

## Religious Minorities: their sense of insecurity, anxiety and threat with special reference to Rohinton Mistry's novel 'Family Matters'

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**Abstract:** The paper presents religious minorities especially Parsis, Muslims and Christians who feel sense of insecurity, anxiety and threat in a dominated culture through different time periods and crisis as presently felt by Muslims and Dalits. Rohinton Mistry has written three novels Such a Long Journey (1991), A Fine Balance (1996) and Family Matters (2002). He has portrayed India in his works. Although he left his homeland India, and is immigrant writer, but his novels are true picture of India in its social, political and cultural sense. His novels often deal with the life of Indians who suffer from communal disharmony, religious and caste discriminations, religious Chauvinism, ethnicity and cultural diversities. His novels mainly present realistic picture of the minority community of the Parsi people, its fears, anxieties, sense of insecurity, helplessness because of the political uncertainties. He raises some problems of minorities and cultural crisis which are the main issues under the subaltern studies, a key term of post-colonial theory. This paper would present Rohinton Mistry's novel Family Matters in which he has shown these minority issues after the time of demolition of Babri Mosque. Besides these it will present the threat of declining population of Parsis.

**Keywords:** Religious Minorities, Sense of Insecurity, Anxieties, Religious Chauvinism, Threat of Decline.

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Date of Submission: 28-08-2016

Date of acceptance: 08-09-2017

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### I. INTRODUCTION

Rohinton Mistry is the most prominent English writers of Post- Independence India. He has written three novels: *Such a Long Journey* (1991), *A Fine Balance* (1996) and *Family Matters* (2002). He has portrayed India in his works. Although he left his homeland India, is an immigrant writer, but his novels are true picture of India in its social, political and cultural sense. Rohinton Mistry in his novels have presented the grim view of Indian life, and have observed the sufferings of the marginalized people, minority communities, the poor and the downtrodden of the Indian society. His novels deal with the backdrop of the Post-Independence history of India. They have included all important events of India since Independence. He raises some problems of minorities and cultural crisis which are the main issues under the subaltern studies, a key term of post-colonial theory. The present paper is the study of Religious minorities especially Parsis, Muslims and Christians who feel sense of insecurity, fear and threat in a dominated culture in different time periods or crisis as presently felt by Muslims and Dalits in India. My Study attention of present paper would be on Rohinton Mistry's novel Family Matters in which he has shown these minority issues after the time of demolition of Babri Mosque. Besides these it will present the threat of declining population of Parsis which is the serious matter of concern as a secular country.

It is necessary to steam out the hatred, misconceptions through proper channels. It has been observed that race, ethnicity or majority are controlling factors on the ideology and cultural make up of particular place. The drift between ethnic culture and majority culture often gives rise to unrest in the National life. In such times of crisis, it is necessary to come in terms of reality by admitting and respecting the differences as a vital aspect of human existence and inculcating tolerance towards other i.e. religion, cultural, national, ethnic and lingual etc.

Literature is a powerful tool in the hands of writers to modulate and change Societal framework. Mistry in his works seek to contribute the process of change that has already started the world over, involving a reconsideration of minorities, their rights and status, and radical restructuring of a social thought. Mistry like other Parsi writers distribute the world which is free of dominance and hierarchy, a world that rests on the principles of Justice and equality and is truly human.

India is a country of tremendous religious and cultural diversity but this diversity often leads to anarchy where some cultures get subjugated and others dominate. The dominated one enter a zone of silence which is

rather difficult to access. Then the responsibility falls upon the writers to highlight such 'others' and raise their voice which has been still unheard. Ethnicity and cultural identity has become the major issues in the multicultural, multi- ethnic and pluralist Nations. Rohinton Mistry successfully bring out the marginalization of the ever dwindling Parsi community only various counts in this turmoil ridden world. Mistry has the capacity to mix Universal themes with the particularity of individual lines. His works are an expression of Parsi sensibility that are rooted in the community in which he has been raised. He has not only raise the problems of Parsi community but other communities also.

***Present issues of minorities:***

Today, as we are aware about the matter of fact that the different religious minorities feel sense of insecurity, anxiety and threat because of rapidly growing problems in India on the basis of nationalism, religion, food ban like beef, Gaa-rakshak, love Jihad, Islamophobia etc. we see India's shift from egalitarianism to majoritarianism in the character of our nationalism carriers, of course, particularly dangerous consequences for minorities. We as a secular state no longer aspire to transform our society and hardly attempt to examine it. All our national attention seems insidiously focused on the affairs and issues of Muslims and Dalits. Past few months their whole way of life is dissected, analyzed and critiqued on prime time on a regular basis. Nowadays, burning issues of country like India seems; what Muslims eat, what Muslims wear, how they pray, how they divorce and so on. It is not because of common Hindu but it is all about the game of different political leaders and conservative religious preachers who make their ends with sacrifice of human concern. These are not only in Hindu religion but also in other religions like, in Muslim, Christians, Parsis etc. The Hindu right wing has started a concerted campaign against all religious minorities including Muslims. The main features of this campaign include protests against the so-called love jihad, *gharwapsi* (homecoming) initiatives which convert Muslims and Christians back to Hinduism. Attacks centered on cow-related issues have been seen over the past eight years, but, past few months, it rapidly increased as we can be witnessed through media whether it would be print, electronic, social media or Google searches with keywords that included; cow vigilantes, Gau-Rakshaks, beef lynching, cow slaughter, cattle thieves, beef smugglers and cattle traders. Recently imposed a ban on beef trading or as a food are increased the sense of insecurity, threat, fear among not only Muslims but other minorities also like Dalits who are becoming the victims of mob lynching. The ban on beef disproportionately harm poor Muslims and Dalits working in meat and leather industries. These are the signs of growing intolerance and a gradual process of de-secularization which do not bode well for religious minorities in India. Regarding with this matter recently the protest was held at different places in India like, at JantarMantaretc. in Delhi against these mob lynching on minorities entitled as 'Not in My Name' by all religious communities including common Hindus also. Another matter of concern is that the Parsis community is declining day by day. Most of the Parsi writers has raised the declining community threat in their works. The work is not focusing negative criticism on any specific religion but it covers some bad events in India where minorities are often becoming the victims of crisis under which they feel sense of insecurity. Similarly, Rohinton Mistry has capture some bad events in which minorities especially Parsis and Muslims feel some sense of insecurity in a dominated culture after the demolition of Babri Mosque.

***Rohinton Mistry's matter of concern:***

Parsis are the most colonized people as they migrate to different parts of world particularly America, Canada and India. Post-coloniality becomes a major theme and preoccupation in the works of the minorities especially Parsi writers like Rohinton Mistry. He depicts how Parsis interact with the rest of the populace around them whether in India, America, Britain and Canada.

Post- independence Parsi writing in English is ethnocentric as Nilofer E. Bharucha points out, "The Parsis are single largest group of ethno-religious/Minority discourse practitioners amongst Indian English writers" Bharucha (2003a). Obviously, their literature is characterized by both ethnocentric and minority discourse features. It depicts all concerns of the modern day Parsis. Parsis, being the miniscule minority in India experiences ethnic anxieties. They feel insecure, experience identity crisis and feel threatened by possible submersion in the dominant Hindu culture, and a feeling of nightmarish which they do not ever want to come true. Besides, the sense of insecurity and identity crisis, there are other disturbing ethnic features like declining population, low birth rate, late marriages, high rate of divorce, attitudes to the girl child, alienation, urbanization etc. All these issues find expression in the works of post-independence Parsi writer Rohinton Mistry.

There are Parsi writers whose literature is considered community specific like Rohinton Mistry in *Tales from FirozshaBaag* and *Such a Long Journey*, Firdaus Kanga in *Trying to Grow*, Farrukh Dhondy in *Bombay Duck* and Bapsi Sidhwa in *The Crow Eaters* and *The Pakistani Bridge*. They are all sensitive to their community's aspirations and frustrations, hopes and fears, Struggles for survival and identity crisis as A. K. Singh points out, "Their work exhibit consciousness of their community in such a way that the community emerges as a protagonist from their work though on the surface these work deal with their human protagonists". (A. K. Singh, 1995 :66).

India is a country where almost all the religions of the world found representation namely Hinduism, Islamic faith, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, etc. While the overpowering majority of India is Hindu (79.80% of the population). Some of the other groups classified as minorities consist of Muslims (14.23%), Christians (2.30%), Sikhs (1.72%), Buddhists (0.70%), Jains (0.37%), and others (0.66%). Prominent among the latter are Parsis (69,601 in number), Bahas (11,324), and Jews (4,650). (Registrar General of India :2011).

Parsis are an ethno-religious minority in India. Although they are minority in India their contribution to society, economics, commerce, science, politics and literature has been remarkable. They are small, yet united Religious community. In India, they live mostly on the West Coast of subcontinent especially in Mumbai. The Parsis are the followers of Prophet Zoroaster and their religion is known as Zoroastrianism. The original Homeland of the Parsis, an ancient Persian province is located at present in Southern Iran. In 8<sup>th</sup> A.D, they were forced to flee from their primary space 'Iran' and arrived at Sajan in Gujarat in India. They sought refuge from king Jadhav Rana and there, their priest and leader Dustur performed a symbolic action of dropping a ruby-studded gold ring into urn filled with milk and sugar which indicates their willingness, friendship and co-operation to the regions prosperity.

Mistry's novels often deal with the life of Indians who suffer from communal disharmony, religious and caste discriminations, extreme poverty, beliefs and superstitions, manners and customs, religious and ethnicity and cultural diversities. His novels also present realistic picture of the minority community of the Parsi people, it's fears, anxieties, a sense of despair, helplessness because of the political uncertainties of the period of 1960s, 1970s, and 1990s. Mistry's first two works foreground the heterogeneity of Identity within Parsi community and dynamic nature of Parsi community itself. But his community does not figure much in his Novel *A Fine Balance*. There is a sincere attempt to retrieve the indigenous Parsi culture which is suppressed by the dominant cultural ideologies present in Indian society. Mistry in his novels brings forth the humiliation and unease in the lives of Parsis and the people from the lower strata of the society in the hands of the dominant ideologies in the society. This ideological domination further leads towards the cultural domination which denies the very heterogeneity of other cultures. He has not raise the issues of his community only but other minorities also through the crucial historical events like emergency periods, after the demolition of Babri Mosque, assassination of Indra Gandhi, Indo-Pak war, etc.

## **II. Religious Minorities in Family Matters**

*Family Matters* is a novel in which Mistry has highlighted concern of minorities. Here he has not only raise the issues of Parsi minority but also the other minorities like Muslims and Christians in a dominated Hindu cultured India in the context of some historical events. *Family Matters* (2002) is Mistry's eagerly anticipated third novel, following the success of his highly acclaimed *A Fine Balance* (1995), which won several major literary awards internationally. The novel has received accolades like his earlier works from the critics. It boldly attempts to secure a distinct space for the Parsi Zoroastrians within the dominant Indian cultural space. The focus of the Novel shifts from the 1970s and the era a emergency to 1990s. The novel expressing the oppressive situation of India and Maharashtra including the major concerns in the 1990's, the era of the post-Babri Masjid riots, corruption and communalism. It deals with everything from the dilemmas among India's Parsi, a single-family living on the edge of the middle class in contemporary Bombay, facing the brutal social situations and living through a domestic crisis. The novel also depicts the problems of insular-marriage and Parsi social-status in post-Ayodhya India where not only Parsis but other minorities were also threatened by the increasing fundamentalism. As such, there is no protagonist in the novel; for the focus of the narrative shifts among several characters, Nariman, Yezad, Jehangir, Roxana and Hussain. In fact, it is the Parsi family and through it the geriatric community that it represents, is the protagonist. A. K. Singh who has aptly commented on the central role of the Parsi community in the novels of Mistry as:

Rohinton Mistry has demonstrated immense ability in responding to the existing threats to the Parsi family and community, and also to the country. He narrates his community through the different narratives of his characters who invariably express their concern for their community and the changes that will affect their community as well as themselves. Their fate is bound up with the fate of their community. By centralizing their community in their narratives, they centralize and preserve and protect themselves, and thus use it as a psychological crutch (Singh, 1996: 29).

As with his earlier short-story collection, *Tales from Firozsha Baag*, and novel *Such a Long Journey*, Mistry consciously crafts a narrative that deepens our sense of the vital life of a Parsi family. The family filled with sibling rivalries, lost loves, secrets, customs and rituals, the pains of the young along with the acute sufferings of the old and all these with the backdrop of emergency. In the novel, Mistry not only mirrored the problems of Parsi community but other minorities also. The novel examines Nariman's enduring adaptation to his chronic condition and the effects on those conditions to him. The novel is narrated by an omniscient narrator and takes place in 1995, two years after the Bombay riots caused due to Babri Mosque conflict. The Novel revolves around a seventy-eight-year-old Nariman Vakeel, an aged Parsi retired professor of English, lives in a spacious seven-room apartment house with his middle-aged stepchildren, Coomy and Jal Contractor. Their relationship is

not pleasant, and when he breaks his ankle they contrive a plan to send him in care of his own daughter, Roxana Chenoy. So, Nariman is transposed to the midst of a loving but burdened household on the other side of the city. Roxana lives in a pleasant apartment with her husband Yezad Chenoy and their two children Murad and Jahangir. Yezad is working as a manager in Bombay sporting Emporium who has already been besieged by financial worries and, therefore, naturally becomes desperate on being forced to take up the new responsibility of looking after his father-in-law. This creates financial and emotional problems in Roxana's household, because the Chenoy family live in a one-bedroom apartment and are hardly able to maintain a middle-class life style. Feeling pressured in such conditions, Yezad, who is the manager of a shop selling sports equipment, schemes to earn a bigger salary by trying to encourage the owner, Mr. Kapur, to stand for elections in order to root out corruption and defy the Shiv Sena. Yezad's scheme has a tragic cost that the Shiv Sena has killed Mr. Kapur. Coomy also dies who was not in interest for Nariman to return, deliberately damages the ceiling of her room and is accidentally killed when a beam falls on her. In the meanwhile, Yezad is powerless to bear the emotional and financial tension. Hence, he gradually turns to religion and becomes a committed Parsi. By using skillful technique, the epilogue takes place five years later and is written from Jahangir's viewpoint. We learn that Nariman has died, the Chenoy family has shifted to Jal after Coomy's death, and Yezad has turned into a religious militant. However, the tension continues to spread through the family when Yezad demands that Murad who is now a rebellious college student, be cautious about Zoroastrian traditions. The novel concludes with Jahangir's disappointment at his father's behaviour, but conscious that he has to negotiate between his responsibilities to his family and the Parsi community, and his own individual wishes.

Once again, the center of attraction in the novel is the Parsi community and hence, all the members of the family are presented Parsis. Besides these Parsi members, there are other characters also who represent other communities. Mistry not only explores his concern for his community but also contemporary ethnic and religious hostility in India attempting to give a literary representation of the importance of the burning and destruction of the Babri Mosque in 1992. Aftermath of the issue of the Babri Mosque causes not only the threat of Muslims but also other minorities like Parsi community and Christians. The Shiv Sena is still shown under its religious chauvinism around the novel as Bharucha rightly points out that the old 'bete-noir', the Shiv Sena, is still around and its religious chauvinism has been augmented by the pan-India fanatic Hindutva of the BJP (Bharucha, 2003: 168).

Mistry sets his novel exactly in the midst of this violent and corrupt politics. He touches the Indian reality of the 1990s, and the political subtext of the novel is the growth of the fundamentalist Shiv Sena principles and its repercussions on the life of the ordinary and innocent people especially minorities. The rise of right wing political parties in India led to a moment of serious crisis for all non-Hindu Indians (minorities) and the novel tries to depict their anxieties, feelings of insecurity and fear. It is witnessed that the tyrannical extremist politics and religious chauvinism enter the novel from the very beginning when Nariman tries to convince Coomy that it is perfectly safe for him to go for a walk by pointing out that dangers prowl indoors as well as outdoors. But Coomy refers to the burning down of an old Parsi couple by angry Hindu mobs under the 'mistaken impression' who believed that fleeing Muslims might have been given shelter in that building. She also points out that Bombay burnt for months after razing the destruction of the Babri Mosque in Ayodhya "How often does a mosque in Ayodhya turn people into savages in Bombay? Once in a blue moon" (Mistry, 2002:5)

This novel like *Such a Long Journey* presents Shiv Sena as a Hindu fundamentalist involved in rioting, looting and burning the poor and the innocent people. It has brought out minority community's grievances and remonstrations with the 'secular' multicultural image of the Indian polity. The demolition of the Babri Mosque was a major destructive event aimed at hurting the secular polity of India. The role of the government agencies in perpetration of atrocities against the innocent civilians of the minorities has been questioned. Mistry unobtrusively mirrored out the danger which exists not only for the Muslim community but also for the Parsis. The people helping the rioters were none other than the guardians of law, the Bombay police, who itself behaving like the gangsters. Mistry shows how the apparatus of the post-colonial national state itself becomes oppressive and perpetuates like National Imperialism. Hussain, while narrating his woeful tale, becomes an authentic voice of not only Muslim community but also of the author's own Parsi community. It is through Yezad that we come in contact with his office peon, Hussain, a tragic victim of the post-Babri Masjid riots in which his wife and children were burnt alive. Hussain in his own words describes the tragic events against Muslim minority as:

The police were behaving like gangsters. In Muslim Mohallas, they were shooting their guns at innocent people. Houses were burning, neighbours came out to throw water. And the police? Firing bullets like target practice. These guardians of the law were murdering everybody! And my poor wife and children... I couldn't even recognize them. (Mistry:148)

These fundamentalist forces used to unleash terror over people's mind as the novelist wails over the ruthless and oppressive measures taken by these religious fanatics. They are responsible for ruining the multi-cultural and

multi-lingual peaceful co-existence of the nation like India. It speaks volumes about how a religious minority gets trampled under the sense of insecurity. Yezad who is hunted by Hussain's tragedy also sums up the attitude of the Shiv Sena as: 'South Indians are anti-Bombay, Valentine's Day is anti-Hindustani, Film stars born before 1947 in the Pakistani Part of Punjab are traitors to the country.' (Mistry:32).

The fear, anxiety and the insecurity the minorities feel from the fundamentalists and fanatics like the Shiv Sena in Bombay or the Hindu fundamentalists like Bajrang Dal. The early 1970s witnessed the growth of the Shiv Sena with its demand for Maratha Raj have got expression in *Such a Long Journey* like Family Matters through the words of Gustad:

No future for minorities, with all these fascist Shiv Sena politics and Marathi language nonsense. It was going to be like the black people in America-twice as good as the white man to get half as much. How could he make Sohrab understand this? (Mistry,SLJ:55).

This statement reveals Gustad's psychological fear and sense of insecurity about his son's future and life. He thinks that there is no future for minorities in this country because of fascist activities like Shiv Sena and Bajrang Dal who fights only for Marathi people and Marathi language. Such fascist ideology reduced them as black people in America.

As mentioned above the events, the reader gets the idea how Shiv Sena has increase their influence on many domains of activities in city and how they try to control and make a profit out of everything. They are not only who are behind the unlawful lottery 'Matka' but also use the profits to fund the organization. It is clearly shown that the illegal lottery also finances the organized crime which has not only contaminated the city and its institutions but also its integrity. Gautam, a journalist who raises his voice by an article against the Shiv Sena underground activities, has undergone the humiliation and threats of Shiv Sena activists as:

Gautam described how a dozen of them had accosted him, screaming that journalists who maligned the Shiv Sena and blackened its good name by printing lies would receive the same treatment. The men twisted his arms behind him and grabbed his hair to keep him still. They had a tin of Cherry Blossom black shoe polish, and applied it to his face and ears and neck, even ruining his shirt in the process.(Mistry:207)

The Shiv Sena has added its connections with gangsters and practiced a cultural censorship programme which causes some cultural disturbances much like Yezad's frustration. They think that the homogeneity of the nation is threatened by cultural diversity and so they banned certain art works, men's magazines, working of women in bars and Valentine's Day. They listed the Muslims as called enemies of the nation. Yezad noticed and said: "What a joke of a government. Clowns and crooks. Or clownish crooks. Santa Claus with mask and machine gun would be a fitting Christmas decoration for the Shiv Sena. Or any other party, for that matter." (Mistry: 273).

Though it is clear that the marginalized people run enormous risks if they refuse to obey the rules established by those in power. Not only it depicted that the Shiv Sena was involved in the savage murder of Husain's family during the Bombay riots but Mr. Kapur himself falls victim to those representatives of the extremist forces who had tried to oppose so feebly, and it is clear that they beat up Gautam for writing "An in-depth analysis about the politician-criminal-police nexus." (Mistry:206). Mistry not feels sorry for Mumbai for 'it is being raped by politicians' (156) but also calls the Shiv Sena "the greatest urban menace" (Mistry:209).

The Shiv Sena and BJP administration, after 1995 elections, on coming to the power, introduced several measures meant to strengthen their position and advance the cause of Hindutva. Some of these actions were directly aimed at minority communities. One of the high-profile initiative among them was the renaming of Bombay as Mumbai which was measured as one of the first significant attempts to remove all non-Hindu place names from the so-called purified Hindu land. This was seen as the massive blow to its cosmopolitan citizens. In consideration of renaming of Bombay, it shows the notion of reiterative practices of naming as a construction and fixation of identities, and of the use of names claims to certain identities, and cultures. This understanding of names as signifiers of identity, culture, belonging and entitlement resonates within the ancestral home and lies beneath the differing behaviours of Coomy, Jal Yezad and Roxana towards Nariman. The decision of the people in power that influences the fate of one of the characters in the novel, namely Mr. Vikram Kapur. He denied changing the name of his shop from Bombay Sporting Goods Emporium to Mumbai Sporting Goods Emporium. The denial of Kapur which attracts the attention of the murderous Shiv Sena activists and indirectly leads to his subsequent murder. Name for him was a kind of sense of his security and indicator of his identity as the reader witnesses how he cherishes the collection of pictures of colonial Bombay which he holds in high regard. He tells Yezad "From three pictures so many memories. And this can happen with every single photo - each one conceals volumes. All you need is the right pair of eyes ... to unlock the magic." (Mistry:229) The concern of renaming the Bombay and characters reaction against this activity is also witnessed in Mistry's early works. For instance, mentioned in *Such a long journey* Dinshwanji's reaction against the reformation of names is resembling with Mr. Kapoor. The reformation of names indicates the troublesome implications for a distinctive Parsi identity.

Besides the sense of insecurity and identity or cultural crisis, there are other disturbing ethnic features like declining population, low birth rate, late marriages, high rate of divorce, attitudes to the girl child, alienation, urbanization etc. All these issues find expression in Rohinton Mistry's works like other the post - independence Parsi writers in English. The Parsi always feel that their community is approaching towards decline day by day and the Parsi writers express their fear through their writings so as to caution their community about their falling population. Similarly, Mistry wants to leave a record about his community for the benefit of posterity. Bharucha Quotes Mistry's words in an interview: "...when the Parsis have disappeared from the phase of the Earth, his writings will preserve a record of how they lived, to some extent (Bharucha, 1995:59). In Family Matters too, Rohinton Mistry expresses his fear about the downfall of the community. We are witnessed when Inspector Masalawala, Jal and Dr. Fitter discuss the future of the Parsi community. They agree that the factors contributing to the downfall are "dwindling birth rate, our man and women marrying non - Parsi, and the heavy migration to the west." (Mistry, 2002:400). Inspector Masalawala expresses his fear thus: "The experts in demographics are confident that fifty years hence, there will be no Parsis left. (Mistry:400)

He also finds fault with Parsi boys and girls for the falling of birth rate as he said:

Our Parsi boys and girls do not want to get married unless they have their own flat. Which is the next to impossible in Bombay, right? they don't want to sleep under the same roof as their Mummy and Daddy. Meanwhile, the other communities are doing it in the same room never mind the same rood, Separated by a plywood partition or a torn curtain. Our little Lords and ladies want sound proofing and privacy. These western ideas are harmful (Mistry:401)

Mistry depicts community's disapproval of inter-community marriage one such issue and the most important one for their survival, through the tragic relationship between Nariman, the protagonist and Lucy. Forced to marry a Parsi widow namely Yasmin, Nariman still loves Lucy. He still feels sorry for Lucy who rejected by her family, now lives in YWCA. The rigidity of the Orthodox Parsis like Nariman's father in disallowing Nariman to marry a non-Parsi girl has not made his son's life miserable but also has far repercussions on his progeny too. Coomy nurtures bitterness for his step-father Nariman throughout her life as on a fatal day, Lucy and Yasmin, while quarrelling with each other in the Balcony fall down and die. The history starts repeating when Yezad, once a jolly-good liberal person, has become a bigot and very stringent about his religion. He agitates when he catches his son Murad kissing a non-Parsi girl and shouts in anger and continues to harangue his son, "You can have any friends you like any Race or religion, but for serious relationship, for marriage the rules are different. Because we are pure Persian race a unique contribution to this planet and mixed marriage will destroy that. (Mistry:469)

Mistry has deliberately brought into the novel the love experiences of both the grandfather and grandson with non-Parsi girls to reiterate that the Parsis can never change their convictions whatever be the whims and fancies of the individual. (Duresh, 2006: 92)

### III. CONCLUSION

The novel is realistic picture of the minority communities like Muslims, Christians especially Parsis who feel fear, anxieties, threat, a sense of insecurity, helplessness because of the political uncertainties. India's shift from egalitarianism to majoritarianism in the character of our nationalism, religious chauvinism carries, of course, particularly dangerous consequences for minorities. India as a secular state no longer aspire to transform our society, hardly attempt to examine it. All our national attention seems insidiously focused on the affairs and issues of religious minorities. It is necessary to steam out the hatred, misconceptions between different religious communities through proper channels. In such times of crisis like today's mob lynching of Muslims and Dalits on the bases of Gaa-Rakhshak, it is necessary to come in terms with reality by admitting and respecting the differences as a vital aspect of human existence and should inculcating tolerance towards other i.e. religion, cultural, national, ethnic and lingual etc.

### IV. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors are thankful to central library Jiwaji University Gwalior and study Centre (M.L.B. college) for providing literature regarding the research.

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IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS) is UGC approved Journal with Sl. No. 5070, Journal no. 49323.

Nisar Ahmad Dar. "Religious Minorities: their sense of insecurity, anxiety and threat with special reference to Rohinton Mistry's novel 'Family Matters'." IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS) , vol. 22, no. 9, 2017, pp. 37–43.