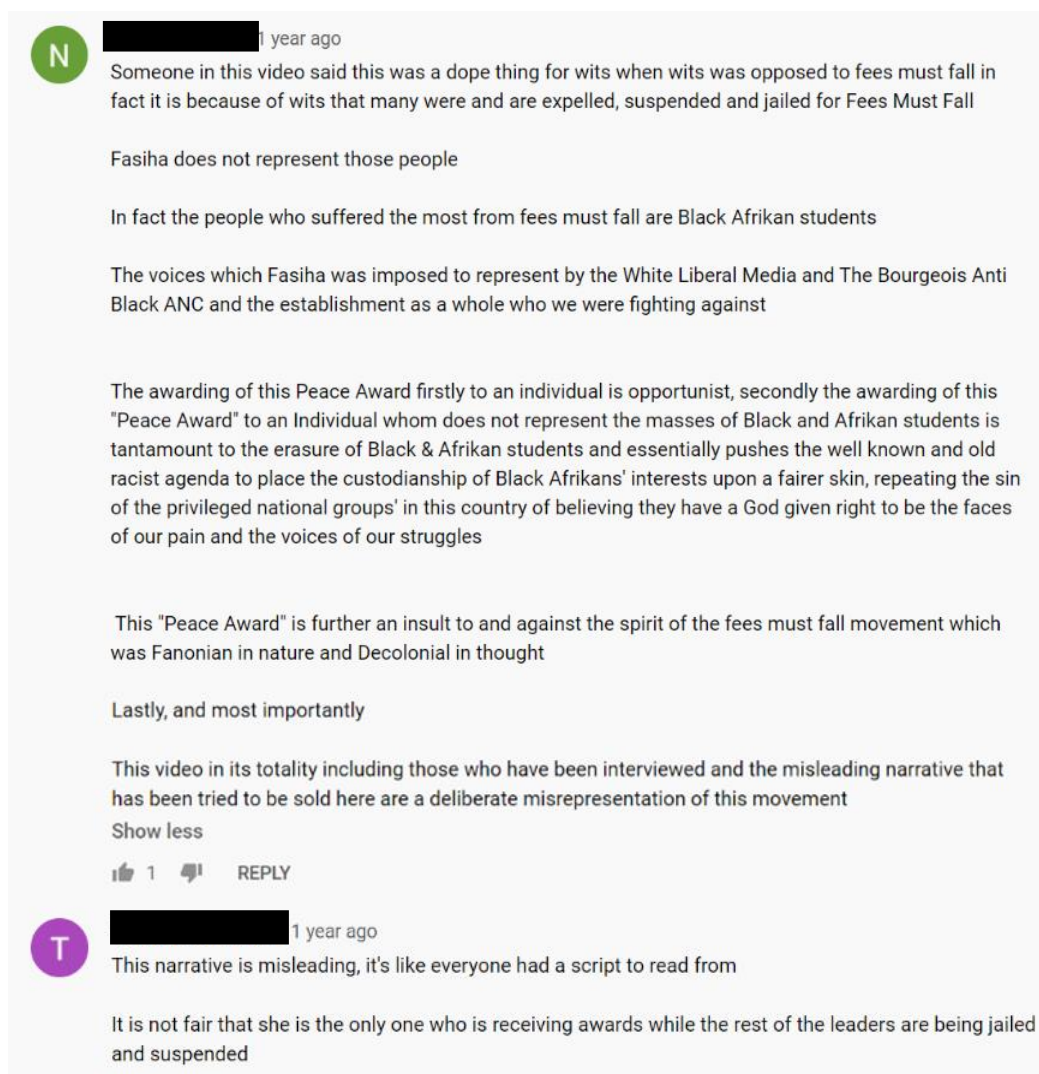
The observation of how race played a role in the #FeesMustFall movement has been evident with the Norwegian peace prize of 2019 and the arrests of only Black students. Now we will look at the gender issues and patriarchy within the campaign.

A distressing remark was recorded during one of the personal interviews about #FeesMustFall movement. It has been used to understand the extent of patriarchy within South African society. Biko<sup>125</sup> was innocent and he was falsely arrested for invoking violence at campus during the #FeeMustFall movement. In his interview, he mentioned about how he had to avoid violence inside prison. He had to stay quiet even when he was provoked by younger men whom he could have normally tackled, if it was outside prison. However, to safeguard his innocence, he had to keep his head down and allow himself to get pushed around by the other inmates in the prison. He says this is the most dehumanising act a man could undergo. It de-masculinises a man, and the act is like castrating a man and taking his manhood away. Biko used four terms about masculinity in one sentence. The statement shows the perception of women as meant to experience oppression and normalises oppression of women. Biko's words ignore the intersectional oppression within society, or they could have been due to the patriarchal setup of society, which has normalised a gender-biased language. For example, in Tamil, almost all swear words are misogynistic or casteist, hence, even people who do not consider themselves patriarchal or casteist might still be unaware and use these words in their daily language.

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<sup>124</sup> Many who came as indentured labourers to South Africa belonged to lower castes (Davenport, 1987:117).

<sup>125</sup> Names of interviewees are anonymised with pseudonyms. Biko's story is elaborated in the police brutality chapter.



**Figure 9-8: Screenshot of the public comments on Documentary Film 3<sup>126</sup>**

The interviewees from South Africa affirmed that the #FeesMustFall movement was largely supported by males rather than by females. The fundamental reason for this trend is patriarchy. Further in this chapter we will look at how female leaders and gender issues were marginalised in the #FeesMustFall movement. Winnie<sup>127</sup> in her interview says that universities in South Africa are not a safe space for female students. She says that she is always on guard if she is in a class with only male students, or if she has to pass through a route in campus where there are a group of male students. She also accounts how one of the male lecturers was flirtatious with the female students

<sup>126</sup> Refer page no. 100 in chapter 7: colourism in social movements.

<sup>127</sup> Pseudonyms. At the time of interviewing, Winnie and Fatima were masters' students at one of the universities in South Africa.

and proposed to raise their grades in exchange for sexual favours. Fatima says South Africa, in general, is unsafe for women. Even though the university space is relatively safe compared to the outside, safety still tends to be an issue for women (Personal Interviews 6, 7, South Africa, 2020)<sup>128</sup>. Safety issues, deliberate silencing of female voices and the non-concern of gender issues could have limited the number of women in support of the #FeesMustFall movement, nevertheless the female voices within the movement were loud and powerful.

#### 9.4.2 Tweets on race and gender in the #FeesMustFall movement

In comparison to the #Jallikattu Protests, the tweets from #FeesMustFall movement discussed the subjects of Race and Gender in higher numbers. The #Jallikattu protests had a greater number of tweets with the discourse of culture, which constituted as the identity metanarrative of the movement, which included centre-state politics, and it ignored caste and gender issues within the *Jallikattu* sport and the protests.

##### Tweets on Race

*I'm all for #feesmustfall protests and labour protests but I think by bring race into it all, we are creating a whole new era of racism.*

*So, we went from #FeesMustFall to #ZumaMustFall to #fuckwhitepeople and #killallwhites 😊 how about #RacismMustFall???*

*#FeesMustFall has morphed into #FuckWhitePeople. And black brethren were bemoaning lack of white support for former. Duh!*

These tweets above are the discussions by fringe groups during the #FeesMustFall movement who misunderstood the movement to be against white people. The anger against white individuals or white groups is irrational, but trying to reduce whiteness within the powerful structures of South Africa is not necessarily racist, but rather a plea for a more authentic reflection of the demographics of the populace. The #FeesMustFall movement cannot ignore race as the majority of the students who are affected by the high costs of education in South Africa are Blacks, followed by some Coloureds, Indians, and Whites. The white population remains predominately to be affluent and economically superior in South Africa to the vast majority of Blacks.

*#FeesMustFall 70% of South African Black Youth never go to University or College due to the INSANE Fees Costs which ONLY white kids afford.*

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<sup>128</sup>After the #feesmustfall movement, a number of violent, in some cases fatal sexual assaults occurred in South African Universities. Female students at UKZN held a night vigil to protest the persistence of gender-based violence (Shabangu, 2019). In some cases the perception among male students is that sexual misconduct is due to “boys being boys” (Nkosi, 2020:57).

*#FeesMustFall shows us the frustration of a black middle class which reflects the challenge that the state faces in education – Rossouw*

*White wits staff be like why did you register if you know you have no funding  
#FeesMustFall*

*Edgy white atheists on the interwebs are too scientific to acknowledge racism.  
#BlackLivesMatter #RhodesMustFall #FeesMustFall*

*@WhyIsrael2 once you acknowledge black pain and suffering due to white supremacy  
and you show me where your support was for #feesmustfall*

*Cultural Appropriation, Racism, Feminism, Sexism, #FeesMustFall, White Privilege like  
YAAAAS!!!*

*I wish white South Africans would watch Cutting Edge right now, maybe this will  
enhance their take on the #FEESMUSTFALL movement.*

*While the elite worry about SA as an investment destination, as a black youth, what about  
#FeesMustFall #SONA2016*

The Tweets above highlight the pain, suffering and frustration of Black students. The first two tweets indicate the economic barrier of Black community which restricts their entry into higher education. The next 5 tweets discuss the perceived ignorance of many within the white community who fail to understand the systematic and structural racism within the powerful institutions of South Africa. The last tweet talks about the elite capitalistic community which worries about economic development for themselves and ignore the sociological development of the nation.

*Soccer's (PSL) profit is from the black population why is it they're not the benefactors of  
#FeesMustFall. #Asinamali*

*If black people stopped drinking for one weekend in SA, SAB would collapse in a day.  
why is it they cannot support #FeesMustFall? #Asinamali*

*CSA is atleast looking after its constituency, what is PSL or SAFA doing giving back to  
black society? #Asinamali #FeesMustFall*

*Free Education can be attainable by tomorrow, what lacks is the willingness to invest in  
the Black person. #Asinamali #FeesMustFall*

The tweets above talk about the sports and liquor industry, which are benefited by the Black communities of South Africa. However, they did not show their support for the #FeesMustFall movement. The mild call for the boycotts of these teams and the liquor industry by the #FeesMustFall protestors did not materialise. Yet, calling out their names would have brought awareness to their lack of support for the movement. The last tweet emphasises that the powerful establishments of the nation can promote free education if they put their minds to it, yet they have no interest in investing and developing the lives of Black people. Although power establishments within Post-Apartheid South Africa are controlled by mainly Black politicians of ANC ruling party,

this just takes us back to Black Skins and White Masks. The ruling party has been tempted by the power left behind by colonisation and Apartheid rule. Even though their skins are Black, they still wear the white masks and act like the colonisers and the white supremacists of South Africa even after democracy has become reality.

*White youth formed a human shield around black students to protect them from police.  
Luthuli House, #FeesMustFall!*

This tweet is disturbing and alarming that a white human shield can still protect Black students even in democratic South Africa. This just shows how apartheid is still lingering within South Africa. Apartheid created a structure of police and armed forces who viewed a Black person especially an African to be a threat, and this continues even until today in democratic South Africa and it is vividly proved by this incident.

We need to realise that since democracy arrived in 1994, and the Apartheid of the previous 40 years was abolished, the people in political power are predominantly Black. In the social injustices that have continued since 1994, we frequently see attempts to remedy the effects of apartheid. However, this does not materialise, as economic power still appears to govern.

### **Tweets on Gender**

*Hell, hath no fury like a Black Womxn scorned. #BlackWomxnLivesMatter  
#RhodesMustFall #FeesMustFall #PatriarchyMustFall*

*If you stood with #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall, you HAVE to stand with  
#RapeCultureMustFall. Women's bodies are NOT commodities.*

*2016 marks 60 years since #1956womensdaymarch - significance? both women and  
student ignored by parliament. #SONA2016 #feesmustfall #FMF2016*

The spelling of the word ‘woman’ with an “x” is the creation of the separate identity for womxn and their struggles from a world created by man. The three comments above speak about the gender issue in higher education of South Africa. The #BlackWomxnLivesMatter is the intersectional issue of ignorance of the struggles faced by Black women. #PatriarchyMustFall and #RapeCultureMustFall are the series of hashtags which followed the Fallist protests in fighting patriarchy within South African society and the rape culture in South African universities which has normalised the exploitation of female students by male staff members and fellow male students in the university space.

The second tweet is an authoritative call to students who fought institutionalised racism and the inaccessibility of higher education for Black students to stand for gender-based issues and against

gender biases in societies and higher education. The final tweet is a question to the government for ignoring both the issues of students and women even after the 60-year mark of the significant women's day march of 1956 where over 20,000 women from all races marched to the union buildings. This concerned "The Pass", an internal passport that people who were classified as "Blacks" needed to carry within the nation.

*Female student disrupts match with #FeesMustFall. Her way of activism, what do u think?*

*We've seen the powers that a woman holds in leadership. #FeesMustFall #Nkandla PP report. We need more women in leadership.*



**Figure 9-9: Busiswe disrupts a football match to draw attention #FeesMustFall campaign**

The two tweets show the power of women in political and social movements. Busiswe Seabe raided a football league match in South Africa for bringing attention to the #FeesMustFall movement. She was arrested later and faced legal charges for the same. The second tweet encourages more women in leadership and politics of South Africa. The #FeesMustFall movement has found many leaders to shape the South African nation, and in particular many powerful women leaders.

*It were BLACK bodies (trans, cis, non-binary, queer) that stripped naked at a plenary to disrupt violent masculinities at #FeesMustFall*

*Never forget that it was black queer womxn who led the #FeesMustFall movement.*

The two tweets highlight the support, participation, and contribution of the LGBTQIA+ community in the #FeesMustFall movement. Even though their plight was not heard and raised in the

movement<sup>129</sup>, in a moment of crisis, students as the tweet says - trans, cis, non-binary and queer people - protested topless with the aim of stopping the violence and shooting of the police at the Wits campus against the students. (Ngcobo, 2016). The second tweet speaks about a Black queer womxn within the leadership of the #FeesMustFall movement.



**Figure 9-10: Protestors go topless to stop police violence**

#### **9.4.3 Articles on race and gender in the #FeesMustFall movement**

**Article 6 (Web Article):** Sherriff (2015) says in her article that in October 2015, the white students from Rhodes University created a human shield around the protesting Black students of Eastcape Midlands College to protect them from police attack.

This article exposes the real face of South Africa and how the structures of Apartheid have not changed. The incident clearly portrays how there is race disparity in police treatment. As the tweet reads above, the generous efforts of the white students in protecting their Black counterparts only hurts more into how bad the race situation is in South Africa, even after more than two decades into democracy and the end of Apartheid rule.

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<sup>129</sup> More about this in pages 166-167, under the section Article 8 (Web Article).



**Figure 9-11: White students shield Black students to protect them from police attack**

**Article 7 (Web Article):** Knowles (2016) is an academic at University currently known as Rhodes and a supporter of the #FeesMustFall movement and the Black students' movement. In her article, she reveals how feminism could help the #FeesMustFall movement. She writes in her article, even though the movement was influenced by Black feminism, a feminist approach is missing from it. The introduction of a feminist lens could promote more inclusiveness, intersectionality, and interconnectedness. The idea encourages better rights and diversity in the work force and the decolonisation of the curriculum. Also, the feminist lens expands on the varied experiences each stakeholder of the university or education system undergoes based on their race, gender, sexual orientation etc. #FeesMustFall interconnects the external factors of funding, labour, curriculum, and student access with the internal factors such as race, sex, religion, sexual orientation, and class disparities. The #FeesMustFall movement fights for free education and against the structural discrimination within the universities.

Knowles also criticizes the heavy security within the university spaces and claims it comes out of the toxic aggressive masculine mentality which stems from a patriarchal mind-set. Making students powerless through control and dominance is the reflection of patriarchy. Furthermore, patriarchy within the society pushes women in a docile and submissive space and places men within an aggressive and dominant space. Feminism can break open these spaces and liberate men and women to fight better for their causes as exemplified by the post #feesmustfall night vigil against

gender-based violence. Equality is the key narrative of #FeesMustFall movement, and it will not be fully possible to achieve this without dismantling patriarchy.

The above article is relevant to the study and brings more clarity into how patriarchy is a problem and how it prevents development and progress in society. Universities are power houses of knowledge and breaking patriarchy within its structures will speed up the process of minimising the effects of the same in society.

**Article 8 (Web Article):** Jagarnath (2016) is also an academic at the University currently known as Rhodes. Jagarnath highlights the man handling of Thenjiwe Mswane, a female student activist from the LGBTIQ+ community by the male protestors of the #FeesMustFall protests at the University of Witwatersrand of Gauteng province. She was attacked because she tried to discuss gender equality and other concerns of the LGBTIQ+ community. A fringe group of male protestors with a powerful voice in the movement side lined these issues and argued them to be a distraction from the main cause of the struggle. Jagarnath also exposes the rape trial of former South African president Zuma, in which he was pronounced innocent. There is a long history of male dominated politics in South Africa. These evidently show that South African society and politics are highly steeped in patriarchy. Further, she also comparatively highlights the rise of fascist politics in India due to toxic alliance between capitalism of nationalist patriarchy.



**Figure 9-12: Male protestors drag and push an LGBTIQ+ activist**

The dominance of patriarchy within the #FeesMustFall movement exposes the undemocratic nature and lack of communicative rationality within the movement. In order for a full realisation of public sphere ideals, all members involved have to be assured of unconstrained participation in order for

the achievement of consensus. This was observed in the *#Jallikattu* protests also. People tend to turn a blind eye and ignore the root cause for societal problems if it affects their indoctrinated beliefs and existing structures such as patriarchy, religion, caste, effectively shutting down certain ideas raised if it threatens existing dominant ideologies.

**Article 9 (Web Article):** Pilane (2015) writes about the systematic ignorance, relegation and suppressing of women's issues and the female leaders from the *#FeesMustFall* movement. Pilane says once fees have fallen, attention needs to be turned towards woman's issues and demolishing patriarchy. In a historic and momentous meeting held at a Senate House of Wits, new meaning was given to the term "power" and strengthened the idea of democracy within a space like Wits. However, when a female activist Nompandolo Mkhathshwa from SRC, addressed the gathering, the male students were shouting sexist comments such as "We won't be told by a woman" and "feminism must *voetsek*"<sup>130</sup>. Pilane also highlighted how the crowd would snub female leaders of the movement, like Shaera Kalla and Mkhathshwa, and drift towards Mcebo Dlamini (former SRC president) and Vuyani Pambo of EFF. Dlamini and Pambo fit the existing narrative of the hypermasculinity in South African politics and, hence, attracted media attention and protestors, side lining a campaign started by Shaera Kalla, a young woman leader of South Africa.

The above article also calls out gender issues within the *#FeesMustFall* movement. It explains the political structure of South Africa which is a male dominated sphere and how difficult it is for female leaders to enter the space to contribute towards change and development in society. Racial issues are inevitably important to discuss and transform, however the intersectional issues faced by Black women have been long forgotten and need to be immediately taken up in action.

**Article 10 (Web Article):** Disemelo (2015) says that the *#FeesMustFall* movement was not a protest for one issue, as its name suggests. The primary concern of the movement was for the accessibility, equality, and quality of education in South Africa<sup>131</sup>. It involved the analysis of class in a post-apartheid setting, racial exclusions, and built-up micro aggressions due to the institutionalised racism in different spaces. The movement also exposed the failures of the patriarchal, heterosexual, and neoliberal capitalist ideals which control the university structures in South Africa. Within these structures, the students and workers belonging to non-white and underprivileged communities face several challenges. The Fallist movements of South Africa were started in a desire for a better life for these communities in the nation. The ANC, during its struggle

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<sup>130</sup> An offensive term meaning "go away" in Afrikaans.

<sup>131</sup> Allied to these concerns were workers issues like out-sourcing, gender issues like safety, and finally decoloniality in higher education curricula.

for independence, believed education to be a liberation for the oppressed souls. Yet, today, the situation is contrary. This is why the students marched, protested, sung, and cried against the government to provide them with their human rights as adopted by the Freedom Charter of 1955 by the South African Congress alliance in order to emphasise the liberation movement's principles. The #FeeMustFall movement fought for the freedom from economic, racial, sexual, class and patriarchal enslavement.

Disemelo also focuses on the solidarity within the movement. He writes about the distribution of food and water, people helping tear gassed victims and students cleaning the college campuses in an aim of liberation. He says that South Africa, for the first time, removed the rainbow-coloured bandage to see the unhealed wounds underneath. He accused the media that portrayed only the violence from the protests and not the disbanding of the structural racism. He concludes by saying the 0% fee increase in 2016 is definitely a win but it is only a start towards emancipation and empowerment.

In the article, Disemelo has clearly condensed the various discourses that were part of the #FeesMustFall movement. The articles above emphasises the importance of the struggle, yet it exposes the issue of patriarchy within society and the movement. The first and last article concentrate on the problems of race and the rest speaks about gender issues. Both these issues need to be tackled, but it is vivid that one aspect gets more attention than the other. Democracy is justice for all, hence, it important to focus on a pluriversal and inclusive approach in letting all voices be heard. Grosfoguel (2012, 97) indicates that a feature of decolonial thinking is a "pluriversal, decolonized world of multiple and diverse ethico-political projects in which there can truly exist equal and horizontal communication and dialogue between peoples of the world that goes beyond the logics and practices of domination..." An oppressed person silencing the voice of another oppressed is the powerful weapon that powerful structures around the world have used in maintaining their oppressive systems. Hence, it is important to dismantle this notion and develop better communicative rationality in building more inclusive discourses. Also, the more voices included within a movement makes it louder to shatter oppression.

### **9.5 Whiteness in protest, centre of protests and media attention**

The #FeesMustFall movement marks a history in South Africa because it was a struggle in which all races came together for a fight against inequality in access to education and institutionalised racism within the South Africa universities. Yet the struggle for fees did not start at #FeesMustFall movement.

In an interview with Krotoa<sup>132</sup>, she says the cause for Fees Must Fall has been an ongoing long-time cause. Though it was not named ‘Fees Must Fall’, the students of former Black universities of South Africa have always been fighting against the expensive fee structures and improper student residence facilities. However, this was not addressed when the students at the Black populated universities demanded access, affordability, and quality of education. However, when the students from the former white universities, which still continue to be the affluent and top-ranking universities of South Africa, came in demand for fees to fall, it became recognised. The whiteness in the protests and the centrality of the protests in University of Wits, University of Cape Town, Stellenbosch and Rhodes University brought the attention of the media and this took the movement to the headlines of the nation. Even though Apartheid has been officially dismantled in South Africa, the structures, and particularly the media, Whiteness confers legitimacy.

The cause of the movement was sophisticated with terms like decolonisation, decommodification, demilitarisation in education. It lacked a metanarrative or a sound bite style slogan like “culture” in the *#Jallikattu* protests with which people can identify themselves. This sophistication of the protests rested only in the arms of the students and it did not reach the people of South Africa due to the selective media coverage. Even though free education is an important cause, it will be secondary, like poverty and unemployment, because these causes do not affect the elite, affluent and privileged. The protests for real causes are also not glamorous to the media. Yet, when the terms like culture and religion is used, they affect people from every sector of the population.

Basing a social movement on these terms degrades the rationality and democracy of it. However, these terms can be integrated with a real cause, and propagate it to acquire the attention of the audience with a short attention span. When enough attention is gained, the efforts of communicative action and communicative rationality can be developed through education, awareness, and inclusivity of all oppressed voices into a movement which will promote real activism and in turn a revolution to destroy the injustices around us.

## 9.6 Concluding Thoughts

Race, caste, gender, sexual orientation, region have been used as instruments to discriminate and oppress people throughout the world. In this chapter, the researcher used online articles, documentary films uploaded by independent media groups on YouTube, discussed how these classifications have affected the *#FeesMustFall* movement and *#Jallikattu* protests from South

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<sup>132</sup> Names of interviewees are anonymised with pseudonyms. Krotoa was a lecturer during the *#FeesMustFall* movement in one of the universities in South Africa.

Africa and India. The representatives for the violence from both the protest movements in South Africa and India were selected from the most oppressed and marginalised communities in both the nations. In South Africa, even though members of all communities were part of the #FMF movement, it was only the Black students who faced the arrests and sexual harassments by the South African police and private security forces at universities. Similarly in India, the police attacked everyone at the protest grounds, however they intruded into the slum areas, fishing community residences where Dalits and the most marginalised and oppressed communities live. The major arrests for the protests were made from these areas. Many of them were not even part of the protests, however, the police made these easy arrests from vulnerable communities who would not be able to legally fight back.

Next, in this chapter we discussed how patriarchy manifested itself to discriminate against women and members of the LGBTQIA+ communities. The *Jallikattu* sport is an all-men sport which excludes women and Dalits from its realm. Hence, it is actually a symbol which supports and carries forward Brahmanical patriarchy in the premise of Tamil pride and culture. Women are only part of raising the bulls for the sport and they do not take part in the actual sport. Dalits are excluded from the sport, as they are placed in the lower step of the caste hierarchy and the power dynamics associated with it. In ancient époques, the winner of the sport would be awarded with the daughter of the bull's owner in marriage. This was again reiterated with parents who were protesting for #*Jallikattu* protests made their children hold placards saying: "We are ready to tame a bull, are you ready to marry us" and "I will marry the one who tame a bull". Women were appreciated for being part of the #*Jallikattu* protests and a tweet defined this as the real feminism. Foucault's normalisation of power, Baudrillard's freedom by default and Chomsky's manufacturing consent is vividly evident in the #*Jallikattu* protests which has conditioned women and Dalits to support and fight for a support which has systematically excluded them.

Parallely, patriarchy manifested itself in the #FeesMustFall movement where it overlooked gender-based issues such as safety of women students in universities. Female activists who spoke about gender equality, issues of LGBTQIA+, rape culture in South African universities etc were marginalised by the male dominated #FMF movement. Education in South Africa is yet a far reach for many from the Black community, and even farther for Black women. Even after reaching universities, they still have to face several issues: gender inequality, sexual harassments by students and faculty. #PatriarchyMustFall and #rapeculturemustfall were raised alongside the #FMF movement shows the seriousness of these issues of women at South African universities.

In South Africa, legacy media was negative about the student protestors at first. When the protest went viral, the media started to follow social media in order to keep updated on the issues and changed their perspectives in some instances. Moreover, the fight for fees was always a cause at former Black universities of South Africa since 1994. However, when the #FeesMustFall movement started in WITs which was one of South Africa's top most and elite universities, also being formerly a White university, the protests attracted legacy media and social media attention which made it grow massive in size. In Tamil Nadu, legacy media at both national and local level covered the protests as it was the hot talk at the time and they did not want to lose viewership. The national media emphasised the protestors as destructive. Even though viral videos emerged showing police behind some of the damage, national and local legacy media did not look into the brutality of the police as much as social media and independent media covered the issue.

Finally, in the next chapter, we will look at the discourses of diasporic and transnational support for the #FeesMustFall movement and #Jallikattu protests outside of South Africa and India. The chapter aims at exploring how the far the voices for both these hashtag movements reached around the globe.

## Chapter 10: Diaspora, Transnational Politics and Social Movements

*So,  
here you are  
too foreign for home  
too foreign for here  
never enough for both*

- Ijeoma  
Umebinyuo<sup>133</sup>

### 10.1 Introduction

The internet and social media have brought the world closer than ever before. This closeness has made it easier for the diaspora to keep in touch with their homeland and their community. Even then, the diaspora is in a constant identity crisis as their culture and identity are shaped by the new land, generations passed, religion, caste, other cultures, race, economics, nostalgia etc. This tends to create a pluralism in the diasporas of a particular community. A single community can have multiple diasporas with different characteristics which cannot be homogenised as one single community outside the homeland.

*Identity is not as transparent or unproblematic as we think. Perhaps instead of thinking of identity as an already accomplished fact ... we should think of identity as a “production”, which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation (Rutherford and Hall, 1990:222)*

The diaspora will lend their support to a social movement only when they identify with the problem in their homeland or their community. The powerful establishments in the homelands or the ones who control the diaspora’s homelands also shape the thought process of the diaspora via propaganda. Beyond identity and propaganda, economics also plays a crucial role in this support. In this chapter, we will look at the role played by the diaspora and their transnational support to the #Jallikattu protests of Tamil Nadu and the #FeesMustFall movement of South Africa.

The diasporic support for the #Jallikattu protests was far wider than the support gained by the #FeesMustFall movement. This chapter tries to ascertain how much support each movement has received from its diasporic communities and to decipher the reasons for the different levels of

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<sup>133</sup> Ijeoma Umebinyuo is a young Nigerian poet. She is one of the best modern poets from Sub-Saharan Africa.

support. To understand this phenomenon better, we will have to look into the different types of diasporas around the world from the Tamil community and their support for the #Jallikattu protests. And then the diasporas of South Africa and their support of the #FeesMustFall movement. Other international involvement towards these movements also will be discussed.

## **10.2 Literature review**

Diaspora studies was established in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, however, there is a dearth of literature on diasporas and protests. A keyword search with the terms “diaspora” and “protest” generated only 121 research articles from the Web of Science database. The first article which dates back to 1998 talks about labour activism amongst the Italian Diaspora from the perspective of Italian Women who migrated to work in Europe, North and South America and Australia (Gabaccia and Iacovetta, 1998:161). 50% of these articles have been published since 2017 which indicates the novelty of the research area. The majority of the articles emerge from USA, England and Canada, but there are only two articles from South Africa and only 1 from India.

### **10.2.1 African and Indian scholarship in diaspora and protests**

Out of the two articles from the African region, one is a historical account of challenges faced by the Indian community during the Group Areas Act from 1952 to 1962. The Group Areas Act severely disturbed and destroyed community settlements as it forcefully displaced non-white South Africans to racially assigned areas during Apartheid. The study highlights the protests against the Act through the mobilisation by the Natal Indian Congress and Transvaal Indian Congress (Yengde, 2021:75). Tewolde (2021:183) has discussed the strategical adoption of the Black identity by Eritrean migrants in Israel to develop social mobilisation during their anti-deportation protests against the racialised exclusionary migration policies in Israel. Both these studies from Africa looks at the protests by diasporas in their present region of residence against issues faced by them due to discriminatory policies. However, in the current study, we look at the transnational political involvement of the diasporic communities with protest movements in support of issues from their homeland. The study by Singh and Singh (2022) is one from India which is about the yearlong protests by farmers from Punjab in India against the newly imposed farm laws by the Indian parliament in September 2020. Demonstrations in diasporic spaces within the UK, USA, Canada and Australia in support of the farmer protests was subtly mentioned in a single line in the article. This reemphasises the limited literature in the area of diaspora and protests from both the Indian and South African contexts.

### **10.2.2 Transnational support of diaspora in homeland issues**

These highly cited studies from the same keyword search emphasise the role, functions and importance of diaspora in protests supporting homeland issues. Yaghoobi (2021) has written about the text-based protests by Iranian diasporic writers in support of the unveiling protests of women of Iran. Yaghoobi highlights the influence of cyberactivism in transnational activist attempts. Anden-Papadopoulos and Pantti (2013) have highlighted the efforts of the Syrian-diaspora activists who bring global attention to the Syrian crisis through a cultural brokerage of connecting local activists to the global arena, linking social media and mainstream media and translating messages for the foreign press to provide a clearer picture of the crisis.

### **10.2.3 Tamil Diaspora and Protests**

A refined keyword search in the Web of Science database with the terms “diaspora”, “protest” and “Tamil”, generated 9 articles. All of the 9 articles pertain to the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora’s interest and support towards the Eelam Tamils, their war-torn brothers and sisters in the Northern and Eastern part of Sri Lanka for their freedom and human rights. 7 articles from Canada, 1 each from UK and Switzerland.

Amarasingam (2015:97) has noted the diasporic politics, identity in protests and social movements of the Canadian Tamil diaspora in the Tamil separatist efforts in Sri Lanka. This phenomenon is similar in the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora in the UK, USA, Europe and Australia. Hyndman (2003:251) has examined the efforts of Canada concerning aid, investment and conflict resolution in Sri Lanka, as it houses the highest populations of Sri Lankan refugees. Ashutosh (2013:197) and Jeyapal (2013:60) have investigated the massive protests by Canadian Tamils demanding Canada to intervene and stop the brutal war by the Sri Lankan government against the Tamil civilians and rebels in 2009. Thurairajah (2017:134) has revealed that the non-Sri Lankan Tamils in Canada perceive the activist efforts of Sri Lankan Tamils for their homeland issues in Canada to be disloyal to Canada. He has engaged in the concept of multiculturalism in Canada and its interpretation amongst different Canadian communities.

Most Sri Lankan Tamils settled in the West as refugees. Hence, they still have ties with Eelam Tamils who still live in Sri Lanka. The literature demonstrates the political attachment of this Tamil diaspora with the Tamil cause in Sri Lanka. This has led to several protests and demonstrations by them in their respective countries. However, the support and protests for the *#Jallikattu* cause was mainly by the Tamil Diaspora from Tamil Nadu settled in the west for economic reasons. The support relied on cultural identity politics and symbolism of Tamils.

#### **10.2.4 Black Diaspora, African Diaspora and Protests**

The refined search adding the terms “Black” and “African” yielded 23 research articles. The articles were primarily from the American and European Continents. Brown and Lesane-Brown (2006:201) studied the messages received from Black parents to their children during different periods of birth in the USA. The authors have considered the pre-Brown vs. Board of Education, protest and post-protest periods. The variables were individual pride, black pride, fear of whites, colour-blind and thinking whites are prejudiced. Dedieu and Mbodj-Pouye (2016:958) have given a historical note on the first collective protest by Black African migrants in France during the post-colonial era. Sub-Saharan immigrants protested for housing and rights by mobilising Black communities in France and their own countries. Garbin and Millington (2018:138) have drawn the geopolitical connections from the Congolese diasporic protests of the “right to the city” movement in London. The protest was not restricted to the local issues or the political present, as they involved the global narratives of Black urbanism, historical injustices and intersected with Blackness and postcolonialism.

#### **10.3 Tamil diaspora**

The southernmost state of Tamil Nadu (Tamil country) in India and the neighbouring north-eastern territory of Sri Lanka (Tamil Eelam) are the two homelands of the Tamils. Historically, Tamils have had trade relations worldwide (McConnell, 2008:60; Sriskandarajah, 2004:493). The ancient kings of Tamil Nadu conquered many nations in Southeast Asia during their reign. As an example of this stands the Angkor Wat Temple in Cambodia, the largest religious architecture in the world. This was built by a Tamil king Suryavarman II (Carter, Stark, Quintus, Zhuang, Wang, Heng and Chhay, 2019:12228). The Tamil people who migrated during ancient times might have amalgamated with the local populations or returned to the homeland as there is no significant ancient Tamil diaspora beyond the broad classifications listed below of the Tamil diaspora.

The Tamil Diaspora can be broadly classified into three categories: (i) Tamil immigrants during colonisation (ii) Tamil immigrants post colonisation and (iii) Sri Lankan Tamil refugees. We will briefly look into each of the broad categories to understand the spread of the Tamil community globally.

##### **10.3.1 Tamil immigrants during colonisation**

The Indian subcontinent was colonised by the Dutch, Portuguese, English, and French. During the colonisation era, Tamils were exported to work in sugar cane fields, railway track laying etc. in the other European colonies, mainly by the English and French. Tamils were taken as indentured labourers, petty clerks and administrative workers to Mauritius, Reunion Islands, Seychelles,

Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Malaysia, Singapore, Fiji, South Africa, Guyana, Trinidad, Martinique, Guadeloupe etc. Even though most of these communities have lost their native tongue, they still practice many of the rituals, mores and norms which were taught to them by their ancestors (Burgio, 2016:107; Vahed and Desai, 2012:195)

Some notable people in South Africa from the descendants of these Tamil immigrants are Senuran Muthusamy (Cricketer), Thillaiyadi Valliammai (Political Activist), M.L. Sultan (Philanthropist), Navanethem Pillay (South African Juriist and United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights), Ronnie Govender (Playwright and Activist), Monty Naicker (Anti-Apartheid Activist), Saths Cooper (Clinical Psychologist and Anti-Apartheid Activist), Kesaveloo Goonam (Doctor and Anti-Apartheid Activist) and Strini Moodley (Founding member of the Black Consciousness movement in South Africa) (Personal Interviews 4, 10, South Africa, 2020)

### **10.3.2 Tamil immigrants post colonisation**

Post-colonisation, few Tamils continued to migrate to the former European colonies through marriage and to join their Tamil relatives living in these countries. Further, the demand for skilled workers in the first world countries like the USA, Canada, UK, Europe, the Middle East, Australia, Singapore etc and the demand for labourers in the Middle East and Singapore has increased the migration of Tamils from India and Sri Lanka in filling these positions worldwide which continues until today. Also, the increase in the need for computers and technology-based jobs in Western countries opened a gateway for many Tamilians to immigrate and settle in these countries. (Burgio, 2016:108) Even today, Tamilians continue to immigrate to other countries in search of better employment and education. Notable people like Kamala Harris (The current and first female Vice President of the USA), Sundar Pichai (CEO of Google), Shiv Nadar (Industrialist, USA), Sasindran Muthuvel (Governor in Papua New Guinea), Indra Nooyi (CEO of PepsiCo), Aziz Ismail Ansari (American Actor and Stand-up Comedian) etc. are from this category of the Tamil Diaspora in the world. (Armus, 2020)

### **10.3.3 Sri Lankan Tamil refugees**

The 30-year-long civil conflict for a separate Tamil homeland called Eelam in the Sri Lankan Island from the 1980s to 2009 forced many Tamils from Sri Lanka to immigrate as refugees (O'Neill, 2015:124). They were welcomed in Canada, the UK and European countries like France, Switzerland, Germany, Norway, Netherlands, Sweden etc. They also migrated to Australia, South Africa, Mauritius, Singapore, and the USA (Sriskandarajah, 2004:494). All these countries have provided citizenship for most of the refugee Tamils who have well-integrated themselves in these

nations. Many of these countries also recognize the contributions made by the Eelam Tamils. For instance, the month of January has been declared Tamil heritage month in Canada acknowledging the contributions of Tamil Canadians. Rathika Sitsabaiesan (First Tamil MP in Canada) and Kamzy Gunaratnam (Deputy Mayor of Oslo, Norway) are a few of the prominent figures from the Sri Lankan Tamil refugee diaspora in the West. (Perera, 2016:44; Razavi, 2015)

While Rathika and Kamzy being first-generation Tamil refugees in Canada and Norway were not only able to claim citizenship in these countries, but they have also been able to gain opportunities in the political leadership of these nations. Yet, there is a huge population of Tamils from Sri Lanka who migrated to Tamil Nadu, and up until today they still live in refugee camps as Sri Lankan citizens. They have not been provided with citizenship or permanent residency in India. And even their children and grandchildren who are born in India have been denied citizenship and still live as refugees. (Phadnis, 2021)

#### **10.4 The Tamil Diaspora's transnational support to the #Jallikattu Protests**

*Tweet: Jallikattu Protests Go International, Reach UK, Australia and Sri Lanka  
#Jallikattuprotest #jallikattufight*

The #Jallikattu Protests were supported by the Tamil Diaspora from many countries around the world. Many within the Tamil Diaspora, especially the Sri Lankan Tamils living in Western countries, have always supported the cause of Tamil Eelam and they have staged many huge protests, marches, and public meetings for the same. The other issues in Tamil Nadu have also drawn the participation of the Tamil diaspora on a minor scale. However, the #Jallikattu protests had the highest support compared to the other issues in Tamil Nadu. The protests primarily witnessed the participation of the post-colonial immigrant Tamils and were followed by a small number from the Sri Lankan Tamil refugee diasporas. However, the diasporas made up of Tamil immigrants from during the colonisation era did not support the #Jallikattu protests.

The language of the protests in the diasporas was dominated by terms like culture, heritage, bravery, and pride of the Tamil culture. And the common concern amongst all the protests in the diaspora expressed the saving of the native bulls, cattle, and poultry. They discussed the health hazards and sicknesses due to the farm animal and bird breeds developed from laboratories for the increase in meat and milk production. This led to their support for the continuation of the *Jallikattu* sport which ensures the saving of native bulls. As the sport gives the purpose for the raising of these bulls. Many from the Tamil diaspora protested at the Indian embassies situated in their countries to urge the Indian government to revoke the ban on the *Jallikattu* sport.

The sentiments, emotions, slogans raised, placards held, language and sound experienced at these protest grounds of the Tamil diasporas resembled the protests happening in the Tamil Nadu homeland. The researcher was able to observe the protests of the Tamil Diaspora only audio-visually via YouTube videos, and with the eyes closed, the protests at the diasporas were undifferentiable from the protests at the homeland. The only difference visually was the location of the protests and the clothes worn by the Tamilians due to the cold weather in the Western countries. *While visual observation is a key to many types of research, there is more to observation than simply seeing: it also involves touching, smelling, and hearing the environment and making implicit or explicit comparisons with previous experience.* (Kearns, 2010:241). Tweets, Facebook posts and videos uploaded by the protestors from the Tamil diaspora and media on YouTube have been used to ascertain and analyse the transnational support and protests in support of the #Jallikattu protests 2017 of Tamil Nadu.

#### 10.4.1 #Jallikattu protests in USA

*#Jallikattu protests: Tamil-Americans demonstrate outside PETA headquarters in Virginia*

*Tamil Americans hold pro- #jallikattu protests in US.... They should think of taming the bull they have elected rather than the Indian bull*

*Jallikattu protests at Jersey City, New Jersey. USA*

*Currently happening - Jallikattu protests in front of the Indian Embassy, Washington DC, USA.*

*ஏறு தழுவுதல் ஏன்? - அமெரிக்கத் தமிழரின் வரைபட விளக்கம் (Why Yeru Thazhuvudhal – A Tamil American's graphical description)*

The Tweets above discuss the protests of the Tamil diaspora in the USA for the removal of the ban on the *Jallikattu* sport in Tamil Nadu. The Tamil diaspora in several states like Virginia, New Jersey, and Washington DC capital city of the USA staged protests against the ban. They demonstrated outside the headquarters of PETA and the Indian Embassy in the USA to show their solidarity and support for the #Jallikattu protests in Tamil Nadu. The tweet in Tamil is about a Tamil American who explains in a YouTube video, the need for *Jallikattu* for the maintenance of sustainability in the farming occupation. The second tweet about the protests of the Tamil Americans is the only tweet in a negative tone which mocks the election of Donald Trump as the president of the USA, as he posed a threat to the immigrant population in the USA. The Tweet criticises the protests of Tamil Americans for the *Jallikattu* sport, and it suggests that they rather concentrate on tackling their issues in the US.

TV news report 2<sup>134</sup> depicted in Figure 10-1 was uploaded in YouTube by a leading Tamil media channel. The video is a media coverage via Skype which shows 100s of Tamil Americans on a hunger strike for the day in Dallas from Texas state for the *Jallikattu* cause. They were holding placards written in Tamil and English in support of *Jallikattu*. “We want *Jallikattu*” was the slogan raised by the protestors. They were also sloganeering in Tamil to ban the PETA organisation and to open the gates of *Vaadivasal*<sup>135</sup>. A leader of the protest says they are proud of themselves that they have a massive gathering in Dallas, as they were pondering on how to extend their help and support to the protestors in Tamil Nadu. He says that they have been protesting peacefully like their brothers and sisters in Tamil Nadu. They also took an oath declaring that they will save the bulls, fight for Tamilians and continue to protest until the Protection of Cruelty of Animals Act<sup>136</sup> is amended and a solution is proposed for *Jallikattu*. They convey their gratitude to the students, men, women, and children protesting in Tamil Nadu. And They proclaim the #*Jallikattu* protests to be a people’s revolution and the expression of the emotions of Tamils.



**Figure 10-1: Screenshot of a news report of the #*Jallikattu* protest in Dallas, USA**

Documentary Footage 5<sup>137</sup> shows protests at Times Square in New York chanting protest slogans in Tamil and English in support of the *Jallikattu* cause. *Meesaiya murukku, PETA va norukku* (Twist your manly moustaches and smash PETA), *Jallikattu Jallikattu, Dhill irundha mallukattu* (*Jallikattu Jallikattu, fight if you dare*), *Udal mannu*, *Uyir Thamizhukku* (The body is to the

<sup>134</sup> TV News Report 2 was retrieved from YouTube (News7 Tamil, 2017).

<sup>135</sup> *Vaadivasal* is the place at the *Jallikattu* sport from which the bulls are opened into the crowd.

<sup>136</sup> The PCA Act classified bulls as non-performing animals which was the reason for the ban on *Jallikattu*. PETA filed a case based on this classification.

<sup>137</sup> Documentary Footage 5 (Pandian, 2017) and Documentary Footage 6 (Veeraraju, 2017) were retrieved from YouTube.

soil, the soul is to Tamil) were amongst the many protest chants which were repeated proudly by the Tamil Americans who had gathered. Documentary Footage 6 in Figure 10-3 is a gathering of Tamil men, women, and children in front of the Indian Embassy in Washington DC. In this protest along with the chants and slogans in Tamil, players were playing the *parrai*. *Parrai* is an ancient Tamil drum and an art form played by a community deemed as lower caste in Tamil Nadu, and it is one of the very few musical instruments from the Dalit community which has some sense of social acceptance and popularity. The word Pariah in English comes from this community in Tamil Nadu. The *Parrai* drums were heard in many protests for the *Jallikattu* sport in Tamil Nadu and other parts of the world.



**Figure 10-2: Screenshot of a documentary footage of the #Jallikattu protest in New York, USA**



**Figure 10-3: Screenshot of a documentary footage of the #Jallikattu protest at the Indian Embassy, USA**

### 10.4.2 #Jallikattu Protests in Canada

Documentary Film 21<sup>138</sup> is the protest at the Indian Consulate by the Tamils living in the Toronto region of Canada on 22<sup>nd</sup> January, 2017. The people gathered said that they had moved to different countries for employment and other reasons. Nevertheless, they still carried the Tamil feeling with them and that is why they were standing in solidarity with their fellow Tamils in the cause of *Jallikattu*. A young girl said she had witnessed the *Jallikattu* events during her visits to Tamil Nadu and the ban made her sad. A young man said “bring reform to the sport, but don't ban it.” He said that the yellow card and red card system like in football should be introduced in the sport if the bulls were subjected to cruelty. He further said if the *Jallikattu* sport was profitable, even PETA would support it, however, it was being banned because more money could be made in the abolition of the sport. The song by Tamil poet Bharathiyar: *Accham illai accham illai, accham enbadhu ilaiyae* (there is no fear, there is no fear) blared through the bullhorn speakers in the streets of Toronto. The Eelam Tamil community also supported the #*Jallikattu* protests in Toronto with the hashtag #eelamsupportjallikattu. A Malaysian Tamilian who joined the protests expressed her support in the Malay language for her friends and family in Malaysia.



Figure 10-4 and 10-5: Toronto Tamils supporting the *Jallikattu* cause retrieved from “We Support *Jallikattu* in Toronto” a public Facebook group

The narrative below was also retrieved from the same Facebook group which describes the reasons for the protests against the ban of *Jallikattu* sport in Toronto.

*To know about football, you have to ask a football-related person, but if you want to know about Jallikattu you have to ask either a farmer or a person who's growing Bull.*

*We are living in this world where if someone earns 1 Lakh/Month and gives a biscuit worth 5 rupees for a dog are being called an animal lover. When it comes to Jallikattu, A farmer's*

<sup>138</sup> Documentary Film 21 was retrieved from YouTube (DV Productions, 2017).

*daily wage would be around 600 rupees/day and he won't have work every day, but he has to spent around 300 rupees/day for the Bull. What would we call him?*

*Hundred years ago, there were 133 types of native cattle breeds, now there's only 37 remaining. There were around Nine Lakhs of Bulls in our country before ten years, after the entrance of Tractor and modern techniques for farming, we are left with only Sixty Thousand Bulls today, what would be that count after 3 years?*

*The Bull which is efficient while playing Jallikattu is used for mating purposes and the rest are sent to farming. If Jallikattu is banned in India, the only way left will be Artificial Insemination.*

*If Jallikattu is banned in India, the count of Bulls will start to fall down and the benefit will go to the corporates who have contracts for Artificial Insemination, most of the people who are raising voice against Jallikattu aren't probably animal lovers, they are the ones who are being paid by the foreign companies. Milk protein was less in Jersey cow which is called A1 category milk and it will create diabetes, cancer.*

Similarly protests for the #Jallikattu cause was staged in Mexico and South American countries of Curaçao, Guyana, Colombia, Cayman Islands, Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay and Chile.<sup>139</sup>

### 10.4.3 #Jallikattu Protests in UK

Tamils in the United Kingdom gathered in thousands at Trafalgar square, Indian Embassy (London), Wembley stadium, Eastham, Birmingham, and Chelmsford to protest against the ban on the Jallikattu sport. They sang, danced, played the *parrai*, and raised slogans in solidarity with Tamil Nadu.



**Figure 10-15: Screenshot of a documentary of #Jallikattu protests in Birmingham, UK**

<sup>139</sup> Refer images downloaded from Facebook in Appendices 01.

Documentary Film 22<sup>140</sup> depicted in Figure 10-15 highlights the protests of UK Tamils in Birmingham. The people emotionally raise their voice in support of Tamil farmers and the entire Tamil community. A man says that Tamilians have been united as a powerful community now and if there are any problems for Tamils hereafter, this power will act towards it. A woman says they are proud of the Tamil students protesting in Tamil Nadu as they have educated the world Tamils about the heritage of the *Jallikattu* sport and with the knowledge about the native bulls of Tamil Nadu. This *Jallikattu* protests have also exposed the mentality of the corporate world which usurps traditional businesses to implement their hyper capitalism. She thanks the police of Tamil Nadu for their support for the *Jallikattu* protests<sup>141</sup>. She also thanks the parents of Tamil Nadu who have sent the youngsters to the revolution in the same way they would have sent them to war to safeguard the nation or clan in ancient époques. Another man exclaims that he was not part of the independence movement in India, and he considers this to be an independence movement of Tamils in India. A localised protest slogan *poraatam poraatam Bull Ring la poraatam* (Here we protest at Bull Ring<sup>142</sup>) was heard at the gathering.



**Figure 10-16: Image of protestors at the Indian Embassy in London retrieved from Facebook**

The sentiments were similar in the *#Jallikattu* protests in the UK in comparison to the protests in the homeland of Tamil Nadu and other Tamil diasporas. The protests were boosted with Tamil

<sup>140</sup> Documentary Film 22 was retrieved from YouTube (Kumar, 2017).

<sup>141</sup> D. Film 22 was uploaded on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2017, a day before the police brutality against protestors in Tamil Nadu.

<sup>142</sup> Bull Ring is a major shopping centre in central Birmingham.

pride and the narratives of Tamil heritage and culture. They showed the concern of the extinction of native bulls and traditional methods of farming and agriculture.

#### 10.4.4 #Jallikattu Protests in Ireland

Documentary Footage 7<sup>143</sup> from Figure 10-17, the Tamils living in Ireland gathered in the streets to demonstrate protests for the cause of *Jallikattu*. Together they chant slogans in Tamil and English and sing the Tamil *Thaai Vaazhthu*, the state song of Tamil Nadu, an invocation to Mother Tamil. The protest leader says cows and bulls are like gods to them, so outsiders need not tell them how to protect their cows and bulls. Another protest leader says people have obtained leave with permission from their workplaces to participate here.



Figure 10-17: Screenshot of a documentary of #Jallikattu protests in Ireland

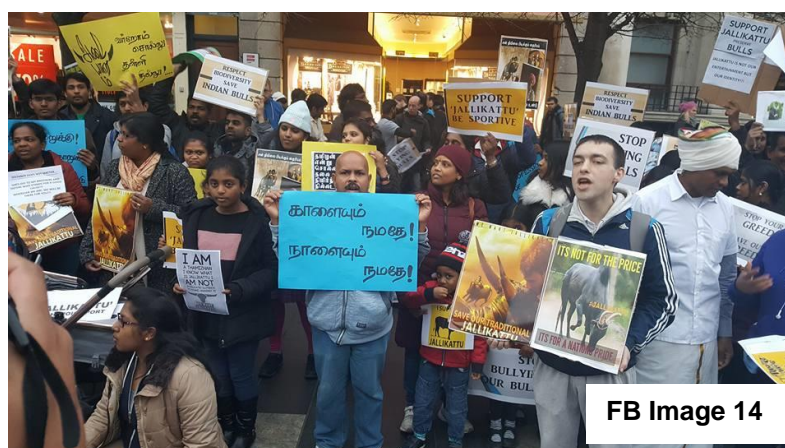


Figure 10-18: Images of Tamils in Ireland supporting the *Jallikattu* cause retrieved from Facebook

<sup>143</sup> Documentary Footage 7 was retrieved from YouTube (Srikanth, 2017).

### 10.4.5 #Jallikattu Protests in Europe

#### France

The #Jallikattu protestors in France gathered at Strasbourg and in Paris at the Indian Embassy and near the Eiffel Tower in protest against the ban of the *Jallikattu* sport. Documentary Footage 8<sup>144</sup>, a protestor says India is trying to enforce Sanskrit as a popular culture in India. They would have supported the *Jallikattu* sport if it was related to Sanskrit, but it is part of Tamil culture and heritage, so they want to eradicate it. The protests in France witnessed similar emotions and the slogans raised were identical to the protests back in the Tamil homeland.



FB Image 15



FB Image 16

Figures 10-19 and 10-20: Images of #Jallikattu protestors in France retrieved from Facebook

<sup>144</sup> Documentary footage 8 was retrieved from YouTube (Red Pix 24x7, 2017).

## Switzerland

*Tweet: All the way from #switzerland #wesupportjallikattu #jallikattu*

The Tamils living in Zurich say that they have gathered in protest even at minus 10° Celsius cold weather to support the Tamils all over the world who have risen in protest against the ban of *Jallikattu*. They chanted protest slogans similar to the other #*Jallikattu* protests around the world. (Documentary Footage 9<sup>145</sup>).



**Figures 10-21 and 10-22: Images of #*Jallikattu* protestors and a newspaper article in Switzerland**

The news article in German is titled “Uprising in India over Swiss cows”. Alongside the *Jallikattu* protests there was importing of Jersey bulls from Switzerland to Tamil Nadu to increase the milk production. The Swiss newspaper article say the revolts in India were against the Swiss cows. The import of bulls from Switzerland during the ban of *Jallikattu* made the protestors more suspicious about the ban of the sport. They suspected the cause for the ban was more than just cruelty to

<sup>145</sup> Documentary Footage 9 was retrieved from YouTube (Sowmya, 2017).

animals and had hidden corporate agenda. This narrative was part of the protests for *Jallikattu* in Tamil Nadu and the Tamil diaspora.

## Germany

In Germany, Tamils gathered in Stuttgart, Cologne, Magdeburg, Berlin, Ingolstadt, Munich, and Rostock for the cause of *Jallikattu*. The Tamil students studying at University of Rostock gathered in support of the #*Jallikattu* protests. In Documentary Footage 10<sup>146</sup>, the supporters congratulate and thank the protestors in Tamil Nadu and apologise for not being able to join the protests in Tamil Nadu. A leader recites poems from Tamil literature about revolutions and speaks of the valiant efforts of Tamils for the cause of *Jallikattu*



University of Rostock, Germany supporting jallikattu protests on Jan 20

**Figure 10-23: Screenshot of a documentary footage of #*Jallikattu* protests at University of Rostock, Germany**

In the Berlin protests, the protestors hold banners in English, Tamil, and German. and a leader explains the protests in German in a video uploaded on YouTube. Another video in Tamil was also uploaded on YouTube supporting the Tamil students protesting for *Jallikattu*. They called *Jallikattu* a “treasure of their motherland”. (Documentary Film 23)

<sup>146</sup> Documentary Footage (Hood, 2017), Documentary Film 23 (Tamil people in Berlin, 2017) and Documentary Film 24 (Muthusubramaniam, 2017) were retrieved from YouTube.



**Figure 10-24: Screenshot of a documentary of #Jallikattu protests at University of Rostock, Germany**

In Cologne, the Tamil protestors invited a German person who has lived in Tamil Nadu to express his support for the *Jallikattu* cause. The German person speaks in Tamil and conveys his interest and support for the sport of Tamils. Many Tamils also expressed their emotions and support for the protests in Tamil Nadu. (Documentary Film 24)



**Figure 10-25: Screenshot of a documentary of #Jallikattu protests in Cologne, Germany**

## Sweden

The Tamilians settled in Sweden also showed their solidarity and support for the #*Jallikattu* protests. About 200 Tamilians marched through the streets of Gothenburg expressing their sentiments and concern for the *Jallikattu* sport, Tamil culture, and heritage.



**Figure 10-26: Image of #Jallikattu Protests by Tamils in Sweden retrieved from Facebook**

The protestors compare the introduction of chillies by Vasco Da Gama in India, as he took the healthier pepper back with him. In the same way, PETA with other Multinational companies, are trying to eradicate the native bulls of Tamil Nadu. Despite the cold weather, the protestors say they have gathered here with high levels of energy and emotions because of their Tamil feeling (Documentary Film 25)<sup>147</sup>. There were protests also in Skåne region and Lund city of Sweden. Below is the description on the video from YouTube:

Swedish Tamils living in Stockholm gathered at the Indian Embassy urging the Indian government to amend the PCA Act, Ban PETA and revoke the ban on the *Jallikattu* sport. (Documentary Film 26)

*Tamils in Göteborg (Gothenburg) Peaceful protest against the ban on Jallikattu: Express solidarity with Tamils protesting in Tamil Nadu, India. The ban on Jallikattu is an affront to Tamil culture, and it is a disgrace to heritage and tradition of Tamil people especially in the village's and across the state. Jallikattu is a traditional bull-taming and bull-embracing sport at the time of 'Pongal (Mattu Pongal) festival. The significance of bull-taming is to identify the best bull of superior gene pool. The bull that emerges out of this festival is sought after and they are used as studs for breeding. But these native bulls are becoming extinct, and it requires attention to preserve its biodiversity. The native bulls are not only cultural and religious symbols, but they are widely used in farming and transport, and also treated as one of the members in a family. We Tamil people in the port city of*

<sup>147</sup> Documentary Film 25 (Karthick, 2017) and Documentary Film 26 (Kannan, 2017) was retrieved from YouTube.

*Gothenburg has come together, Saturday 21st January 2017 to express and show their support for the people of Tamil Nadu, and other parts of the world. About 200 people have staged a peaceful march and gathered at the city's popular cultural venue called Gotaplatsen (Gothenburg Cultural Centre) in Gothenburg. They have expressed their support to the peaceful protestors in Tamil Nadu, and also sought action from the Government of India to lift the ban on Jallikattu imposed by the Supreme Court of India. The gathering also called upon the Government of India to immediately ban PETA and amend the PCA (Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) Act.*

Swedish Tamils living in Stockholm gathered at the Indian Embassy urging the Indian government to amend the PCA Act, Ban PETA and revoke the ban on the *Jallikattu* sport. (Documentary Film 26)

### **Netherlands**

Documentary Footage 11<sup>148</sup> shows Tamils living in Netherlands shouting protest slogans in Tamil in support of the #*Jallikattu* protests of Tamil Nadu.



**Figure 10-28: Screenshot of a documentary of #*Jallikattu* protests in Netherlands**

### **Norway**

An image retrieved from Facebook showing the #*Jallikattu* protests by Tamils living in Norway.

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<sup>148</sup> Documentary footage 11 was retrieved from YouTube (Stichting Netherlands Tamil Sangam, 2017).



Figure 10-29: Image of #Jallikattu Protests by Tamils in Norway retrieved from Facebook

### Denmark

The Tamils living in Copenhagen of Denmark protested against the ban on the *Jallikattu* sport. In News footage 2<sup>149</sup> the protestors say, “*Jallikattu* is the right of Tamils and it is our duty to protect”. So, they have given a written petition to the Indian embassy in Denmark urging the Indian government and the Supreme Court of India to withdraw the ban on the *Jallikattu* sport. The protestors speak about the interests of multinational companies involved in this ban and the import of Jersey cows to India and the eradication of the native bulls of Tamil Nadu.



Figure 10-30: Screenshot of a news footage of #Jallikattu Protests by Tamils in Denmark retrieved from FB

<sup>149</sup> News footage 2 was retrieved from Facebook (Thanthi TV, 2017).

Similarly, protests were organized in support of the #Jallikattu cause in Ukraine, Russia, Italy, Poland, Belgium, Luxembourg, Spain, Iceland, Finland, Belarus, Lithuania, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Georgia and Turkey.

#### 10.4.6 #Jallikattu Protests in the Middle East

The Tamil workers and families living in Dubai, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, and Kazhakshtan etc. staged many demonstrations in support of the #Jallikattu Protests in Tamil Nadu.<sup>150</sup> The Tamils working there involved a few local Arabs who showed their interest in the sport and their anger towards PETA in banning this sport.



**Figure 10-47: Screenshot of a documentary Arabs supporting the #Jallikattu protests in Qatar**

A Tamil person has made this video in which he shows his Arab acquaintances from Qatar speaking in Arabic supporting the *Jallikattu* sport and the people of Madras (Chennai). (Documentary Film 27<sup>151</sup>)

<sup>150</sup> Images downloaded from Facebook from different countries in Middle East and Central Asia is in Appendices 01.

<sup>151</sup> Documentary Film 27 (Murugan, 2017) and Documentary Film 28 (Kassim, 2017) were retrieved from YouTube.



**Figure 10-48: Screenshot of a documentary of a trilingual skit in support of the #Jallikattu protests in Qatar**

Documentary Film 28 in Figure 10-48 is a trilingual skit made in Arabic, Tamil, and English by the same Tamil worker from Qatar. The Arab says, “drive to the airport, we need to go to Madras and I want to watch *Jallikattu*”. The Tamil person replies, “we cannot watch *Jallikattu*, PETA has banned it”. And the Arabic person says, “PETA can go home, come let us go to Madras, we are going to Madras to support the people in the protests”. The skit ends with the Tamil person getting into the car to drive says excitedly, “oh really?” in Arabic and then says “Tamilians have support all over the world, but only inside India they do not support Tamils” in Tamil.

#### **10.4.7 #Jallikattu Protests in Australia and New Zealand**

Tamils living in Australia staged protests for the *Jallikattu* cause in Perth, Melbourne, Adelaide, and Sydney. The Tamils of New Zealand demonstrated at Christchurch, Wellington, and Auckland to support the #*Jallikattu* protests and demand the Government of India to revoke the ban on *Jallikattu*.<sup>152</sup>

<sup>152</sup> Images of other protests from Australia and New Zealand downloaded from Facebook are in Appendices 01.



Figure 10-58: #Jallikattu protests in Melbourne (Australia)



Figure 10-61: #Jallikattu protests in Wellington at the Parliament of New Zealand

#### 10.4.8 #Jallikattu Protests in Southeast Asia and East Asia

The countries in Southeast Asia also witnessed the #Jallikattu protests. Protests were staged in Japan, Vietnam, Brunei, China, Taiwan, Myanmar, Indonesia, Philippines, South Korea, Thailand, Papua New Guinea, Hong Kong and Cambodia.

#### Malaysia and Singapore

*Tweet: Jallikattu protests which has divided India threatens to spill over into Singapore*

In Malaysia and Singapore, unlike most other countries with Tamils diasporas from during colonisation, the Tamil language is still spoken. Hence, in these countries, it was both the Tamil diasporas created by the Tamils who migrated during colonisation and recently migrated Tamils who staged protests and demonstrated their disappointment against the ban on *Jallikattu*. People gathered in different locations such as Penang, Klang, Petaling Jaya, Kuala Lumpur, Pengerang, Kedah State and the Indian embassy in Malaysia and several locations in Singapore.



Figure 10-77: #Jallikattu protests in Malaysia



Figure 10-78: Tamil text: Support for *Jallikattu* in Singapore

#### 10.4.9 #Jallikattu protests in Sri Lanka

*Tweet: "ஏறு தழுவுதல்" - ஜல்லிக்கட்டிற்கான ஆதரவுக் குரல் யாழ் மண்ணிலிருந்து*<sup>153</sup>

Sri Lanka is both a homeland of Tamils and also a diaspora of Tamils. There are two broad types of Tamil populations in Sri Lanka, one population being indigenous to the island and another population who were transported as indentured labourers during the British colonisation of India

<sup>153</sup> *Eru Thazhuvudhal – A supporting voice for Jallikattu from the Jaffna soil.*

and Sri Lanka (McConnell 2008: 60). Sri Lanka is a peculiar case consisting of both indigenous Tamils and immigrant Tamils. However, both these populations have always been politically conscious of the happenings in Tamil Nadu and India. Beyond political consciousness, they were also affected by the sentiments and emotions of the narratives of Tamil culture and heritage which were linked with *Jallikattu* and the welfare of the farming community. Hence, several protests were staged in Colombo, Jaffna, and other parts of Sri Lanka. (Video 47)<sup>154</sup>



**Figure 10-79:** The meme compares the #*Jallikattu* protests at Marina Beach (Tamil Nadu) and Galle Face beach (Sri Lanka). Tamil text: Even though countries are different, the goal is the same.



**Figure 10-80:** Screenshot of a video of #*Jallikattu* protests in Jaffna (Sri Lanka)

Other Island nations in the Indian Ocean such as Maldives, Seychelles and Mauritius also had protests in support of the #*Jalikkattu* cause.

<sup>154</sup> Video 47 was retrieved from YouTube (IBC Tamil, 2017).

#### 10.4.10 #Jallikattu Protests in Africa

The *Jallikattu* protests were also witnessed in Africa. Facebook images have been used to depict the protests staged by Tamils living in Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Congo, Kenya, Egypt, Zambia, Nigeria, Ghana, Gabon, Algeria and South Africa.<sup>155</sup>

#### #Jallikattu Protests in South Africa



Figure 10-98: A collage #Jallikattu protests in Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban

In South Africa, the biggest Tamil diaspora is made up of the descendants of the Tamils who came to South Africa as indentured labourers during the British colonisation of India and South Africa from 1860 to 1911. This population practices Tamil rituals and culture in their daily lives, but they

<sup>155</sup> Refer Appendices 01 for images downloaded from Facebook of protests in Island Nations and African countries.

did not support the #*Jallikattu* protests of Tamil Nadu, as they were not familiar with this culture and politics. The #*Jallikattu* protests were demonstrated by the Tamils who recently immigrated to South Africa from Tamil Nadu. The province of KwaZulu-Natal has a high number of Tamils from indentured descent, followed by Gauteng and Western Cape. However, the recently immigrated Tamils are settled in Johannesburg, Cape Town and a few in Durban working in Information Technology and related fields. These Tamils staged the #*Jallikattu* in Johannesburg, Cape Town, and Durban. (Personal Interview 10, South Africa, 2020)

We have looked at the different diasporas within the Tamil community and the widespread protests for the removal of the ban of the *Jallikattu* sport from the Tamil diaspora living around the world. Now we will look at how the South African diasporas have positioned themselves within the global map. We will further magnify the diasporic and transnational support by the South African diaspora and the other international support, specifically the support of international student communities and activist communities who lent their voice to the #FeesMustFall movement.

## **10.5 The South African diaspora**

South Africa has always welcomed all kinds of people into its geographical territory. Rainbow Nation is truly an apt name for the country as it has a variety of people from different topographies who have settled here. The South African diaspora is not as widespread and organised as the Tamil diaspora, yet there is a considerable population of South Africans who live outside South Africa. The South African Diaspora can be broadly classified into two categories: (i) South African immigrants during Apartheid and (ii) South African immigrants post-Apartheid.

### **10.5.1 South African immigrants during Apartheid**

During Apartheid, immigration to other countries was a challenging feat for non-whites as the apartheid system made it difficult for non-whites to get a passport. However, for the white community, South Africa was a paradise. So, during apartheid, there were more whites coming into the country than the ones who left. Some whites who were romantically involved with people from other races found it difficult to continue their lives in South Africa as the *Immorality and Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Amendment Act* forbade marriages, or love affairs, between whites and other races. So, this made some whites leave South Africa with their partners during Apartheid. Education made it possible for non-whites to leave the country during Apartheid, hence students from families that could afford a foreign education were sponsored by their families to study abroad. Some of these students settled in countries like the UK, if they had better prospects there. There were opportunities for South African teachers in countries like Zambia, Brazil, Guyana, and

Canada which motivated a few South African teachers mostly from the Indian race to immigrate to these countries. The only other immigration which happened during this era was the exile of anti-apartheid leaders and rebels, mainly Blacks and few Indians, coloureds and whites who went to other countries for training, protection, and political strategy (Personal Interviews 3, 10, South Africa, 2020).

### **10.5.2 South African immigrants post-Apartheid**

Post-Apartheid, the benefits, and privileges of the whites from the government were stopped. Democracy was hostile for many whites who were offered the pinnacle of comforts under Apartheid rule. Hence, this made many whites either immigrate to their home countries, or to countries like Australia and New Zealand who welcomed South African whites. Amongst those who migrated post-apartheid were some Indians and coloureds who had technical and professional skills and found better prospects in countries like UK, USA, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada. The Black population was restricted from immigrating during Apartheid. Post-Apartheid, the other Black populations who newly entered South Africa with a dream of a better life, also stayed put in South Africa. Hence, the only considerable Black immigrants from South Africa, post-Apartheid, were students in other countries and the ones with white collar jobs. (Personal Interview 3, 10, South Africa, 2020)

## **10.6 The South African diaspora's transnational support and other international involvement for the #FeesMustFall movement**

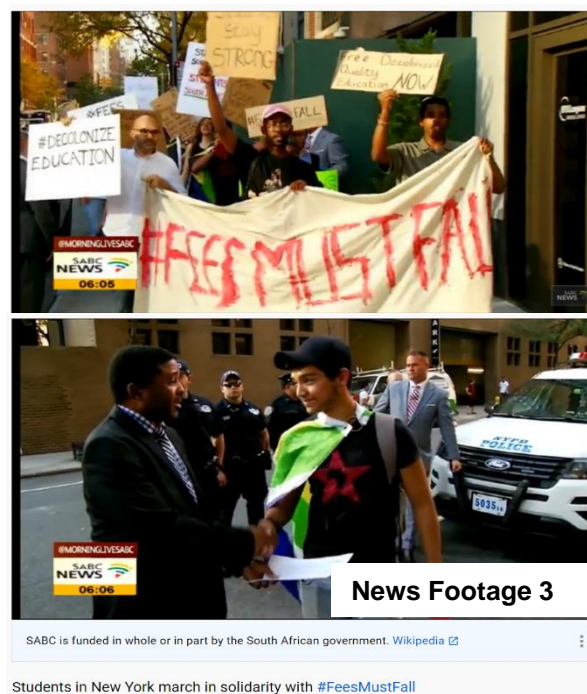
The transnational support by the South African diaspora was less compared to the Tamil diasporic support to the #Jallikattu protests. However, there was international support from the student and activist community, even though it was less, and the #Jallikattu protests had almost no international support from other communities, except the Tamil diaspora. This is due to the nature of the protests. The cause of the #Jallikattu protests was more cultural. Even though the allegations on multinational interests and mischievous interferences were part of the discourses of the protests, these were not the central idea of the protests to attract the attention of the international activists. The metanarrative of a cultural aspect invited the attention of the Tamil diaspora communities, as they emotionally identified with the central discourse.

Similarly, in the case of the #FeesMustFall movement, the central discourse was free education and decolonisation of education. This lacks an identity metanarrative, as in South African culture. Black pride did not attract the South African diaspora or the greater international Black community and the Black community within South Africa. Further, the nature of the South African diaspora is

composed of a high number of whites who left South Africa because of the democratisation. Hence, these members would not have the interest to support the cause of #FeesMustFall or any other protests from South Africa, unless it was a protest by the white community in South Africa, like the campaign against the murders of white farmers in South Africa.

The majority of the students affected by the high fees are from the Black community, hence the migrants from the Indian and Coloured communities outside South Africa also will not identify with the #FeesMustFall movement. Other than this, the only communities left were the student community from South Africa studying at international institutions. The lack of an identity metanarrative, but the centralising of a social cause and intellectual narrative of free education and decolonisation of education etc. attracted the participation of the international student and activist community from USA, UK, Australia, France, Belgium, Zimbabwe and similar protests were staged in India for the fees issues in one of the Indian universities. The evidence on the international and transnational support for the #FeesMustFall movement retrieved from online media and social media like Facebook and YouTube will further this discussion.

### 10.6.1 The #FeesMustFall movement in the USA



**Figure 10-99: Screenshots of a video of South African students marching on the streets of New York in support of the #FeesMustFall movement**

Outside South Africa, the USA witnessed one of the major protests and support for the #FeesMustFall movement of South Africa. South African students studying in various universities in the USA supported this protest.

News footage 3<sup>156</sup> is a news report on SABC about the South African students in New York who organised a march in the streets of Manhattan in solidarity with the #FMF movement back home. With the slogans of Amandla! Awethu!<sup>157</sup> the students also discussed the importance of free education, and decolonisation of curriculum. The students handed over an open letter to the officials from the South African embassy with the demands of an end to outsourcing of workers and the militarisation of South African campuses.



**Figure 10-100: Protests in support of the #FeesMustFall movement at the Duke University, USA**



**Figure 10-101: Students in support of the #FeesMustFall movement at Harvard University, USA**

<sup>156</sup> Video 48 was retrieved YouTube. (SABC News, 2015)

<sup>157</sup> Power to the people.



**Figure 10-102: Students in support of the #FeesMustFall movement at Brown University, University of Pennsylvania, Parsons School of Design, USA**



**Figure 10-103: An alumnus of Stellenbosch shows her support to #FeesMustFall from USA**

The South African students studying at the Duke University in Durham, North Carolina and Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Brown University in Rhode Island, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Parsons School of Design, USA staged protests in support and an alumnus of Stellenbosch University showed her support from New Jersey of USA to the #FeesMustFall movement of South Africa.

### **10.6.2 The #FeesMustFall movement in the UK**

On 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2015, the South African students pursuing their higher studies, and other supporters of the movement in the UK, staged protests and marched in the streets of London in support of the #FeesMustFall movement of South Africa. The protestors gathered at the South

African High Commission in Trafalgar Square in London to show their solidarity with the #FeesMustFall protestors of South Africa.



**Figure 10-104: A collage of the march and protests in support of the #FeesMustFall movement of South Africa in London, UK retrieved from Facebook**

The protestors in London were singing many South African protest songs. *Shosholoz*a meaning “go forward” is a song which used to be sung by mine workers during their tireless and hard work. *Asimbonanga* meaning “We have not seen him (Mandela)” was an anti-apartheid song by a mixed-race band in South Africa called *Savuka* which means “awakening”. The protestors invited the South African high commissioner to talk with the protestor and they made him sign a memorandum

to show support for the causes of the #FeesMustFall movement (Documentary Film 30)<sup>158</sup>. The photos below of the protests in London are retrieved from Facebook.

### 10.6.3 The #FeesMustFall movement in France



**Figure 10-105:** An activist group “POID” demonstrate in support of the #FMF movement in Paris

*France - 19 octobre*

*Des militants du POID de Paris se sont rassemblés mercredi 19 octobre à 17 heures devant l’ambassade d’Afrique du sud. « Fees must fall! » ont scandé les manifestants, reprenant ainsi le mot d’ordre central des étudiants sud-africains qui exigent la gratuité des études. « Libérez Busisiwe Seabe et ses camarades! » « Zuma (1), Blade (2), bas les pattes devant les étudiants» .*

*(1) Président de la République, dirigeant de l’ANC, le Congrès national africain*

*(2) Ministre de l’Education et secrétaire général du parti communiste sud-africain*

The image was retrieved from a Facebook group called “Comité Unité – Eenheidscomite” which means “unity committee”. This activist group fights for the working class of Belgium and the world and for the independence for trade unions. The above post from Facebook translates to

“France - October 19

The activists from POID (Democratic Independent Workers party) gathered at 5 p.m. on Wednesday October 19 (2016) in front of the South African embassy in Paris. Fees must fall! chanted the protesters, echoing the central slogan of South African students demanding free education. Free Busisiwe Seabe and her comrades! Zuma (1), Blade (2),

<sup>158</sup> Video 49 was retrieved from YouTube (Sibilski, 2015).

back off from the students. (1) President of the Republic, leader of the ANC, the African National Congress

(2) Minister of Education and Secretary General of the South African Communist Party”

#### 10.6.4 The #FeesMustFall movement in Belgium



**Figure 10-106: A collage of trade unionists and students showing their solidarity for the #FeesMustFall movement of South Africa in Belgium**

*Communique from Belgium and France on their mobilisation around Free Decolonised Education Now in South Africa.*

*Four trade unionists and students went on SA embassy today (October 6) in Brussels (Belgium), to demand to stop repression against the students, to answer their demands on free higher education, and immediate release of 17 students arrested in Johannesburg on October 4th, including Sister Busisiwe Seabe from Wits university*

*Already hundreds of French students endorsed our urgent letter to the SA Embassy: hands off SA students! Stop repression! Free the Johannesburg 17! Fees must fall.*

The post with images were retrieved from Facebook. The images show trade unionists and students who demonstrated at the SA embassy at Brussels in Belgium to stop the atrocities against the students in South Africa. They also demanded the release of the students who were arrested in Johannesburg, including Busisiwe Seabe, a #FeesMustFall Activist from the University of Wits.

At the initiative of the Comité Unité, a delegation of 12 workers and young people demonstrated in front of the South African embassy. The following is the press release of this demonstration retrieved from the Facebook group.

FB Image 109

Communiqué

Les étudiants d’Afrique du Sud sont mobilisés par centaines de milliers depuis l’annonce, le 19 septembre, de l’augmentation de 8 % des frais d’inscription à l’université, par le ministre de l’enseignement supérieur Blade Nzimande.

« *Fees must fall !* » (« *Les droits d’inscription doivent tomber* »), disent les étudiants. Ils demandent l’enseignement supérieur gratuit, seule possibilité pour les enfants de la majorité noire de la population d’accéder à l’instruction. Ils ont reçu le soutien du syndicat des métallurgistes (NUMSA).

Mais le gouvernement (composé de l’ANC et du PC d’Afrique du sud) répond à leurs revendications par une répression féroce. Dès le 28 septembre, la police a tiré à bout portant sur les étudiants des balles en caoutchouc, sur les campus de Johannesburg et du Cap.

Des dizaines d’étudiants ont été arrêtés. Le 14 octobre à nouveau à Johannesburg, les tirs de la police ont envoyé plusieurs étudiants à l’hôpital. Le mardi 18 octobre à Johannesburg s’ouvrira le procès de plusieurs étudiants, dont Busisiwe Cathrine Seabe, l’une des porte-paroles des étudiants.

Une invitation est lancée aux travailleurs, aux jeunes, **jeudi 20 octobre 2016 à 16 heures**, à se rejoindre près de l’Ambassade d’Afrique du Sud, rue Montoyer 17-19, 1000 Bruxelles, pour porter le message suivant : « *Arrêt immédiat de la répression contre les étudiants d’Afrique du sud !* », « *Abandon de toutes les poursuites judiciaires contre Busisiwe Seabe et ses camarades !* », « *Satisfaction immédiate des revendications des étudiants : enseignement supérieur gratuit pour tous ! Fees must fall !* ».

Contact : comiteunite.eenheidscomite@gmail.com  
Comite Unité – Eenheidscomité (Belgique)  
16/10/2016

**Figure 10-107: The press release of Comité Unité in French on the demonstrations for #FeesMustFall movement in Belgium**

## The translation of the press release:

### Statement

*Hundreds of thousands of South African students have been mobilized since Higher Education Minister Blade Nzimande announced an 8% increase in university tuition fees on 19 September.*

*“Fees must fall! (“Tuition fees must fall”), say the students. They demand free higher education, the only possibility for children of the majority black population to access education. They received support from the Metalworkers Union (NUMSA).*

*But the government (made up of the ANC and the South African CP) is responding to their demands with fierce repression. As early as September 28, police fired rubber bullets at students at point blank range on campuses in Johannesburg and Cape Town.*

*Dozens of students have been arrested. On October 14 again in Johannesburg, police fire sent several students to hospital. On Tuesday, October 18 in Johannesburg, the trial of several students, including Busisiwe Cathrine Seabe, one of the spokespersons for the students, will begin.*

*An invitation is issued to workers and young people, Thursday 20 October 2016 at 4 pm, to meet near the Embassy of South Africa, 17-19, Montoyer road, Brussels, 1000, to carry the following message: “Immediate stop of the repression against the students of South Africa! Drop all legal proceedings against Busisiwe Seabe and her comrades! Immediate satisfaction of student demands: free higher education for all! Fees must fall! “.*

*Contact: comiteunite.eenheidscomite@gmail.com*

*Comité Unité - Eenheidscomité (Belgium) 16/10/2016*

## 10.6.5 The #FeesMustFall movement in Australia



**Figure 10-108: Socialist Alternative students & worker members support the #FeesMustFall movement of South Africa in Adelaide, Australia**



**Figure 10-109: Socialist Alternative activists support the #FMF movement of South Africa in Perth, Australia**



**Figure 10-110: A collage of students from RMIT University and La Trobe University support the #FeesMustFall movement of South Africa in Melbourne, Australia**



**Figure 10-111: Socialist Alternative students from Sydney University support the #FeesMustFall movement of South Africa in Sydney, Australia**

The images of the demonstrations by activists and students in Australia were collected from Facebook and the last image was retrieved from an online magazine in South Africa.

### **10.7 Concluding thoughts**

The international support to the #FeesMustFall movement was received from the South African student diaspora in UK, USA, and the international student and political activist community from France, Belgium and Australia. This shows how the voice for an African movement was only heard from a few western countries, and there was no support for this movement from within Africa, Asia, South America and other third world countries. Just as Biko pointed out, most of the anti-apartheid movements were mobilised by white liberals instead of the Blacks, indigenous or other third world communities from around the world. Even in the case of the #FeesMustFall movement, it is the white liberals from western countries who showed their solidarity and support. The movement did not receive support from any other South African diaspora except the South African students who are students or recently started working in the UK and USA.

The Tamil diasporas living in the Americas, Europe, Africa, Asia and Australia supported the #Jallikattu protests. The movement attracted the support and involvement of the diaspora communities as the campaign included metanarratives such as Tamil culture, heritage and pride. However, this was missing with the #FeesMustFall movement which was for the cause of “free education” which did not include metanarrative like religion, race, caste, nationalism or identity. Further, the major immigrant population from South Africa were Whites post-apartheid, hence they would not identify with the current issues of South Africa. However, the movement was identified

by the South Africa student diaspora community and few western political activists' who supported the #FMM campaign. The #Jallikattu protests played a role in identity of the Tamil diaspora, they recreated the protests from their mother land in the foreign nations. The #Jallikattu campaign created a Tamil experience in the foreign lands like how religious organisations, language schools, cultural events promote amongst the diaspora communities.

The next two chapters conclude the thesis with the final discussions of research. Chapter eleven revisits the review of literature, theoretical framework and research methods and methodology. Reflection of the different themes of the chapter: colourism, police brutality, race, caste, gender, media attention, diaspora and transnational politics. The researcher discusses the way forward with reformation of *Jallikattu*, Rethinking the #FeesMustFall movement. Finally concludes the thesis with the questioning if democracies are simulated.

## Chapter 11: Conclusion

### 11.1 Introduction

The research journey travelled by the researcher for this thesis has certainly broadened the intellectual acumen of the researcher. The university committee who approved the research proposal for the thesis suggested to focus on one case study and use the other as a theoretical boarding. However, the motivation for the dual case study pursuit to critically analyse them under the same lens has created this inter-continental comparative study of protest cultures.

In this concluding chapter, the researcher will bring together the various themes of the thesis to offer a comprehensive synthesis of the outcomes of the research. The central theme of the research work commenced with the exploration of whether the democracies existing in India and South Africa were real or simulated via social media activism. However, the research work transgressed to varied themes with the aid of Giddens's structuration, which exposes simulation of democracies with its major structures and the exploration of protest cultures and discrepancies within activism with the minor structures from social movements.

### 11.2 Revisiting the literature review, theory and methods

The review of literature chapter provides the background of both the social movements: the #FeesMustFall movement (2015-16) from South Africa and the #Jallikattu protests (2017) from India. The massacres of Marikana and Thoothukudi in South Africa and India from before and after the two social movements accelerate the understanding of the phenomenon of a simulation of democracy. A 'democratic massacre' is a contentious term and cannot be theorised under a real democracy, however, possible only in the circumstance of a simulated democracy. Next, the researcher discussed the digital protest movements from around the globe such as the Arab springs which has been heavily theorised in understanding social media activism. Then, the varied literature explaining the binary position of social media in working as public spheres in protest movements and the same social media used as a tool of control, surveillance, corporate control and promotion of consumerism was discussed. Finally, the chapter talks about the decrease of the democratic ecstasy in India and South Africa, with a nation-state conflict perspective in India and the contestation of citizenships in South Africa.

The theories discussed in the theoretical framework chapter has its origins from Europe, USA, Caribbean Islands, South America, South Africa, India and Tamil Nadu. Even though theory is dominated by western theorists, the practise of theory by regional activists and academics provides a sound boarding to the research work. Giddens's structuration theory is the golden thread, which

sews the different themes brought out in this thesis to answer the research question of whether democracies are simulated in India and South Africa and understanding the protest cultures under critical lenses.

The concept “Simulated Democracies” is derived and theorised by the researcher from the theory of “Simulacra and Simulation” and “the divine references of images” by Baudrillard. Further, Stanley’s “Symptoms of Fascism” delineates real democracies from fascism. Baudrillard’s “Freedom by default” was used to understand how corporates increase consumerism by making people inherently believe that they need the products sold by the corporates without forcing them to buy the product. This is the same way how politicians and states make people believe that they need the politicians/party with a certain ideology in power to protect them. This discussion makes it easy for us to move to Foucault’s conceptualisation of Power, Knowledge, Governmentality, Surveillance and Panopticon to comprehend how governments and politicians normalise power structures and control people through surveillance. Governmentality is a Foucauldian theory drawn from Machiavelli’s “The Prince” from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, which teaches new princes and royal diplomats to control people and safeguard their glory to stay in power. “The Prince” legitimises ruthless behaviour, manipulation to exercise control over people. Governmentality explains the same in current governments and their power dynamics in control and management of its citizens.

Panopticon refers to the invisible surveillance of the people by the state with the example of a prison tower situated in the middle of a spherical construction and makes prisoners feel that they are always under surveillance. Similarly, I discuss the Synopticon and Omnipticon where the power of surveillance shifts from the state/politicians to the people. YouTube has played an important role as an Omnipticon where protestors and citizens have uploaded documentary footage of state sanctioned violence and brutality by the police against the protestors. From here, we look into Habermas’s theories of public sphere, the ideal speech situation within the public sphere, communicative rationality, communicative action and critical theory, which helps to explore protest cultures, protest discourses from the #FeesMustFall movement and the #Jallikattu protests. Further, we use the concepts of Habermas and Fuchs in understanding the contestation of the public sphere by legacy media and social media. During protest movements, the traditional legacy media was selective in showing the public what happened at the protest grounds, sometimes, it deliberately hid police violence and brutality to protect the state. However, as social media provides a platform for anyone to upload photos and videos, the public got information on what the legacy media disregarded. This is why powerful states suspend or shutdown internet access in regions when there is civil unrest, mass protests etc. Fuchs also helps us understand both sides of

the coin when using social media in protest movements, as social media is not a *super hero* which helps protests. As much as social media helps in mobilisation of people in supporting a cause, finding support from far and wide, powerful establishments use social media to surveil social activities and track social movements. States even arrest activists who use social media to build awareness against the injustices of the political regimes. Hence the use of social media by social activists needs to be prudent. Finally, Habermas's Critical theory helps researchers and the members of societies to rationally analyse situations and make better judgements in dealing with social issues, building better social movements, and creating an ideal society.

From here, we look into the perspectives of Freudenburg and Alario on diversionary reframing. This theory reiterates the normalisation of power by Foucault. Politicians and power establishments such as the state use different tools to control and condition the minds of its people. Diversionary reframing is a crucial tool used by ruling parties or a state to divert and distract people from probing into their political actions, implementation of new laws and schemes which may affect people. They use another event or happening to distract the people from the main event/new law or mishaps of politicians or the state. The film *Wag the Dog* (1997) is a classic example of diversionary reframing. In the film, the US president gets caught in a sex scandal shortly before an election, so a spin doctor and a Hollywood director fabricate a fake war in Albania to avoid media and public outrage against the president. Then we discuss Chomsky's manufacturing consent and propaganda model, a similar theory which is used in conditioning minds of people in normalising the agendas of powerful systems. The public are made to believe in the system and they subserviently support the system out of their freewill, however their freewill is conditioned and manufactured. Foucault's panopticon explains systems like schools, universities, hospitals, police, military are used in conditioning and controlling people. However, Freudenburg and Alario opine that there are invisible structures such as religion, culture, nationalism etc. which have greater power in conditioning the people in supporting politicians and powerful establishments.

Finally, we look at theorists from the southern hemisphere who provide us the conceptualisation of decolonisation, colourism, racism, casteism. Grosfuguel's and Maldonado-Torres' theorisation of decolonisation provides us insights on effects of colonisation on colonised nations and insists on the understanding and importance of decolonisation of the colonial structures which are intact even after democratisation. However, decolonisation can be a contentious term as it is hijacked by fundamentalists and the far right who try to implement previous systems of discriminations in the place of colonial structures. Hence, Grosfuguel explains that decolonisation is not just the untying of colonial injustices but also injustices which precede colonial era. Fanon's masterpiece "Black

Skin, White Masks” help us understand decolonisation, racism and colourism. Biko is a social activist who lost his life in the fight to uproot Apartheid from South Africa. Fanon and Biko both reiterate the point of understanding Blackness from the Black person and importantly raising awareness to the Black population for the fight for freedom and rights. Biko provides us the understanding of Apartheid in South Africa. Finally, the researcher discusses caste from prominent anti-caste activists Ambedkar’s and Periyar’s point of view from India and Tamil Nadu. Ambedkar and Periyar provides us the knowledge on caste oppression and the fight against caste in India and Tamil Nadu. The chapter is concluded with Foucault’s voicing against authority for protestors and social activists to build better discourses and successful social and protest movements.

The research methodology involves the epistemological considerations which takes an interpretivist paradigm in analysing the research findings. This helps in understanding the multiple realities emerging from social movements. The central empirical methodological framework uses Yin’s explorative case study to explore the two case studies: #FeesMustFall movement and #Jallikattu protests in the same critical lenses. Yin justifies this method to be more effective in exploring two or more case studies with the same framework. Data for the research of social media activism was collected from e-newspapers, e-magazines, which represent the legacy traditional media. However, these e-articles are posted on social media platforms and hence allowed the researcher to collect public discussions in the comment sections of the articles posted. Further, 3,504 tweets and 127,281 retweets were scraped with the keyword ‘feesmustfall’ and 17,379 tweets and 11,769 retweets were captured with the keyword ‘jallikattu’. Documentaries, documentary footage, news footage, protest videos, TV interviews and independent interviews uploaded by protestors, general public, independent research groups, and legacy media on YouTube, memes, photos, and posts from Facebook were used as key research data in analysing the varied themes of the research. Finally, qualitative face-to-face interviews with protestors, students, faculty members, media persons, and general citizenry were conducted on Zoom to avoid personal contact during the COVID-19 pandemic. Preliminary interviews for the study were conducted in a normal face to face method which was pre-covid. The personal interviews were also collected through chat method on WhatsApp instant chatting application, the data collected from WhatsApp from respondents allowed them to answer key research questions in their free time and also there is no need for transcription of this data as they are already transcribed in the app. The interviews helped to substantiate and fill the gaps of the research, which were not fulfilled with the other data collected. Foucault and Fairclough’s critical discourse analysis were used to critically analyse the data collected from varied sources.

Finally, the researcher elucidates the limitations and privileges of the study. The limitation includes lack of knowing the indigenous languages such as IsiZulu or IsiXhosa from South Africa. Interviews were conducted in English with respondents whose first language was IsiZulu or IsiXhosa and second language English. The Covid-19 pandemic also caused a limitation as it prevented the researcher from personally meeting people for the interview process and it had to be substituted with Zoom meetings. The privileges of the study include the researcher knowing Tamil, English and French. Tamil was used to collect interview data in the mother tongue of respondents from Tamil Nadu and also to read and understand memes, videos, and posts in Tamil. English was used to write the thesis. French was used to read some texts of theorists like Baudrillard and Foucault in French and to read and translate a few Facebook posts in French. The researcher was provided a university scholarship which covered university tuitions fees for the first three years and the remaining years fees was covered by bursaries. The researcher conducted the entire research through self-funding which was possible through part-time employment.

### **11.3 Reflecting on the themes and findings of the thesis**

Now we will look at the different themes and discourses which emerged parallelly from both the social movements. These discourses answer the key question of the thesis which examines the simulation of democracies in the light of social media activisms. However, the varied themes also help us understand protest movements in South Africa and Tamil Nadu, which signifies an intercontinental explorative research of protest cultures.

#### **11.3.1 Colourism in social movements**

Colourism is a phenomenon where lighter skin individuals from the same race or society enjoy better social privileges and benefits than their dark skin counterparts from the same race or society. Colourism which is subtler form of racism manifested in both the *#Jallikattu* protests and the *#FeesMustFall* movement from India and South Africa as ‘colourism in activism’ a term coined by the researcher. While there were thousands of activists and protestors who were fighting for the cause of decolonisation and decommodification of education in South, Fasiha Hassan, a fair skinned Indian girl from South Africa was selected by a Norwegian organisation: SAIH (Norwegian Students' and Academics' International Assistance Fund) and she was awarded the International Student Peace Prize for her involvement in the *#FeesMustFall* movement. The peace prize and the further attention from South African legacy media after the award was a key for her joining the ANC politician as the youngest member of provincial legislature of Gauteng Province. Even though at ground level, protesters from all communities were attacked by the police, when it came to arrests, suspensions, it was the Black students and in the case of sexual harassments, it was

female Black students who were at the receiving end of it. Black students on the internet condemned this award and claimed this to be a colonial mindset, which makes a lighter skinned person as a custodian of Black people's problems.

Similarly, in Tamil Nadu and the Tamil diaspora millions of people came to the streets in protest against the ban of the *Jallikattu* sport. However, Maria Juliana a fair skinned Tamil girl was singled out from the protest grounds of Marina Beach in Chennai (the central protest grounds of the #*Jallikattu* protests). She was adorned by the titles of the brave Tamil girl, the Tamil woman who grabbed the attention of the world Tamils, the bold Tamil voice which grabbed the attention of Tamils by the Tamil netizens through memes and videos on social media. This attention gave her the opportunity to enter the first season of Bigg Boss, a Tamil version of the Big Brother reality show. She has since had many television and film opportunities in Tamil Nadu. Discourses were raised on the internet of how this girl received so much attention from the media and the Tamil people themselves when there were millions of protestors from different facets of life who contributed much more to the protest movement. They compared her with another anti-liquor social activist Nandhini who has been fighting against the alcoholism problem in Tamil Nadu and the government run liquor shops. Nandhini is a law student and has been jailed several times for her protests, however she did not receive the attention which Maria Juliana received from the Tamil community. Nandhini is a darker skinned activist.

The researcher has developed a theory called the "cameraman syndrome" which has patriarchal roots where men with cameras focus on women with light skin or attractive facial features at public events. This phenomenon has also been found in social protests and revolutions where media persons and common public look for pretty faces to represent the movement. This unfair practice based on fairness has been the reason for the side-lining and focusing on activists based on the colour of their skin. The understanding of communicative action can bring a solution to this problem. The world is still yet to balance itself in many aspects, hence the opportunities may come to people based on unfair reasons. However, it is important to understand these privileges and share these opportunities with other activists who may be side-lined but worked harder for the cause. Next, we will discuss the cases of police brutality in both the social movements.

### **11.3.2 Police brutality in social movements**

The nation's police force is the invisible arm of the state, in a real democracy the arm protects the people and in a simulated democracy, this arm protects the regime. The research work accounted for police violence, excesses and brutality in both the social movements. The chapter includes varied evidences of police brutality, which was sourced from Twitter, YouTube and personal

interviews. As Foucault has pointed out the police is used to condition and control the people to be obedient to the regime. In the #FeesMustFall movement the violence on students were committed both by the South African police force and private armed security hired by the university. The attack of the students at university spaces mirrored the experiences of Apartheid era. The tweet data also reveals that the violence of the police reminded the students of the Marikana massacre in which 47 coal miners were killed by the police for protesting for a higher wage.

Student/protestors/independent media recorded documentary footage, independent interviews, independent documentaries and media news footage on the atrocities committed by the police. These feeds uploaded on YouTube revealed the brutal attack of the police on the protestors of the two social movements. Students were attacked when they marched to the parliament in support of the #FeesMustFall movement. They were attacked inside and outside the university campuses. The police and private security physically attacked the students, shot at them with rubber bullets and sexually harassed the female students. A personal interview with Biko (name anonymised), a Black student who was falsely arrested during the #FeesMustFall movement exposes the brutality of the South African police on the students especially Black students.

Similarly, documentaries and interviews carried out by independent research groups and local media students uploaded on YouTube provide data for the police excesses and brutality during the #Jallikattu protests. In South Africa, the police were distant from the students' movement, but in Tamil Nadu the case is different. The police were part of the movement, they supported and participated in the #Jallikattu protests. However, when the government decided to put an end to the #Jallikattu protests, the same police who were part of the movement suddenly became against it. They heavily thrashed the people, made several arrests and forcefully cleared the protest grounds. In Chennai, a local fish market was burnt and looted by the police. Residences of fishing communities who supported and gave refuge to the students and other protestors who fled the protest grounds were teargassed. Protestors including women and children were attacked by the police. The researcher has conceptualised a theory called "the *werewolf* syndrome of power" which is dual character exhibited by the police who protect the common people and engage with them as community, suddenly turn brutal against the common people like it is out of their control, when power dictates violence. A typical character of a *werewolf* which cannot control its actions when it is transformed.

The governments who are currently in power in both South Africa and India have been able to secure power only through protests against previous oppressive apartheid and colonial regimes. However, they have forgotten the memories of their protests and mimic the colonial/apartheid style

policing of protest movements. The next theme discusses how race, caste, gender bias, heterosexism and media attention has manifested itself in both these protest movements.

### **11.3.3 Race, caste, gender and media attention in social movements**

Race and caste have been used as discriminatory instruments in oppressing people in South Africa and India respectively. In this chapter the researcher has critically analysed tweets, documentaries uploaded on YouTube, Facebook posts, online media articles which discuss the issues of racism, casteism, gender bias and heterosexism and media attention has affected the two protest movements.

#FeesMustFall is known to be a protest movement beyond race, as students from every community took part in the protests. Education in South Africa has been a far reach for members from the Black community and further still for Black women. However, when it came to arrests, the police targeted mainly the Black students and sexually harassed female Black students. The #FMF movement also marginalised issues of gender inequality, safety and security of women students at universities and discriminations against LGBTIQ+ communities at university spaces by male-dominated protestors. Parallely, in the #Jallikattu protests, even though the people from all castes took part in the protests, when it came to arrests, it was the Dalits and the marginalised communities from slums and fishing communities (people deemed as lower caste) who were targeted. The #jallikattu sport is only played by higher caste men and Dalits and women are not allowed to play this sport. The sport is patriarchal in nature and the protest movement also maintained the patriarchal setup in many forms.

Finally, the media attention played a vital role in the growth of both the movements. Social media helped in the mobilisation of the #FeesMustFall movement and the #Jallikattu protests, however legacy media boosted its sustenance and longevity. The fight for fees was always a cause at former Black universities from 1993, however there was no real attention towards those movements. However, when the protests were started in the former white and elite universities of South Africa such as the University of Witwatersrand and Cape Town, the movements gained the attention of legacy media and social media which spread nationwide. Also, when the protests were only by Black people, it did not attract any interest, the novelty of white, Indian and Coloured students also protesting alongside Black students brought the kind of attention that the #FeesMustFall movement had. Similarly, there have been several issues Tamil people are fighting against, however, it is evident that #Jallikattu protests received a support from Tamils living all around the globe as it was centred against the metanarratives of Tamil culture and Tamil pride. Also, the protests had

Chennai's Marina beach as its central protest ground, as most of Tamil media's have their head offices situated in Chennai, the reach of the protests via media was very powerful.

In the next chapter, the researcher discusses how far the protests reached from Tamil Nadu and South Africa in the global arena.

#### **11.3.4 Diaspora, transnational politics and social movements**

The diaspora community will lend their support to social movements from back home only when they identify with the problem. The three different major Tamil diaspora communities are Tamil immigrants during colonisation, post colonisation and Sri Lankan Tamil refugees. The Tamils who migrated post colonisation in search of better employment opportunities in Western countries supported the Tamil cause of *#Jallikattu*. The discourses amongst the protest were dominated with the terms of Tamil pride, Tamil culture and heritage. A second-generation Tamil from the USA says *if it comes to my culture and heritage, anything else can take a backseat*. The voice for the *#Jallikattu* protests were raised globally by the Tamil diaspora community in USA, Canada, Mexico, Curaçao, Guyana, Colombia, Cayman Islands, Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, Chile, United Kingdom, Ireland, France, Switzerland, Germany, Sweden, Netherlands, Norway, Denmark, Ukraine, Russia, Italy, Poland, Belgium, Luxembourg, Spain, Iceland, Finland, Belarus, Lithuania, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Georgia, Turkey, Dubai, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Iraq, Iran, Kazakhstan, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Vietnam, Brunei, China, Taiwan, Myanmar, Indonesia, Philippines, South Korea, Thailand, Papua New Guinea, Hong Kong, Cambodia, Malaysia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Seychelles, Mauritius, Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Congo, Kenya, Egypt, Zambia, Gabon, Nigeria, Ghana, Algeria, Rwanda, Senegal, North Sudan and South Africa. The sentiments and emotions experienced at protest grounds in these nations mirrored the protests in Tamil Nadu with the same language, slogans, placards and gestures. In contrast, the researcher has classified the diasporic communities from South Africa into two: South African immigrants during apartheid and post-apartheid. Compared to the *#Jallikattu* protests, the diasporic support for *#FeesMustFall* was far less. As the immigration post-apartheid has been mainly white communities and few Indians and Coloureds, who may not necessarily relate with the current South African regime or causes. During Apartheid, Black communities were restricted from immigrating to other countries from South Africa. The researcher observed even after Apartheid that the immigration is only restricted to South African students studying abroad and few South African Blacks in white collar jobs in other countries. However, the student communities from South Africa studying in countries like USA and UK staged protests at their universities and organised marches to the South African embassies in support of the *#FeesMustFall* movement in

South Africa. Like the South African protests, the protests in UK and USA by the South African student diaspora were found to have members from all races. The *#Jallikattu* protests did not have transnational support from other communities, it was only concentrated by the Tamil diaspora. But, the *#FeesMustFall* movement had the support of activists from the West such as the “POID” (Democratic Independent Workers Party) from France, Trade Unionist from Belgium, Social Alternative Students and Workers from Australia and University students from RMIT and La Trobe University of Australia.

In the next chapter, the researcher discusses the future scope of research. The researcher discusses the way forward with the idea of reformation of *Jallikattu* and rethinking the *#FeesMustFall* movement. Finally concludes the thesis with the questioning of whether democracies are simulated.

## **Chapter 12: Suggestions for Way Forward and Future Research**

### **12.1 Introduction**

This research work is a preliminary to a tool kit for activists to mobilise people to support and participate in social campaigns. The thesis for the doctoral studies is hopefully a precedent to many research studies in the future. The researcher will deal with them in a post-doctoral capacity. Journal articles, conference presentations and book chapters are planned based on this research work for the future. The interests and involvement of other researchers in these following areas are welcomed owing to its vastness and contemporary significance.

This research work aims at uniting the Tamil voices and Black voices with each other, and other voices who may be interested in bringing out the similarities of inequalities they face. There is the need for a futuristic project to create a platform to unite the voices of the discriminated and marginalised from around the world.

### **12.2 Future scope for research**

The theories in this research work have been located from Europe, USA, Latin America, Caribbean Islands, South Africa, Tamil Nadu and India. The theories have been sourced from English, French and Tamil texts. In the study, a comparison of Fanon (Martinique) and Periyar (Tamil Nadu) by a theorist is highlighted. Similarly, there is scope for the comparison of works between African and Tamil theorists like Biko and Periyar's works, and also, the comparison of African and Indian texts of Biko and Ambedkar.

The different discourses that were discussed in this study have much scope for future studies. So, the researcher has dealt with the future scope of each of the discourses from the thesis. Colourism is a newer area in academia, and it has not been explored within every spectrum of life such as marriage, employment, education, media, cinema etc. A scoping review shows it has been dealt with academically only in the USA, yet there is much scope for this area both in South Africa and India. Colourism in activism is a phenomenon which has been highlighted by the researcher for the first time in this thesis; the same phenomenon can be applied to other protest movements and social campaigns. While drafting the chapter on police brutality, which was contained within the scope of the thesis, this evoked thoughts that this could have been dealt within a thesis of its own. The police brutality chapter has included a few voices from the movements, however, there are still more stories out there still to be heard. Further, the concept of demilitarisation of education discussed in this topic has no trace of academic attention.

The race, caste, gender chapter talks about the existences of biases based on the narratives within several spectrums of life in both Tamil and South African society. The scholarly discussions on these narratives are abundant, however, there is still scope in magnifying these narratives separately and combined in various institutions such as education, employment, cinema, marriage etc. Finally, the studies of the various Tamil diasporas and South African diaspora and their transnational support to social and political activism in India and South Africa can be dealt with in detail in future research studies. The study highlights the Tamil communities settled in different countries and the South African student diaspora in the west. Future studies can be made to study these different Tamil diasporas and the South African diasporas and their diasporic and transnational politics.

### **12.3 Reformation of *Jallikattu***

The *Jallikattu* sport has beaten the ban and it is back in practise today. Yet, the death and injury of humans, cruelty towards the bulls, gender and caste bias etc. are still being practised. Firstly, the sport was banned undemocratically without involving the stakeholders present within the framework of this sport. Secondly, the sport was again allowed without creating any reformations for the reasons for which it was banned. Several people have died due to the sport, and there are allegations that the bulls are physically tortured to get them ready for the sport. The *Jallikattu* culture has witnessed the exclusion of Dalits, and women only take part in the raising of the bulls etc.

As an observer, reformations which will check the cruelty of animals, introduction of safety guards for the players, the reduction of the gender and caste bias within the sport etc. can be discussed and implemented in the sport. The ban of the sport was undemocratic because it did not engage the community involved in the sport for clarifications, insights and suggestions. Hence, in the reformation process it is important to connect the local knowledge with rational ideas and create policies for the reformation of the sport, in order to maintain the culture and sustainability for a longer extent of time.

The protests spoke about the corporate lobbying which instigated PETA India to file a case against the *Jallikattu* sport in the pretext of animal cruelty. The #*Jallikattu* protests from all over the world discoursed the interest of multinational corporates like Pepsi and Coca-Cola who have interests in entering the dairy industry in Tamil Nadu. PETA was blamed as a corporate stooge who wanted to ban the *Jallikattu* sport, and in turn, eradicate the traditional farming business interests in Tamil Nadu. Pepsi or Coca-Cola also did not take the responsibility to deny these accusations, even though this was a popular dialogue in the protests. For a short time, the beverages from these companies were boycotted by the Tamil Nadu business associations, however, it did not last very

long. These allegations were not taken further by the community or protestors, or did the government take interest in investigating these allegations.

Activism should not end with achieving the cause, and it is important to take legal actions for the people who were affected by the state sanctioned violence. The chapter on police brutality shows how populations suffered from the atrocities of the police, however, there was no legal help or cases filed against the police by the activists. This was the same case in South Africa also. The police and security forces were not put on trial for their atrocities and violence against the students.

#### **12.4 Rethinking the #FeesMustFall**

The #FeesMustFall movement was a movement with an intellectual cause, the ideas within the movement were structured with narratives of free education, decolonisation of education which would exponentially grow the intellect and thought of the youth of South Africa. However, the lack of an identity metanarrative weakened the mobilisation of the movement. The people of South Africa did not lend their support to this movement as they were not able to identify with the movement. This is where metanarratives such as religions, culture and nationalism scores, as the authorities and beneficiaries of these institutions work with words and languages that people identify with.

Rationalism is an outcome of intellectual and philosophical understanding of the world combined with the withdrawal of oneself from personal dogmas and societal, political and religious indoctrinations. The expectation of this rationalism from every citizen is a utopian dream and if achieved, the world would not suffer from inequalities and injustices. Hence, it is important for rational beings in society to understand their community and reach them with simpler language and educate them to identify with the causes that activism fights for.

At several points, the #FeeMustFall was dominated by male students ignoring the problems and issues faced by female students in South Africa. As discussed in the study, the issues of the rape of female students in South African universities, the exclusions and violence against women and the LGBTIQ+ communities within the university structures were ignored by the movement. A social justice movement needs to include the voices of all injustices and this could form a focus of future studies.

The movement was successful in terms of attaining the 0% fee hike in 2016. However, the greater discourses of the movement such free education, decolonisation of education and demilitarisation of scholarly spaces is yet to be achieved. To take the movement forward, the movement should seek for support from the Black voices, student voices and other voices with similar concerns and

create a global movement against entities which have made education an expensive feat for many. Even though the movement was not widely supported by international Black communities or third world students or activist communities, this movement was mimicked in countries like Kenya, Uganda and India. However, rather than holding separate movements in each country, the cause should consort as a global voice because the #FeesMustFall is not restricted to South Africa, it is a global issue and needs global attention and support.

### **12.5 Are democracies simulated?**

Baudrillard's (1983) *Precessions of Simulacra* has been used to identify if India and South Africa are real or simulated democracies. India is a secular country. However, there is an idea that has been propagated by political power to create a unified Indian nationalism called the Hindutva, which promotes Hinduism to be the principal religious identity of the nation, Hindu culture to be the central cultural identity of Indians and Hindi to be the national language of the country. This idea excludes the other citizens of India who do not conform to this. This idea destroys the entire point of a federal state. The fact that a person's identity is not accepted, and they are forced to learn another language or culture to stay in their own land is purely an act of Imperialism. In South Africa, Apartheid has ended politically, however inequalities in education, employment, social opportunities and poor living conditions and poverty are still existent amongst the Black population. The Apartheid government took drastic steps to favour one particular race and alienated the others, and the democratic government is rather slow in undoing the injustices of the previous regime. Colonial and Apartheid regimes created inequalities in India and South Africa, however it is crucial to acknowledge inequalities which precede these eras and still intact within Indian and South African societies. Gender based bias and inequalities precede the Apartheid era. In India, caste-based discriminations and gender inequalities precede the colonial era. Liberation and emancipation are only the first steps for post-colonial states. So, it is important to discuss and evaluate all of the existing structures in a nation which have traces of apartheid/colonialism/third-world fundamentalism. The steps of decolonisation include the emancipation of people from both injustices of apartheid/colonisation and local fundamentalisms such as casteism and gender inequality which precede colonisation.

A country has not achieved independence just because the baton of power has been passed from one hand to another. True independence can only be realised when every inequality in society has been eradicated, including the ones created by the previous oppressive regimes and the ones which have perennially existed. Baudrillard's freedom by default, Chomsky's manufacturing consent, and Foucault's normalising of power provides us with the knowledge on how oppressive systems work.

They make the people believe that the system is intrinsically good in its nature, and any problem is only due to issues at implementation or ground level due to the misunderstanding of the system. There is a popular myth amongst Indians that the caste system was never designed to be a system of inequality, rather it was just a system to divide and delegate the different roles in society. The myth is that the caste system was manipulated by the intruders, especially the British, to create inequality amongst Indians. To borrow from the research work of Arundhati Roy (2014), we can see how Indian leaders have fought really hard to keep this system intact. The Indian leaders, including Gandhi, fought vigorously to promote the caste system in Indian society, whereas some leaders, such as Ambedkar, went unheard when they called for the annihilation of the caste system. As a consolation prize, the reservation policy based on a positive discrimination was introduced in 1950 for the previously oppressed castes in education and employment, which has never achieved the ultimate equality in society even after 77 years of Independence in India.

Powerful establishments (e.g., governments and political parties) spread certain ideas to the people of their nation. They advertise and promote their ideas along with the cultural, religious and nationalist sentiments to the people who compose the majoritarian population of the nation. People are given the utmost freedom to accept or decline these ideas. They are not forced to follow these ideas, but the promotion of these ideas is so powerful that they do not have the chance to analyse if these ideas are rational or not. Also, as pride is mixed in as an important component along with these ideas, it motivates people to accept these ideas. Even though, these ideas may not be rational, people are convinced to accept and support these ideas as excessive pride diminishes self-awareness. While there may be crucial issues such as poverty, unemployment, lack of health care facilities, illiteracy, malnutrition which needs to be addressed, it might be easier to divert and distract people with a caste/religion/race/nationalism-based issues. As they are intangible issues, they can be easily fabricated and propagated, and no real time efforts or solutions are needed to deal with them. If health care needs to be addressed, the government will need to build thousands of hospitals all around the country, but a single temple, a single statue, a single pole is enough to suffice religious, casteist or nationalist pride. Real democracies deal with people's problems, however in simulated democracies, problems are fabricated and then they are dealt with.

Making sure the reach of the basic necessities such as food, clothing, shelter, education, health and sanitation to every person in a nation is not socialism, communism or some utopian dream. Nothing can be more democratic than making sure these needs are met. Democracy is about establishing the ideas of the majority of the people in a nation and in my understanding 100% of the population in any country believes in food, clothing, shelter, education, health and sanitation are important even

more than caste, religion, race or nationalism. This was so evident during the COVID-19 pandemic, when the governments shut down religious institutions, but hospitals and doctors were functioning 24/7. Whilst religious institutions were closed, people did not come to the streets in protest for the opening of religious spaces. Unanimously people understood which was more important. For this to be enhanced in everyday life, people need to be educated and their social, scientific and political inquiries need to be enhanced, in order for a democracy to function the way it is supposed to.

The thesis centrally argues that the two protest movements make visible that both India and South Africa are 'simulated' rather than authentic democracies. Even though, both the movements were progressive and revolutionary in their own terms, it can be denied that they were partly reactionary also. Colourism in activism is an outcome of an inadequacy of socio-political inquiry amongst people and organisations. Self-respect, rational and critical thinking fight against inferiority and bias based on superficial elements such as colourism, racism, casteism, nationalism and makes people choose better leaders to advance democracy. Similarly, the research highlights how the Tamil diaspora supported the cause of *#Jallikattu* protests due to the focus on metanarratives of Tamil culture, heritage and pride. However, the other issues faced by Tamil Nadu have not received the similar outrage and support by the diasporic communities. Parallely the *#FeesMustFall* movement did not receive the attention of the Black or African voices, as a result of a lack of a metanarrative of the issue of fees to be a Black or African issue. The student diasporas from South Africa and few international western activists supported the *#FMF* movement. The enhancement of socio-political inquiry, communicative action and communicative rationality in a community also steers the diasporic voices and international activists especially the communities who are challenged by similar issues in support of the contestation of deficiency of democracies in the nations.

In real democracies, the police are the arms which protects the people, the research showed how the police brutally attacked the students, protestors and the common citizenry during the two hashtag movements. Democracy promotes free speech and human rights, however, during the *#FeesMustFall* movement, the police attacked student protestors, falsely arrested Black students, molested and raped the female Black student protestors. In the *#Jallikattu* protests, the police forcefully cleared the protest grounds, they intruded slum areas and fishing community residences. They burnt a fish market and vehicles, attacked the residents and made false arrests from these areas as the marginalised will not be able to combat the police legally. Dalits who are most marginalised in Indian society were the primary victims of the arrests in Tamil Nadu during the *#Jallikattu* protests. Legacy media steered its attention toward the hashtag movements to be part of

the sensation as it is good for business. However, legacy media hid the violence committed by police which was exposed by social media in both the protest movements. Legacy media is allowed to function independently as people's media in real democracies. However, the deliberate hiding of police brutality and functioning merely as a profit-motivated institution shows the status of legacy media in India and South Africa.

In conclusion, the study confirms that both movements riddled with dominant ideologies such as colourism, patriarchy, racism, casteism, heterosexism etc impacts the democratic nature of the protest movements. The persistence of these inequalities undermines any real post-colonial freedom. Nevertheless, the thesis argues, both the movements have challenged the States, and have met with extreme police brutality, in that process the States of India and South Africa have been exposed as simulated democracies. The simulation of democracy is a philosophical measure which delineates dictatorships, autocracies, oligarchies, pseudo-democracies masquerading as real democracies. Hence, from the various discourses, narratives and the discussion in the study and the understanding of Baudrillard's Precessions of Simulacra, it can be concluded that India and South Africa, both belong to the third stage of simulation of democracy, where the simulated democracy masks the absence of a real democracy.

*A political sorcery is present  
which makes the public believe,  
we live in real democracies.*

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Appendices 01: Images of #Jallikattu Protests from the Tamil Diaspora



FB Image 4

Figure 10-6: Tamils living in Mexico staging protests for the *Jallikattu* cause.



FB Image 5

Figure 10-7: #Jallikattu protests in Curaçao



FB Image 6

Figure 10-8: #Jallikattu protests in Guyana



Figure 10-9: #Jallikattu protests in Colombia



Figure 10-10: #Jallikattu protests in Cayman Islands



Figure 10-11: #Jallikattu protests in Argentina



FB Image 10

Figure 10-12: #Jallikattu protests in Brazil



Figure 10-13: #Jallikattu protests in Uruguay



FB Image 12

Figure 10-14: #Jallikattu protests in Chile



Support Jallikattu Protest - Sweden - Indian Embassy : AmendPCA , BANPETA

Figure 10-27: Screenshot of a documentary of #Jallikattu protests at the Indian embassy in Sweden



Figure 10-31: Image of #Jallikattu Protests by Tamils students in Ukraine retrieved from Facebook





FB Image 23

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FB Image 24

Figure 10-34: #Jallikattu protests in Italy



FB Image 25

Figure 10-35: #Jallikattu protests in Poland



FB Image 26

Figure 10-36: #Jallikattu protests in Belgium



FB Image 27

Figure 10-37: #Jallikattu protests in Luxembourg



FB Image 28

Figure 10-38: #Jallikattu protests in Spain



Figure 10-39: #Jallikattu protests in Iceland



Figure 10-40: #Jallikattu protests in Finland



Figure 10-41: #Jallikattu protests in Belarus



Figure 10-42: #Jallikattu protests in Lithuania



Figure 10-43: #Jallikattu protests in Czech Republic

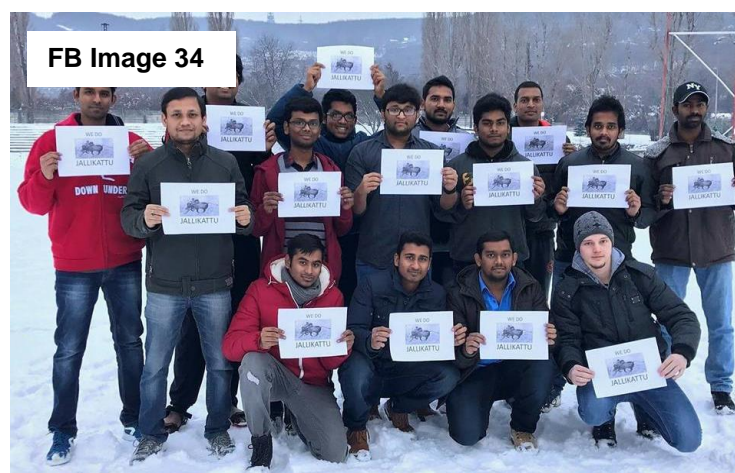


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FB Image 35

Figure 10-45: #Jallikattu protests in Georgia



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Figure 10-46: #Jallikattu protests in Turkey



Figure 10-49: A collage of the #Jallikattu protests in Dubai



Figure 10-50: #Jallikattu protests in Kuwait



Figure 10-51: A collage of #Jallikattu protests in Qatar



Figure 10-52: A collage of Saudis and Tamils in Saudi Arabia supporting the *Jallikattu* cause



FB Image 44

Figure 10-53: #Jallikattu protests in Bahrain



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Figure 10-54: #Jallikattu protests in Iraq



FB Image 46

Figure 10-55: #Jallikattu protests in Iran



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Figure 10-56: #Jallikattu protests in Kazakhstan (Central Asia)



Figure 10-57: #Jallikattu protests in Perth (Australia)



Figure 10-59: A collage of #Jallikattu protests in Sydney (Australia)



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Figure 10-62: #Jallikattu protests in Christchurch (New Zealand)



Figure 10-63: #Jallikattu protests in Auckland (New Zealand)



Figure 10-64: #Jallikattu protests in Japan



Figure 10-65: #Jallikattu protests in Vietnam



FB Image 58

Figure 10-66: #Jallikattu protests in Brunei



FB Image 59

Figure 10-67: #Jallikattu protests in China



FB Image 60

Figure 10-68: #Jallikattu protests in Taiwan



Figure 10-69: #Jallikattu protests in Myanmar



Figure 10-70: #Jallikattu protests in Indonesia



Figure 10-71: #Jallikattu protests in Philippines



Figure 10-72: #Jallikattu protests in South Korea



Figure 10-73: #Jallikattu protests in Thailand



Figure 10-74: #Jallikattu protests in Papua New Guinea



Figure 10-75: A collage #Jallikattu protests in Hong Kong



Figure 10-76: #Jallikattu protests in Cambodia



Figure 10-81: A collage #Jallikattu protests in Maldives



Figure 10-82: #Jallikattu protests in Seychelles



Figure 10-83: #Jallikattu protests in Mauritius



FB Image 74



FB Image 75

Figure 10-84: A collage #Jallikattu protests in Uganda



FB Image 76

Figure 10-85: #Jallikattu protests in Tanzania



FB Image 77

Figure 10-86: #Jallikattu protests in Ethiopia



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Figure 10-87: #Jallikattu protests in Congo



FB Image 79

Figure 10-88: A collage #Jallikattu protests in Kenya



Figure 10-89: A collage #Jallikattu protests in Egypt



Figure 10-90: #Jallikattu protests in Zambia



Figure 10-91: #Jallikattu protests in Gabon



Figure 10-92: #Jallikattu protests in Nigeria



Figure 10-93: #Jallikattu protests in Ghana



Figure 10-94: #Jallikattu protests in Algeria



FB Image 86

Figure 10-95: #Jallikattu protests in Rwanda



FB Image 87

Figure 10-96: #Jallikattu protests in Senegal



FB Image 88

Figure 10-97: #Jallikattu protests in North Sudan

## **Appendices 02: Consent Form**

### **UKZN HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (HSSREC)**

**APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL  
For research with human participants**

#### **INFORMED CONSENT RESOURCE TEMPLATE Information Sheet and Consent to Participate in Research**

You are invited to participate in the study which is conducted by Kameshwaran E. Govender who is a PhD candidate at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. I am currently under the supervision of Dr Anusharani Sewchurran, a lecturer from the Media and Cultural Studies Department (Howard College) at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. I may be contacted at +27312086929, Email: kameshgovender@gmail.com and my supervisor is Dr Anusharani Sewchurran may be contacted at: +27 31 260 2461, Email: sewchurrana@ukzn.ac.za.

The study seeks to investigate the extent to which social media tools such as Twitter and Facebook have become a viable public sphere to discourse social issues in the digital age. In so doing, this study will try to unpack the definition of public sphere in the digital context to examine how social media has worked as a public sphere in social movements. The study will further examine the challenges and opportunities of social media in becoming an alternative voice to the voiceless.

As such, the researcher believes that your participation in this study will assist him in tackling some of the questions raised above. The researcher would like to assure you that participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to withdraw your participation from the study at any point if do not feel comfortable. You are also guaranteed that your responses in this interview will be treated with confidentiality and anonymity. Where appropriate the researcher will use disguised names of respondent to maintain high level of confidentiality.

Participation in this study will take 20 - 30 minutes of your time. There are no anticipated rewards for participating in this study. By consenting to participate in this study, you also give the researcher a permission to record the conversation. You are also assured that the researcher will report the findings in such a manner which respect the right to dignity for each participant. The researcher will make available to you the result of the study when the study is concluded. The study will not necessarily pose any risks or discomfort, maybe the risks and/or discomforts the study could pose will be when/if the dissertation gets published and your views are known to the world. The study will not provide any direct benefit to participants but its stands a chance to put up a fight in gatekeeping and getting media to centre its motives around information rather than profit.

This study has been ethically reviewed and approved by the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (approval number: Ref no. HSS/00000696/19M).

In the event of any problems or concerns/questions you may contact the researcher, Kameshwaran E, Govender at +917397382607, Email: kameshgovender@gmail.com, or my supervisor, Dr Anusharani Sewchurran at: +27 31 260 2461, Email: sewchurrana@ukzn.ac.za or the UKZN Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, contact details as follows:

**HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION**  
**Research Office, Westville Campus**  
**Govan Mbeki Building**

Private Bag X 54001  
 Durban  
 4000  
 KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA  
 Tel: 27 31 2604557- Fax: 27 31 2604609  
 Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Participation in this research is purely voluntary. Participants may withdraw from participating at any point, and in the event of refusal/withdrawal of participation the participants will not incur any reprisal.

Participants will not incur any costs as a result of participation in this study.

Participants will be anonymized to protect their identity and after a period of five years the raw data will be destroyed.

-----  
**CONSENT FROM PARTICIPANT**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ have been informed about the study entitled “.....”  
 By .....

I understand the purpose and procedures of the study.

I have been given an opportunity to answer questions about the study and have had answers to my satisfaction.

I declare that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without affecting any of the benefits that I usually am entitled to.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study I understand that I may contact the researcher at (add name, phone and email address).

If I have any questions or concerns about my rights as a study participant, or if I am concerned about an aspect of the study or the researchers then I may contact:

**HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION**  
**Research Office, Westville Campus**  
**Govan Mbeki Building**

Private Bag X 54001  
 Durban  
 4000  
 KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA  
 Tel: 27 31 2604557 - Fax: 27 31 2604609  
 Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

**I hereby provide consent to:**

Audio-record my interview YES / NO  
 Video-record my interview YES / NO

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Participant Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Witness Date**

## Appendices 03: Interview Schedule

**Your name:** Kameshwaran E. Govender

**Institution:** University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, Howard Campus

**Discipline:** Media & Cultural Studies (HC)

**Degree:** PhD

**Supervisor:** Dr Anusharani Sewchurran

**Title of your study:** Social Media Activism and Simulated Democracies: A comparative exploration of #FeesMustFall (South Africa) and #Jallikattu Protests (Tamil Nadu, India).

Sign: K.E.Govender

### Questions (India):

#### Part 1 (Demographic Profile)

- What is your name and surname?
- What is your age/gender?
- What is your occupation?
- What is your mother tongue and other languages that you speak?

#### Part 2 (In depth conversation)

- Do you use social media? Which ones do you use?
- Do you think social media provides awareness on issues happening in society?
- Have you been part of the #Jallikattu Protests?
- Do you think social media played a crucial role in creating awareness about the protests?
- What do you feel about the protests? Do you feel it is necessary?
- Has #Jallikattu protests triggered political consciousness in you?
- Do you feel satisfied with the decisions of the government regarding #Jallikattu protests?
- Are you aware about the other on-going protests in Tamil Nadu (India)?
- Do you feel social media can bring about social change in society?
- Do you think you have the power to question the government? Do you think social activists are safe in India?
- What do you feel about federalism in India? Do you think the government should give states more power?
- What are your thoughts on the political climate of India? Can India really be considered a Democracy?

**Questions (South Africa):****Part 1 (Demographic Profile)**

- What is your name and surname?
- What is your age?
- What is your gender?
- What is your occupation?
- What is your mother tongue and other languages that you speak?

**Part 2 (In depth conversation)**

- Do you use social media? Which ones do you use?
- Do you think social media provides awareness on issues happening in society?
- Have you been part of the #FeesMustFall movement?
- Do you think social media played a crucial role in creating awareness about social movements?
- What do you feel about the social movement?
- Has #FeesMustFall movement triggered political consciousness in you?
- Do you feel satisfied with the decisions of the government regarding #FeesMustFall movement?
- Do you feel social media can bring about social change in society?
- Do you think you have the power to question the government? Do you think social activists are safe in South Africa?
- Do you think the racial discriminations of the past has been overcome in South Africa? Do you think the government needs to take more steps to eradicate the injustices of the past?
- What are your thoughts on the political climate of India? Can South Africa really be considered a Democracy?

## Appendices 04: Ethical Clearance



UNIVERSITY OF  
KWAZULU-NATAL  
INYUVESI  
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

31 October 2019

Mr Kameshwaran Envernathan Govender (215082367)  
School of Arts  
Howard College Campus

Dear Mr Govender,

**Protocol reference number:** HSS/00000696/019M

**Project title:** Social Media Activism and Simulated Democracies: A comparative exploration of #FeesMustFall (South Africa) and #Jallikattu Protests (Tamil Nadu, India)

### Approval Notification – Expedited Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application received on 22 October 2019 in connection with the above, was reviewed by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**

**Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.**

This approval is valid for one year from 31 October 2019.

To ensure uninterrupted approval of this study beyond the approval expiry date, a progress report must be submitted to the Research Office on the appropriate form 2 - 3 months before the expiry date. A close-out report to be submitted when study is finished.

Yours sincerely,



Professor Urmilla Bob  
University Dean of Research

/ms

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee  
Dr Rosemary Sibanda (Chair)  
UKZN Research Ethics Office Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building  
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000  
Website: <http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics/>

Founding Campuses: ■ Edgewood ■ Howard College ■ Medical School ■ Pietermaritzburg ■ Westville

INSPIRING GREATNESS

## Appendices 05: Plagiarism Report



Turnitin Originality Report  
 Social media activism and simulated democracies by Kameshwaran Govender  
 From Kameshwaran E Govender (MA and PhD)

- Processed on 11-Aug-2023 6:51 AM CAT
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