



VOICING A RETURN: EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF THE BPO SECTOR ON THE ANGLO-INDIAN COMMUNITY IN SECUNDERABAD

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ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes the impact that a generation of job opportunities in the BPO (business process outsourcing) sector—also known as call-centre unit— has had on the Anglo-Indian community in the Secunderabad-Hyderabad region. Possessing an unparalleled communicative proficiency in English, the community quickly forayed into the Information Technology (referred to as IT hereafter) sector boom that the region has experienced since the mid-1990s. In many ways, this proved to be a turning point for the less privileged members of the community who found themselves financially constrained after the retraction of reservations in jobs in the 1960s. In terms of livelihood, the BPO sector became a launching pad for better job opportunities and much more besides. Based on the findings arrived at through a series of surveys and interviews, my paper investigates how the community has negotiated the socio-economic shifts brought about by the arrival of IT companies. In this context, I will also examine the sustainability of hopes among Anglo-Indians that the IT revolution had promised in its initial years.

INTRODUCTION: THE ANGLO-INDIAN COMMUNITY IN SECUNDERABAD

The beginnings of the Anglo-Indian community in the Hyderabad-Secunderabad region can be traced back to the emergence of the cantonment town of Secunderabad as a railway hub in the closing decades of the nineteenth century. Developing a railway network in the area had been a long standing ambition of the British to further their interests in the Deccan by maintaining a strategic presence in the region (Jaganath, 2013, p. 69). Speedy movements of troops and personnel required connectivity with other parts of the country which the railways provided. This

in turn required the presence and expertise of the Anglo-Indian community who had taken the lead in railway operations elsewhere in British India. A large settlement of Anglo-Indians grew as the base of railway operations in Secunderabad expanded to serve not only as a gateway to the interior regions of the South and the Deccan but also as the nodal point for the operations of the Nizam's extensive railway. Over the years Secunderabad came to acquire its own distinct identity, was classified as a twin town to Hyderabad, and posed a demographic contrast to its bigger twin. An overwhelming majority of the population in Secunderabad comprised officials serving the Raj—Europeans, Anglo-Indians and people of other communities from all across the country—as opposed to Nizam-administered Hyderabad which was dominated by local Telugu speaking Hindus or Urdu speaking Muslims (Kochattil, 2011).

With the armed forces and the railways as the biggest employers, Secunderabad was home to people from all over the country, a large proportion of whom were Anglo-Indians. Certain pockets of the new town soon became places where members of the community set up large residential clusters. The legacy of these first settlements is evident to this day in the high concentration of Anglo-Indians in and around areas such as Lallaguda, Mettuguda, Bowenpally, Walker's Town, and Gunrock. Over the years the community flourished, despite uneasy relations with the British and persistent difficulty in identifying with the other Indian communities. The better off among them enjoyed enviable status among the elite of the town.

The fortunes of the community took a beating, however, in the wake of independence and even earlier as the nationalist movement gathered steam. Incidents such as the controversy regarding the introduction of the Ilbert Bill in 1883¹ alienated the community from both the British and the Indians. Matters came to a head when the community was confronted with the prospect of being increasingly isolated from the national mainstream in the aftermath of independence. Most Anglo-Indians with access to some political and cultural capital—those better placed in the bureaucratic ladder and in closer proximity to the corridors of power in the Raj—chose to migrate. As Karen Isaksen Leonard notes, policies of selective immigration prevalent in countries like Australia until the 1960s allowed only those Anglo-Indians with verifiable British ancestry to migrate, deepening a divide between those who could leave and those who stayed back (Leonard 2007, p. 112). The

benchmark for this privilege was, therefore, determined not merely by economic means but also by one's perceived social acceptability, based on ancestry, among the English.

Members of the community with limited financial means had to stay back. Frank Anthony, the foremost among the community's representatives in the Parliament at this time is alleged to have gone to the extent of labelling the Anglo-Indians who stayed back as the "last dregs in a cup of tea carelessly stirred" (Female, 62 year old, social worker, Secunderabad, August 09, 2014). Despite the seemingly disparaging and even offensive tone of this attributed remark, migration patterns within the community appear to follow a similar trend today with migrating abroad being the exclusive forte of the relatively rich, the upper middle classes, and those with access to considerable cultural capital. Migration of the Anglo-Indians to places outside India during the years following independence was then spurred largely by fears of a socio-cultural backlash.

Another negative turn in the fortunes of the community in Secunderabad came with the phasing out of reserved employment provisions in the railways in 1967 (Williams 2000).² The loss of railway jobs eroded stable employment opportunities and increased unemployment especially among the youth of the community. Faced with an uncertain future, many among them were forced to take up underpaid jobs in the hospitality and services sectors. It was around this time that the stereotypical association of young Anglo-Indian men and women with bartenders and cabaret dancers originated. Such stereotypes distanced them from the largely conservative core of the other communities in Hyderabad-Secunderabad area. Even grimmer was the fallout in school education. The diminishing disposable income for many of the families meant that education, especially for girls, came to be perceived as something of a luxury. In the view of one participant, a high dropout rate among school-aged girls resulted which adversely affected the prospects of the community as a whole (Female, 62 year old, social worker, Secunderabad, August 09, 2014). Practices of identity formation among the Anglo-Indians in the Secunderabad-Hyderabad area remain informed by this double-bind of an overall socio-economic backwardness and a consistent trend of migration in search of better prospects.

THE VOICE PROCESSING JOBS IN THE NINETIES

It is within this context that this paper seeks to make a closer study of the nature and scope of the impact of the proliferation of the BPO units for members of the community. The substantial socio-economic changes triggered by the emergence of the city as a major IT hub following economic liberalization in the early 1990s, appear to have constituted something of a game changer for the community. This is without doubt a phenomenon quite unique to the area and without parallel elsewhere in the country. While other cities with significant Anglo-Indian populations, such as Bangalore and Pune, did witness considerable job generation following the IT boom, the focus of the firms being set up in those areas has leaned more towards highly specialized engineering and technical aspects of the field. The BPO units set up by the IT companies in Hyderabad, on the other hand, acted as front offices for the software development and engineering departments in the city and elsewhere. While limited access to higher education impeded Anglo-Indian prospects in the engineering departments, flair and command over the English language ensured their sizeable presence in the BPO offices.

The IT boom saw several prominent software companies set up in Hyderabad, a majority of which were the 'techie think-tanks,' and the BPOs assisted these offices by way of initiating and managing channels of communication between them and their clientele at home and abroad.³ Business in this scenario was largely controlled and monitored on the basis of the dynamics of these BPOs. Strategies of communication and connectivity with the existing and potential customer base across the world are the primary factors that determined the acceptability of a particular firm in the larger global market. This in turn created a major base for outsourcing jobs related to voice processing, whereby the clientele abroad were to be served and assisted in their purchases and their complaints by trained personnel in India.⁴ As was made abundantly clear in the course of the interviews, their fluency and clarity of English diction and communication skills provided an employment advantage to Anglo-Indians, which many capitalized upon. One of the respondents noted: "I would say our diction, our fluency, our command over the English language (was) obviously ahead for a long time of the English spoken by the local Telugu people" (Male, 47 years old, a former BPO employee, Personal Interview, November

12, 2014). Their competence in the field thus left them without peer for a long time and they enjoyed prominence for over a decade.

The IT boom and the resulting inflow of capital also led the twin cities to develop by the mid-nineties into a single metropolis marking a decisive end to the somewhat laid-back charm the two 'towns' used to enjoy up until the eighties. This spurred substantial change in the demographics of both Secunderabad and Hyderabad as large numbers of people moved in from all across the country and even from neighbouring countries in South Asia. Prospects for the Anglo-Indians seemed to be on an upward swing from the 1990s with many preparing to capitalize on the IT boom that was coming to have a major impact on the socio-economic dynamics of the twin cities. What simultaneously registered a significant impact on the socio-cultural milieu of the Anglo-Indian community, however, was the tendency of intra-urban migration. Localities such as Mettuguda, Lallaguda and Gunrock, which were almost exclusively dominated by Anglo-Indian households now became increasingly more diverse and housed people from other communities too (Male, 62 years old, retired school teacher, October 17, 2011). Added to this was the shrinking numbers within the community itself due to continuous emigration. The IT revolution and the socio-economic ramifications it registered on the urbanscape of Secunderabad and Hyderabad thus seems to have been *prima facie* a mixed blessing for the community.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

This paper examines the anticipation and increasing aspirations for upward mobility in the community that preceded the advent of the BPOs, the initial impact registered by the transition, and the extent to which these expectations were realized and fulfilled. In the process, I also analyze the ways in which the members of the community adapted and responded to the BPO's novelty as a professional sector and the perceptual shifts that such responses underwent in the course of the last two decades.

METHOD OF STUDY

The paper grew out of a study conducted for the 'Anglo-Indians in Small Towns of India' project.⁵ Aimed broadly at understanding the contemporary socio-economic

standing of the community in the Secunderabad-Hyderabad area, a modified version of the common the questionnaire for the project was later deployed in order to specifically assess the impact of the IT industry and the BPOs in particular on the fortunes of the community. The questionnaire laid special emphasis on questions with regard to homing, amenities, level of qualification and other socio-economic determinants. In a departure from the original questionnaire, the one used for Secunderabad-Hyderabad had the questions pertaining to the above divided into sections labelled 'Earlier' and 'Later'. This was done to elicit specific responses on changes in socio-economic conditions before and after their work experiences at call centres.

An explanation for Hyderabad's inclusion in a project expressly focused on small towns is in order. While Hyderabad is not exactly a small town, it merits mention in the project by dint of Secunderabad's qualification as a small town. This especially makes sense when one considers that the greater concentration of the Anglo-Indians in the Hyderabad Metropolitan region has historically lived in the Secunderabad area. Sizeable Anglo-Indian colonies continue to exist in many of the above mentioned localities to this day and bolster Secunderabad's unchallenged position as a locale of preference for most members of the community. Added to this is the fact that the Anglo-Indian community in Secunderabad, like elsewhere in India, identifies itself as a largely urban community. The community's presence in the urban landscape of Secunderabad is thus a major marker of their identity as Anglo-Indians. In view of this, a study of the changes brought forth in the Secunderabad area by the Hyderabad-based BPOs is also a study of a small town contending with issues typical of much of India's late twentieth century urbanization—a process of transformation that bypasses the small town and at the same time registers upon it a discernible impact.

The surveys were followed up by focus group interviews comprising members of the community who had been employed and involved with the BPO in some employment capacity. Responses garnered from this exercise triggered a range of appraisals, criticisms and discussion from the focus group members. This in turn helped consolidate the data previously gathered from the questionnaire. Using the contacts I had built up in the course of my interactions with the members of the group

interviews, I followed the study with a round of individual interviews. Some of the ideas that had been raised in the course of the conversation were raised again and critiqued during some of these one-on-one interviews. By and large however, a degree of concurrence with the earlier positions was discernible across the board. While excerpts from the interview have been extensively quoted all through this paper, I have withheld the names of the interviewees in keeping with standard practice to protect their privacy.

Responses were tabulated to account for the change in perception about the sector among two major age groups that made up my target respondents for this research. The degree to which socio-economic and political spaces that the BPO sector was expected to make available and could actually in the end deliver, is also shown in Table 1. Using the collected data, it was possible to map the extent of the shifts and contextualize these within the dynamics of a globalized economy that became characteristic of cities such as Hyderabad, beginning in the early 1990s.

Table 1

Range of opinions with regard to BPOs	35-45 (Total respondents: 30)	46-55 (Total respondents: 23)
Expected the BPOs to be something of an economic game changer	28	19
Believe that the BPO has lived up to the expectations	16	7
Saw/still see the job sector as a prospective rallying point by way of political/pressure group formations	13	6
Consider a call-centre job as fairly respectable	22	5
Consider that call-centre jobs registered an overall negative impact on the social, cultural make-up of the community	5	14

Table 1: Changing Economic, Political and Social Perception about the BPO Sector among the Anglo-Indians in Secunderabad, disaggregated according to age, with findings consolidated by the author based on the responses to the questionnaire

ANALYSIS

The Initial Years

In the course of answering the questionnaire, and in the interviews that followed, respondents were unanimous in voicing a feeling that they had greeted the coming of the BPOs in Hyderabad with optimism. Almost everybody in the community at that time seemed to believe this emerging job sector held the promise of a much needed turnaround for the community. Indeed, the rhetoric of optimism, evident in remarks such as “that was a great thing to happen” (Male, 42 years old, former BPO professional, November 12, 2014), concurs with the numbers shown in Table 1. As will be discussed, this general feeling of buoyancy was not in the least because the BPOs also seemed to be able to provide something of a springboard to more lucrative career options. With the flexible work regimen typical of the sector, enrolling for what was thought to be temporary employment at a BPO served as a strategy for many to accrue capital before venturing out for better employment opportunities.

The unparalleled flair, accuracy and command of English that most members of the community possessed also meant they were among the most obvious choices for recruiters looking for competent professionals to give the sector an advantage in Hyderabad. This was because proficiency in English for most Anglo-Indians included grammatical competence and a more than acceptable accent to ‘western’ ears, as well as fluency in ‘western’ colloquialisms. Both the interviews and the surveys revealed that members of the community appeared quite comfortable and confident of their communicative abilities. That they believed themselves to wield considerable leverage over the ‘locals’ (by this they meant the other communities) in the sector was exemplified by what one of the respondents observed: “our fluency, our command over the English language, is obviously ahead of the English spoken by the local Telugu people... Our diction is clearer so that was something positive, our strength” (Male, 52 years old, former BPO employee, November 12, 2014). A shared sense of being the most deserving of the BPO jobs by virtue of this advantage was thus clearly implied.

The promise of better times that the BPOs seemed to guarantee was not restricted to ramifications within the community alone. That the changes promised to bring prospects of improvement in overall social standing vis-a-vis other communities was

also a major attraction for Anglo-Indians. Many looked forward to cashing in on what the jobs had to offer by way of providing hitherto unimagined opportunities to connect with the global forces of production, exchange and commerce. Not surprisingly then, this also appeared for some as a means of joining the socio-economic mainstream of the country not just as participants but as cutting-edge entrepreneurs.

Negotiating the Mainstream

Forging relations with the mainstream has always been something of a dilemma for members of the Anglo-Indian community (Parker, 2015, p.30). As the interviews revealed, the problematic of identifying with the mainstream involved making a conscious choice between the extent one wished to identify with what a respondent referred to as “the mannerisms and ways of the locals” (Female, 41 years old, homemaker, October 17, 2011) and the degree to which one preserved an essential identity of ‘Anglo-Indianness’. A section of the respondents, particularly the elderly, were somewhat wary of economic mobility occurring at the expense of socio-economic ties that have traditionally knit the community close together. As Table 1 shows, this was not a perception shared by the younger members of the community.

This polarization of opinions points to a larger question pertaining to the extent of the identification with other communities that has left Anglo-Indians in present day Secunderabad caught in the midst of an unresolved dilemma. This has to do with having to choose and decide on the degree and extent of identification with the mainstream without jeopardizing their distinct identity. The dilemma also found expression in the responses of the Anglo-Indians to the changes brought about by the BPOs. The massive rate of job creations that this triggered and the slew of opportunities that became available to members of the community created a range of possibilities that the community as a potential cultural and political group could have used to their advantage. In other words, the members of the community as a cohesive group might have used the BPO workspace as an arena in which they could decide the extent of interaction with the mainstream and the degree to which they would tap into it. That is precisely where the community appears to have faltered however.

Individual Competitiveness and Lack of Group Activism

The very success story that the BPOs brought into being became something of a bane at a later stage. The initial breakthroughs that members of the community achieved as employees in the BPO firms generated and encouraged a competitive work environment where the prospects of a lucrative yet limited range of career and employment opportunities became available to a wide range of candidates, each of whom could be potential employees of these companies. While this served the interests of the corporations well, it simultaneously outdid the necessity as felt by some among the community to assert their presence in the sector as a cohesive unit through political channels and pressure groups. One of the respondents astutely observed: "When you are talking about career and you are talking about unity, it's hard. It's a very competitive market and everyone is ambitious. So it's like the Indian story where you press him down to go on top" (Male, 47 years old, a former BPO employee, November 12, 2014). Efforts to advance the interests of members of the community were largely individual; effective mechanisms of appropriation, so common to most other forms of identity politics in the country, did not emerge in the case of Anglo-Indians.

An inability to come up with forums to put forth their opinions as a collective appears to have cost the community dearly in the long run. While not particularly common, political activism in the form of labour movements and social pressure groups are making inroads into the Indian corporate sector. Trade unions run by the Dalit communities in states such as Karnataka could have served as exemplary models for the Anglo-Indians in Hyderabad.⁶ Studies also show how, in a significant break from the trends of the early years, unions have been able to breach the restrictions placed by IT industries on labour activism (Sarkar, 2008, p.1054). The community's failure to tap into this alliance of identity politics and trade unionism is something that has adversely affected their interests and rendered virtually invisible the members of the community employed in the sector. According to some of the respondents involved at some stage of their career in the sector, this appears to have impacted on their prospects of promotions as well, and resulted in a lack of incentive that has led to stagnation or diminishing fortunes. Not being recognized despite consistently good performance led to a declining preference among Anglo-Indians for jobs in the

BPO sector. This is evident in Table 1 from the gap in numbers between those expecting the sector to be a game changer by way of socio-economic transformation back in the nineties and those of the opinion of this transformation being actually realized in the present day context.

Bereft of any group-based, identity-oriented, socio-political role or commitment, the Anglo-Indian worker employed in the BPOs of Hyderabad, turned out to be just another competitive voice-processing professional among many. A promising platform or a rallying point was thus lost to the community. As a result, enthused as they were by the initial prospects the BPO sector held for them, in the span of nearly a couple of decades the 'IT boom' looks more like a missed opportunity for the members of the community who failed to forge in the work sector of their choice an arena for socio-political cohesion within the aegis of their work environment. The space for asserting its identity, that the community could have rightfully claimed given their contribution to the sector at its earliest stages, never really materialized and the members of the community found themselves steadily side-lined within the BPO sector as well. One of the first-wave employees in the BPO sector observed: "Presence of Anglos in the BPO sector has gone down. More and more people from the other communities have been joining in recent years. It [the number of Anglo-Indians in the sector] is definitely less today than when I joined" (Female, 33 years old, BPO employee, November 12, 2014).

Later Concerns

The other aspect of this phenomenon of side-lining that I observed within the community itself was with regard to the advisability of the BPO as a career choice. Lukewarm responses from more sceptical quarters of the community have become something of the norm in more recent times. The increasingly influential role of the BPOs in the socio-economic life of the community, as a preferred career option was not welcome amongst all sections of the community to begin with. While for some, the BPOs did seem to pave the way for better opportunities and a more secure future, others interpreted the BPO as a very sophisticated version of blue-collar jobs and attached negative attributes to it such as stress, underpayment, and overwork. This in turn had ramifications at the level of the socio-economic self-definition of the community. An invisible hierarchy emerged within the community where working at

the call centres came to be regarded as the new “low-income group” (Female, 49 years old, homemaker, November 12, 2014) and evoked some derisive responses in certain quarters within the community.

In a study documenting the shifts brought about in the urban employment scenario by the BPO sector, Jonathan Murphy notes its association with the prospect of quick money (Murphy 2011, p. 420). While many in the community were alert to the promises this held, such possibilities were frowned upon by others who made links between quick money and the risk of inconsistency it brought in its wake. This was particularly noticeable in the insecurities of the older generation who had always regarded these jobs with a trace of suspicion. Hints of opposition or concern from parents whose children went out to work in the BPOs surfaced in responses such as this:

IT keeps changing and stress is high. [Pay/Remuneration] Packages keep changing so you have to keep up with changes...there is no certainty [and there's] stress. I didn't want him to get into the IT industry because he would have to struggle. He could have gone into business administration. (Female, 67 years old, homemaker, October 17, 2011)

The situation was further complicated as job opportunities shrunk over the years and the employment scenario in the BPO sector became increasingly competitive and less promising.

Present-Day Perceptions among Former Employees

A curious form of self-defensive stigma was manifest in the responses of many BPO employees to the above mentioned turn of events. Those working at the BPOs no longer seemed to identify with their work with the degree of pride that had been characteristic of so many of them in the initial years of the IT revolution. When asked for a general appraisal of the current scenario of work in the sector, one of the respondents clarified:

Now the standard of the call centres, the kind of people they are taking in, the kind of work they are expected to do and the pay they are getting is not satisfactory. They [the companies] feel they can get cheap labour at a low pay package. (Female, 43 years old, former BPO employee, personal Interview, November 12, 2014)

The BPOs have definitely declined in favour and no longer occupy the place of pride they once did among the job profiles of the community. There was, as a result, a palpable sense of reluctance to identify with the profession. A second and slightly less negative response to work at the BPO was that of construing it as a very temporary launching pad. This also indicates a large scale shift in professional choices, with more and more among the younger generation of the community attempting entrepreneurship-oriented professions. Pointing out the decline in preference for a career in the BPO sector, one of the respondents said: "I think most of us are the entrepreneur types so we move into call centres but would rather be our own bosses, move out and start off something of our own" (Female, 43 years old, BPO employee, 12 November, 2014). While this relegation of the BPO to something of a temporary employment option is fairly consistent with the earlier trends, this appeared to have become even more pronounced in recent years.

Converging Stereotypes

Harassment in the workplace proved to be a further deterrent, particularly among the women members of the community, against considering BPO sector employment. For many of the members of the community interviewed, especially those into their fifth year of work at the BPOs or more, the multiple markers of identification as a woman, and an Anglo-Indian working with the BPO sector, appear to invite disparagement and a stance of subtle and guarded discrimination. According to one of the respondents:

It (discrimination) is not always very pronounced at work...that comes with it. Then when they see the professional side of you only, they say she is *normal*. Just because you are an Anglo-Indian you go for parties and do the things that are expected of you. (Female, 29 years old, BPO employee, personal Interview, November 12, 2014, italics are mine)

Responses such as these suggest at least some instances of female Anglo-Indian employees having to put up with a convergence of sexual typifying and ethnic marking in workplaces that label and identify them on the basis of certain stereotypical, overwhelmingly sartorial traits. These ultimately serve as the basis for formulating and passing moral judgments, not only on the women but also on the community as a whole, and simultaneously points to a unique instance of ethno-sexual indexing in the BPO sector in Hyderabad.

CONCLUSION

This paper aimed to analyze the present-day views of the Anglo-Indian community in the Secunderabad-Hyderabad region in relation to employment in IT-based BPO jobs in the early 1990s. Responses gathered from the questionnaires and the interviews suggest that the Anglo-Indians almost unanimously saw the BPOs as a welcome turnaround in the fortunes of the community in the initial years of the IT boom in cities such as Hyderabad. The previous three plus decades of marginalization in the social life of the twin cities and in matters of policy making had left the community impoverished in terms of economic as well as cultural capital. The BPO sector furnished something of an imaginary resurgence for the community by opening up a slew of economic opportunities and facilitated a degree of social mobility previously lost to the community. Associating with the newly emergent corporate sector also shaped the community's changing dynamics of interaction with the social and economic mainstream in a fast transforming cityscape.

The enthusiasm of the initial years appears to have given way to a more cautious and guarded appraisal of the BPO jobs in recent times. Members of the community once employed at BPOs concede their inability to capitalize on the opportunities the new job sector had paved way to. This was particularly true on the social and political fronts and I felt there was also an underlying sense of deficit with regard to rallying the Anglo-Indian employees together to voice demands that could extend beyond bringing benefits to individual workers. It is a sign of hope, however, that interviewees did not pass off the resulting invisibility of the community in today's BPO sector as integration. In fact, they were acutely aware of the connection between the impediments of this invisibility at the larger community level and the individual cases of subtle discrimination and even harassment that many Anglo-Indians had to face in the workplace.

A more lasting impact of the BPO boom on the community has played out along a somewhat unexpected trajectory. An increasing number of the younger generation Anglo-Indian BPO employees use the experience gathered in the sector not merely to launch themselves as successful professionals in subsequent jobs but also to venture into their own small to medium start-up businesses. Facebook pages such as *Anglo-Indian Entrepreneurs* (www.facebook.com/Anglo.Indian.Entrepreneur)

aimed at bringing together the enterprising members of the community to show a collective presence in tier two metropolitan cities such as Hyderabad today. This decisive shift to a more entrepreneurial career choice with flexible work patterns increasingly defines the social, economic and cultural experiences of life and livelihood for the Anglo-Indian community in the Secunderabad-Hyderabad area.

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NOTES

¹ In February 1883 the then Viceroy of India Lord Ripon, tried introducing the Ilbert Bill which sanctioned the trial of Europeans and people of European origin by Indian judges in the district courts. Faced with stiff opposition-especially from the Anglo-Indian community-the government was forced to withdraw this bill. The amended bill introduced in 1884 retained the provision for trial by Indian judges while also granting the European and Anglo-Indian defendants the benefit of trial by a jury half of whose members were to be Europeans. For further details on how the Ilbert Bill controversy distanced the community from the Indians and in some measure the British, refer to Christine Dobbin (1965).

² For more on the North-South debates pertaining to reservation for the community and its classification as a 'Backward Community', refer to Blair Williams (2000).

³ While other industries also do enlist BPO services, they are overwhelmingly identified in the IT hubs with the call centres that function as ancillaries to major IT companies. Hence the terms call centres and BPOs are used interchangeably here.

⁴ Voice processing involves front office department in the IT companies dedicated to being in direct contact with the customers and troubleshooting their problems. Slightly less common voice processing work involves calling up prospective and existing customers by way of a promotional and marketing strategy and is commonly referred to as 'outbound' processing.

⁵ A project supported by the New Zealand India Research Initiative (NZIRI), the 'Anglo-Indians in Small Town India' project aimed to profile Anglo-Indians in some of India's 'small towns': railway colonies and hill stations in particular in the states of Kerala, Goa, West Bengal and the Union Territory of Pondicherry.

⁶ Refer: Special Correspondent. (2007, November 12). Dalits to Launch Trade Union. *The Hindu*. Retrieved from: <http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-karnataka/dalits-to-launch-trade-union/article1946608.ece>

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