



*Representation of Indigenous Practices: An Eco-Critical  
Discourse Analysis of PETA Blogs on Animal Sacrifice in  
Indian Muslim Culture*

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**Abstract**

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) is an activist organization dedicated to raising awareness about animal abuse and advocating for legal protections for both domestic and wild animals. One of the primary ways PETA disseminates its message is through digital weblogs published on its official website. These weblogs promote discourse on animal rights and mistreatment, highlighting cases from around the world, including industrial-scale issues such as factory farming. While PETA's advocacy aims to foster awareness, this study critically examines the discourse presented in its weblogs, particularly regarding indigenous practices of animal sacrifice observed by Muslim communities in South Asia. Through the lens of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), this research investigates how the language used in PETA's weblogs constructs a Western outsider perspective that potentially misrepresents or marginalizes cultural and religious traditions. By analyzing linguistic patterns, ideological framing, and implicit biases, the study explores whether PETA's discourse aligns with an ethnocentric narrative that overlooks the historical, religious, and cultural contexts of animal sacrifice. The findings aim to contribute to broader discussions on the intersection of animal rights activism, cultural representation, and discourse analysis, emphasizing the need for advocacy that acknowledges diverse cultural practices while promoting ethical treatment of animals. This research underscores the importance of a balanced and contextually aware approach to global activism, ensuring that efforts to protect animals do not inadvertently perpetuate cultural insensitivity or misrepresentation.

**Keywords:**

*Animal Rights, PETA, Critical Discourse Analysis, Weblogs, Cultural Representation, Indigenous Practices, Animal Sacrifice, Western Perspective, Activism, Ethical Treatment.*

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## **1. Introduction**

Panday (2024) describes PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) as an activist group and a prominent international organization that uses the digital platform of weblogging to engage their audience on their official website. Sheffield (2010) analyzes the relationship between social activism and weblogs. He argues that the medium of blogging is not only an effective tool to democratize information production and dissemination but it also has the potential to lead to polarizing and dividing ideologies. This also impacts the goal and aim of social activism. Social activism is defined by Sheffield (2010) as interaction between pluralized individuals with the aim of resolving conflicts and achieving a shared collective identity. In the context of the efforts of the marginalized group to voice their neglected rights, social activism is defined as “contentious collective action” characterized by the representation of the subjugated voice of the marginalized groups against the authoritarian one-sided narrative of the ruling class. Murphy (2020) defines social activism as the attempt of the marginalized to communicate the demands of their due rights to those who have power and access to state institutions of knowledge, education, and resource use. It is communication across groups as Murphy (2020) states that “for an action to count as activism, it has to communicate across the gap from one’s self or group to those who are ‘different’ because they have power; it is about the redistribution of power and is usually a public action” (p. 14). Sheffield (2016) notes that PETA’s activism through blogging is limited to grabbing the attention of a large number of people to attract donations in the non-profit industrialized market; “the recurrent discourse also fosters and contributes to a particularly neoliberal construction of the nonhuman animal rights movement that encourages competition with other non-profits and defines “success” by the number of single issues campaigns it “wins”, the amount of media coverage it gets, the number “likes” it receives on social media, and the number of donors it attracts” (p. 37). Sheffield (2016) adds an annual financial report from 2015 in which it is recorded that PETA generated 45 million dollars through donations that year.

### **2.1. Background of the Study**

PETA promotes consumer activism in a way that it overshadows non-monetary forms of activism such as confrontational protests, funding campaigns, use of online platforms to raise awareness, etc. Springirth (2016) notes that phrases such as, ‘Put your money where your heart is’, ‘All you need is heart’, ‘It’s as easy as swiping your credit card’, and ‘Eat, shop, relax, repeat’ demonstrate the presumption that vegan consumerism might be a more effective form of advocacy than nonmonetary advocacy” (p.26). The animal rights advocacy is turned into an economic activity of spending money and that too of a limited group of people. In short, the discourse of vegan consumerism becomes an outsider perspective catering to a limited group of people as it is characterized by the absence of class awareness or class consumerism rhetoric. Springfield (2016) observes the same in his analysis that “the majority of the vegan movement is made up of a white middle-class demographic that collectively never has to think about how class, racism, food deserts, or poverty influence how one engages in veganism” (p. 27).

In the current digital age, weblogs are used as rhetorical tools by several animal advocacy organizations like PETA to promote their messages of social activism through practices of community building and societal commentary. The use of digital technology such as social media sites and websites allows PETA to build its audience worldwide. Panday (2024) writes about the international outreach of PETA by stating that it “is an animal rights organization that has worked actively to fight against the unethical treatment of animals since its establishment in 1980. According to their website, this Virginia-based organization has around 7 million members and works worldwide” (p. 2). Panday (2024) writes that there are several websites of PETA including its official website. They are easily accessible with minimalist design, hyperlinks and international outreach. The official website also has hyperlinks to several countries including India, the U.K., France, Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland,

Australia, Latin America, and China. These links lead to country-specific pages of PETA. Sheffield (2010) writes about the connection between “weblogs and social activism that the very act of blogging can be seen as part of a global movement of self-expression, community-building, and social commentary....and blogging is changing the character and quality of social movement rhetoric” (p. 21).

## **2.2. Statement of the problem**

We often come across an outsider perspective in literature, which refers to a viewpoint about a phenomenon, or culture that comes from someone who is not directly involved or deeply embedded within it. Such a perspective, on the one hand, can provide an alternative and impartial viewpoint. It is also essential to recognize limitations such as generalizations and lack of nuanced understanding of such perspectives. PETA being an international organization gives an outsider perspective about the religious practice of animal sacrifice carried out by Muslims on Eid. In the blog, animal sacrifice carried out by Muslims is presented as an inhumane, unethical, and ecologically destructive practice. This perspective is globally seen as humanitarian and ethical to animals but it is also interpreted as a misrepresentation of indigenous practices. The aim of the research is to analyze how language is used to create a certain narrative about this indigenous practice at intra-relational, inter-relational, and extra-relational levels of discourse and find the underlying perspective of the blogs.

## **2.3. Research Questions**

The research is organized around the following questions:

1. What are the linguistic choices made in the text to promote a certain perceived view on the Muslim practice of animal sacrifice?
2. How is the use of language in PETA blogs promoting a certain ecological narrative about the Muslim practice of animal sacrifice?

## **2.4. Research Objectives**

The objectives of the present study are as follows:

1. To find the linguistic choices made in the text that promote a certain perspective on the Muslim practice of animal sacrifice
2. To find ways in which the use of language in PETA blogs promotes a certain ecological narrative about the Muslim practice of animal sacrifice

## **2.5. Significance of the Work**

The present study problematizes the language used by PETA to promote animal rights advocacy through the online platform of weblogging. This is done to uncover any kind of biases implicit in the seemingly transparent and objective narrative created and promoted by PETA about the protection of animal rights in the under-developed regions in South Asia. The research looks at how language is used as a framing tool to shape our perception of a situation or a practice in society. It does so by looking at how outsider discourse practice devalues and marginalizes alternative ecocentric perspectives rather than collectively representing the heard as well as unheard voices in society. Lastly, the present study seeks to analyze the relationship between environmental issues and social inequality by looking at the representation of vulnerable communities in the environmental discourse created and promoted by PETA.

## **2.6. Delimitation**

The research is delimited to the perspective of an international animal rights organization called PETA about the religious practice of animal sacrifice in Islam. The two recently published blogs are analyzed to study the influence of outsider perspectives on shaping the narrative about the indigenous practice. Two of the published weblogs from the official website of PETA are taken as data for micro-level and macro-level discourse eco-critical discourse analysis.

## **3. Literature Review**

Dechka (2008) numerates two approaches to animal advocacy. The proponents of animal welfare advocacy focus on the improvement of the living conditions of the animals used as

resources for the benefit of humankind. The examples include domesticated animals such as cows, goats, and chickens which are the source of meat, milk, and eggs for us. The animal welfare approach focuses on the quality of life of the animals rather than debating on whether the instrumental use of animals should be allowed or not. The second approach to animal advocacy is that of animal rights which values the freedom and autonomy of animals as independent beings and equates instrumental use of animals with exploitation of animals. The animal rights advocacy approaches the sense of entitlement of humans over animals and human treatment of animals as an ethical issue as Dechka (2008) argues “these campaigns and their responses highlight the ethical question of how a group which advances a social justice agenda,<sup>7</sup> and thus presumably self-identifies as progressive, may interact with—whether by disregarding, not addressing, harnessing, or exploiting—other social-justice causes” (p. 37). The analysis of local practices or indigenous treatment of animals from the two approaches to animal advocacy results in insider and outsider perspectives about these practices. The animal welfare approach leads to an insider perspective about the traditional relationship between animals and local or rural humans. It is based on the symbiotic human-animal relationship where it is the right of the animal to be treated with respect and given necessary care and shelter as a sentient living being and provider of food and nourishment to their human caretakers. The animal rights advocacy, on the other hand, labels local knowledge and indigenous practices as barbaric. The human-animal and human-nature relationship in local practices across many contents focuses on the human need to be conscious and respectful of the sacrifice of animals for their meat and milk and also for the resourcefulness of nature to provide us with nourishment from air to fruits and vegetables. This idea that we are dependent on our surroundings makes us be more careful and caring for nature and animals. However, the devaluing of community practices based on indigenous knowledge desensitizes human beings living in closed walled-up urban spaces about the unavoidable role of nature and animals in their nourishment and survival of humans. This effect of a capitalist society on the human-animal and human-nature relationship is explained by Marx in his theory of alienation that “under the environments of private ownership and exchange, the individual is alienated from his species-being and his fellows, whom he considers solely as a means to attain personal goals” (Mukhopadhyay, 2021, p. 5). The traditional schema of human-animal and human-nature symbiotic relationship is replaced by the schema of commodification brought about by industrialized and capitalist societies. This exclusion of the non-industrialized traditional values and the influence of industrial countries of the Global North in shaping environment agendas, policies, and resource use patterns proves disadvantageous for developing countries. The distance between humans and animals is brought about by the commodification of animals where our connection with our sources of nourishment is reduced to packaged meat on the shelves brought by money. People give value and respect to paper notes they put an effort in and earn and they are emotionally and physically distant from the animals they take eggs, milk, and meat from often unaware of the inhuman ways sentient animals are treated and butchered in factories to produce the packages of meat and eggs. Adams (1990) writes about the “unseen animal” in her work “The Sexual Politics of Meat”. She uses the term “absent referent” to refer to the presence of animals in human society which is relegated to the status of object or commodity instead of live sentient being which needs to be taken care of before being used as a resource. Adams (1990) refers to three types of absent referents. The first type is the literal absence of animals and their replacement with factory-produced packaged products as already discussed in this paragraph. The second and third types of absent referents refer to the use of language in the commodification and subordination of animals through language. One is the definitional absence in which meat is referred to as steak, mutton or beef instead of cow meat or lamb meat. The last one is a metaphorical referent in which animals are used to describe



human experience leading to the subordinate status of animals in the anthropocentric paradigm. Examples include sentences like he is chickening out (He is giving up).

PETA is considered to be the “organizational face of animal rights advocacy” according to Dechka (2008). The organization promotes the message of animal rights activism through celebrity endorsement and sexualized and provocative campaigns. The goal is to grab the attention of the readers through any means possible to promote the right cause of animal rights. However, the organization deviates from the transparent representation of ground realities. This is evident in the use of controversial and provocative images in their ad campaign to catch the attention of the audience. The sexualized, provocative, and controversial campaigns are often criticized for brash and insensitive comparisons of animal plight with the plight of humans including events of genocide and subaltern status of women. Dechka (2008) gives the examples of “I’d rather go naked than wear fur” campaign, the “Holocaust on your plate” campaign, and the “End slavery” campaign. The first example is often criticized from a feminist perspective in that it uses sexism to advocate animal issues. The second and the third examples are offensive to Jewish and African-American communities as they find it violating the dignity of their traumatic past by reducing their plight to a seemingly brash comparison. Murphy (2020) also gives examples of several campaigns. In the “Lose the blubber: Go vegetarian” campaign, PETA aims to promote a healthy lifestyle through vegetarianism at the expense of fat-shaming women by comparing them with whales. In their socio-semiotic analysis of several ad campaigns including “Hands off the Buns” anti-fur ad and “Models Should Be the Only Foxes on the Runway” anti-fur ad, Dechka (2008) argues rightly that “reducing women to their bodies in a context of animality, whether by presenting them as sexualized “bunnies” or “foxes” or simply connecting their sexualized bodies to the idea of animals, solidifies the trajectory of thinghood. All the usual suspects of things, rather than persons, are still aligned: women, body, animals” (p. 55).

In this context, it can be argued that PETA provides an outsider perspective on animal rights advocacy in its use of provocative and controversial campaigns often in the form of billboards and advertisements to promote animal rights advocacy. It does not consider the socio-cultural nuances and comes off as offensive to communities as discussed above in the studies conducted by Dechka (2008) and Murphy (2020). Springirth (2016) conducts a critical discourse analysis of consumer activism promoted by PETA and looks at discrepancies between the marketing of this form of activism and the underlying agenda as well as the excluded narrative from its discourse. The consumer activism promoted by PETA refers to buying environmentally friendly and cruelty-free products from PETA. This buying of consumer products from vegan milk to shirts, cups, and purses, etc. is shown to be equated with the defense of non-human animal rights. The campaign slogans run as “Attention shoppers: Put your money where your heart is”, “Join the Animal Savings Club”, “save lives with wise buys”, “turn your concern for animals into a shopping spree” and “as easy as swiping a credit card when you buy cruelty-free” (Springirth, 2016, p. 24). The consumer activism is promoted to be budget-friendly and inexpensive. However, Springirth (2016) deconstructs the claim made by PETA that anyone with any budget can shop in its online stores by pointing out that the organization partners with high-end fashion designers to produce the so-called environmentally friendly and cruelty-free vegan products. One such designer is Michelle Leon Vegan according to Springirth (2016) who argues that “telling people ‘being cruelty-free is all about easy choices’, and then advertising \$400 vegan bags also demonstrates the presumption that only those who can afford to buy cruelty-free products can help liberate nonhuman animals and put a padlock on factory farming” (p. 26). This also shows that PETA is not a non-profit organization. Panday (2024) observes that PETA collaborates with scientific, cooperate as well as legislative communities to promote its activism.

#### 4. Research Methodology

The present study follows the qualitative approach of critical discourse analysis (CDA) to uncover the social inequalities and power relations embedded in the discourse of PETA about indigenous practices related to animal sacrifice. The purposive method of data collection is used to select the text which is relevant to the study of the research questions. Two of the most recent blogs on the topic of Eid are selected from Peta website:

1. “What about Eid?” (2023)
2. “Vegan Muslim PETA India Supporters Celebrate Eid by Treating Goats to Fruit Feast in Heart-warming Video” (2024)

The method of textual analysis is utilized to study the linguistic features of the text with the aim of revealing the underlying narrative in the text. The theoretical framework is adopted from Bang and Door’s dialogue model of the three-dimensionality of social praxis. Three types of linguistic references in the text are studied. They include intra-relational reference which refers to lexical choice in the text, inter-relational reference which refers to linguistic patterns at phrase and sentence level and extra-relational reference which looks at the absence, presence, foregrounding, and backgrounding of themes in text.

Three Levels of Eco-CDA (micro-level analysis)	Three dimensions of text as discourse Practice (macro-level analysis)
Intra-relational Reference (semantic level)	<b>Ideo-logical</b> (schemas, ideas, beliefs, cultural values)
Inter-relationality Reference (syntactic level)	<b>Socio-logical</b> (social organizations such as neighborhoods, speech communities, countries etc.)
Extra-relationality Reference (pragmatic level)	<b>Biological</b> (relationship between humans and other species)

These references are also termed as semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic references by Bang and Door (2000). These micro-level references relate the language used in the text to the macro-level ideological, sociological, and biological dimensions of the environment of the language use. The ideological dimension of the text as discourse practice refers to the schemas, ideas, beliefs, and cultural values of any society. The sociological dimension refers to the social organizations such as neighborhoods, speech communities, countries, etc. formed on shared values, beliefs, and attitudes while the biological dimension refers to the relationship between humans and other species in the environment.

#### 5. Data Presentation and Analysis

##### 5.5. Intra-relational References in the text

Intra-relational references in the text refer to the choice of words used in the blogs to create and promote a narrative. In the text under analysis, words with negative connotations such as “harmful practice” and “cruel habit” are used to refer to the practice of animal sacrifice performed by Muslims on Eid. The practice is equated with heart disease, cancer, strokes, diabetes, and even “climate catastrophe”. While the words such as “sacrifice” of cruel habits and “healthy lifestyle” are used to refer to going vegan. The word “Muslim” is mentioned in the text but only in the form of “Muslim vegetarians and vegans” or “vegan Muslims”. There

is an absence of vocabulary referring to the larger non-vegetarian Muslim population in India and how they consider their practice of animal sacrifice as sacred and as a sign of respect for nature. The words with negative connotations such as “slaughter” and “consumes” are used to refer to the practice of animal sacrifice. The imagery of humans consuming milk, eggs, and skin “stolen” from animals is elicited in the choice of words. The words “consume” and “stolen” equate the practice of domestication of animals in which the quality of animals’ lives is not undervalued with the practice of factory farming in which animals are reduced to commodified objects and treated as such.

This is also evident in the use of conjunction as shown in the example taken from the text given below. The religious practice of sacrifice is shown equal to the commercial practice of animal exploitation by using ‘and’ between sacrifice and slaughterhouses. The linguistic elements connected through this conjunction show that they are equally important or similar.

“During sacrifice and when they are killed in slaughterhouses, animals’ throats are typically cut open in full view of other terrified animals.”

Another word that equates inhumane industrial farming with human domestication of animals is “slaughterhouse”. The word is used to refer to the unethical and barbaric treatment of animals that are mass-produced, unethically raised, and mass slaughtered for meat, eggs, dairy, and skin. Additionally, formal words are used to promote animal rights advocacy while informal and harsh words which create gruesome imagery in the mind, are used to demote the religious practice of animal sacrifice celebrated by Indian Muslims. For instance, references to authority figures and organizations that support veganism over non-vegan diets are only given in the text. These references include “PETA India Senior Advocacy Officer Farhat Ul Ain”, United Nations report, and Andhra Pradesh Animal Welfare Board. On the other hand, no references to support the argument of local practices and non-vegan diets are given in the text. This leads to the perception of a high level of facticity for one side of the argument only. The use of informal and harsh words such as “animal’s throat cut open” is observed in the text to refer to the religious practice of animal sacrifice. While the devaluing of a local practice is referred to as only a “harmful practice” and “cruel habit” which can be ended easily when people would “just stop eating meat”. Words like “a mere suggestion” are used to refer to the implementation of a vegan lifestyle over a non-vegan lifestyle in India which is often criticized as the imposition of a western-centric neoliberal approach and disregard of cultural and religious values of the local middle- and working-class masses.

Certain words are hyperlinks that connect the weblogs to further PETA weblogs, multimodal social media posts, or YouTube videos adding to the intertextual nature of the blogs. One of the hyperlinks is “illegal treatment of animals” which leads one to perceive that the religious act of animal sacrifice on Eid is considered illegal in the country. However, the links lead to an eight-minute-long YouTube video named “Glass Walls” in which evidence of poor, unethical, and illegal treatment of animals in factory farms which is unrelated to the topic of animal sacrifice on Eid. Another hyperlinked word leads to the criticism of unlicensed slaughterhouses and illegal transportation of animals. The unethical and unregistered abuse of animals for commercial purposes is, however; different from the religious practice of animal sacrifice on Eid which allows to reduce the distance between humans as consumers and their source of sustenance. It takes the animal out of the “packaged product” and brings it closer to humans to allow them to see animals as sentient beings deserving of our respect, care, and protection in addition to being a resource.

### **5.6. Inter-relational References in the text**

Inter-relational references refer to linguistic patterns at phrase, sentence, and paragraph levels. The overall positionality and perspective of the text are set through the arrangement of information at phrase, sentence, and paragraph levels. The angle taken by the author or the creator of the text determines these stylistic and syntactic patterns. The common types of these

patterns include topicalization, passivization, and nominalization. Topicalization is foregrounding at the sentence level. In the text, almost all the sentences start with phrases related to PETA, veganism, and campaign as shown in the below examples taken from the text:

- PETA India....
- By encouraging vegan living....
- Vegans don't meat.....
- Many Muslim vegans and vegetarian.....
- Our campaigners.....
- Our mere suggestions.....

Another form of inter-relational reference is passivization. In the representation of any particular community, one of the tools of taking the agency from the community is through passive voice representation instead of active voice representation as shown in the below examples taken from the text:

- **Unfortunately, our campaigners have been beaten up and worse for peacefully encouraging a humane celebration of Eid that doesn't involve animal sacrifice.**
- Our mere suggestion of giving alms without slaughter has resulted in death threats towards us.
- Our staff members have faced similar abuse.....

One thing common in all the above construction is that the agent of the action is not mentioned and is unknown. It implies the violence and abuse faced by proponents of the PETA campaign are solely done by Muslims in the defence of animal slaughter on Eid. However, the context of the information should be foregrounded at the beginning of the paragraph as the most important information is given later in the paragraph in the form of disconnected supplementary examples. The context of the above sentence is not related to Eid. It is rather an unrelated bull-taming sport called "Jallikattu" which has been banned again and again because of its danger to animal and human life. Another important type of inter-relation reference is nominalization in which the noun phrase construction is used instead of verb phrase construction to hide agency. An example from the text includes:

- The consumption of meat and other animal-derived foods also hurts human health and has been conclusively linked to heart disease, strokes, diabetes, cancer, and obesity.

There is no mention of who consumes the meat, and how it is consumed, and the difference between different forms of use of animal meat for sustenance. The socio-cultural complex topic of the use of animals for sustenance has been crammed into a single noun phrase leading to generalization and simplification of the practice turning it into a mere "cruel habit" that can be changed.

### 5.7. Extra-relational References in the Text

Extra-relational references in the text refer to themes prevalent in the text and analyze which themes are foregrounded, backgrounded, absent, or reframed in the text. PETA foregrounds its euro-centric perspective of the vegan lifestyle by representing the socio-religious practice of animal sacrifice by Indian Muslims in such a way that it is backgrounded, devalued, and reduced to a "cruel habit" in need of change. It does so through semantic and syntactic linguistic choices as already discussed in previous sections. The blogs write about the positive aspects of a vegan lifestyle only. The vegan lifestyle is valued over the non-vegan lifestyle practiced by the majority of the Muslims. Only minority vegan Muslims and their perspective are mentioned while there is 'textual silence' when it comes to the majority non-vegetarian Muslim population in India and how they consider their practice of animal sacrifice as sacred and as a sign of respect for nature.

The concept of animal sacrifice is only mentioned as a brutal and inhumane activity and it is repeatedly compared with the industrial exploitation of animals in slaughterhouses and factory



farming. There is an absence of themes such as the relationship distribution of meat to the poor and the respect taught by Islam for animals as a source of sustenance. In other words, there is the absence of local sociocultural context leading to un-situated ecological discourse. In conclusion, an indigenous activity is represented from an outsider euro-centric perspective. In other words, the sacred act of animal sacrifice in Muslim culture is reframed as a barbaric and inhumane act of animal slaughter. Goldstein (2021) rightfully argues against this form of outsider and one-sided perspective of social activism that instead of an all-or-nothing approach, social activism should be more inclusive and allow for the traditional and sustenance value of local practice to make the activism more nuanced and situated.

### **5.8. Three dimensions of text as discourse Practice**

In this section, the positionality or framing of the text studied through intra-relational, inter-relational, and extra-relational linguistic markers is connected with the broader sociological, ideological, and biological implications of the text. The three dimensions of the text do not exist in isolation and interrelate with each other. The biological dimension of the text refers to the relationship of humans with other species in society. The indigenous practice of animal sacrifice is framed as cruel and inhumane practice. This is done by promoting the perspective of animal rights advocacy only, which promotes an impractical approach of elimination of the instrumental use of animals. On the other hand, there are no implicit or explicit linguistic markers reflecting the perspective of animal welfare advocacy which promotes the approach of reducing our consumption and over-reliance on animals as commodities of meat, eggs, and dairy in a society where instead of actively contributing to the benefit of our environment, our roles are reduced to that of passive consumers. Goldstein (2021) argues against the approach of elimination in activism and argues in favor of the approach of reduction of the commercial use of animals. This is because elimination seems more practical and approachable than reduction.

Animal welfare advocacy involves not only protecting and supporting animals but also protecting and supporting practices in indigenous cultures. In the text, there is no mention of the symbiotic relationship of human with their environment. The indigenous practices are uninfluenced by the urban lifestyle of consumption or ready-made food packed with preservatives in plastic packages in which people are distanced from their sources of sustenance and hence do not value them. Goldstein (2021) writes that “they (local practices) protect up to 80% of the planet’s biodiversity often using traditional techniques to hunt, fish, forage, and live alongside nature” (p.01). The outsider perspective reframes these practices as barbaric and uncivilized while their version of the civilization itself is harming the environment through cooperate greed and pollution. Goldstein (2021) argues that biodiversity practices of the indigenous cultures need to be incorporated into social activism related to the environment.

The sociological dimension of the text refers to the community of people involved when it comes to the production and interpretation of the text and refers to questions such as which group of society is represented in the text and whether they are represented from the outsider perspective or insider perspective. The textual silence about the socio-cultural context shows that the outsider perspective of an international organization is imposed on the local practice with no representation given to those who support this practice. Berti (2024) observes the same aspect in the writings of the outside writers when it comes to the debate of animal sacrifice in India that “these outside writers appeared willing to eradicate local practices, the coverage by locally based journalists sought a more nuanced tone and seemed willing to take into account the discourse of those who supported the sacrifice” (p. 5). The weblogs also represent the outsider perspective as they fail to mention that animal rights advocacy is not the only reason behind the beef ban in India. The other local political aspect of the beef ban is that it is rooted in rising Hindu nationalism and casteism. The weblogs provide un-situated ecological discourse by being textually silent about how the seemingly constructive ecological discourse

is used as a tool by cow vigilante groups to use violence against Muslim communities. Miller (2019) writes that “the beef ban has largely operated to marginalize Dalits and Muslims through disciplinary examination and surveillance while differentiating and excluding subjects across the human-nonhuman spectrum. Such violence has stoked fear and heightened structural inequalities in communities already marginalized within the Indian context” (p. 836).

The last dimension of the text defined by Bang and Door (2000) is the ideological dimension of the text. It refers to the representation of the shared perspective in the text. It is evident that the shared perspective of the global north is represented in the blogs which are viewed as biased and Western-centric in the community of the global south and it is argued that weblogs misrepresent the indigenous practices by being textually silent about the sociocultural context in which these practices take place. The weblogs as already discussed present an outsider perspective of the US-based organization about the South Asian practice of animal sacrifice on Eid. The blogs reframe the religious practice as a harmful and ecologically destructive act through the one-sided representation of the phenomenon. This leads to the imposition of Western-centric perspective on the local socio-cultural context. In other words, the impartial view of Global North about Global South is repeated and foregrounded throughout the text in which the practices of Global North such as the vegan lifestyle are narrated as civilized and ethical activities that should be standardized. The practices of the global south, on the other hand, are narrated as uncivilized and unethical and should be eliminated.

## **6. Conclusion**

The micro-level and macro-level textual analysis of the language used in the PETA blogs reveals the relationship between language, power, and society and how this relationship influences the representation and construction of ecological and environmental issues in discourse. The seemingly transparent and ecologically constructive narrative promoted by PETA reframes the religious practice of animal sacrifice in India as a cruel and inhumane habit. This is done through the use of language as a framing tool as discussed in the section on data analysis. The research uncovers the Western-centric misrepresentation of the local practice involving animals through eco-CDA. The linguistic strategies employed to delegitimize a complex socio-religious practice practiced by the majority Muslim population to a mere cruel habit are identified through Bang and Door’s model of eco-critical discourse analysis.

## **7. Recommendations**

The comparative study of the discourse related to animal sacrifice in Islam in different countries can be done through the approach of eco-CDA as it involves not only the environmental dimension of language use but social and political dimensions as well. The textual analysis of laws and bills in India related to the use of animals as a source of sustenance and nourishment can be done to study whether the influence of outsider perspective is dominant in the language of the law or whether they consider the indigenous people and their non-commercialized biodiverse lifestyle. The practice of animal sacrifice in India is of considerable importance in need of further exploration as there are several socio-political and ecological debates associated with it. Some interrelated themes that can be researched further include the influence of Western-centric discourse of framing local practices as uncivilized and inhumane, and the discrimination faced by Muslims in India related to their lifestyle of using animals as a source of sustenance and nourishment in the context of rising Hindu nationalism.

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