

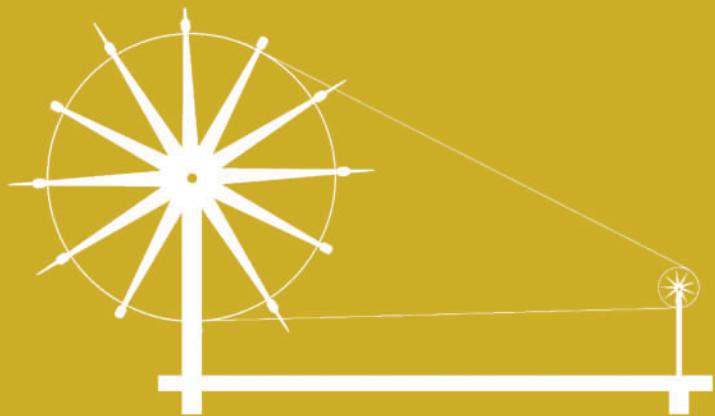


INTERNATIONAL
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The Third Voice *Reality and Vision*

The Official Journal of Centre for Third Voice Studies





Centre for Third Voice Studies (CTVS)

Niladri Vihar

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THE THIRD VOICE: REALITY AND VISION

ISSN-2583-1852 (P)

ISSN-2584-0878 (O)

VOL. NO.-7

ISSUE NO.-1

JUNE 2025

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THE THIRD VOICE: REALITY AND VISION

ISSN-2583-1852 (P)
ISSN-2584-0878 (O)

VOL. NO.-7

ISSUE NO.-1

JUNE 2025

Published By :

Voice for Voiceless ®

Registration No:23717/65

At: NiladriVihar

P.O: Nayabazar

Dist: Cuttack

Pin:753004

Odisha, India

Website : www.thirdvoice.voiceforvoiceless.in

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Printed By:

Ray Printers, At-G-3, Raja BagichaLabour Colony,
P.O.-Telenga Bazar, Cuttack-753009, Odisha, India.

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Editorial

BHARAT – THE FULLCRUM OF THE NEW WORLD ORDER

Prof. Ramakrushna Pradhan

The global trade landscape is undergoing significant changes primarily due to the tariff war between the U.S. and the global South especially India and China, which reflects evolving economic and political systems. This conflict is redefining notions of global trade, international relations, and power distribution. A tariff war involves escalating trade barriers like tariffs and protectionist measures, aimed at protecting domestic industries and reducing trade imbalances. Nonetheless, the long-term consequences extend beyond immediate tariffs, signaling a departure from the pro-free trade environment established by the liberal international order led by the U.S and Europe in the post-World War II through its agencies operating by the Bretton Woods system. Ironically, a sudden shift in the western orientation on free trade has just not surprised all but also underpinned the changing dynamics of the global politics inherent in these tariff wars.

The shift away from global free trade is evident, as nations increasingly prioritize protectionism and national interests, leading to slower economic growth, rising consumer costs, and the formation of regional trade agreements like the USMCA and RCEP. Additionally, the U.S.-China rivalry highlights a potential division into competing economic blocs, with the U.S. adopting an "America First" policy and China aiming for self-sufficiency in technologies further escalated with the recent U.S tariff on India for the reason stated beyond acceptance. That has led Europe to finds itself in a precarious position between the US, China and India triangle with the continent already fighting a war with Russia in its neighborhood, potentially needing to adjust its trade and diplomatic strategies.

The impact on global supply chains is profound, as the U.S. and China retract from their long-standing economic interdependence. Companies are seeking alternative manufacturing bases in with tariffs on India and trade war with China. This trend could diminish the influence of tariffs by allowing for localized production.

In the long run, these changes may lead to a reordering of the global economic landscape, with shifting power dynamics favoring China and India and the emergence of currency wars as nations reconsider their reliance on the U.S. dollar largely attributing to its trade monopoly. The U.S.'s diminished global leadership role could open opportunities for other nations to assume greater influence in international institutions. Overall, the tariff war signals a pivotal transition in global politics and economics, suggesting a future characterized by new economic blocs and a less interconnected world.

As Donald Trump's administration accelerates its tariff strategies and questions the United States' allegiance to NATO, UNO and the western oriented and inclined Bretton Woods System there is rising apprehension about a potential breakdown of the global order. This concern is intensified by the suddenness of these shifts. Post-2008 economic crisis, the US-led liberal international order seemed robust, with affirmations of US dominance despite emerging challenges like China. However, Trump's second term brings a perception of him as undermining the liberal and overarching world order. Nevertheless, this view may oversimplify his role, as he is more a catalyst of existing destabilizing trends than the cause of current crises. It is believed that any new order will likely retain elements of the previous one. Reassurance lies in the fact that no other country has embraced Trump's 'reciprocal tariffs' or disdain for multilateralism, suggesting that globalization is evolving rather than disappearing, particularly shifting towards the East. Current global governance structures face inefficiencies, yet new formats will likely surface post-Trump, without a significant loss in global governance.

Challenging the notion that world order hinges solely on US and Western hegemony reveals that vital principles like state sovereignty, territorial integrity, and multilateral diplomacy have historical roots in various global regions beyond the West. Despite narratives highlighting the West's decline, the post-World War II international framework has been significantly influenced by non-Western leadership and contributions. Countries in the Global South, such as India, South Africa, and Indonesia, are pivotal in shaping global standards, as evidenced by their collective condemnation of the Russian invasion of Ukraine and critique of Israeli policies in Gaza.

The trajectory towards a multipolar world order, while perceived advantageous in averting chaos, often overlooks the significance of ideas, norms, and leadership from non-great powers. Historical multipolarity in Europe before World War II often involved imperial dominance with insufficient multilateral institutions, contrasting sharply with present global dynamics.

A more nuanced view of the emerging world order is through the lens of multiplexity, highlighting that no single nation or coalition will dominate the global landscape. The expectation is for the US to maintain military and technological supremacy, while China increasingly leads in development and trade. Regional influences, exemplified by ASEAN and the African Union, will also gain prominence. In such a multiplex environment, power dynamics and alignments are expected to be fluid and issue-specific, leading countries to adopt a strategy of hedging over rigid alliances. For example, nations in Southeast Asia might align with the US for security while seeking economic support from China, indicating a move towards non-alignment. No single country is projected to lead across all sectors, with diverse contributions from the US in security, China in trade, and the EU in climate policy. Global South nations will harness flexible partnerships for security and economic collaboration with various powers, thereby enhancing their agency in shaping geopolitical relations and support.

Reglobalization

A multiplex world order is posited to influence globalization and global cooperation in a unique manner, differing from both multipolarity and the previous dominance of the West. The document argues that globalization is a longstanding and more expansive phenomenon than typically acknowledged, particularly by the conventional 'Davos view,' which links it primarily to 19th-century developments stemming from the steam engine. It emphasizes that there have been multiple instances of globalization throughout history, including significant networks such as the Eurasian Silk Roads and the extensive non-Sinic Indian Ocean trade and cultural exchanges, which connected Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Middle East long before European imperialism.

The era of hyper-globalization, once viewed as a driver of prosperity, has now transitioned due to the weaponization of trade and geopolitics, leading to discussions about both de-globalization—reducing dependence on foreign trade for greater national self-reliance—and a potential re-globalization. This reintegration is expected to be spearheaded by Asia rather than the West, as the region has become a vital global growth engine and connector. Between 2015 and 2021, Asia contributed 57% to global GDP growth and accounted for 42% of world GDP (purchasing power parity). Furthermore, Asia made up over half of global trade in 2022, with its intra-regional trade being second only to that of the European Union.

However, the effects of Trump's tariff wars may hinder Asia's growth since much of its economic progress has relied on access to the American market. Countries like Vietnam, Korea, Taiwan, Mexico, and the EU, which have a strong export dependency to the US, face particular risks. This situation suggests a shift rather than a complete end to globalization, indicating that it is entering a new phase characterized by new economic dynamics and challenges.

The infrastructure and policy frameworks established by Asian countries like Vietnam, Malaysia, and Bangladesh will continue to play a vital role as these nations adjust to evolving global trade dynamics. Emerging supply chains are anticipated to be more localized, simplified, and virtual, influenced not only by shifting geopolitical landscapes and US tariffs but also by factors such as automation, sustainability, and technological progression. China is proactively constructing supply chains that are less reliant on the US, instead focusing on markets within the Global South. This trend of re-globalization may empower non-aligned Global South countries economically and enhance their appeal to global investors, as evidenced by a recent Economist Group survey indicating that a non-aligned strategic position attracts investment. While US tariffs may introduce challenges to diversification efforts, they are unlikely to halt this trend, potentially fostering greater South-South globalization.

A multiplex world order is reshaping globalization and global cooperation, diverging from both multipolarity and Western dominance. The document asserts that globalization is a broader, historical phenomenon, with notable instances predating European imperialism, such as the Silk Roads and Indian Ocean trade. As hyper-globalization gives way to the weaponization of trade and geopolitics, discussions arise around de-globalization and potential re-globalization, driven by Asia, which made significant contributions to global GDP growth and trade. However, challenges such as Trump's tariffs pose risks to Asia's reliance on the US market. This transition suggests a new phase of globalization characterized by evolving economic dynamics, with Asian nations adapting policies and infrastructure to localize and virtualize supply chains, while China seeks to reduce US dependency by targeting Global South markets, potentially enhancing investment interest in those countries.

Bharat

Bharat has emerged as a crucial player amid a global tariff war and shifting geopolitical dynamics, balancing the interests of major powers like the U.S., China, and Russia through a doctrine of strategic autonomy. This strategy allows Bharat to maintain defense ties with Russia, engage in QUAD collaborations with Western democracies, and work with China via BRICS and SCO, despite ongoing border tensions. The U.S. imposed tariffs of up to 50% on Bharat's goods in 2025, which led Bharat to diversify its energy imports, boost rupee-based trade settlements, and accelerate free trade agreements (FTAs) with several countries, while its Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme attracted significant investment, enhancing domestic manufacturing.

Bharat is not merely a passive participant; it is positioning itself as a leader in a multipolar world, characterized by its \$4 trillion GDP and a growth rate of 7.8%. It has established itself as an alternative to China in global supply chains, ranked 4th in military capability with strong defense partnerships, and is actively engaged in various international forums. In its relations with the U.S., Bharat maintains significant trade and defense ties despite tariff tensions, with Russia as a key supplier and expected bilateral trade exceeding \$100 billion by 2030, while continuing economic engagement with China amidst ongoing border issues.

Furthermore, Bharat's internal strengths—demographic dividend, digital infrastructure advancements, and investments in green energy and semiconductors—play a vital role in its global positioning. However, challenges loom in the form of China's regional influence, U.S. unpredictability, Russia's reliance on China, and global protectionism.

To navigate these challenges, Bharat's strategic blueprint emphasizes multi-alignment, trade diplomacy, defense modernization, and reforms in global governance. Ultimately, Bharat's rise as a fulcrum of the changing world order is attributed to its strategic clarity, economic resilience, and adept diplomacy, setting an example of balanced engagement and sovereign decision-making on the global stage.

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	9 Help Senior Citizens	
	3 Stop Plastic Use	
	10 Help Sick Person	
	4 Save Earth	
	11 Help Poor Children	
	5 Stop Drug Abuse and Alcoholism	
	12 Help Poor Women	
	6 Stop Untouchability	
	7 Help Dibyanga	
	13 Planting Tree	
	14 Protecting Animals and Birds	
	15 Spreading Basic Education	
	16 Women Empowerment	
	17 Cleanliness Campaign	
	18 Satya and Ahmisha	
	19 Health and Hygienic	
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India's Leading Role in the Counter-Terror Cooperation in South Asia

Prasanta Sahoo

Associate Prof., Centre for International Politics, Organisation and Disarmament,
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ABSTRACT:

After decades of being a victim of terrorism, India has started leading the SouthAsia region in cooperation for counterterror measures. The menace of terrorism in this region is deeply rooted in the cultural, historical, political, ideological, and socio-economic conditions of the region. The Afghan War of 1980, along with the USA, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan's arms support against the Soviet invasion, is the mother of the genesis of terrorism in this region. Due to the unorthodox way of partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947 on religious grounds, Pakistan has been sponsoring terrorism in the Kashmir region of India. In the last 75 years, India has seen several of the worst cases of terror attacks on its soil by Pakistan-supported terror groups. The South Asian Region (SAR) has seen the maximum number of deaths due to terrorism compared to any other reason. Terrorism also poses a significant threat to the political stability, economic development, national security, peace and harmony of the region. This paper explores how India is trying to bring unanimity and cooperation among the South Asian nations in counterterror measures.

KEY WORDS: *India's Leading Role; Terrorism; SAARC; South Asia; CounterterrorMeasures*

INTRODUCTION

South Asia remains one of the most fertile grounds for terrorism and extremism in the world. The menace of terrorism in this region is deeply rooted in the cultural, historical, political, ideological, and socio-economic conditions of the region. The region comprises countries such as Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. These nations have seen the most brutal form of terrorism, insurgency and extremism over the last five decades or so. The Afghan War of 1980, along with the USA, Saudi and Pakistan arms support against the Soviet invasion, is the mother of the genesis of terrorism in this region (Chellaney,2001). During that period, Pakistan became the ultimate destination of terrorists fighting for *Jihad*. However, once the Soviets left and the US turned a blind eye to the promises it had made to the *jihadi* fighters,

these elements established Afghanistan as the hub of terrorist activity. As a result, the attacks of 9/11 were propelled by logistical and moral support from Afghanistan and Pakistan.

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Received	Reviewed	Accepted	Published
30-Jan.-2025	27-Mar.-2025	22-May.-2025	01-June.-2025

Volume	Issue	June	ISSN
No. 7	No. 1	2025	2583-1852(P), 2584-0878(O)

How to Cite this Article: Sahoo, Prasanta. India's Leading Role in the Counter-Terror Cooperation in South Asia. THE THIRD VOICE REALITY AND VISION. 2025. Vol No-7. Issue No-1. June. Pp: 7-13.
DOI : <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17403217>

ACCESS THIS ARTICLE ONLINE

Quick Response Code:



Available online at :
thirdvoice.voiceforvoiceless.in

DOI:
<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17403217>
Article No - TVRV00082

Due to the unorthodox way of partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947 on religious grounds, Pakistan has been sponsoring terrorism in the Kashmir region of India. In the last 75 years, India has seen several of the worst cases of terror attacks on its soil by Pakistan-supported terror groups. Though after every terror attack since 2016 till the recent Pahalgam attack, India has successfully given a befitting reply to Pakistan with surgical strikes and military actions. Since the exit of the Soviet Union from Afghanistan, the terrorist groups, having transnational links, have wreaked havoc in the region. The fatalities in this region due to terrorism are second to none. According to several reports, the South Asian Region (SAR) has seen more deaths due to terrorism than for any other reason. Cross-border terrorism is a prominent feature of terrorism in this region, and states like Pakistan have sponsored a lot of it in their proxy war against India. No South Asian country is free from the scourge of terrorism, and terrorist groups in one country are inextricably linked to such groups in other countries.

Terrorism not only poses a major threat to national security, political stability, and economic development, but also to regional peace and harmony in South Asian. Due to the unique nature of the region, the nation-states of South Asia are interdependent in their security affairs, where one state's internal problem seriously affects other states and vice versa (Singh, 2002). Hence, cooperation in combating terrorism is not just desirable but imperative.

This paper explores how India, the most vibrant democracy, a military bull and an economic hub in the region, is trying its best to bring unanimity and cooperation among the South Asian nations. Especially since Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) came to power in Delhi, under the able leadership of Narendra Modi, in 2014, India has been claiming its leadership position in counterterror cooperation in the South Asian region.

HISTORY OF TERRORISM IN SOUTH ASIA

The South Asian region has enormous potential to develop into an economic hub. A demography of young people, fast-growing economies like India, countries with huge natural resource stocks, and a strategic geographic location regarding trade and transit routes characterise this region. Hence, any form of terrorism and violence hinders this growth and hampers the region's progress (Meng, 2024). Today, the whole of South Asia, from Afghanistan to Bangladesh, is going

through a phase of internal unrest and political upheaval arising from a range of factors such as ethnic conflicts, religious radicalism and fundamentalism, as well as powerful political divisions (Malik, 2012).

The truth is, Islam as a religion has occupied the position of the second-largest in the region. Unfortunately, there have been efforts made to establish the linkage between terrorism and religion in strategic thinking and foreign policy analysis. Also, it has been found that some states have used it politically to bargain with the neighbouring states. This has made the national security discourses more than a cancerous disease (Singh, 2002). Afghanistan and Pakistan have become a breeding ground for these extremist elements. This situation is further aggravated by the internal unrest and turmoil in countries like Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Myanmar (Dasgupta, 2024). However, other categories of terrorism or insurgency are present in the region too, like ethnic terrorism as seen in Myanmar, Sri Lanka and North-East India; Narco-terrorism is also prominent in the SAR due to its proximity to the 'Golden Crescent' and the 'Golden Triangle' (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2025; CLAWS, 2019). The two regions are notoriously famous for the drug trade and terrorism emanating from state sponsorship, as seen in the case of Pakistan's proxy war against India.

History tells us that the South Asian region has been plagued by terrorism for decades now. The Afghan civil war and then the Soviet-Afghan war saw the region turn into an epicentre of *jihadi* ideology. Militia from all over the world joined hands in the region to fight a holy war, *jihad*. Pakistan's ISI and Jamaat have played a key role in converting them to real terrorists on the religious line through their training centres existing across the country. They have been motivating them and preparing them for the holy war for the survival of Islam (Liwal, 2010). The result has been a spill over of these militants to the entire region, including the countries that sponsored these terrorists in the beginning.

The SAR is plagued by some of the most radical terrorist organisations in the world. Terror organisations like Al-Qaeda, Taliban, Haqqani Network, the Islamic State Khorasan Province, etc., in Afghanistan; Tehreek-e-Taliban, Hizb-ul-Mujahideen (HM), Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), are some of the numerous such organisations in Pakistan. There are also several terror outfits existing in Bangladesh, such as Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), Ansarullah Bangla Team (ABT), Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami (HuJI), Al-Qaeda, etc (SATP,

2025). In Myanmar, there are ethno-separatist terrorist groups like Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA), Arakan Army, etc. Finally, there are organisations like Indian Mujahideen (IM), United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA), Harkat-ul-Mujahideen (HuM), etc., as some of the many terrorist organisations are active against India. The South Asian insurgencies, on the other hand, have their identity linkages at two levels: with the persons belonging to different countries but of the same identity, and with their compatriots settled in other countries as the diaspora (Muni, 2012). These identities work along the lines of ethnicity and religion (Mukherjee, 2021). The transnationalisation of terrorist groups has led to multiple terror funding sources, varied political and social support structures, and havens across boundaries. This mandates a common security perception from the region's countries (Wagner, 2020).

LESSONS LEARNT FROM THE PAST COOPERATION

The South Asian region has a history of old civilisational linkages, but it has not worked particularly well in the case of counter-terrorism cooperation. It was in the Asian Relations Conference (1947) where the regional security perspectives were debated with an objective of developing a sense of interdependence among the nations of the Asia continent. More precisely, the socio-economic development and diplomacy, as well as to provide a basis for the formation of the 'Regional Security Community' among those nations (Thakur, 2018).

In the South Asia Region, the same perception and idea was taken as the sole motivation while forming the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) in 1985. In 1987, the organisation, in its resolution, framed the SAARC Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism, which was unanimously supported by all the member states. India and Sri Lanka joined hands to combat ethnic tension in the Jaffna city of Sri Lanka, popularly known as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Other such initiatives included the operation by Bhutanese forces against insurgents in its territory with the help of India, Bangladesh and Myanmar. Myanmar forces undertook various operations to flush out insurgent groups operating around the Indo-Myanmar border, such as the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) Khaplang, the ULFA and the People's Liberation Army (PLA), active in Manipur. These SAARC nations conducted joint exercises with India during the 1990s to crack down on insurgent infrastructure. The Bangladeshi government

has sometimes taken action against such groups and insurgent groups of North-East India (Bhattacharjee, 2023).

In the wake of 9/11 and the GWOT, the world realised that borders cannot prevent terrorism from spreading. Hence, with India's proactive initiative, the SAR was prompted to tackle terrorism together. This was evident in the 11th SAARC summit of 2002, where all the members pledged to undertake collective efforts to combat terrorism. In 2004, an additional protocol was adopted along with the already existing SAARC's Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism to make it effective.

The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) and *Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal (BBIN)*, as subregional organisations, have also tried to achieve cooperation to combat terrorism in the South Asian region. In 2005, counterterror measures and actions against transnational crime syndicates were placed on the priority list of BIMSTEC. Shortly, a Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime was set up unanimously among the member states. However, SAARC remains the most prominent representation of the South Asian region.

CHALLENGES TO THE COOPERATION

Regarding counterterror cooperation, several challenges persist and hinder the complete elimination of terrorism in the region. Although it would be unfair to entirely disregard what has been achieved by the SAR countries, loopholes and challenges are still very much evident.

The definition issue becomes an obstacle to achieving uniformity in the position on terrorism. There is no universally accepted definition of terrorism (Schmid, 2023). This anomaly leaves the room open for interpretations and hence, fuels aberrations as argued by Ganor (2002), such as "One man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter," which confuses the very definition of the term terrorism. This lacuna has been exploited by Pakistan in the case of Jammu and Kashmir by labelling terrorists and militants in the region as freedom fighters (Ganor, 2002). Similar behaviour has been observed in Nepal in the case of Maoists and in Sri Lanka in the case of native Tamils.

The idea of a regional security community gets thwarted by the inaction of Pakistan in addressing the terrorism emanating from its soil. It has been proven that Pakistan has used terrorism as a tool of state policy to carry out its dirty work and to sabotage its neighbours, especially

India. This was acknowledged by Pakistani President Musharraf in a speech in 2002 (DIA, 2002), later by President Asif Ali Zardari, and more openly by PM Imran Khan, as well as later by the Defence Minister of Pakistan, Khawaja Asif (ET, 2025). Musharraf very elegantly admitted that the Pakistani government in the past sponsored and nurtured terrorists through providing them with political and security support on its soil. The main objective was to use them for short-term foreign policy and political goals, particularly against India (Thapa, 2012). The attacks like 26/11 and 9/11 were also linked directly to Pakistan. Hence, such a state in the region instils insecurity and distrust among other countries and hinders cooperation.

Many eminent scholars argue that the SAARC has become dormant or dysfunctional (**Haque, 2025**). The continued issues between India and Pakistan owing to the latter's sponsoring of terrorism and the domestic issues in countries like Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Afghanistan have rendered the organisation into a mere paper tiger. Afghanistan is being run by the Taliban, which itself is considered a terrorist organisation by many countries. On the other hand, Sri Lanka is going through an economic crisis, whereas Bangladesh has just witnessed massive social and political unrest. These developments impede the prospect of cooperation in combating terrorism.

Even though the countries of the SAR have agreed upon the need and the importance of combating each other at various summits of the SAARC and other regional bodies, as well as through bilateral channels, the commitment has not been backed by proper legislation (Kumar, 2012). These challenges expose the gravity of regional cooperation among South Asian countries in combating terrorism (Kurian, 2021). This propels everyone to consider India a key player in the region.

INDIA'S LEADING ROLE IN THE SAR

While looking at the political dynamics of the South Asia region, it becomes pertinent to understand a few things, such as the ideological and political compulsions of the countries. One of the main reasons is the Indo-centric nature of the region, where only India shares its borders directly and indirectly with all the nations. It is believed that any political or security upheaval that takes place in any country directly impacts India, including the security architecture of the region. Therefore, the matter of the success of the counterterror measures depends upon a deep cooperation of India with all its neighbours (Kumar, 2012). Another reason why India has become a focal

point in counterterrorism discussions is that India has been a primary victim of terrorism.

As one of the world's major victims of terrorism, India desires to be in the mainstream international coalition against terrorism. It wants to ensure the world community considers its security concerns and interests (Ramabadran, 2024). Terrorism in India has manifested itself in its various forms, including religious, ideological, cross-border and ethnic, and India has carefully worked around the goal of combating terrorism given its dominant religious nature. It has been argued by many scholars that India has to delink religion from its counter-terrorism strategy, presuming terrorists are a separate entity having no emotional relationship with any religion (Doval, 2007). Terrorism has to be dealt with an approach it deserves without having any religious bias.

India has tried to take each player into confidence regarding regional cooperation by building a solid bilateral rapport. The reality of working with an unenviable neighbourhood has shaped New Delhi's strategic choices. Initiatives like the "Neighbourhood First" policy of the Modi government make India's priorities evident (Haidar, 2025). India has established that South Asia's development depends on South Asia's stability. This stability is endangered by terrorism and extremism of any form. However, the seriousness of India's initiatives in this regard can be understood through discussing its bilateral understanding and cooperation with the neighbouring countries in the region.

INDIA AND PAKISTAN

Despite Pakistan's habitual offence of sponsoring cross-border terrorism in India and using terrorism as a tool of state policy, India has tried to resort to cooperating with Pakistan to combat terrorism multiple times in the past. In 2004, India and Pakistan agreed to restart the composite dialogue and cooperate to fight terrorism. In 2006, in Havana, Pakistan's President Pervez Musharraf and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, on the sidelines of the meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement, resolved to establish a bilateral Joint Anti-Terrorism Mechanism (JATM) (Thapa, 2012). Apart from this, India submitted a dossier as evidence of Pakistani involvement in the 26/11 Mumbai attacks to the Pakistani High Commission and even allowed a Pakistani investigation team to come to India to investigate the Pathankot Air Base attack in 2016. Later, they attacked Uri, Pulwama and recently at Pahalgam in Jammu & Kashmir (*The Hindu*, 2025). However, these efforts did not yield any success as Pakistan continues to harbour

and sponsor terrorists and use them against India as a weapon in its proxy war.

INDIA AND BANGLADESH

Bangladesh is home to numerous Islamic militant outfits (JMB, Al-Qaeda, Hefazat, etc.) and some insurgent groups that operate in Northeast India. Bangladesh is also plagued by economic disparity, social unrest and religious dogmatism, which makes it even more conducive for terrorism to thrive. Cross-border illegal immigration is a prominent issue between India and Bangladesh, which only exacerbates the threat of terrorism in the region. In addition, the porous nature of the Indo-Bangladesh border has provided a positive environment for the northeast militants to cross over to Indian territory and, when required, easily slip over to the Bangladesh side. (Kumaraswamy, 2007).

Hence, India has tried to seriously take up the issue of cooperating to combat these security challenges with Bangladesh. The then government at New Delhi had accused Dhaka of harbouring and sponsoring various militant groups, and it had presented Dhaka with a list of these militants' camps and demanded their closure. However, they continue to thrive (Kumaraswamy, 2007). However, with the Sheikh Hasina government, the cooperation seemed to deepen, as Bangladesh cracked down on north-eastern militants and ULFA leaders in 2009. The two countries have also established joint working groups for border management to tackle illegal immigration.

INDIA AND AFGHANISTAN

The recent Taliban takeover (2021) has mandated India to take a careful approach towards Afghanistan. Interestingly, without giving official recognition to the Taliban regime due to its national security, ideological and political compulsions, India has successfully established a solid rapport with it (Patil, 2023). India has followed the informal way to recalibrate its Afghanistan strategy to address the security threats spilling out from the soil of Kabul. India and Afghanistan have historical and cultural links between the two nations (Patil, 2023). The presence of a religious extremist government only exacerbates the *Jehadi* culture and ideology in the region, and India has carefully crafted its response to avoid the dissemination of this ideology in India, given a substantial Muslim population in the region.

INDIA AND MYANMAR

The Myanmar junta has often been accused of ethnic cleansing and violence in their country, including the

incidents of 2016-17, which resulted in the fleeing of 700000 Rohingyas from the Rakhine province to the neighbouring countries (UNHRC, 2024). However, India has diplomatically engaged with the junta, keeping its security concerns in mind. This is because cross-border insurgency in Northeast India is a pressing issue for India. These insurgents operate from across the border in Myanmar and often take shelter there when running from Indian security forces. Apart from this, illegal immigration from Myanmar, owing to its internal unrest, is a pressing challenge to Indian security. To address these challenges, India has taken joint efforts with Myanmar, culminating in military operations like the 'Sunrise' in 2019. India had conducted a military action like a surgical strike inside the Myanmar jungles (*The Hindu*, 2019). India has also agreed to contribute US\$25M over five years, starting from 2019, to reconstruct the violence-torn Rakhine state. These efforts speak of a serious cooperation effort from India.

CONCLUSION

The South Asian region has become a terrorist hotspot over the years, particularly the Afghan-Pakistan border area of West Waziristan (Liwal, 2010). The nature of terrorism in South Asia is transnational, and isolation will only prove to be detrimental for the regional players. India is rightly working towards creating a consensus among the establishment of the South Asian Regional Security Community on the 'Security and Prosperity' of the SAR. India has been trying to convince the people of SAR to consider the fight against terrorism as a common objective of the region, its governments and defence forces the regional prosperity and stability (Singh, 2002). The only way forward to combat this menace is cooperation and building a comprehensive regional strategy. A beginning has been made, especially after 9/11, to recognise that the way forward to combating terrorism requires cooperation from each country. However, it must also be recognised that using terrorism as a weapon is fatal to the very own country that harbours it, because terrorism is a dog that bites the very hand that feeds it, as stated by the Secretary of State, USA, Ms. Hillary Clinton, in a similar fashion (NDTV, 2011). Countries like Pakistan must work on this and improve their credibility.

In this regard, India has emerged as a key player in the SAR due to its robust economy, decisive leadership and strong ability to combat terrorism (Doval, 2007). This has been seen in the aftermath of the Pahalgam terror attacks (*The Times of India*, 2025). India has been leading the fight against terrorism in South Asia, owing to its

domestic experiences fighting the same and its larger vision of *VasudhaivaKutumbakam* (*The Economic Times*, 2024).

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS:

The author declare no potential conflicts of interests with respect to the research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

FUNDING:

The author acknowledges the support of the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) for this research through grant no. ICSSR/RPD/MJ/2023-24/OBC/30 Dated 22.12.2023 under the Centre for International Politics, Organisation and Disarmament, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India.

Acknowledgements

Not applicable

Availability of data and materials

No datasets were generated or analysed during the current study

Declarations

Ethics approval and consent to participate

Not applicable.

Consent for publication

Not applicable.

Competing interests

The authors declare no competing interests.

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Strategic Contestation and Regional Realignment: Israel–Iran Dynamics in the Emerging Global Order

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ABSTRACT

This paper analyses the strategic rivalry between Israel and Iran and how it has reshaped the Middle East's global order. The paper discusses how this protracted conflict reshapes regional security paradigms and world power dynamics by following their development as a regional rival and studying current geopolitical patterns. The research examines how Iran's backing of proxy militias and ideological gains in going for regional hegemony jeopardise Israel's national security directly through qualitative analysis of newspaper reports, policy reports, and scholarly work. Israel retaliates by resisting Iranian influence on battlefields through the application of its military power, intelligence apparatus, and foreign alliances. The strategic competition between these two Middle Eastern nations is shaping greater diplomatic, geopolitical, and security issues in the Middle East region and indeed globally, fueling tension and conflict cycles. While they are inherently competitive, the study argues that mutual dialogue, global mediation, and confidence-building measures can provide a choice of de-escalation and longer-term regional stability. Finally, a critical perspective for examining the dynamics of global change and regional conflict in the twenty-first century is the Israel-Iran relationship.

KEYWORDS: Strategic Rivalry, Israel-Iran Relations, Middle East Geopolitics, Regional Security, Global Power Dynamics

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the last century, Israel-Iran relations have experienced significant shifts, responding both to domestic political turmoil in the two countries and the changing geopolitical landscape of the world. Historically, Israel and Iran had a discreet but beneficial relationship before the Iranian Revolution of 1979, motivated by shared strategic objectives and economic cooperation (Gazit 2015). However, after the revolution, this dynamic drastically changed as Iran took a firmly anti-Israel posture, which profoundly changed the geopolitical landscape of the Middle East (Parsi 2007a). With their interactions characterized by ideological

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Received	Reviewed	Accepted	Published
21-Jan.-2025	29-Mar.-2025	22-May.-2025	01-June-2025

Volume	Issue	June	ISSN
No. 7	No. 1	2025	2583-1852(P), 2584-0878(O)

How to Cite this Article: Singh, Sandip Kumar; Gidey, D; Dadhwala, K.S. Strategic Contestation and Regional Realignment: Israel–Iran Dynamics in the Emerging Global Order. THE THIRD VOICE REALITY AND VISION. 2025. Vol No-7. Issue No-1. June. Pp: 14-26. DOI : <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17403248>

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Available online at :
thirdvoice.voiceforvoiceless.in

DOI:
<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17403248>
 Article No - TVRV00083

hostility, military tensions, and competing regional influences, Israel and Iran have become significant regional actors in the decades that have followed. The expansion of nuclear weapons, proxy conflicts, and advancements in cyberwarfare technology are some of the main issues that drive their rivalry. According to (David 2019), Israel, which sees Iran as an existential threat if it were to acquire nuclear weapons, has been extremely vocal in its opposition to Iran's highly disputed pursuit of nuclear capabilities. As a result of both countries' support for rival groups in different Middle Eastern crises, the proxy battles worsen relations. According to (Kraus 2010), Iran provides significant support to organizations like Hezbollah and Hamas, while Israel uses force to fend off these influences and protect its borders. According to (Analytica 2022), this complex rivalry has spilled over into the field of cyberwarfare, where both nations have advanced their capabilities and produced a slew of high-profile cyber drama. Iran's geopolitical policies and economic stability have been impacted by the imposition of sanctions, whereas Israel's strong economic and technological sectors support its status regionally and globally (Bahgat 2011). The involvement of major international powers such as the US, Russia, China, and the EU significantly impacts whether diplomatic attempts to defuse these tensions are successful (Qadri 2024). The Israel-Iran relationship holds significant importance in understanding contemporary geopolitical dynamics, particularly in the context of the Middle East. As tensions continue escalating, this rivalry's implications extend beyond regional borders, affecting global security, economic stability, and international diplomatic efforts. The ongoing conflict has prompted a reevaluation of alliances and military strategies among global powers, thereby reshaping the geopolitical landscape (Khan, Ahmad, and Alam 2023; Furlan 2022a). Iran's nuclear ambitions serve as a primary concern not only for Israel but for many nations worldwide. The potential for a nuclear-armed Iran raises existential questions for Israel, which perceives this development as a direct threat to its national security (Kumar 2024a; Freilich 2023). Israel's defensive strategy and numerous preemptive measures have therefore become the centre of global debate on military actions and diplomatic talks. The nuclear proliferation dilemma and fears over a regional race to arms compel the need to look at how Israel and Iran have a fine line between their relationship (Bukhari, Khan, and Haq 2024). Rivalry has also created a realignment of regional blocs, with countries revisiting their regional security

interests under the increased Iranian influence. For instance, various Arab nations have attempted to improve relations with Israel as a balancing act against the Iranian influence. This shifting regional realpolitik complicates the old narratives and diplomatic equations, so it is only necessary to examine the meaning of Israel-Iran relations in terms of regional stability (Mabon 2023). Recent events, including military engagements and cyber warfare, highlight the critical need for comprehensive research on the Israel-Iran dynamic. Each incident not only escalates hostilities between the two nations but also amplifies the risks of wider regional conflict, which could have cascading effects on international markets and security frameworks. *Cracking the Enigma: Iran-Israel Relations Unveiled a Provocative Exploration into Global Geopolitics* (Bukhari, Khan, and Haq 2024). By studying these dynamics, policymakers and scholars can better understand the mechanisms at play and work towards developing nuanced strategies that promote dialogue and de-escalation (Analytica 2024a). Based by shared strategic goals and practical factors, Israel and Iran enjoyed a reasonably cooperative relationship before the Iranian Uprising of 1979. Both countries saw each other as important friends in the 1950s and 60s in a region largely hostile to Israel and cautious of Soviet dominance (Melman & Raviv, 1990). During this time, military and economic collaboration was established, resulting in cooperative farming initiatives, arms agreements, and information exchange (Gazit 2015). Iran's Shah, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, modernized and secularized the country in a way that suited Israel's goal of forming non-Arab coalitions in the Middle East. Because Iran views overt partnerships as politically problematic, this cooperation was frequently carried out in secret because of the larger Arab Israeli conflict (Parsi 2007b). However, the 1979 Islamic Revolution dramatically altered the bilateral relationship. The overthrow of the Shah and the rise of the Islamic Republic, led by Ayatollah Khomeini, introduced a new ideological dimension to Iran's foreign policy. The revolutionary regime adopted a vehemently anti-Israel stance, denouncing the Jewish state as an illegitimate entity and expressing support for Palestinian liberation movements (Haddad and Qasim 2023). This ideological shift began a hostile and adversarial relationship that continues to shape Middle Eastern geopolitics. The two-way relationship was significantly changed by the Islamic Revolution in 1979, though. Iran's foreign policy took on a new ideological component with the toppling of the Shah and the establishment of the Islamic Republic

under Ayatollah Khomeini's leadership. With a strong anti-Israel stance, the revolutionary leadership supported Palestinian liberation forces and declared the Jewish state to be an illegitimate entity (Aharon 2024). A confrontational and antagonistic relationship that still shapes Middle Eastern geopolitics began with this ideological change.

KEY EVENTS SHAPING THE CURRENT GEOPOLITICAL DYNAMICS

Despite the revolutionary rhetoric, there was a short convergence of interests between Israel and Iran in the early phases of the Iran-Iraq War. The strategic goal of undermining Iraq, a shared enemy, is purportedly the reason Israel allegedly gave Iran restricted weaponry shipments (Pollack 2005). One key component of Iran's anti-Israel agenda has been its support for the militant Shiite organization Hezbollah, based in Lebanon. As a major Iranian proxy in the region, Hezbollah has fought Israel in multiple wars, among which was the 2006 Lebanon War (González Mendelejis 2020). As part of the Oslo Accords, which represented the Israeli-Palestinian reconciliation process in the 1990s, Iran grew more hostile toward Israel by supporting organizations that opposed the peace attempts, such as Islamic Jihad and Hamas (Wertman 2021). The development of Iran's nuclear program has been a major cause of friction in relations with Israel. Israel has argued for worldwide sanctions alongside military action to stop Iran's nuclear development because it views Iran's nuclear objectives as an existential danger (Hussain* 2020). Israel-Iran ties have become more complex due to the Syrian conflict since Iran has established a presence close to Israel's borders and has given the Assad regime major military backing. Israel has responded to this by carrying out multiple airstrikes against Iranian sites in Syria (Lister 2016). A set of reconciliation agreements between Israel and several Arab states, known as the Abraham Accords, have altered regional alignments and increased Iran's sense of encirclement. These agreements mark a dramatic reorientation of Middle Eastern geopolitics, possibly further isolating Iran (Faheema 2023). To understand the geopolitical dynamics of the Middle East today and in the future, one must have a thorough understanding of the historical background and significant events that have influenced Israel-Iran ties. These incidents highlight the intricate interactions between strategy, ideology, and local power struggles that shape this crucial bilateral relationship. A major geopolitical concern in the Middle East has been Iran's nuclear program, which has raised serious questions about both regional and international security. Iran's

nuclear program aims to produce electricity and conduct medical research. However, because of concerns over the program's possible military applications, there has been intense international scrutiny and political pressure to halt its advancement (Einhorn and Nephew, 2016). Under the Atoms for Peace program, Iran started working on nuclear weapons in the 1950s with US assistance. However, the Islamic Revolution of 1979 signaled a change, and the following decades saw varying degrees of growth and global participation. Early in the new millennium, there were indications that Iran was making major strides toward uranium enrichment, a dual-use technology with military and civilian applications (Pashayi and Kodaman 2023). The international community, led by the US and the EU, responded to these events by enacting several economic penalties designed to put pressure on Iran to stop its enrichment activities. After much work, Iran and the P5+1 (China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Germany) reached an agreement in 2015 known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), which aimed to restrict Iran's nuclear capabilities in exchange for the lifting of sanctions (Kaya and ^aartepe 2015). Iran's nuclear program was subject to severe restrictions under the JCPOA, which included lowering its number of centrifuges while minimizing its reserves of enriched uranium. With President Donald Trump's unilateral withdrawal from the JCPOA in 2018, tensions reappeared despite the pact, prompting the introduction of new sanctions and a rise in Iranian nuclear activity. Mahasneh and Al-Mashaqbeh(2023) noted that Iran has escalated regional and global worries by building sophisticated centrifuges and boosting its nuclear power production levels to surpass JCPOA constraints. Israel views Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons as an existential threat. Israel has continuously argued for a zero-tolerance approach toward any prospective Iranian nuclear weapons capabilities due to Iran's hostile rhetoric and support for militant groups that oppose Israel. Israel's approach has reportedly involved clandestine operations, intelligence gathering, and diplomatic attempts with the goal of undermining Iran's nuclear infrastructure (Sanger 2019). Israel is the only nuclear-armed state in the Middle East, even though its nuclear program is not officially recognized. It is generally considered to have created a sizable stockpile of nuclear weapons. This "nuclear opacity," or ambiguous posture, is meant to ward off enemies without taking the political heat for an outright admission (Cohen 2010). Several clandestine operations, including the Stuxnet cyberattack that severely hampered Iran's

nuclear program, have been carried out by Israel in recent years to target Iranian nuclear experts and facilities. Such moves demonstrate the seriousness of this geopolitical contest and demonstrate Israel's resolve to keep Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons capability (Jung, 2024). The nuclear impasse between Iran and Israel has significant ramifications for both international non-proliferation efforts and regional security. Iran's nuclear technological developments and possible weaponization represent a serious threat to the stability of the region. As a result, nearby nations are already considering implementing their own security measures, which could spark a regional weapons race (Fahmy 2022). Global non-proliferation efforts have also become more complex due to the strained dynamics. The JCPOA's partial failure and lingering ambiguities threaten the global non-proliferation system, despite the agreement being viewed as a significant diplomatic success in stopping nuclear proliferation. Regarding how to best handle the difficulties brought on by Iran's nuclear program while maintaining regional stability and averting a wider conflict, the international community is still at odds (Einhorn and Nephew 2016). Grasping the current Middle East security situation requires a grasp of Iran's nuclear ambitions and Israel's resolute resistance to them. These dynamics have important ramifications for international security and non-proliferation initiatives in addition to having an impact on regional players.

PROXY CONFLICTS AND REGIONAL INFLUENCE

Using a few Middle Eastern proxy groups, Iran and Israel have been involved in an indirect conflict for a long time. Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in the Palestinian territories are two groups that actively oppose Israel and carry out terrorist attacks against it. Iran has been a major supporter of these groups. Created in the early 1980s with Iranian support, Hezbollah has developed into one of Lebanon's most potent political and military forces, regularly engaging in combat with Israeli forces (Norton 2014a). Iran provides financial and military backing to Hamas, which has engaged Israel in several battles, including significant wars in Gaza and periodic rocket assaults (Levitt 2006). By posing a constant threat to Israel's security and acting as vital tools for Iran to project power and wield influence throughout the region, these organizations undermine Israel's security. Using these proxies, Iran may wage asymmetric warfare without resorting to direct state-to-state battle, thus depleting Israeli resources and attention (Byman 2005). Iran and Israel are at the core of many

strategic calculations in the Middle East, which is defined by a complex web of alliances and conflicts. Iran's partnerships with Hezbollah, Syria, and other Iraqi militias create an alleged "axis of resistance" that challenges Israeli dominance and Western influence in the area (Phillips 2020). On the other hand, Israel has improved relations with Sunni Arab nations like Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, in part due to everyday worries about Iran's regional aspirations and nuclear program (Winter 2020; Brom and Winter 2020). The Abraham Accords, which are agreements between Israel and numerous Arab states, such as Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates, to normalize relations, mark a dramatic change in the dynamics of the area. These agreements have made it easier to cooperate economically and in terms of security, which might further isolate Iran and change the Middle East's strategic environment (Tohme 2022).

CASE STUDIES OF KEY CONFLICTS AND CYBER WARFARE

The Iran-Israel proxy war has found a significant stage in the Syrian Civil War. To protect its strategic interests in Syria and keep up supply routes to Hezbollah, Iran has supported President Bashar al-Assad by sending military advisers and militias (Fulton 2013). To stop Iran from entrenching its military infrastructure close to its borders, Israel, on the other hand, has carried out multiple airstrikes against Iranian targets in Syria (Ahmadian and Mohseni, 2019). Conflicts with Israel have frequently resulted from Hezbollah's substantial military and political presence in Lebanon. Major combat in the Lebanon War of 2006 left massive devastation in its wake and momentarily altered the balance of power in the region (Norton, 2014b). A fragile balance of deterrence has resulted from Hezbollah's persistent missile and rocket building, which continues to threaten Israel. Because of Iran's support for the Houthis, the Yemeni conflict, which is essentially a civil war between the rebel Houthis and the government of Yemen, has wider regional ramifications. Saudi Arabia and its supporters see the Houthis as an Iranian proxy, and this support, which has included arms, training, and political backing, has intensified the conflict (Sharp and Brudnick, 2015). Iran's possible use of Yemen as a base to attack Israeli naval lines in the Red Sea has alarmed Israel. Iran and Israel are increasingly waging cyberwarfare in addition to their conventional military conflicts. Their strategic toolkits now include cyberattacks, which aim to interfere with one another's operations and target vital infrastructure. Notable events include the Stuxnet virus, which was aimed at Iranian

nuclear facilities and is commonly linked to cooperation between the United States and Israel (Sanger, 2019). Tensions have increased as both nations have lately seen cyberattacks on vital infrastructure (Watney, 2022). Iran and Israel find cyberwarfare to be an attractive instrument in their continuing conflict because it provides a low-risk, high-impact method of applying pressure and causing harm. The Middle East's strategic landscape is shaped by military breakthroughs such as drone capabilities, missile technology, and other developments beyond cyber warfare in the technical struggle (Hassib & Ayad, 2023). Both Israel and Iran have made significant strides in their cyber capabilities in recent years. Recognized for its expertise in cybersecurity, Israel has persisted in creating cutting-edge offensive and defensive cybertools. According to reports, Israel's investment in artificial intelligence (AI) powered cyber technology is improving its ability to identify and neutralize threats (Tunysová, 2022) instantly [Click or tap here to enter text..](#) Additionally, Israel's cyber divisions have increased the scope of their operations, focusing on Iranian networks and infrastructure to get intelligence and stop actions that are thought to pose a danger to national security (Chachko, 2020). In contrast, Iran has made enormous investments in its cyber capabilities to offset perceived threats from Israel and other foes in the area. According to Stachoñ (2024), Iran's increasing cyber capabilities and readiness for aggressive actions are demonstrated by recent events, including the hack on Israeli water infrastructure in 2023. Israeli cyberspace defenses are facing a significant threat from Iranian cyber units, which are thought to be connected to state-sponsored actors. These units have shown a rise in complexity in their tactics, techniques, and processes (Simons 2023). The growing cyber capabilities and events between Iran and Israel significantly impact nationwide security in the area and worldwide. Since Iran's cyber actions could breach sensitive information, impair vital infrastructure, and jeopardize national security, Israel sees them as a serious concern. Israel has therefore taken a proactive stance to counter and prevent Iranian cyberthreats, combining offensive and defensive maneuvers (Freilich, Cohen, and Siboni 2023b). Israel's cyber efforts, in contrast, are seen by Iran as a component of a larger plan to weaken its influence in the area and sovereignty. A new source of conflict between the two enemies is the Iranian government's accusation that Israel has been conducting cyberattacks against its nuclear facilities and other strategic assets (Mimran, 2022). According to (Stachoñ, 2024), Iran has made significant investments

to strengthen its cyberspace defenses, cultivate cooperation in cybersecurity with other countries, and promote the establishment of more robust international rules to regulate cyberwarfare. The need for international cyber rules and laws is becoming more and more important, considering the growing cyber hostilities between Israel and Iran. The absence of generally recognized guidelines guiding state conduct in cyberspace raises the possibility of mistakes and ambiguity, increasing the likelihood of conflict escalation (Moynihan, 2021). Clear rules, like those included in the Tallinn Manual, are difficult to implement and enforce widely (Schmitt, 2017). Nonetheless, current campaigns, like the Paris Call for Trust and Security in Cyberspace, are important first steps in promoting global collaboration and attempts to establish norms (Lété, 2022). Such programs seek to reduce the likelihood of cyber war and improve collective security by advancing the values of responsible state conduct, transparency, and collaboration in cyberspace (Paulus, 2024). Respecting international cyber rules might be an effective way for Iran and Israel to lower tensions, foster mutual confidence, and avoid unintentional cyberspace escalation (Harknett and Smeets, 2022).

ECONOMIC SANCTIONS ON IRAN: EFFECTIVENESS AND CONSEQUENCES

The international community's attempts to confront Iran's nuclear program and its regional operations have mostly relied on economic sanctions. There has been discussion on whether these sanctions effectively change Iran's behavior and accomplish their goals. According to recent research, sanctions have significantly hurt Iran's economy and hampered its ability to influence its strategic thinking, even though they have restricted its ability to finance transactions and export oil (Oryoie, 2024). On the contrary, the imposition of sanctions has worsened economic suffering for common Iranians, intensifying social and political unrest in the nation (Furlan, 2022b). Furthermore, Iran is investigating alternative economic approaches, such as broadening trade alliances and lowering dependence on conventional Western markets, because of the sanctions. Iran has been able to lessen the effects of the sanctions to some degree thanks to the growth of stronger economic relations with China, Russia, and other nations (Ismael, 2022). Furthermore, Iran has tried to use its human resources and technological prowess to foster domestic industry and lessen reliance on imports,

especially in areas that are the focus of sanctions (Fartash & Ghorbani, 2023).

ISRAEL'S ECONOMIC STRATEGIES AND TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS

Because of its robust startup environment, concentration on research and development, and long history of technical innovation, Israel has long been recognized as a worldwide leader. Israel has grown more interested in the role it can play with technology in advancing national security and economic development in the past few years. Entrepreneurship, innovation, and the growth of advanced technologies in areas such as biotechnology, artificial intelligence, and cybersecurity are given prominence in the nation's economic policies (Ciuriak, 2018). Israel's innovation capacity has strengthened its economy and geopolitical status in the region. The Israeli government has strongly promoted activities to boost technological innovation, e.g., R&D financing, company tax credits, and recruitment programmes to bring talent and capital in from overseas (Galanti, Yuval, and Meydani, 2020). By such moves, Israel became a global hotspot for innovation and technology, positioning it to meet challenges about national security while maintaining a market lead in strategic sectors of economic importance (Freilich et al., 2023).

MULTILATERAL AND BILATERAL ECONOMIC POLICY IMPACTING BOTH COUNTRIES

Multilateral matters and overall regional and global policies guide the economic affairs between Israel and Iran. Despite political impediments to the two countries enjoying formal economic relations, bilateral and multilateral economic policies in other nations affect Israel and Iran alike. Economic cooperation with neighbours and friends, such as the US and the GCC, has been one of the central pillars of Israel's foreign policy strategy. Bilateral negotiations and institutions like the Abraham Accords have enabled trade, investment, technological transfer, and economic integration (Bryc, 2019). With these shifts, Israel has more opportunities to disperse its economic influence throughout the Middle East. The Middle Eastern economic climate has also shifted. China, Russia, and Turkey are important commercial partners and sources of investment for Iran, and their influence on the country shapes its economic policy. Iran may diversify its economic connections and lessen its reliance on Western markets by pursuing bilateral agreements and multilateral projects like the Eurasian Economic Union

and the Belt and Road Initiative (Ayalon, 2010). Concerns over financial reliance, technology dependence, and geopolitical alignment are some of the difficulties that Iran's economic cooperation with these nations faces (Amiraslani & Dragovich, 2023).

DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: SUCCESSES AND FAILURES

During the last five years, there have been both achievements and failures in diplomatic attempts to resolve the Israeli Iranian dispute. International mediators, including the UN and regional organizations, have attempted to foster confidence between the two enemies through sporadic discussions and actions. However, entrenched mistrust, conflicting strategic goals, and internal political concerns have frequently thwarted these efforts (Abdul Lateef and Waleed Rasool, 2024). Limited de-escalation tactics, such as prisoner exchanges and humanitarian gestures, have been successful in reducing tensions and fostering some appearance of goodwill between Israel and Iran. However, broader peace efforts, including comprehensive negotiations on contentious issues such as Iran's nuclear program and regional influence, have faltered due to entrenched ideological differences and conflicting geopolitical ambitions (Analytica, 2024b).

THE ROLE OF GLOBAL POWERS: USA, RUSSIA, CHINA, AND THE EU

International powers that impact Israeli Iranian ties diplomatically, economically, and militarily include the USA, Russia, China, and the EU. The United States of America, a significant supporter of Israel, has implemented a strategy of maximum pressure on Iran, which includes the application of economic sanctions and the country's departure from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) (Razzaq, 2020). China and Russia have worked to reconcile conflicting interests in the area while keeping diplomatic links with Iran and Israel. The Russian government's engagement in Syria and its backing of Iran's neighbors have made defusing tensions and fostering communication more difficult. According to (Shinji, 2023), China's strategy for Israeli Iranian ties has also been influenced by its economic interests in the area, particularly its energy cooperation with Iran. The EU has been instrumental in diplomatic attempts to resolve the Israeli-Iranian dispute, working with its member states to uphold multilateralism and diplomacy and supporting the JCPOA. Nonetheless, coherent EU action

has faced obstacles, from conflicts inside the EU over Iran policy to external pressure from the USA (Hoeksma, 2023).

REGIONAL COALITIONS AND ALLIANCES: GCC, ARAB LEAGUE, AND OTHERS

Israeli-Iranian relations are also influenced by regional coalitions and alliances, such as the Arab League and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), through joint security cooperation and collective diplomacy. The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which is made up of Arab governments around the Persian Gulf, has sided with Israel against Iran's alleged expansionist goals and backing of proxy militias (HicretBattaloglu, 2020). As for Israeli Iranian ties, the Arab League, which represents Arab nations in the Middle East and North Africa, has worked to strike a balance between the interests of its members. Some member nations support attempts to limit Iran's influence, while others are more closely aligned with Israel and promote discussion and engagement with Iran(Abbas, 2024).

FUTURE SCENARIOS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

A few possible paths for Israel-Iran ties might be visualized based on prevailing trends and dynamics in the area. Three major situations come to light, while the situation is still unstable and prone to alter: The likelihood of a military conflict between Israel and Iran may increase because of events that may be precipitated in battlefields that serve as proxies, such as Syria or Lebanon. The potential of mistakes and unintentional escalation is increased by ongoing regional rivalries, proxy conflicts, and the spread of modern military capabilities (Perepelytsia&Rohulia 2023). Alternatively, Israel and Iran may pursue a containment or deterrence policy to mitigate tensions by utilizing a blend of military readiness, diplomatic outreach, and financial inducements. Both parties in this scenario understand the dangers of escalation and the advantages of preserving a delicate balance of power, which prevents full-scale war despite sporadic flare-ups and crises (Maher, 2020). Doubling diplomatic efforts to de-escalate hostilities and resolve core issues through discussion and negotiation is a better option. Confidence-building through constructive interaction between Israel and Iran becomes mainly possible through the initiatives of regional actors, international mediators, and track-two diplomacy efforts(Tertrais, 2006).

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REGIONAL STABILITY AND PEACE

Some policy recommendations help promote regional stability and peace within the context of Israel-Iran relations. It is imperative to emphasize the importance of sustained diplomatic relations between Iran and Israel, with regional and international mediators playing their role. Trust and confidence can be established through facilitating direct communication on issues of common concern, i.e., humanitarian emergencies, counterterrorism, and local security(Maher, 2020). It is also important to advance conflict prevention and crisis management protocols to reduce the risk of unintended escalation, for the resolution of any military crises and averting misunderstandings or misperceptions, hotlines, communications channels, and deconfliction mechanisms may be set up (Gjerazi, 2023). Confidence-building initiatives such as reciprocal exercises, military-to-military dialogue, and arms control agreements can establish transparency and reduce tensions. To enhance communications and peace between Iran and Israel, global actors and organizations like the United Nations, European Union, and Gulf Cooperation Council must be employed. Such institutions provide venues for global cooperation and participation, and separate from official diplomatic attempts, initiatives with a mandate to "track-two diplomacy" as well as impartial mediators can offer informal means of dialogue and actions leading towards confidence building(Bharwani, Palmiano Federer, and Latour, 2022).

DISCUSSION

The multifaceted Israeli history with Iran has evolved entirely since the mid-1900s. Previously characterized by cooperation, particularly between the 1940s and 1979, the intellectual revolution of the Iranian Revolution gave birth to the shift that has led to continuing confrontations(Leslie, 2022). A critical inflection point was reached by the revolution, which resulted in Iran's political establishment of an anti-Israel position and a tense relationship characterized by mistrust and hostility. It is important to comprehend this historical background because it brings to light the long-standing grievances and ideological differences that still affect bilateral relations. Iran's nuclear ambitions, which significantly impact regional security, are fundamental to the dynamics of Israel-Iran ties today (Roomi 2023; Kumar, 2024b). Israel views Iran's nuclear program as an existential threat, despite Iran's claims that it is meant for peaceful purposes. Israel's national security tactics,

such as clandestine activities meant to thwart Iran's nuclear development, have been influenced by this view. The impasse surrounding the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) serves as an example of how flimsy international frameworks intended to address concerns about nuclear proliferation are. Following America's exit from the JCPOA in 2018, Iran intensified its nuclear program, raising tensions and leading Israel to call for tougher international sanctions against Tehran. The multifaceted history of Israel and Iran has evolved quite extensively since the mid-1900s. Defined initially by cooperation, most notably between the 1940s and 1979, the Iranian Revolution's revolution of thought powered a trend that has witnessed ongoing conflicts (Leslie, 2022). At the same time, proxy wars are another essential element of the conflict between Iran and Israel that reveals a broader geopolitical battle for hegemony and influence within the Middle East (Csepregi, 2024). Iran's support for groups such as Hamas and Hezbollah has created heightened tensions, given that such proxies confront Israel directly and erode its security institutions. Iran can extend its influence locally through proxy warfare while insulating itself from military confrontation with Israel. The geopolitical dynamics within the region have therefore become complicated as Israel has deepened relations with Sunni Arab regimes due to the common threat of Iranian expansionism (Combes, 2023). The nuclear aspirations, past grievances, and proxy conflicts among these players significantly impact regional stability. Israel and Iran also share a longstanding animosity that generates the volatile conditions under which miscalculations can quickly spiral out of control and become larger confrontations. Reconsidering neighboring governments' security roles is driven by fear of an arms race as a response to Iran's nuclear victory, which gives rise to further questions. Furthermore, in addition to destabilizing the region, extended war and humanitarian issues stemming from proxy wars hinder movements towards peace and reconciliation. Last, evaluating these results reinforces the requirement to deal with them diplomatically and utilize conflict resolution skills. An expansive plan that identifies complexity in the past, decreases risks of nuclear violence, and halts proxy conflicts is required to respond to Iran-Israel complex interactions (Khamis, 2023). Conjointly, great powers and regional actors must construct more secure geopolitics in which communication and trade-offs substitute confrontation and aggravation. Therefore, the road to long-term peace and stability will require creative diplomacy that advances mutual understanding and

cooperation between all parties concerned while addressing the fundamental problems at the center of the rivalry between Iran and Israel (Khlebnikov and Smagin, 2021).

According to the study, there are serious concerns about regional security because the confrontation between Israel and Iran has greatly intensified. Among the study's principal conclusions are:

- **Nuclear Advancement:** Iran is getting closer to crossing the nuclear threshold because of its advancements in its nuclear program. The JCPOA is an international effort to control this progress, but the current trajectory points to greater capabilities, which worries Israel and its allies even more (Alagöz & Toprak, 2022).
- **Israel's military endeavors:** Israel has increased its military operations against Iranian interests in response to the nuclear threat. These operations include direct strikes on Iranian military installations in Syria and the use of cyberwarfare to thwart Iran's nuclear endeavors (Freilich, Cohen, and Siboni 2023a).
- **Strategic Alignments:** To build security cooperation that may serve as a barrier against Iranian aggression, Israel has reinforced its strategic ties with Gulf governments and opposing Iranian influence (Jones and Jones, 2017).
- **Regional dynamics:** Are constantly changing in Iraq and Syria due to Iran's employment of proxy forces, including Hezbollah and other militias. This makes diplomatic initiatives more difficult to implement and creates a complex battlefield (Akbarzadeh, 2019).
- **Requirements for political engagement:** There is a crucial need for reinvigorated diplomatic efforts involving global powers and regional players since the dynamics of armed confrontation and political disengagement are interwoven and make peaceful resolutions impossible (Bessant and Watts, 2023). These findings show that Israel and Iran's geopolitical situation is unstable, requiring quick communication and proactive measures to reduce the likelihood of future hostilities and escalation.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research has explored critically the strategic competition between Iran and Israel and its wide-ranging

consequences for regional change and the global order. The persistent rivalry between these two countries based on ideological, security, and geopolitical differences remains central to the definition of Middle Eastern politics. Despite occasional diplomatic initiatives and international peace-making endeavours, the trajectory towards enduring reconciliation remains replete with deep mistrust, incompatible national interests, and different strategic objectives. In the future, the course of relations between Israel and Iran might play out through a range of possible scenarios: hesitant diplomatic outreach, strategic containment, or escalated military conflict. They pose varying threats and opportunities that will determine not just bilateral ties but regional and global stability. The findings of this study underscore the critical importance of seeking all-around policy approaches that put the highest premium on continuous diplomacy, preventive conflict instruments, confidence-building measures, and economic interdependence as the building blocks of de-escalation and cooperation. It is specifically noteworthy that the strategic competition between Israel and Iran transcends the regional scenario, intersecting with global interests such as nuclear non-proliferation, counterterrorism, and energy security. The intervention of great powers with conflicting strategic agendas only complicates the terms of the geopolitical equation and orients the reshaping of the regional balance. Their policies, be it through coalition, sanction, or diplomacy, heavily shape the contours of the contest as much as its probable outcome. In short, while the Israeli-Iranian conflict is a perpetual bane on regional stability, it is also the key to revolutionary change. Its promise of betterment hinges on permanent global mediation, extensive regional negotiation, and the political will of both countries to move beyond zero-sum thinking. Placing such rivalry within the strategic, vision-based framework is essential for regional stability in the Middle East and the global international order within the era of speed-up blocs and multipolar rivalries.

Basing its argument on the in-depth analysis of Israel-Iran strategic competition, this research presents a pragmatic array of recommendations to convert adversarial conditions into avenues of enduring peace, regional transformation, and the overall global context.

Above all, prolonged diplomatic interaction between Israel and Iran must remain a continuing priority. While sporadic attempts from time to time have been undertaken, there must be continuous and collective exchange driven by neutral international intermediaries to stop the deadly spiral of animosity and distrust. Even

at times of crisis, diplomatic channels must never be shut down, because they are the most vital veins for de-escalation and prevention of conflict.

Secondly, confidence-building measures are vital to building a minimum level of trust and reducing the possibility of miscalculation. These involve formal and informal non-aggression agreements, exercise transparency, and backchannels. Confidence-building stabilizes near-term relations and provides a space for deeper diplomatic breakthroughs.

Third, regional cooperative frameworks must be encouraged, and both nations encouraged to engage in multilateral conversations regarding common concerns like water security, climate change, public health, and counterterrorism. Even modest cooperation along these lines can humanise the ‘enemy’ and create an atmosphere of interdependence.

Fourth, economic interdependence can be a stabilising factor. Selective economic contacts, perhaps through third countries or international institutions, can show the common gains of peaceful coexistence and minimise incentives for war. Though full-scale economic cooperation is perhaps too early to expect gradual economic cooperation in non-sensitive areas can be an instrument of confidence-building.

Fifth, the behaviour of external stakeholders, including international institutions and world powers, should be facilitative rather than prescriptive. External stakeholders’ behaviour must be balanced, transparent, and directed toward maximising local agency and effective aid to peace processes. Unilateral action can only reaffirm enmity and should be avoided in favour of collective action.

Finally, there must be a continued policy and scholarly effort at transforming Israel-Iran relations. A multidisciplinary study combining geopolitical analysis, history, and conflict resolution theory can better understand what drives the dynamics and provide more effective policies in the future.

Thus, in sum, the Israel-Iran conflict, as profound as it seems, is not eternal. Strategic thinking, shrewd diplomacy, and collective efforts provide constructive means to convert a long stalemate into a moment of regional rebirth and international security. These recommendations guide the respective countries and the international community dedicated to peace in the Middle East and the world.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS:

The authors declare no potential conflicts of interests with respect to the research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

FUNDING:

The authors received no financial support for this research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

Acknowledgements

Not applicable

Availability of data and materials

No datasets were generated or analysed during the current study

Declarations

Ethics approval and consent to participate

Not applicable.

Consent for publication

Not applicable.

Competing interests

The authors declare no competing interests.

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Distraction and Estrangement in the Digital Age: A sociological study based on the girl students of Kailash hostel of Lucknow University

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ABSTRACT

This research paper explores the impact of digital technologies on the lives of girl's students, focusing specifically on feelings of distraction and estrangement in the digital age. The study is centred on the resident of Kailash Hostel at Lucknow University. The study examines how excessive engagement with digital devices particularly smartphones and laptops affect academic focus, emotional well-being, interpersonal relationships, and the overall sense of community. In the digital age, social media platforms, while designed to enhance interaction and provide entertainment, have also led to unintended psychological dependencies. Users often become subconsciously dominated by these technologies, resulting in a paradox where tools meant for connection contribute to emotional detachment and social engagement. The study is grounded in theoretical frameworks such as Karl Marx's theory of alienation, Sherry Turkle's concept of digital disconnection, and feminist media theory. offering a multidimensional perspective on digital saturation in academic life. The present research will be based on mixed method approach and include a google form questionnaire and interview scheduled examines screen-time habits, emotional outcomes, and patterns of social participation among U.G. & P.G. girl's students. Gendered experiences further reveal pressures related to online visibility, self-presentation, and digital surveillance. The Research Paper contribute to the broader discourse on digital culture by presenting a localized, gender-sensitive analysis of estrangement in higher education.

It emphasizes the need for digital mindfulness, institutional interventions, and community engagement to mitigate the isolating effects of hyperconnectivity and help students reclaim control over their digital lives.

KEYWORDS: *Digital technologies, social isolation, Interpersonal relationships, Digital Surveillance, Psychosocial Impact.*

INTRODUCTION

The 21st century is marked by the rise of digital technology as a dominant force in shaping social structures, communication, identity, and mental well-being. The augmentation of smartphones, high-speed internet, social media platforms, and streaming services

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Received	Reviewed	Accepted	Published
12-Jan.-2025	17-Mar.-2025	22-May.-2025	01-June-2025

Volume	Issue	June	ISSN
No. 7	No. 1	2025	2583-1852(P), 2584-0878(O)

How to Cite this Article: Saini, S.; Gupta.P.K.; Nag.U.; Gaur. D; Distraction and Estrangement in the Digital Age: A sociological study based on the girl students of Kailash hostel of Lucknow University. THE THIRD VOICE REALITY AND VISION. 2025. Vol No-7. Issue No-1. June. Pp: 27-34. DOI : <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17403265>

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DOI:
<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17403265>
 Article No - TVRV00084

has altered the rhythm of everyday life. In India, this digital revolution has not only reshaped economic and political spheres but has profoundly influenced youth culture, particularly among university students. Students today are often referred to as digital natives, the term introduced by (Marc Prensky, 2001) which describes individuals born into the era of digital technology and therefore innately familiar with it. For students in higher education, especially those living away from their families in hostels, digital devices serve as tools for learning, entertainment, and maintaining long-distance social ties. However, this ubiquity of digital media is a double-edged sword. In the specific context of Indian universities, hostels are traditionally seen as microcosms of social learning and personal development. Kailash Girls Hostel, affiliated with the University of Lucknow, has long been regarded as a prestigious and active residential space for female students from diverse academic and regional backgrounds. With its own history, culture, and institutional norms, Kailash provides an ideal ground for studying the impact of the digital age on communal and individual life.

The based on present research study, it is an attempt to know how long teenagers and youth can remain away from these resources without being attracted to technological resources or digital environment in today's time, because in today's time, due to excessive attraction and attachment to these digital resources among youth and adolescents, many types of social and mental problems as well as physical problems They are being seen to have depression, restlessness, sleep problems as well as frequently checking the screens of their gadgets and falling behind in academic and academic levels. Due to the excessive use of these digital resources, teenagers and youth remain disconnected from people and community at the social and cultural level and there are problems related to limited social interaction.

From a sociological perspective, the Marxist concept of alienation means that a person feels alienated from his diverse culture, conduct and thoughts as well as from the society. Due to these digital resources, a person gradually starts getting detached from the society and along with becoming an obstacle in social mobility, problems related to involvement in criminal activities are often seen among adolescent and youth (Calabrese, et.al 1990). Another study found that higher use of digital resources led to mental stress and inhibition of cognitive development in adolescents studying in schools. (Natvig et al.1999) also due to the increased use of social media in the digital age, most teenagers and youth find it

difficult to make social connections with their friends and family members and feel uncomfortable in sharing ideas and experiences in their daily lives (Gibson, 2020). Moreover, many adults' students now turn to social media for health information, either through active engagement or passive exposure (Lim et al. 2022). On a professional level, social media platforms can be a powerful tool for expanding knowledge and networking within specific fields (Fischer & Reuber, 2021). We avoid hard conversations, preferring the clean break of disappearing. Friendship has morphed from a lived practice into a virtual performance, measured in emojis and digital applause. Few people would welcome a surprise phone call these days many consider it intrusive. **Elizabeth and Jennifer** view the impact of social media as an application of psychological theories, suggesting that both communication and social psychology should be examined, particularly during times of crisis. In contrast, (**Boulianane, 2015**) explores the role social media plays in civic and political life, emphasizing its power to promote political expression, while less estrangement is given to its role in the dissemination of information, with a particular focus on the political context. Another perspective, offered by (**Liu and Li, 2016**), explores social media from a societal and cultural angle. They argue that social media platforms provide users with enhanced communication opportunities, but the misuse of these platforms also exacerbates issues like polarization and violence. A second category involves the interpretation of estrangement itself. (**Yang, 2007**) draws on Marx 's theory, which views human activities as tools that, in turn, become controlled by external forces. Marx posited that the relationship between humans and their environment is one of mutual interaction, with the environment shaping human behavior while humans also contribute to environmental change. Building on this idea, (**Hu, 2018**) introduces the concept of estrangement in consumer culture. Marx argued that the purpose of labor is no longer to fulfill one 's production needs, but rather people become enslaved to labor itself. In modern consumer culture, symbolic consumption is driven by marketing strategies that transform the original meaning of production, creating a new symbolic reality. This symbolic fiction leads people to obsess over the meaning of these symbols, effectively making them "slaves" to consumerism. When applying the theory of alienation to social media, (**Wu,2019**) defines this estrangement as extreme panic, \vdash where individuals, instead of actively engaging in consumption, are controlled and dominated by the media. Additionally, the entertaining

nature of social media creates an illusion of happiness, which, coupled with the magnification of consumerism, leads to resource wastage.

RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY

This study contributes to digital sociology and youth studies by examining the impact of digital tools on girl's students' social lives. It aids institutions in developing strategies to enhance mental health and community bonding, while offering broader insights into how digital habits affect social connectivity and overall well-being. Hostel residents may feel disconnected from peers despite constant virtual interaction. girl's Students' digital interactions can become commodified (e.g., likes, followers), reducing meaningful connection.

OBJECTIVES

To examine the extent and patterns of digital device usage among residents of Kailash Girls Hostel.

To analyze how digital distraction influences academic focus, social interaction, and emotional well-being.

To understand the nature and causes of alienation as experienced by the residents in a digitally saturated environment.

METHODOLOGY

The presented research study is based on undergraduate and postgraduate Girl's students living in Kailash hostel of Lucknow University. Mixed research methodology was used for this study, in which qualitative and quantitative methods were used to analyze digital distraction and isolation, behavior, screen time related facts among the female students, along with the use of structured questionnaire through Google Form for primary data collection, in which a list of 45 questions has been divided into 5 parts and an attempt has been made to analyze digital habits, mental behavior, social interaction, autism facts. This questionnaire has been sent to the respondents through Facebook, WhatsApp and email. The target population included undergraduate and postgraduate girl's student's resident in Kailash Hostel and enrolled at the University of Lucknow during the 2024–2025 academic year. Participants were selected through purposive sampling to ensure diversity in age, socio-economic status, and digital behavior. Only participants who identified as high users of digital media (i.e., those spending six or more hours daily on social media, streaming platforms, etc.) and were between the

ages of 18 and 30 were included in the study. And sample size selection for using the Yamane's formula,

$$N = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

with a total population of 200 and a 5% margin of error.

$$N = \text{total population} = 200$$

Sample Size Calculation:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{200}{1 + 200 \times (0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{200}{1 + 200 \times 0.0025}$$

$$n = \frac{200}{1 + 0.5}$$

$$n = \frac{200}{1.5} = 133.33$$

Sampling Technique:

So, the total sample has been selected for the study is 133. Now 133 sample out of 200 total population has to be selected through scientific sampling techniques. So, the random circular sampling method will be adopted. Firstly, a list of students from Kailash hostel has been taken for the proper using of random selection of the respondents and following formula has been adopted which are as follows:

$$S = \frac{N}{S}$$

$$S = \frac{200}{133}$$

$$S = 1.50$$

According to the circular random, 1.5 respondents were to be selected from a total of 200 girl students. For this, first 200 respondents were arranged in ascending order from the list and in the process of selection, every third respondent was selected with an interval of Second and then the fourth respondent was selected. Similarly, the process of selection was completed sequentially. A total of 134 respondents were selected from the list. As per Yamane's formula, a total of 133 respondents were to

be selected, hence the last respondent was dropped. Thus, the total number of selected respondents was 133.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This Research Paper find out presents and interprets the empirical findings gathered through the structured questionnaire administered to the Undergraduate & Postgraduate girl's Students resident Kailash Hostel at University of Lucknow. The aim is to explore how digital technologies especially smartphones, social media, and internet use affect students 'sense of estrangement, focus, emotional well-being, and academic productivity.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

The Research begins by outlining the demographic details of the sample: Total Sample Size: 133 (calculated using Yamane formula). Age Range: 18–30 years Course Enrolment: U.G. & P.G. girl's Student resident Kailash Hostel at University of Lucknow all Departments Represented: Humanities, Sciences, Commerce, and Professional Courses Digital Access: All respondents own smartphones and access the internet daily

Table-1 Age Distribution of the Respondents

Ages Group	No. of Respondents	Percentage
15-20	4	3
21-25	122	91.7
26-30	7	5.3
Total	133	100.0

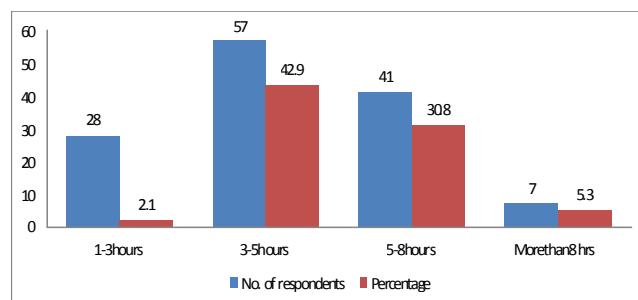
Table no. 1 presents the data about age of respondents in the study. A majority of the respondents 91.7 percent belongs to 21–25 age group, indicating that most respondents are in their early twenties. A smaller proportion 5.3 percent belong to the 26–30 age group, while only 3 percent of the respondents fall between 15–20. This age distribution reflects the youthful demographic of the study population, with a total of 133 respondents surveyed.

Table 2: Socio-economic backgrounds of respondents

Background	No. of respondents	Percentage
Upper class	7	5.2
Upper Middle Class	30	22.6
Middle Class	85	63.9
Lower Middle Class	9	6.8
Lower Class	2	1.5
Total	133	100.0

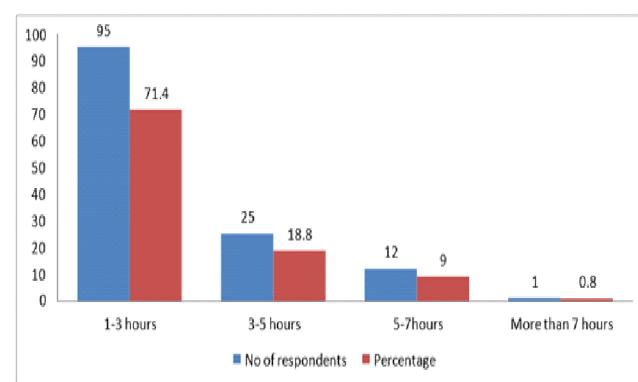
Date presented in table no. 2 reveals that the majority of respondents 63.9 percent belong to the middle class, followed by 22.6 Percent from the upper middle class. A small proportion comes only 6.8 percent from the lower middle class followed by 5.2 percent belongs to upper class whereas only 1.5 percent belongs to lower class. Therefore, the data indicates that girl's students Kailash Hostel at the University of Lucknow predominantly come from socio-economically stable backgrounds, with some representation from economically marginalized sections.

Graphs 1: Use of phone per day (average)



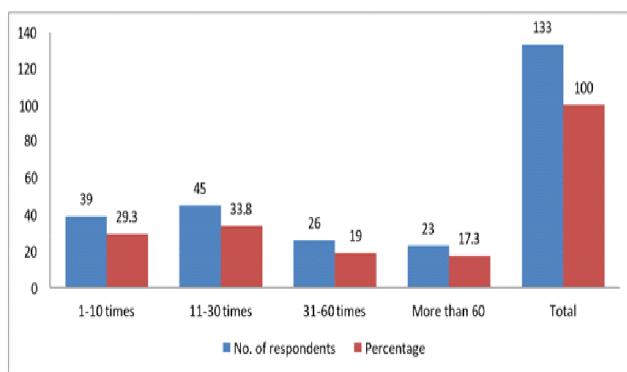
As Show in Graph no. 1 analysis of the data number of respondents who use mobile phone for maximum 8 hours out of 24 hours per day is 5.3 percent. This percentage further shows a negative relationship i.e. the number of people using mobile for 5 to 8 hours is 30.8 percent. Whereas the number of respondents using mobile for 3 to 5 hours is 42.9 percent and the number of respondents using mobile for 1-3 hours is relatively less. Hence, it is known from the data that the relationship between the number of hours used for mobile and the number of respondents is decreasing and negative. According to W.H.O guidelines, from a health perspective, adults should use smartphones for at least 2 to 4 hours per day during non-working hours.

Graphs 2: Use of laptop per day (average) for academic purpose.



As shown in Graph no. 2 the analysis of the data reveals that the majority of respondents 71.4 percent use their laptops for academic purposes for 1–3 hours daily, while 18.8 percent spend 3–5 hours. A smaller portion 9 percent, use laptops for 5–7 hours, and only 0.8 percent exceed 7 hours. This indicates that while laptops are an essential academic tool, most girl's students limit their academic screen time possibly to balance other activities or due to a preference for alternative study methods.

Graphs 3: Phone checked by respondents in a day (average)



The analysis of the data presented in graph no. 3 reveals that the majority of respondents 33 percent check their mobile phones 11–30 times per day on average. meanwhile, 29.3 percent check their phones 1–10 times a day, and 19 percent check them 31–60 times daily. A smaller proportion 17.3 percent were found to check their phones more than 60 times per day. These findings clearly indicate a level of dependency and habitual phone checking behavior among girl's students, suggesting a form of addiction. This may contribute to digital distraction and negatively impact students' academic performance.

Table 3: Platforms used by respondents

Platforms	No. of respondents	Percentage
Instagram	78	58.6
WhatsApp	95	71.4
YouTube	102	76.7
Snapchat	39	29.3
Twitter/X	22	16.5
Ott platforms	17	12.8
Other	10	7.9

Data presented in table no. 3 reveals that the majority of respondents above highlights the widespread usage of various digital platforms among the U.G & P.G. girl's

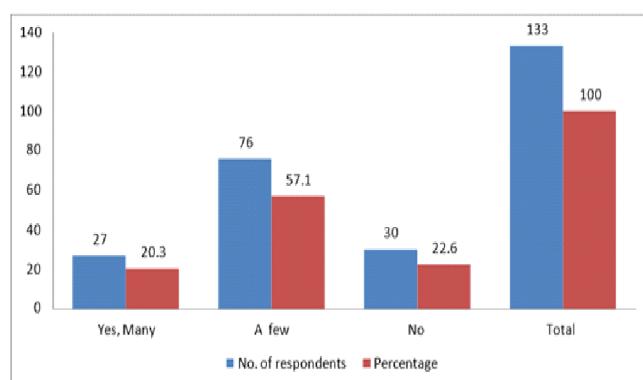
Students Resident Kailash Hostel at University of Lucknow. YouTube emerges as the most popular platform, used by 76.7 Percent of respondents, closely followed by WhatsApp 71.4 Percent and Instagram 58.6 Percent. Snapchat and Twitter/X are used less frequently, with 29.3 Percent and 16.5 Percent respectively. A smaller portion of the respondents reported using off platforms 12.8 Percent or other platforms 7.9 Percent, indicating limited engagement with alternatives beyond mainstream social media. This suggests that visual and instant messaging platforms dominate the digital landscape for these students, potentially shaping their habits, communication styles, and daily routines. The high dependency on these platforms may also imply a strong connection between digital usage and distraction, which the central theme estrangement in the digital age explored in this Study.

Table 4: Use of phone during lecture or classes

Response	No. of respondents	Percentage
Frequently	9	6.8
Occasionally	41	30.8
Rarely	54	40.6
Never	9	6.8
Total	133	100.0

Data presented in table no. 4 reveals that the majority of respondents 40.6 Percent rarely use their phones during lectures, while 30.8 Percent use them occasionally. Only 6.8 Percent admit to using their phones frequently, and an equal 6.8 Percent claim they never use them in class. This indicates that while phone usage during lectures is not extremely prevalent, it is still common enough to warrant attention. The data suggests a moderate level of digital distraction that could potentially affect classroom engagement and learning.

Graphs 4: Respondents following the celebrities or influencers online.



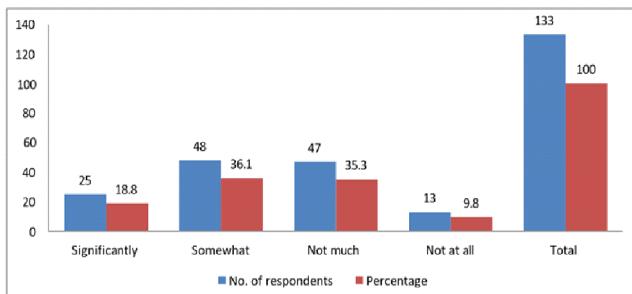
The analysis of the data presented in graph no. 4 indicate that a significant majority of respondents follow celebrities or influencers online to some extent. 57.1 Percent follow a few, while 20.3 Percent follow many. Only 22.6 Percent reported that they do not follow any. This shows that online personalities have a notable presence in the digital lives of most respondents, potentially shaping their opinions, lifestyle choices, and online behavior. The influence of social media figures is clearly a relevant aspect of youth digital engagement today.

Table 5: Feels alienated from real life surrounding due to excessive digital engagement

Response	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	31	23.3
No	63	47.4
Sometimes	39	29.3
Total	133	100.0

Data presented in table no. 5 reveals that the majority respondents that 47.4 Percent of respondents sometimes feel estrangement from their real-life surroundings due to excessive digital engagement, while 23.3 Percent feel this way consistently. Only 29.3 Percent reported not experiencing such estrangement. This suggests that digital overuse significantly affects social presence and emotional connection with the immediate environment. The majority's acknowledgment of occasional or constant estrangement highlights a growing concern about the impact of digital habits on real-world interactions and well-being, particularly in communal living spaces like university.

Graphs 5: Decrease in academic focus due to distraction by digital devices.



The analysis of the data presented in graph no. 5 reveals that a significant portion of respondents 36.1 Percent reported a somewhat noticeable decrease in academic focus due to digital factors, while 18.8 Percent experienced a significant decline. Meanwhile, 35.3 Percent indicated only a minor impact, and 9.8 Percent

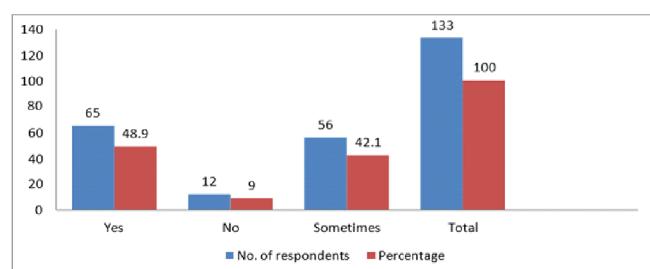
claimed no effect at all. This suggests that digital distractions have a considerable influence on academic engagement for a majority of individuals, with over half acknowledging at least some degree of negative impact, highlighting the need for digital balance in academic settings.

Table 6: Missed deadlines or study targets because of digital distraction

Response	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes, many times,	26	19.5
Occasionally	33	24.8
Rarely	33	24.8
never	41	30.9
Total	133	100.0

Data presented in table no. 6 reveals that the majority of respondents that illustrates the extent to which digital distraction affects the ability to meet deadlines or study targets. While 19.5 Percent of respondents admitted to missing deadlines many times, a larger portion reported occasional 24.8 Percent or rare 24.8 Percent occurrences. Notably, 30.9 Percent of the respondents claimed they never missed deadlines due to digital distraction. This suggests that although a substantial number of individuals are impacted by digital distractions, a significant proportion still manage to maintain their productivity. Overall, nearly 69.1 Percent of respondents have experienced missed targets due to digital distractions at least once, indicating that it remains a widespread issue worth addressing.

Graphs 6: Feel more mentally tired after using screen for a long time.



The analysis of the data presented in graph no. 6 indicate that a significant majority of respondents that 48.9 Percent of respondents feel mentally tired after prolonged screen use, while 42.1 Percent experience it sometimes, and only 9 Percent do not feel any fatigue. This indicates that a significant majority over 90 Percent report some level of mental exhaustion due to extended screen exposure, highlighting the cognitive strain associated with digital device usage and the need for mindful screen time management.

Table 7: Effect on the sleep time of respondents

Response	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	94	70.7
No	39	29.3
Total	133	100.0

Data presented in table no. 7 reveals that the majority of respondents that 70.7 Percent of reported an effect on their sleep time, while 29.3 Percent did not. This indicates that a significant majority experienced changes in sleep patterns, suggesting a widespread impact on rest and well-being among the population studied. Digital distraction is pervasive, especially among students trying to balance studies and online life. Feelings of estrangement are subtle but significant, rooted in constant online comparison, attention fatigue, and reduced face-to-face interactions.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the deep and multifaceted impact of digital technology on the emotional, academic, and social lives of girl's Student residing in Kailash Girls Hostel, University of Lucknow. While digital tools and social media platforms provide opportunities for academic support, connection, and entertainment, they also contribute significantly to digital distraction, emotional detachment, and a sense of social Estrangement. A majority of students spend over 3–8 hours daily on smartphones and digital platforms, often multitasking during study or social hours. Although digitally connected, \sim many students experience loneliness, identity fragmentation, and weakened real-life relationships. Platforms such as Instagram and YouTube are widely used for both academic and escapist purposes, revealing a dual role of media in empowerment and entrapment. Emotional dependency on digital tools, frequent self-comparison, and anxiety related to online personas contribute to self-estrangement and psychological fatigue. Gendered experiences, such as online performance pressure and digital surveillance, further complicate the digital experiences of women in hostel settings. The study, grounded in theoretical frameworks such as Marx's alienation theory, Seeman's dimensions of alienation, and Goffman's dramaturgical analysis, shows that hyperconnectivity does not equate to genuine social integration. Rather, it may reinforce emotional isolation and cognitive overload, particularly in closed residential environments.

SUGGESTION

Digital Mindfulness Programs Hostels and universities should implement workshops or seminars promoting conscious digital usage, screen-time management, and emotional self-regulation. Establish Tech-Free Zones or Hours Designate common areas or time blocks in hostels for device-free interactions, to foster real-life social bonding and improve mental presence. Counselling and Support Services Offer access to mental health counsellors trained in addressing tech-induced anxiety, alienation, and social withdrawal. Digital Literacy Curriculum Incorporate modules on digital behavior, algorithm awareness, and ethical media use into university orientations or skill-building courses. Encouragement of Offline Community Activities Promote peer support groups, study circles, and extracurricular events that encourage interpersonal connection and reduce screen dependency. Gender-Sensitive Digital Policies Address the unique digital challenges faced by women, including online harassment, surveillance, and self-image pressures, through safe reporting mechanisms and awareness drives. Academic Engagement with Digital Tools Shift students' digital use from distraction to productivity by integrating interactive academic platforms that promote structured learning. Encourage more longitudinal and comparative studies across other hostels or universities to generalize findings and propose policy reforms.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS:

The authors declare no potential conflicts of interests with respect to the research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

FUNDING:

The authors received no financial support for this research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

Acknowledgements

Not applicable

Availability of data and materials

No datasets were generated or analysed during the current study

Declarations

Ethics approval and consent to participate

Not applicable.

Consent for publication

Not applicable.

Competing interests

The authors declare no competing interests.

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Submerge Sports : A Case Study of Khuntapali Village of Bolangir District of Odisha

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ABSTRACT

This research examines how the Lower Suktel Irrigation Project (LSIP) in Odisha's Bolangir district has affected sports through displacement. The status of the displaced people's adaptation to the local athletic culture in opposition to the acquisition of land for the irrigation project is identified in the study. The primary data collected from 300 households in Khuntapali, a fully displaced community, using an open door-to-door survey. A specific study with a conflict viewpoint has been detailed using basic descriptive statistics. Caste, household size, total household income, land loss, compensation for land and house, education, ethnomedicine, culture, fair and festival, occupation, kinship relationship, and social relationship are among the factors included in the analysis. It is found that households losing large size land, education, occupation, forest-based livelihood source, kin/primary relationship, and social relationship in general and local sports are submerged in the dam.

KEYWORDS: *Submerge sports, Local sport, Displaced People, Kin, and Social Relationship*

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Among the several infrastructure development programs that demand a significant amount of land are irrigation dam projects. Mass displacement is unavoidable and essential to the irrigation dam project process. Many people have been evicted and displaced from their original places of residence as a result of the majority of these projects' significant changes to land use patterns, water supplies, and natural resources (Panday, 1998). It is a serious issue because of the ruin of the displaced people's pattern of livelihood in addition to the loss of tangible goods. The loss of land is just as significant as the extinction of plants and animals.

The most valuable natural resources, including indigenous wisdom, social capital, and flora and fauna, cannot be replaced by any amount of money paid for land and other natural resources. Similar to this, people who have lived in a certain location for many generations

and have continued to work in a certain occupation are uprooted when development projects are established. Although people may relocate and work in the same field, this does not ensure that their standard of life would be the same as it was prior to the project (Agnihotri,

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Received	Reviewed	Accepted	Published
02-Jan.-2025	27-Mar.-2025	22-May.-2025	01-June-2025

Volume	Issue	June	ISSN
No. 7	No. 1	2025	2583-1852(P), 2584-0878(O)

How to Cite this Article: Tandi, Subal. Submerge Sports : A Case Study of Khuntapali Village of Bolangir District of Odisha. THE THIRD VOICE: REALITY AND VISION. 2025. Vol No-7. Issue No-1. June. Pp: 35-43. DOI : <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17403301>

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Available online at :
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DOI:
<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17403301>
Article No - TVRV00085

2008). The Lower Suktel irrigation project was suggested by the Odisha government in 1994 with the goal of raising the standard of living for residents of the Bolangir district. Even after more than 20 years have gone by, there is still debate about it among the local populace and the authorities. Large-scale public protests against the dam have been taking place on the one hand, while administrative officials have suppressed pressure on the general population to support the project. Like other irrigation dam projects, this one is not without controversy, mostly with issues of compensation, relocation, the displaced people's future means of subsistence, and, last but not least, the project's feasibility (Tandi, 2018).

An irrigation project with several uses is the Lower Suktel dam. The project entailed evicting residents from their homes and agricultural land in 29 villages. According to projections, the project would have an impact on almost 9212 persons. More than 100 people were arrested after the protest, and hundreds of women got into a fight with police after the health of several "Parishad" members who had previously been detained by the police worsened. Amongst the people who are continuing with their fast inside the jail, fourteen were considered serious and were hospitalized by the authorities. In support of the project, the Lower Suktel action committee members organised a bike rally from Balangir to Magurbeda. However, a focal point of public complaints has been the irrigation project's loss of land and the eviction of local residents. It is incorrect to see social movements against the regulation of natural resources as just another instance of local people fighting against international systems. Instead, these movements fit with how resource policies provide development and the country purpose and are connected to what is perceived as the interests of the populace (Tandi, 2019).

The study makes the case for a viewpoint that would go beyond a rigid idea of struggle and consider the significance that people attach to their home and land in order to explain people's connection to resistance against displacement (Asthana, 2012). Moreover, Women have taken lead roles in the major struggles against development projects like the struggle against Sardar Sarovar project, the struggle against Maheshwar dam, Hirakud dam, Tehri dam etc (Behera, 2015). The slogan of Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA) led by Medha Patkar and Baba Amte to protect to Tribals people to hunger strike for the construction of Sadar Sarovar Dam, Gujarat. (Tandi et al., 2018)

The construction of infrastructure, such as roads, railroads, airports, dams, etc., is essential to a nation's progress. Large-scale projects like dams benefit both established and developing nations in a variety of ways, including the availability of irrigation water and, particularly, the production of power and the prevention of flooding. These kinds of undertakings are the primary drivers of a nation's rate of development. They create many job possibilities, generate enormous economic value, and play a vital part in meeting a nation's needs for irrigation and water supply. Dams also provide electricity which is environmentally important and main source of energy. Where there is development project started, people effect on multidimensional, social exclusion, alienation, higher growth of poverty, and negative impact of population displacement and relocation (Gogoi & Lahon, 2014) moreover significant source of conflicts like social, economic and ecological impacts etc. These socioeconomic impacts have always been very hard on local people affected in the form of landlessness, Homeless, loss of livelihood, loss of economic, social network, loss of culture, and family became defunct, unfitness, suspiciousness, etc and so on. (Gogoi & Lahon, 2014) sometimes leading to greater social conflict, disorder, unemployment and landlessness. Further, Dams has negative impact of environment. It includes forest, loss of flora and Fauna, land degradation, impact water etc. and also the water pollution increase due to downstream the dam. The irrigation dam is the causes of boost chemical agriculture, salinity, and people are facing directly ecological problems (Bottero, 2013). Study the large number of construction dams change the nature of environment with negative impact of ecosystem, biodiversity, food web, temperature, food production etc. are directly affected and also large number of Birds, Mammals, Fishes, species or aquatic impact of large dams.

The present study has covered the Bolangir district of the State of Odisha, India. It has studied the status of culture of displaced people from the major irrigation project. Lower Suktel Irrigation Project is a significant irrigation project of Bolangir Block of Bolangir District. There will be benefited 50.000(approx.) families from 189 villages (177 from Bolangir District and 12 from Sonepur District) from Lower Suktel Irrigation Project. But on the other side, there will be displaced 9212 families from 29 villages in tree blocks (e.g. Bolangir, Patnagarh and Loisingha) of Bolangir District. The displaced communities will be lost their permanent

livelihood, social relation, and culture in particular etc. Many studies and reports have confirmed the poor performance of the Displacement at all levels of development in general and culture in particular (Lower Suktel Office, 2022).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

PURPOSE AND GOALS

Finding submerged cultural practices related to the problem of displacement in Odisha, specifically, and India in Odisha, are the goals of this article. Submerge cultural activities, indigenous games, occupational labour structure, and indigenous medicinal practices are the three primary issues that the researcher has focused on in this work in relation to dam-induced displacement. In order to illustrate the difficulties at hand, the study looks at a number of arguments and suggestions.

METHOD AND AREA OF THE PROFILE

This study focusses on displacements caused by development. For this study, data from respondents was gathered using a concurrent mixed research method. Purposive sampling and multistage proportionate simple random sample were used in this investigation. 438 participants were chosen for the survey, focus groups, and in-depth interviews with key informants.

The study is based on the fieldwork report (2019-20) of the selected five displaced villages from 29 submerged villages of the Lower Suktel Irrigation Project of Bolangir district in Odisha. As snowball and convenience sampling, the sample size is 438 respondents from five submerge villages (Khuntapali, Pardhiapali, Kaindapali, Khagasabahal, and Santelenpali). There were 134 respondents from Khuntapali village with a population was 1338. Then 96 sample respondents were taken from Khagasabahal that population was 986. The next 56 sample respondents were Pardhiapali, where the people were 559. There were 76 sample respondents from Badtelenpali, where the population was 775. Finally, there were 76 sample respondents from Kaindapali village, whereas the population was 763.

Near the village of Magurbeda is the Lower Suktel Irrigation Project, a major irrigation project in the Bolangir block of the Bolangir district within the KBK region of Odisha. Bolangir town and the proposed dam site across the Suktel River in the Mahanadi basin are around 20 miles apart. (Lower suktel office, Bolangir, 2019-20) The project includes a 1410-meter-long and

30-meter-high earth dam, a centrally located ogee-crowned spillway, a 177-meter-long spillway, a 890-meter-long and 16-meter-high earthen right dyke that is 6 meters wide, a 412-meter-long, 3-meter-high, and 6-meter-wide earthen left dyke, as well as a 16.58-kilometer-long Left Main Canal with Head regulator and a 23.84-kilometer-long Right Main Canal with Head regulator and associated distribution network.

Scope And Limitations

The scope of this paper is limited to the identification and study of the major issues concerning the Indian culture.

Mode Of Citation

A uniform mode of citation is used throughout the paper.

Sources Of Data

This paper is based on researched complied from numerous articles, working papers, statistical data and case laws.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following questions are sought to be addressed in the course of this paper:

- What are the major issues and problems affecting displaced people of Khuntapali village of Bolangir district of Odisha?
- Why does the current cultural mechanism hinder the development and progress of displaced people?
- How can the issues discussed in the paper be addressed to resolve the existing conflicts?

LOCATION OF THE STUDY AREA

The region is located in Odisha's Bolangir district's Bolangir block. The district's geographic coordinates are 82°41'15" - 83°40'22" east latitude and 20°11'40" - 21°05'08" north latitude. There are 206388 villages, 285 Gramme Panchayats, 14 Blocks, and 3 subdivisions in the Balangir District. The dam covers 23 GP 12780 communities in the Bolangir block. The proposed dam would span the Suktel River, which is a tributary of the Tel River and rises from the Harishankar River, which is a significant right tributary of the Mahanadi River in

Tandi. Submerge Sports : A Case Study of Khuntapali Village of Bolangir District of Odisha

Odisha. The dam will be constructed 20 kilometres from Bolangir town, between the Jhareidungri and Budalagen hills, close to the community of Magurbeda.

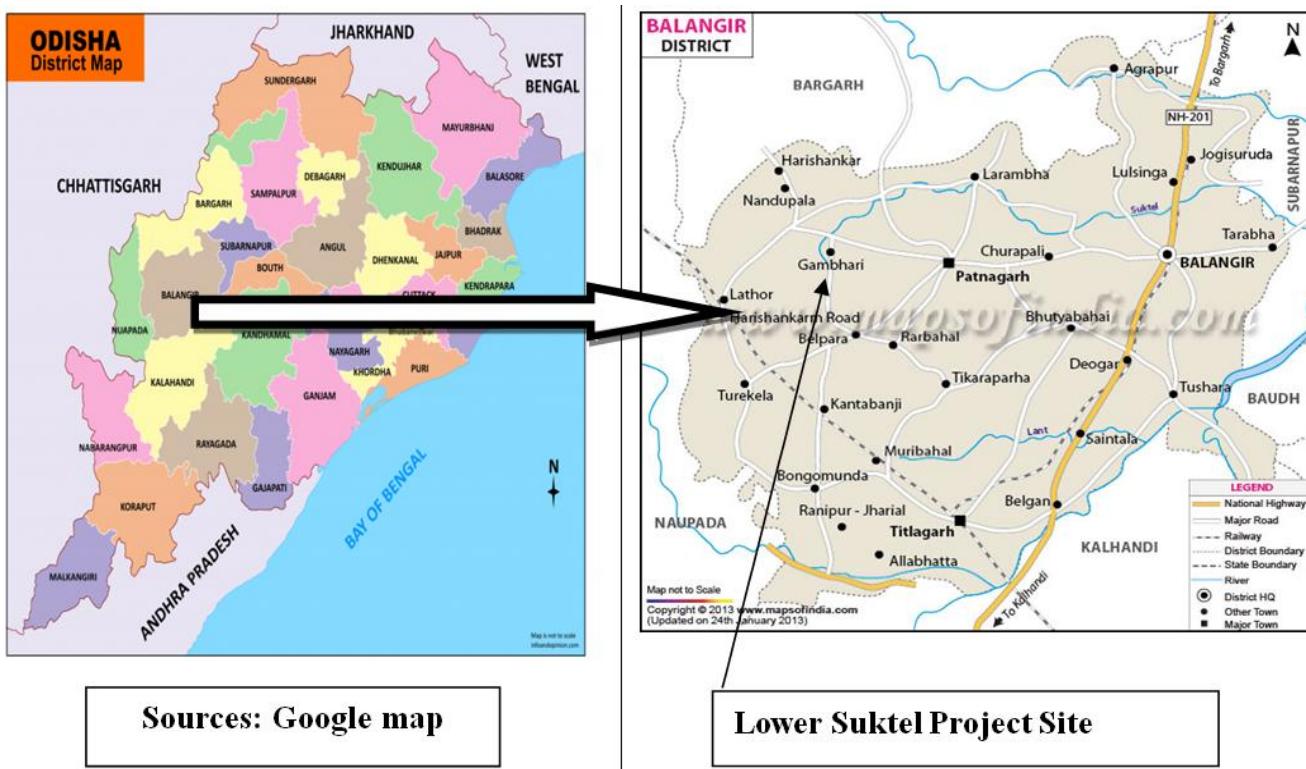


Figure 1: Lower Suktel Irrigation Dam Project Area Mapthodology and Data source

The study's foundation is a thorough primary survey and interviews with 268 households in the lower Suktel irrigation project's submerged village of KHUNTAPALI. Fifteen of the study area's twenty-nine displaced communities are completely displaced, while fourteen are partially displaced. Using a pre-planned interview schedule, door-to-door surveys and in-person interviews were used to gather primary data on the issues and future prospects of the lower Suktel project from the local population. The secondary data for the lower Suktel project was gathered from several government agencies and publications, such as the District Statistical Handbook, Documents collected from Lower Suktel office, Bolangir, Bureau of Statistics Bhubaneswar, Economic survey of Odisha, Census of India and Satirical Abstract of Odisha etc. Binary Logit regression technique has been used to explore the factors which are likely to induce resistance among the people towards the establishment of the project.

PROFILE OF KHUNTAPALI VILLAGE

The village Khuntapali is a revenue village going to be fully submerged by Lower Suktel Irrigation Project. The village itself is the Gram Panchayat headquarters village

belonging to Bolangir block, Bolangir Tahasil of Bolangir district. A total of 268 households (HHs) comprising 531 displaced families (DFs) and 28 landless households consisting of 51 displaced landless families are going to be displaced from the village Khuntapali due to acquisition of land and houses for the project. In addition, 41 households consisting of 80 affected families (AFs) (Above 75%) are being affected by the project due to acquisition of their agriculture land in the village Khuntapali before declaration of 4(1) notification. The table gives the brief scenario of distribution of total displaced, affected and displaced landless households along with displaced, affected, and displaced landless families according to the sex and caste categories.

The total of the village Khuntapali is 1471 that include displaced population 1346 and landless population 125 who also are going to be displaced from the village. Of the displaced population 691 are male and 655 are female while the distribution of displaced population are male 59 and female 66. Similarly, 201 persons are affected of which 105 are male and 96 female. Further the populations are categories in different age groups. It is found that the highest number of displaced and

affected population comes under the age group of 26-45 years.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Socio-Economic and Demographic Characteristics of the Sample Households

After being coded and input into Microsoft Excel, the information from the completed questionnaires was exported to SPSS statistics for additional examination. The sample households' socioeconomic and demographic details. The bulk of the sample households (50.7%) belong to the schedule group, with the non-scheduled castes coming in second (49.3%). Among the 1410 responders, men made up 51.63 percent of the overall population, while women made up 48.36 percent. However, a sizable number of the respondents—55.46 percent—are in the 36–60 age range, which represents a sizable portion of the population. This is followed by the 16–35 age group (24.89%), baby age (0–15, 6.87%), and old age (12.76%). Although around 9.78 percent of the population lacked literacy, 47.37 percent had completed basic school, 27.65 percent had completed high school, just 6.6% had graduated or higher, and only 2.83 percent had technical education. A tiny family makes up 16.7% of all families, followed by medium-sized families (54.3%) and bigger families (20.0%).

It is also found that more than 83 per cent of population directly or indirectly depends on agriculture and that is their main occupation, and only 16 per cent people are engaged in other activities. (Service, business and non-farming). More than 65 per cent of the sample households have their income below 50,000 per annum.

Submerge Sports of Khuntapali village due to Dam Construction

1) ChorPulish

A ancient outdoor game with rich cultural roots in rural Western Odisha called Chor-Pulish. Children and young people frequently play this exciting and captivating team game, which represents fun dramatisation and the spirit of group recreation. This game demonstrates Odisha's inventive folk traditions and strong social cohesion. In Odia, "Pulish" signifies police, and "Chor" indicates thief. The classic dynamic of thieves being pursued by police enforcement is at the heart of the game. A game of tag-and-chase that requires cooperation, agility, and strategic thought. The game is still a popular past time, particularly in Khuntapali village, and is typically played in open fields or village courtyards.

2) Raja Mantri

A fun group activity that is frequently connected to regional customs and social gatherings is RajaMantri, a traditional sport from Khuntapali village in Odisha. This game reflects the rich cultural legacy of rural Odisha by combining social connection with strategic play. Traditional games in Odisha, like RajaMantri, are frequently used as means of improving physical skills, encouraging teamwork, and commemorating festivals or social occasions, even though precise historical or gameplay aspects are less well-documented online. Traditional games that are frequently connected to festivals and ceremonies have a long history in Khuntapali. Games like Pitu (a stone-stacking game) and Bagha-Chheli (a strategic tiger-goat game), for instance, are popular in the surrounding areas and may be related to RajaMantri. These games are valued for promoting physical fitness, mental agilityand cultural preservation.

3) Baadi Degani

Khuntapali village is the birthplace of the ancient indigenous game known as Badi Degani. The region's cultural legacy and sense of community are reflected in this distinctive pastime. The game has long been played at community festivals and get-togethers as a means of amusement and to strengthen ties amongst residents. The Khuntapali community's local customs have a strong influence on the game's rules, strategies, and gear. usually requiring both physical agility and collaboration. However, this cultural practice is under danger because Khuntapali village was submerged during the Lower Suktel Irrigation Project's development.

4) Bati

This game was a source of leisure, camaraderie, and cultural identity and was ingrained in the village's social fabric. Played mostly by kids and young adults, Bati showcased the inventiveness of the local population by requiring basic equipment and a keen sense of strategy. The game's rules are simple but entertaining. Usually, participants use little clay or wooden balls and try to strike targets or reach predetermined objectives designated on the ground. In addition to encouraging physical activity, the game helped players develop their problem-solving and teamwork abilities. However, the Lower Suktel Irrigation Project's submersion has put Khuntapali and its cultural customs, including Bati, in danger of going extinct.

5) Pitu

The game is straightforward but thrilling, and it just requires minimal supplies and a healthy sense of competition. The goal is to topple a stone pile and then reconstruct it without getting struck by the other team. It is standard practice to stack seven flat stones of varying sizes one on top of the other. Pitu or Lagori is the name of the stack. The stone stack is overturned with a tennis ball or soft rubber. Two groups of three to seven players each.

6) LaduBetani

Two teams compete in this dynamic and captivating game where players must manoeuvre through designated regions, plan their movements, and demonstrate physical skill. LaduBetani represents solidarity and the village's distinct cultural legacy, making it more than merely a recreational activity. Unfortunately, Khuntapali village's submersion under the Lower Suktel Irrigation Project has put LaduBetani's legacy in jeopardy.

7) KanchiKudhi

A common kind of play called "Kachi-kudi" (Cooking and Utensils) was seen. Girls in a younger age range play this game in particular. These girls act as though they are working in a kitchen while using tiny tools. In this game, grass represents veggies, leaves represent money, and sand represents rice. It is a sort of pretend game that girls used to play in their courtyards, verandas, and kitchens. They act as though they are extremely busy with cooking and other housework. The cultural formation of girlhood is reflected in this game. The teenage girls have embraced it as a way of life for the future.

8) Jam Bhut

Only males aged seven to twelve play the game Jam Bhut, which is based on indigenous beliefs about witchcraft. Other players summon a witch doctor, known as a Gunia, to treat him while one player acts as he is being witch made. The participants also performed the Gunia. They perform all the rituals and rites associated with witchcraft, based on their personal experiences in the area.

The game is similar to card games. The names Raja and Mantri are written down by players. After adding some points to paper slips and rolling them, Chor and Pulish combined the slips, picked one at a time, and noted their points.

After twenty additional iterations of this method, they determine their final score and designate the lowest score as chor. Through playing traditional games in Western Odisha, players gain social skills, camaraderie, cooperation, unity, discipline, and knowledge of many societal rules. Players in traditional games actively learn about the game world, or the entire system of interaction, through their gaming experiences. Players bring to the game prior knowledge and expertise about the real and virtual worlds, games they have played, and other things. They then attempt to apply this knowledge to the game's unique circumstances. Players form mental models, or mental images, based on patterns they observe while playing. By playing games, players create an image, or mental model, of the game system and how it works—that is, how it works. Following that, these models can be used to predict future occurrences, carry out experiments to ascertain what actually happened, and evaluate the outcomes.

9) Kabbadi

Another game that both boys and females can play in their own groups is kabaddi. There are two groups who play this game. There are seven players in each group. As they recite the jingle, the players attempt to touch the opposite group's players in the following ways:

"kabadikabadibagharambatibudhajauchechunabati"

"band talar tulsi paean dele marsi"

"anda paean dele Thanda¹.

Players from one group are eliminated if they attempt to touch other players in their home, and they are eliminated if other players touch them without repeating the jingles. Participants in this game learn to regulate their bodies and minds.

10) Bisa Amruta

It is found that both boys and girls play another game called Bisa-amruta (Poison-antidote). The maximum number of participants in this game is unlimited. In this game, the player tries to touch other players when it's their turn, and the other players run away. Saying "bisa" while touching the opposing player is required of the player who has the turn. After that, the individual being touched has to sit down and stop running until another player touches them and utters the word "amruta." The

¹"Kabadi (just a term used during the game) the old man is going to grind powder""he throw us the water near the tulsi plant of the pond ""and the water is cold"

first person touched wins the turn, and the game continues if all players have been touched.

11) Rasi Degani

Another game, called “Rassi-degani” (Rope Jumping), is only played by girls. It is possible to play this game with other players or by yourself. A skipping rope is used by the players. As the skipping rope circles her body, the player must make one hop. She must carry ahead with the procedure. If the player pauses or crosses the rope incorrectly, she is deemed to be disqualified. Since the girls play this game in the nearest area to her home, it socialises them to a limited geographic area.

12) Patar Anati

The hamlet’s kids were observed engaging in a customary game known as “PatarAnati” (Bringing the Right Leaf). Both boys and girls play this game. Two waiting circles are created for each player: one for the players taking turns and another for the remaining players. One player is asked “kiskiskiskapatar” (Whose, whose, which leaf) by the opposing players. When the player with the turn says the name of a leaf that is close, the other players go outside to pick it up. As they attempt to assemble inside a second circle while holding the leaf, the player with the turn tries to touch each participant. The turn changes to them if the player can get in touch with them; if not, it stays with the same player. When each person puts that specific leaf inside the circle, they say “itilitolokainpatar milo” (Which leaf do you find?). The kids gain an understanding of how to improve their relationships with their classmates by playing this game.

13) Gutka

“Gutka” (Pebble Game) is another game that is exclusively played by girls. In this game, players use from five to ten spherical, little pebbles. When playing with five or ten stones, depending on the circumstances, the player spreads all of the stones on the floor and chooses one. After that, the player throws one pebble, attempts to catch the second one in midair, and finally manages to grab them both. She also selects each pebble on her own. Similar to picking one pebble again, the player picks two at a time, repeating the process until she picks all ten at once. Similar to picking one pebble again, the player picks two at a time, repeating the process until she picks all ten at once. During the 10 rounds of play, a player will be eliminated if she cannot pick the pebble, if the pebble falls and she cannot catch it, or if she touches any of the unneeded pebbles. The

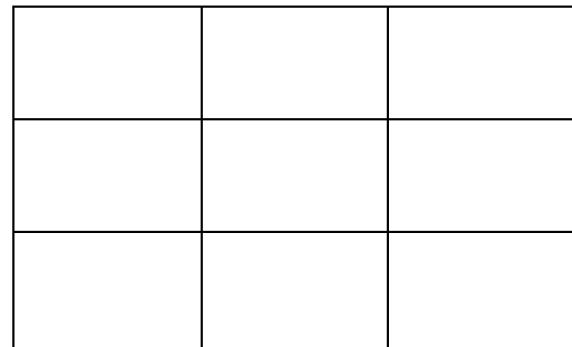
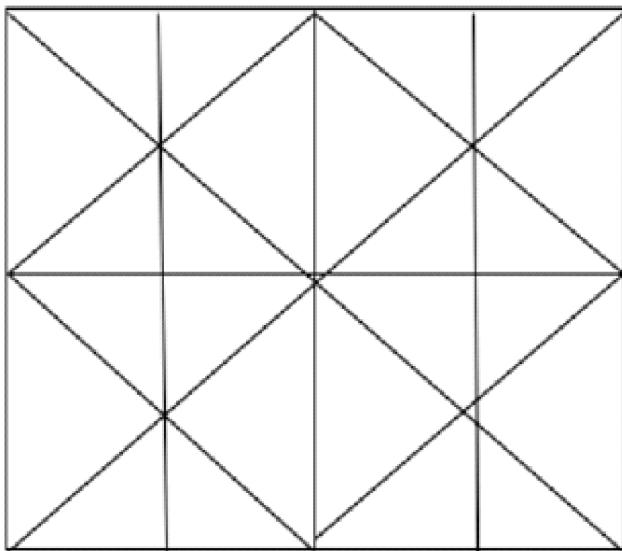
next player will then take their turn. Usually, three or four players participate in this game at once. Either inside the home or on the porch, this game is played. Teenage girls learn and practise limiting their movement around the house, as this illustrates.

14) Lukati

The village kids were witnessed engaged in a symbolic game known as “Lukati,” or “Hide and Seek.” This game is played by both boys and girls. The maximum number of participants in this game is unlimited. While other players hide in various locations, the player with the turn in this game closes their eyes and counts the numbers till they reach a predefined number. The player looks for other players after finishing the count. “First trip,” he or she says after searching and finding the first person. Then he repeats “second trip” after locating the second individual, and so forth. He goes through the same motions over and again. The first player discovered gets his turn and begins looking after he has located every other player. It will not be his turn to search if a player is searched and not located. In order to play this game, the kids don’t need any playthings or objects; instead, they play it with symbolic roles that represent their traditional skills.

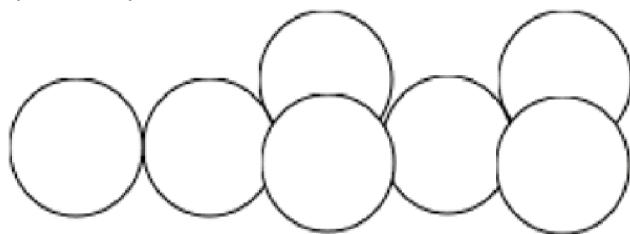
15) Bagh Cheli

The fact that both boys and girls play the game “Bagh-cheli” (Tiger-Goat) is significant. There are a lot of people playing this game; four are “bagh” and eighteen are “cheli.” Here, various types of stone dice are employed. In this case, the player selects “bagh” and positions the dice in each of the board’s four corners. After the other players have selected “cheli,” the dice are positioned between “bagh.” After that, “bagh” tries to murder the “cheli” and continues on. Another dice is placed around the “bagh” in an attempt to save the “cheli.” The game is over if all of the “bagh” dice are surrounded by “cheli” dice. The game is over if every “cheli” die is eliminated by the “bagh” dice. However, “bagh” can kill “cheli” by jumping over it and moving to the empty house if “cheli” dice surround the “bagh” dice and the following house is empty. The children’s cognitive abilities are enhanced by these indoor activities, which aid in their comprehension and decision-making.



16) Golgol

The game known as “Golgol” (Circle-Circle) is played by both boys and females.



Groups of three to four people play this game. The ground is divided into seven “house”-shaped circles, and each participant uses one khapri dice. In this game, the player throws the dice in the first house and then uses one leg to jump over them. Then, with the dice in hand, s/he jumps into the next house. In the first, second, and fifth houses, the player jumps with one leg; in the third, fourth, sixth, and seventh houses, where they dwell in pairs, they hop with two legs. When the player reaches the sixth and seventh houses, they toss the dice outdoors and jump on them. The player must give up their turn for the next player if they miss the dice, however they can start over from the beginning of the next turn. The player tosses the dice to the next house after completing the cycle from the previous one, and so on. He or she must also forfeit their turn if the dice touches or lands on the lines. In order to improve their personalities, the kids who play these games adhere to a rule they have created for themselves. Their lifestyle becomes more organised as a result.

17) Both the girls and the boys also play another game called “Kit-kit” (Term-Term).

Each player in this game has a knapri, or dice. This game is played one at a time by four or five individuals. In this game, the player uses one leg to jump from one tile to another in a clockwise sequence while chanting “kit-kit.” The whole region is divided into nine squares. In this game, the player throws the dice in the first house and then hops over it with one leg. Then he jumps into the next house, slips the dice outside the total area with his leg, and repeats until he reaches the centre house. When the player reaches the middle residence, they can jump over the dice outside the main area using both legs. Additionally, the player must complete all nine of the houses. When the player reaches the ninth home in the last round, the house is deemed his or hers, and the player is free to roll the dice without looking at any of the houses. To keep another player from treading on that house, the player can place a “X” sign there. If a player violates the game’s rules, the next player takes his or her turn.

18) Thin-thin-phat

Thin-thin-phat, also known as Thief and Handkerchief, is a game played by both boys and females. There is no limit on the number of players. In this game, each player sits in a circle on the ground, eyes closed. The player with the turn begins racing outside the circle, holding a piece of cloth or a handkerchief. After a few circuits around the circle, the player smacks the other player in the back and sprints around the circle again, holding the handkerchief or piece of fabric behind the sitting player. The person who was struck in the back picks up the cloth left behind and rushes towards the other player. If the first person takes a seat, the second player will take their turn running around the circle. There is no time limit on the game, therefore it never ends. This game demonstrates children’s imagination as they seek to play simple yet expressive games that allow them to feel triumphant and dejected while also improving their leadership skills.

19) Gaur Badi

Only members of the Magadha Gauda (milkman) community play Gaur Badi at their marriage ceremony. They used a five-foot designed stick (SamaleiBadi) to do their skills in this martial arts show.

CONCLUSION

Here, it is concluded that the local sports of Khuntapali village submerge due to dam-induced displacement. It is found from the field work that different sports have submerged because of lower suktel irrigation project, Bolangir. Different sports which submerged i.e., Gouda Badi, BagCheli, Gutka, Lukati, Ladubetani, Kabadi, Bati etc. Now-a-Day, the displaced people do not practice in their resettled colony.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS:

The author declare no potential conflicts of interests with respect to the research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

FUNDING:

The author received no financial support for this research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

Acknowledgements

Not applicable

Availability of data and materials

No datasets were generated or analysed during the current study

Declarations

Ethics approval and consent to participate

Not applicable.

Consent for publication

Not applicable.

Competing interests

The authors declare no competing interests.

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Domestic Tyranny and Cultural Expectations: Analyzing Gender Roles in Purple Hibiscus

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: This study undertakes a critical examination of how gender roles, domestic oppression, and cultural expectations are represented in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's celebrated novel *Purple Hibiscus* (2003), situated firmly within the socio-political landscape of postcolonial Nigeria. **Materials and Methods:** A qualitative content analysis of the primary text has been carried out, employing frameworks of feminist literary criticism (specifically African womanism and postcolonial feminism) alongside socio-cultural contextual analysis. The analysis paid close attention to character arcs (Kambili, Beatrice, Aunty Ifeoma, Eugene Achike, Jaja), narrative techniques, dialogue patterns, symbolic motifs (silence, the purple hibiscus), and the juxtaposition of domestic spaces to investigate the mechanisms of patriarchal control, forms of resistance, and the complex formation of gender identities. **Results:** The findings reveal that domestic tyranny within the novel is fundamentally structural, deeply rooted in hegemonic masculinity, religious fundamentalism, and the enduring legacies of colonialism. Female characters manifest distinct responses: Beatrice's endurance signifies internalised oppression; Aunty Ifeoma stands as a beacon of emancipatory agency; Kambili's journey powerfully illustrates the reclaiming of voice against profound linguistic paralysis. Jaja's character development significantly challenges toxic masculinity, proposing an alternative model grounded in empathy and sacrifice. Crucially, the Achike household functions as a microcosm reflecting Nigeria's broader socio-political structures of control. **Conclusion:** *Purple Hibiscus* delivers a potent critique of the intersection where cultural norms, religious dogma, and patriarchal power converge to enable and normalise domestic violence. The novel advocates compellingly for decolonised gender identities and illuminates viable pathways to resistance—through education, female solidarity, and the crucial act of reclaiming one's voice. Thus, it firmly positions itself as a significant work within African feminist and postcolonial literary traditions.

KEYWORDS: Purple Hibiscus; *Gender roles*; *Domestic violence*; *Nigerian literature*; *Feminism*; *Cultural expectations*; *Patriarchy*; *Postcolonialism*; *Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie*

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DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17403327>
Article No - TVRV00086

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Received	Reviewed	Accepted	Published
02-Jan.-2025	27-Mar.-2025	22-May.-2025	01-June-2025

Volume	Issue	June	ISSN
No. 7	No. 1	2025	2583-1852(P), 2584-0878(O)

How to Cite this Article: Dash, Shradhananda; Sethi, Ananda. Domestic Tyranny and Cultural Expectations: Analyzing Gender Roles in Purple Hibiscus. THE THIRD VOICE: REALITY AND VISION. 2025. Vol No-7. Issue No-1. June. Pp: 44-52, DOI : <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17403327>

INTRODUCTION

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's debut novel, *Purple Hibiscus* (published in 2003), presents a searing and deeply affecting portrayal of domestic oppression intricately intertwined with patriarchal authority, religious fundamentalism, and the heavy, lingering legacies of colonialism in postcolonial Nigeria—the narrative centres intensely on the fractured dynamics within the Achike family. Here, Eugene Achike, the patriarch, is a figure whose very public image of benevolence, piety, and generosity stands in stark, almost grotesque, contrast to the private despotism he wields within the walls of his home. He enforces rigid, often brutal, control over his family members, primarily through an unyielding interpretation of Catholic dogma and the systemic application of violence, both physical and psychological. Narrated through the perspective of his fifteen-year-old daughter, Kambili, the story meticulously dissects how culturally ingrained gender roles operate to normalise female subjugation and enforce a pervasive, suffocating silence upon the women. Kambili's initial voice, hesitant and fearful, becomes a powerful narrative tool to expose this silencing.

Set against the turbulent backdrop of Nigeria's post-independence political instability – a period marked by military coups, corruption, and social unrest – the novel deftly explores the volatile collision between indigenous Igbo traditions and the powerful impositions left by colonialism, particularly the dominance of Western religion (Catholicism) in shaping societal values and, more specifically, gender expectations. Eugene Achike emerges as a near-textbook embodiment of the sociological concept R.W. Connell termed "hegemonic masculinity." This concept refers to the culturally idealised form of manhood within a given society, which is intrinsically tied to dominance, control, unwavering authority, and a rigid sense of moral absolutism (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 832). His domestic tyranny, however, is not merely a product of indigenous patriarchy; it also reflects Frantz Fanon's piercing analysis of the "internalized colonialism" or "colonised mind," a psychological condition where the colonised subject internalises the values and hierarchies of the coloniser, often leading to a rejection of native identity and an exacerbation of authoritarian tendencies, frequently directed towards one's community (Fanon, 2008, p. 136). Eugene's fervent Catholicism and disdain for his own father's "pagan" traditions starkly illustrate this internalised oppression.

The female characters navigate this oppressive landscape in markedly different ways, providing a spectrum of responses to patriarchal domination. Beatrice (Mama), Eugene's wife, endures relentless physical and emotional trauma primarily in silence, embodying the culturally prescribed role of the suffering, sacrificial wife. Aunty Ifeoma, Eugene's sister, stands in direct contrast – a university lecturer, a widowed single mother, and an outspoken champion of progressive thought, critical inquiry, and female independence. She represents a potent alternative model of womanhood. Kambili, the protagonist and narrator, undergoes the most visible transformative journey, evolving from a state of near-muteness, crippled by fear and obedience, towards finding her voice and a sense of self-expression, catalysed mainly by her exposure to Aunty Ifeoma's radically different world. This present study, therefore, aims to conduct a detailed analysis of how Adichie masterfully utilises the microcosm of the domestic sphere – the Achike household and its counterpart in Ifeoma's home – to launch a profound critique of larger societal power structures embedded in patriarchy, religion, and colonial residue. Further, it explores how the novel imagines the possibility of decolonised gender futures through the struggles and transformations of its central characters.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research employs a rigorous qualitative content analysis as its primary methodological approach for interrogating Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*. The cornerstone of the analytical framework is feminist literary criticism, with specific emphasis drawn from two key strands highly relevant to the African context: **African womanism** and **postcolonial feminist theory**.

- 1. African Womanism:** Pioneered by thinkers like Chikwenye Okonjo Ogunyemi (1988) and drawing inspiration from Alice Walker's concept of "womanism" (Walker, 1983), this framework is crucial. It prioritises African women's specific experiences, struggles, and resilience, emphasising cultural specificity, community well-being, familial responsibility (particularly motherhood), and often advocating for a complementary rather than solely adversarial relationship with men. It moves beyond Western feminism's potential limitations in addressing the unique intersectional oppressions faced by African women, incorporating race, colonialism, and class alongside gender. Ogunyemi's

concept of “negotiated resistance” (1988, p. 72) – where women subvert oppression through subtle, often non-confrontational means within existing structures – is particularly pertinent to understanding characters like Beatrice.

2. Postcolonial Feminist Theory: This lens, articulated by scholars such as Juliana Makuchi Nfah-Abbenyi (1997) and Obioma Nnaemeka (1998), examines how gender oppression is inextricably linked to the historical and ongoing effects of colonialism. It critiques how colonial powers often imposed or reinforced patriarchal structures while simultaneously marginalising indigenous gender systems, sometimes ironically using the rhetoric of “liberating” native women. Nfah-Abbenyi’s call to “decolonise gender” (1997, p. 45) and Nnaemeka’s exploration of “negotiated feminism” (1998, p. 3) – finding space for agency within culturally specific constraints – provide vital tools for analysing the Achikes’ situation and the impact of Eugene’s internalised colonialism.

To enrich this core feminist analysis and address the multifaceted nature of power and control depicted in the novel, several supplementary theoretical lenses are strategically integrated:

1. Connell’s Theory of Hegemonic Masculinity (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005): This sociological concept is indispensable for deconstructing Eugene Achike’s patriarchal authority. It allows us to analyse how his performance of masculinity – through dominance, control, moral rigidity, suppression of emotion (except anger), and the use of violence – aligns with the culturally idealised (hegemonic) model in his specific context, and how this performance sustains gender inequality.

2. Foucault’s Concepts of Disciplinary Power and Surveillance (Foucault, 1995): Michel Foucault’s insights into how power operates through subtle mechanisms of discipline, routine, observation, and normalisation are highly applicable. They help us examine the intricate ways control is exerted within the Achike household – rigid schedules, constant surveillance (akin to the panopticon), internalised silence discipline, and religious doctrine for behavioural regulation and punishment.

3. Butler’s Theory of Gender Performativity (Butler, 1990): Judith Butler’s influential idea that gender is not a fixed essence but rather constituted through

repeated performances and enactments under societal constraints provides a crucial lens. It helps us understand how characters like Eugene, Beatrice, and Kambili are constantly “doing” gender – performing masculinity and femininity according to deeply ingrained cultural and religious scripts, and facing consequences when they deviate.

4. Fanon’s Analysis of Colonial Psychology (Fanon, 2008): Frantz Fanon’s work on the profound psychological impact of colonialism, particularly the concept of the “colonised mind” characterised by internalised racism, self-hatred, and the valorisation of the coloniser’s culture, is essential for interpreting Eugene’s character. It explains his rejection of Igbo traditions (“paganism”) and his obsessive embrace of a rigid, European-style Catholicism as manifestations of this deep-seated psychological wound.

DATA EXTRACTION AND ANALYTICAL PROCEDURE:

Data extraction was conducted systematically through multiple, close readings of the primary text, *Purple Hibiscus*. Attention was meticulously focused on the following key textual elements:

1. Character Development and Interactions : Detailed tracing of the evolution of major characters (Eugene, Beatrice, Kambili, Jaja, Aunty Ifeoma) and significant minor characters (Papa-Nnukwu, Father Amadi). Special attention was paid to their relationships, power dynamics, moments of conflict, and dialogue exchanges that reveal internal states and societal pressures.

2. Narrative Structure and Symbolism: Analysis of how Adichie structures the narrative (e.g., Kambili’s first-person perspective, flashback, the contrast between Enugu and Nsukka sections). Decoding of potent symbols, most notably *silence* (its various forms and functions) and the *purple hibiscus* (its significance as a metaphor for freedom, resilience, and rare beauty).

3. Dialogue and Internal Monologue: Scrutiny of spoken interactions to reveal power relations, hidden tensions, and cultural subtexts. Particular emphasis was placed on Kambili’s internal monologue – her hesitations, self-doubt, observations, and the gradual strengthening of her internal voice – as a primary indicator of her psychological journey and the oppressive atmosphere.

4. **Depictions of Practices and Rituals:** Close examination of descriptions related to domestic routines (e.g., mealtimes, prayer schedules), acts of violence (their nature, frequency, justification), religious practices (Eugene's rigid Catholicism vs. Papa-Nnukwu's traditional beliefs), and cultural rituals (e.g., the omugwo ceremony, attitudes towards marriage).
5. **Juxtaposition of Spaces:** Critical analysis of the stark contrast between Eugene's oppressive, fear-saturated environment in Enugu and the liberating, intellectually vibrant space of Aunty Ifeoma's home in Nsukka. How these physical spaces shape the characters' behaviour, communication, and possibilities.

The analytical phase involved thematic coding of the extracted data. This meant identifying recurring patterns, motifs, and themes related to the core research concerns: the mechanisms of enforcing traditional gender roles; the diverse strategies of resistance employed by different characters (overt, covert, internal); the development and assertion of agency, particularly female agency; and the specific impact of intertwined cultural and religious expectations on individual lives and choices. Scholarly interpretations from relevant critics (e.g., Acholonu's (1995) view of Ifeoma's home as a "feminist utopia", Okuyade's (2009) analysis of silence as a character; Taylor's (2009) concept of "linguistic paralysis") were not merely cited but integrated contextually throughout the analysis to deepen the critique, provide comparative perspectives, and situate the novel within ongoing academic discourse.

RESULTS

The meticulous qualitative analysis of *Purple Hibiscus* yielded several significant findings concerning the intricate workings of gender roles and power dynamics within the familial and societal contexts depicted by Adichie. These results are presented thematically below:

1. **Gendered Domestic Tyranny: Structure and Manifestation:** The analysis unequivocally established that Eugene Achike's authority within his household was not merely the result of personal failings but a structured system of domination. This system manifested through multiple, interlocking mechanisms:

- o **Systematic Violence:** Physical abuse was a primary tool, disproportionately targeting his wife, Beatrice, and his daughter, Kambili. The violence was often brutal (beatings leading to miscarriages, scalding with boiling water) and ritualised, frequently justified through a distorted interpretation of religious doctrine. The scalding incident, where Eugene punishes Kambili for not receiving communion during menstruation – deemed "impure" by his rigid Catholicism (Adichie, 2003, p. 197) – stands as a chilling exemplar. It demonstrates how religious fundamentalism became the legitimising framework for physical abuse, a clear manifestation of internalised colonialism where Western religious dogma overrides both compassion and indigenous cultural understandings (Okuyade, 2009, p. 98; Fanon, 2008, p. 136).
- o **Surveillance and Control:** Eugene's rule extended beyond physical punishment into pervasive surveillance and control over the minutiae of daily life. Rigid prayers, meals, study, and leisure schedules dictated the family's existence. This created an atmosphere of constant anxiety and fear, where even thoughts felt monitored. Kambili's description of their "measured and silent" steps on the stairs (Adichie, 2003, p. 31) encapsulates this environment. The home functioned effectively as a Foucauldian panopticon (Foucault, 1995, p. 184), where the *possibility* of being watched induced self-discipline and internalised repression.
- o **Religious Indoctrination:** Catholicism, as interpreted and enforced by Eugene, was weaponised as a tool of control. Religious observance was not a source of solace but another rigid structure demanding absolute compliance. Deviation from his prescribed norms (e.g., Kambili visiting her "pagan" grandfather, Jaja refusing communion) was treated as a grave sin, meriting severe punishment. This indoctrination served to silence dissent and enforce submission under the guise of spiritual duty.
- o **Enforcement of Performative Femininity:** The analysis revealed how Beatrice's quiet endurance and Kambili's initial muteness were not passive states but active, albeit coerced,

performances of the femininity demanded by the patriarchal and religious structures Eugene represented (Butler, 1990, p. 33). Their silence and obedience were performative acts necessary for survival within the tyrannical domestic space.

2. Silencing and the Arduous Reclaiming of Voice:

Kambili's character arc provided profound insights into the psychological impact of patriarchal control and the arduous journey towards reclaiming agency. Her initial condition was diagnosed through the analysis as "linguistic paralysis" (Taylor, 2009, p. 151), a state where fear and repression physically inhibited her ability to speak – manifesting as stammering, whispering, or complete loss of voice under stress. This paralysis symbolised the systematic erasure of female agency and subjectivity under Eugene's rule. Her transformation, however, was catalysed by her exposure to Aunty Ifeoma's nurturing environment in Nsukka. Ifeoma's home, characterised by open dialogue, intellectual debate, laughter, and mutual respect, provided a starkly different model of communication and relationship. Within this liberating space, Kambili gradually discovered the power of her voice – not merely as the ability to speak, but as an instrument for expressing desire, emotion, critical thought, and moral judgment. Her journey demonstrates that reclaiming voice is fundamental to resistance and authentic self-discovery, positioning language as a critical battleground in the struggle against patriarchal silencing.

3. Contrasting Femininities: Endurance, Resistance, and Alternative Models:

The novel presents a compelling spectrum of female responses to patriarchy, embodied primarily by Beatrice and Aunty Ifeoma:

- o Beatrice: The Paradox of Endurance and Radical Resistance:** Beatrice's character exemplified traditional, sacrificial womanhood within the Igbo/Nigerian Catholic context. Her silent endurance of years of physical abuse (resulting in miscarriages) and emotional torment reflected deep cultural conditioning that valorises female suffering, patience, and the preservation of family unity at immense personal cost. Her declaration to Ifeoma – "A woman with children should stay alive for them" (Adichie, 2003, p. 213) – underscores

the immense ethical burden placed upon mothers. However, the analysis revealed her silence as more than passive victimhood; it could be interpreted as a form of "negotiated resistance" (Ogunyemi, 1988, p. 72), a survival strategy within an impossible situation. Her ultimate act – poisoning Eugene – though morally complex and born of utter desperation, constituted a radical rupture in this pattern of endurance. It was a moment of suppressed agency violently reasserting itself, a final, definitive act of resistance against her oppressor, undertaken to protect her children from his escalating violence. It signified a reclaiming of autonomy from the margins of silence.

- o Aunty Ifeoma: Embodying African Womanism and an Alternative Utopia:**

Aunty Ifeoma emerged as the novel's most potent representation of an alternative African womanist model. As an educated, financially independent university lecturer, a widowed single mother successfully raising her children, and an outspoken critic of both oppressive tradition and political tyranny, she defied the conventional gender script. Crucially, her strength did not necessitate rejecting her culture or faith outright. She harmonised her devout Catholicism with respect for indigenous Igbo values (evident in her relationship with her father, Papa-Nnukwu). She actively fostered feminist ideals of equality, education, and critical thinking. Her household, marked by open conversations, debate, laughter, shared responsibilities, and mutual respect between herself and her children, functioned as a powerful "narrative counterpoint" to Eugene's oppressive domain. Scholar Rose Acholonu aptly describes it as an "alternative feminist utopia, a space where gender roles are fluid and familial hierarchy is negotiated rather than imposed" (Acholonu, 1995, p. 64). Ifeoma embodied Chikwenye Ogunyemi's African womanism, blending self-determination with a deep commitment to community and familial well-being (Ogunyemi, 1988, p. 70).

4. Reconstructing Masculinity: Jaja's Counter-Model:

While the primary focus often falls on the female characters, the analysis highlighted the significant role of Jaja, Kambili's brother, in

challenging toxic masculinity and offering an alternative vision. Jaja's evolution was crucial:

- o **From Compliance to Defiance:** Initially, Jaja appeared more compliant than Kambili, perhaps better navigating the rules to avoid punishment. However, he underwent a profound transformation. His first significant defiance was refusing Holy Communion, directly challenging Eugene's religious authority. Later, his most significant act was assuming the blame for his father's murder (actually committed by Beatrice), sacrificing his freedom to protect his mother and sister.
- o **An Alternative Masculinity:** Jaja's emerging masculinity starkly contrasted Eugene's hegemonic model. It was not based on dominance, control, or violence, but on empathy, deep familial loyalty, profound sacrifice, and moral courage. His actions demonstrated emotional intelligence and rejected the violent patterns he inherited. This aligns with R.W. Connell's concept of "subordinate masculinities" – identities that exist alongside and challenge the hegemonic model by embodying different values (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 832). More broadly, Jaja's journey resonates with the postcolonial feminist imperative to "decolonise gender" roles for *both* men and women, liberating masculinity from the constraints of colonial and patriarchal violence (Nfah-Abbenyi, 1997, p. 45).

5. **The Domestic Sphere as Political Microcosm:** The analysis confirmed that the Achike household was far more than a setting for private drama; it functioned as a potent microcosm reflecting the broader socio-political realities of postcolonial Nigeria. Eugene's authoritarian rule, characterised by absolute control, suppression of dissent, arbitrary punishment, and the use of ideological indoctrination (religious in his case, nationalist/state propaganda in the country), directly paralleled the military dictatorship and widespread corruption plaguing Nigeria. The inefficiency and decay of public institutions were mirrored in the fear and dysfunction within the home. Michel Foucault's theory of disciplinary power (Foucault, 1995, p. 184) proved highly relevant: Eugene's meticulous control over time (schedules), space (restricted movement), behaviour, and thought within the domestic sphere

mirrored the techniques of surveillance and regulation employed by modern state institutions. Thus, the home in *Purple Hibiscus* is intensely political; it is the primary site where national ideologies of control, enforced compliance, and the seeds of resistance are enacted on the most intimate and damaging level. The personal tragedies within the Achike family are inextricably linked to the public tragedies of the nation.

DISCUSSION

Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* transcends the confines of a domestic family narrative, ascending to the level of a profound and multi-layered critique of intersecting systems of oppression – namely patriarchy, colonialism, and religious extremism – that collude to enforce rigid, often destructive, gender roles within postcolonial Nigeria. The novel's enduring power lies significantly in its nuanced characterisations, which refuse simplistic binaries and reveal the multifaceted, often contradictory nature of oppression and resistance. This discussion delves deeper into the implications of the results, exploring the mechanisms of control, pathways to agency, and the novel's vision for decolonising gender identities.

Mechanisms of Control and the Depths of Internalised Oppression:

Eugene Achike's domestic tyranny stands as a harrowing case study of how hegemonic masculinity is not merely possessed but is actively, ritually performed and sustained. His daily routines, the strict schedules, the enforced silence, the public displays of piety, and the brutal punishments are all performances meticulously designed to assert his dominance and naturalise his authority as father and devout Christian (Butler, 1990). This performance, however, is crucially underpinned and intensified by two powerful forces: religious absolutism and colonial mimicry. His interpretation of Catholicism is devoid of mercy or love, reduced to a set of rigid rules demanding unquestioning obedience. This absolutism provides the moral justification for his violence and control. More insidiously, Eugene embodies Fanon's concept of the "colonised mind" with devastating clarity. His internalised disdain for Igbo traditions, labelling them "pagan" and "heathen," particularly his rejection of his father, Papa-Nnukwu, underscores how the colonised psyche can weaponise the coloniser's values (in this case, European Catholicism) against its cultural heritage and community

(Fanon, 2008). His quest for “purity” is a quest for whiteness, for European validation, achieved by violently erasing his roots. This internalised colonialism does not liberate him; it fuels his authoritarianism and deepens his alienation, making him a more effective enforcer of a patriarchal order fused with colonial superiority.

Beatrice’s protracted silence, interpreted in the results as both endurance and a form of negotiated resistance, requires further unpacking within this framework. Initially, her silence is undeniably a survival tactic to navigate the daily terror of Eugene’s rule and protect her children. However, the analysis also reveals it as a tragic symptom of devastating internalisation. She has absorbed, over the years, the patriarchal and religious norms that equate ideal womanhood with silent suffering, unwavering submission, and the bearing of pain with stoic dignity. Her identity becomes entangled with this suffering. Erin Taylor’s (2009) characterisation of her silence as a “cultural performance” of femininity is crucial here. It highlights how systemic oppression operates insidiously, not just through overt violence, but through the successful inculcation of values that lead individuals to *perform* their subjugation, believing it to be their natural or divinely ordained role. The cost of this performance, however, is immense – psychological fragmentation, physical damage (the miscarriages), and the near-erasure of her selfhood. Her eventual, violent act of resistance, while breaking the cycle, also speaks to the extreme pressure-cooker environment created by such internalised oppression.

Pathways to Resistance, Agency, and the Power of Alternative Spaces:

One of the novel’s most significant contributions is its delineation of diverse, viable pathways to resistance and reclaiming agency, particularly for women. Adichie masterfully contrasts spaces of repression and liberation, demonstrating how the environment shapes possibility. Aunty Ifeoma’s household in Nsukka emerges as the novel’s vital heart of resistance, embodying the principles of African womanism articulated by Ogunyemi (1988) and Walker (1983). This space is revolutionary not because it rejects Nigerian culture or Catholicism wholesale, but because it forges a *hybrid*, emancipatory identity. Ifeoma seamlessly blends her deep Catholic faith with respect for indigenous Igbo values (her loving care for Papa-Nnukwu, her understanding of tradition). She fosters critical thinking, open debate, laughter, and mutual respect within her

home. Education is paramount, not just formal education but education in questioning, self-expression, and understanding the world. Her feminist ideals are expressed through her independence, her career, her parenting style (raising children, especially her daughter Amaka, to be assertive and proud of their heritage), and her vocal criticism of injustice, whether familial (Eugene’s tyranny) or political (the military regime). Her home is a lived “feminist utopia” (Acholonu, 1995) precisely because it demonstrates that liberation can be cultivated *within* the cultural context, through renegotiation and the assertion of different values.

This liberatory space acts as the essential catalyst for Kambili’s transformation. Immersed in an environment where dialogue is encouraged, questions are welcomed, and individuality is respected, Kambili slowly thaws from her “linguistic paralysis.” Her journey from stammering and silence to hesitant speech and finally to clear articulation (her final words in the novel expressing love for Father Amadi and defiance in visiting Jaja) is perhaps the most powerful narrative arc. It positions language – the ability to name one’s experiences, express one’s desires, and articulate moral judgments – as the fundamental site of liberation and self-possession. Finding her voice is synonymous with finding herself. This journey powerfully illustrates Obioma Nnaemeka’s concept of “negotiated feminism” (1998), where African women carve out spaces for agency and empowerment *within* the existing cultural and familial structures, navigating constraints rather than simply overthrowing them from an external position.

Beatrice’s pathway, culminating in the poisoning, presents a starkly different, yet equally significant, form of reclaiming agency. While morally ambiguous and born of utter desperation and accumulated trauma, her act is a radical rupture in the cycle of silent endurance. It is the eruption of suppressed rage and the ultimate assertion of control over her own life and the safety of her children. It is “negotiated resistance” pushed to its absolute limit. Her act, though leading to Jaja’s sacrifice and her psychological burden, decisively ends Eugene’s reign of terror. It demonstrates that agency can emerge violently from the depths of subjugation when all other avenues seem closed. Kambili’s voice and Beatrice’s poison are acts of reclaiming power through vastly different means and with vastly different consequences.

Decolonising Gender Identities: Beyond the Binary and Towards Healing:

Adichie avoids the trap of gender essentialism by offering not only a critique of femininity under patriarchy but also a compelling deconstruction and reimagining of masculinity. Jaja's evolution is central to this project. His rejection of his father's toxic model of manhood – based on dominance, control, suppression of emotion (except anger), and violence – signifies the novel's hopeful potential for reconstructing male identity. His emerging masculinity is defined by empathy (his understanding of his mother's suffering, his bond with Kambili), profound sacrifice (taking the blame for Eugene's death), moral courage (defying Eugene's religious control), and relationality (his connection to his grandfather, his loyalty to his sister and mother). He embodies Connell's "subordinate masculinity" (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005) not in a weak sense, but as a powerful alternative that challenges hegemony by embodying different values: care, responsibility, and emotional strength. This aligns perfectly with the postcolonial feminist call articulated by Nfah-Abbenyi (1997) to "decolonise gender" itself – liberating both men and women from the constricting, often violent, roles imposed by patriarchal traditions *and* colonial legacies that frequently reinforced or distorted those traditions. Jaja represents the possibility of a masculinity unshackled from the need to dominate, a crucial component of any future based on equality.

The symbolic purple hibiscus, carefully cultivated by Eugene yet becoming a symbol of defiance and hope nurtured by Ifeoma and admired by Kambili and Jaja, serves as the novel's potent metaphor for this potential. It is rare, beautiful, resilient, and blooms "against odds" – much like the possibility of new, liberated gender identities emerging from the harsh, oppressive soil of tradition, patriarchy, and colonial damage. It signifies the stubborn persistence of life, beauty, and the potential for transformation even in the most constrained circumstances.

Ultimately, the novel suggests that collective healing for a society like postcolonial Nigeria requires systematically dismantling patriarchal structures, not just in the public sphere of politics and economics, but crucially within the intimate spaces of the home and family. The damage inflicted by figures like Eugene, products and enforcers of intersecting oppressions, radiates outwards, poisoning relationships and stunting lives. Adichie advocates implicitly for relationships rebuilt on foundations of mutual respect, open communication, empathy, and shared humanity, rather than domination, fear, and silence. The purple hibiscus

points towards this possibility, a fragile but persistent hope nurtured by resistance, education, solidarity, and the courage to find one's voice.

CONCLUSION

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* is a significant and enduring contribution to the canons of African feminist literature and postcolonial writing. Through the intensely focused microcosm of the Achike family's harrowing experiences, Adichie masterfully exposes the intricate workings of domestic tyranny, revealing how it is actively sanctioned and perpetuated by deeply ingrained cultural expectations and the potent force of religious fundamentalism. The novel demonstrates with unflinching clarity how these forces converge to enforce debilitatingly rigid gender roles that stifle individual potential, inflict profound trauma, and fracture familial bonds. Eugene Achike stands as a tragic archetype of the colonised patriarch, his internalised oppression fuelling a violent performance of hegemonic masculinity that devastates those closest to him.

Crucially, Adichie avoids presenting a monolithic picture of victimhood under this oppression. Instead, *Purple Hibiscus* illuminates the agency, however constrained, that individuals exercise. The characters navigate their oppressive reality through diverse, culturally resonant strategies: Beatrice's silent endurance evolving into desperate, radical action; Aunty Ifeoma's vocal defiance and the creation of a liberating alternative space grounded in African womanist principles; Kambili's painstakingly gradual journey from enforced muteness to empowered self-expression; and Jaja's significant rejection of his father's toxic model, embracing instead an empathetic, self-sacrificing masculinity. Each pathway, in its way, constitutes a form of resistance and a reclaiming of agency.

The novel delivers a powerful critique of the lasting psychological and social damage wrought by the colonial mentality. Eugene embodies this damage – his internalised valorisation of Western religion and culture leading to the violent rejection of his heritage and the exacerbation of patriarchal authoritarianism. However, simultaneously, *Purple Hibiscus* offers compelling, hopeful pathways towards resistance and liberation. These pathways are firmly rooted in the African context: the transformative power of education (embodied by Ifeoma and experienced by Kambili and Jaja in Nsukka); the strength found in female solidarity and familial bonds (between Ifeoma and Beatrice, Kambili and Amaka,

ultimately between Beatrice and her children); and the fundamental, revolutionary act of reclaiming one's voice, breaking the silence imposed by tyranny.

Adichie is unflinching in acknowledging that liberation is rarely simple or without cost. Beatrice remains psychologically scarred, bearing the weight of her act and Jaja's sacrifice. Jaja's incarceration underscores the personal price paid for challenging oppressive systems. However, the narrative concludes not with despair, but with a sense of cautious, hard-won hope. Kambili's voice, now stronger and clearer, her perceptions sharpened by experience, and her dreams reaching towards a future defined by love and freedom rather than fear, signal a profound internal shift. The enduring symbol of the purple hibiscus, blooming resiliently against the odds, encapsulates this hope. It represents the persistent potential for new, decolonised gender identities to take root – identities liberated from the suffocating constraints of patriarchal domination, colonial self-hatred, and religious absolutism. It points towards the possibility of relationships rebuilt on foundations of genuine equality, mutual respect, and shared humanity.

Ultimately, *Purple Hibiscus* is far more than a family saga; it is a powerful, resonant call to action. It urges readers to recognise the political nature of the private sphere and challenge patriarchal systems in the grand arenas of public discourse and policy, as well as within the intimate, everyday spaces of the home and the family. Adichie compels us to listen to the silenced voices, to nurture the fragile blooms of resistance, and to actively participate in the decolonisation of gender for a more just and humane future. The novel remains a vital testament to the resilience of the human spirit and the enduring quest for freedom within the complex tapestry of culture, faith, and power in postcolonial Africa.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS:

The authors declare no potential conflicts of interests with respect to the research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

FUNDING:

The authors received no financial support for this research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

Acknowledgements

Not applicable

Availability of data and materials

No datasets were generated or analysed during the current study

Declarations

Ethics approval and consent to participate

Not applicable.

Consent for publication

Not applicable.

Competing interests

The authors declare no competing interests.

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DOI : <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17403356>

Demystifying Teachers Identity in Odisha within the Socio Professional Contour and Changing Educational Policies

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the perceptions of elementary school teachers in Odisha regarding their professional space, employment security, and socio-economic status in the context of shifting educational policies. Grounded in Social Identity Theory, Role Identity Theory, and Policy Implementation Theory, the research investigates how reforms such as the National Policy on Education (1986, 2020), the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, the Right to Education Act (2009), and NCTE regulations have influenced teachers' professional identity and everyday work experiences. Using a qualitative design, in-depth interviews with sixty teachers from diverse urban, semi-urban, and rural schools in Cuttack were conducted and analysed thematically. Findings reveal a paradox of autonomy, where teachers exercise freedom in classroom-level pedagogy but lack influence in broader institutional or policy decisions. Limited policy awareness, inadequate institutional support, insufficient remuneration, and restricted career growth contribute to professional stagnation and low social recognition, particularly in urban contexts. The study underscores the need for inclusive, context-specific reforms that recognize teachers as active stakeholders in educational change, emphasizing the importance of aligning policy frameworks with the lived realities of teachers to strengthen professional identity and improve educational outcomes.

KEYWORDS : Elementary school teachers; Teacher identity; Educational policy; Professional autonomy; Socio-economic status; Odisha; Qualitative study; Policy implementation

INTRODUCTION:

Indian elementary education has seen many changes in teaching over time because of different reforms, government policies, and changes in society and the economy. Teachers' sense of self and how others see them are very important for the success of education. In India, a teacher's identity is connected to how much control they have at work, how they earn an income, and how they are recognized by society. Even though they are vital for the development of children and the nation, elementary school teachers in states such as Odisha still struggle with having enough space to do their job, poor financial benefits, and a lower position in society (Biswal, 2013). This study tries to explain these

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DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17403356>
Article No - TVRV00087

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Received	Reviewed	Accepted	Published
15-Jan.-2025	17-Mar.-2025	22-May.-2025	01-June-2025

Volume	Issue	June	ISSN
No. 7	No. 1	2025	2583-1852(P), 2584-0878(O)

How to Cite this Article: Singh, Arpita.; Dansana, Ashok; Demystifying Teachers Identity in Odisha within the Socio Professional Contour and Changing Educational Policies. THE THIRD VOICE REALITY AND VISION. 2025. Vol No-7. Issue No-1. June. Pp: 53-62, DOI : <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17403356>

challenges by seeing how policy changes in education have affected the identities of elementary school teachers in Odisha. Teacher identity includes a person's sense of self as well as their jobs, duties, recognition from others, and the standards they are held to. Teachers are considered as guides for morals and social values as well as educators in India; their identity there is very important. Often, shifts in policies have changed the character of American identity (Sethy, 2019).

The National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986 was an important event that acknowledged the significance of teachers and urged measures to strengthen teacher education and training. It focused on improving the teaching profession and made sure teachers had better opportunities and resources (Surya Pratap, 2019). The actual delivery of the program was often inadequate, mainly in rural and low-resource places such as Odisha. The Right to Education Act (RTE) 2009 made sure that every child between the ages of 6 and 14 had the right to go to school by making elementary education mandatory. While the RTE helped many join school and made education more available, it was also a great source of work and teaching problems for teachers. Teachers were required to spend time on administrative chores such as record-keeping, surveys, and supervising mid-day meals, which took away from what they should be teaching (Alonso Sáez, 2017). Responsibilities has made it harder for teachers to keep a professional boundary, which has led to many experiencing stress and not being happy with their jobs. In 2001, the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) was created to make sure that all children were able to enrol in and succeed at elementary school. It resulted in hiring thousands of contract and para-teachers, which influenced the status and position of regular teachers (Pennington, 2016).

Through its 2009 guidelines, the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) set minimum requirements and established standard courses for teachers. By aiming to enhance teaching standards, this policy also closed down many poor teacher training programs and reduced the chances for marginalized students who wanted to teach (Van Lankveldet *et al.*, 2017). Teachers who were already employed often did not see their working lives improve or have their esteem as professionals rise. Despite many efforts to improve the state of elementary education in India, teachers are still dealing with concerns about job stability, their social and economic situation, and having control over their jobs. In Odisha, since the majority of schools exist in rural and tribal areas, the main problems are underdeveloped

infrastructure, weak support, and few career advancement choices (Jupp *et al.*, 2016; Looney *et al.*, 2018).

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The research objective is to explore the felt identity of elementary school teachers in relation to the major educational guidelines like the National Policy on Education (1986-2020), Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), the Right to Education (RTE) Act 2009, and the National Council for Teacher Education, 2009. This study focuses on:

- Professional Space and Autonomy: To realize the degree to which powerful educational policy has an impact on the perceptions teachers of elementary schools have of their professional space and freedom within the system.
- Professional Security and Capability Enhancement: To determine the difference in the perceived professional security and capability because of educational policies.
- Remuneration and Professional Worth: To assess teachers' perceptions of the sufficiency and value of their pay regarding educational policies, considering how these policies support their sense of professional value.
- Integrated Policy Impact on Teacher Identity: To investigate the collective impact of educational policies on the felt identity of elementary school teachers, focusing on their professional experiences and perceptions of identity in the educational landscape.
- Policy Awareness and Influence on Professional Identity: To evaluate the degree of knowledge and understanding of educational policies among elementary school teachers and how this knowledge shapes their professional identity and responsibilities in the classroom.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Conceptualizing Teacher Identity

Zembylas, (2018) stated that teacher identity is now considered dynamic and full of various aspects in current educational research because educators are being asked to perform different roles and meet new standards. People are now seeing it as a mix of personal values,

job roles, and what is expected by organizations. Teacher identity is basically about how teachers feel about their jobs and how others in the education system see them. This identity develops from the personal beliefs, teaching style, and care for students' success and happiness. What a teacher is expected to teach, how, and how well can have a big impact on their professional persona.

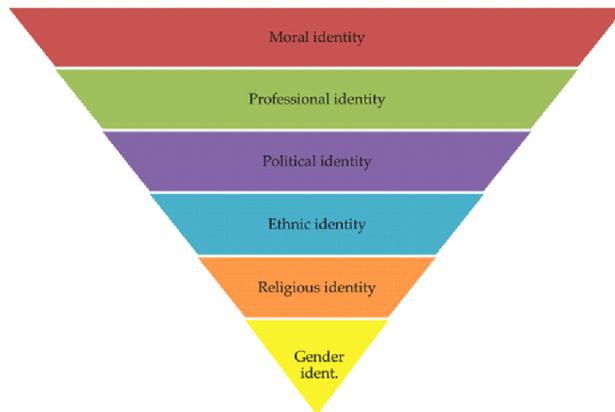


Figure 1 The Hierarchy of Teacher's Identity

https://www.researchgate.net/figure/The-hierarchy-of-teachers-identities_fig1_320043818

Henry, (2016) examined that teachers must adopt policies and goals from their institutions, which means they might find themselves facing challenges between their ideals and what is required by others. Yazan, (2023) pointed out that the structure of many institutions, such as layers of control, a high workload, little freedom, and no active decision-making role, makes it more difficult for individuals to form an identity. People in teaching have to keep adjusting their personal goals to fit the expectations established by the school system. A supportive school setting is very important for promoting a positive and strong identity among teachers, research says. Seeing that teaching is this complicated is necessary to make rules that respect teachers' skills and point of view.

Table 1 Conceptualizing Teacher Identity

Author	Key Points on Teacher Identity
Zembylas (2018)	Teacher identity is dynamic, shaped by personal values, roles, and institutional expectations.
Henry (2016)	Tension arises when teachers' ideals conflict with institutional policies and goals.

Yazan (2023)	Institutional structure (e.g., control, workload, lack of autonomy) hinders identity formation.
General View	Supportive school environments are crucial for fostering strong teacher identities.

2.2 Teacher Identity and Educational Policies in India

Clarke *et al.*, (2023) stated that educational policies, including the 1986 National Policy on Education (NPE), the 2009 Right to Education (RTE) Act, and initiatives like Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and the 2009 National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE), have greatly changed and improved the education system in India. They targeted giving access to everyone, boosting quality, and upgrading teaching skills. Gupta, (2021) analyzed that applying them has changed the responsibilities and identity of teachers in elementary schools differently for some. Whilst these approaches acknowledged the importance of teachers, they also included new demands, greater responsibility, and duties outside of teaching that have become too much for teachers. Although the RTE Act stressed child-centered approaches, inclusion, and regular assessment, there were not enough resources or assistance for teachers.

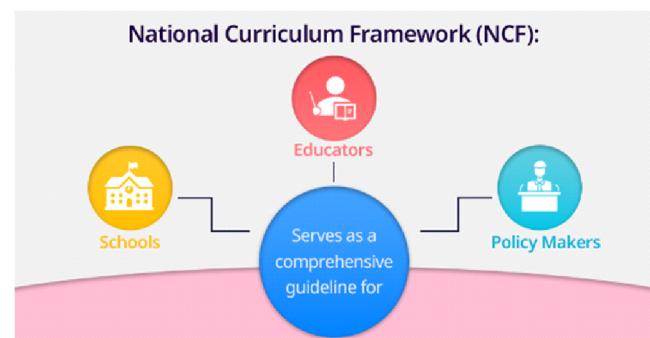


Figure 2 National Curriculum Framework

<https://www.21kschool.com/us/blog/national-curriculum-framework-ncf/>

Chandran, (2022) pointed out that SSA promoted the training of many teachers and implemented large recruitment drives, but it also introduced contract-based work and thus created job instability and divided the teaching workforce. In 2009, NCFTE focused on reflection and development for teachers, yet its ideas were not always adopted consistently into how teachers were trained and schools were run. The gap between

policy goals and street-level action influences a divided sense of a professional's identity. Many times, teachers find it difficult to connect ambitious policies with their daily problems, which may reduce their determination and willingness to continue in their job.

2.3 PROFESSIONAL SPACE AND AUTONOMY

Oolbekkink-Marchand *et al.*, (2017) stated that teachers have professional space in education when they are free to shape how they teach, select the content, and manage the interactions in the classroom. It covers the right to try new methods, change teaching strategies, and take part in the management and decisions of an institution. According to the National Curriculum Framework 2005 and the National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education 2009, teacher autonomy matters and urges educators to move away from strictly centrally guided lessons to techniques they can decide on. The focus in these policy documents is on teachers as people who think innovatively and guide the learning process, rather than those who just obey rules. Maaranen, (2022) stated that teachers are still managed closely by rules and regulations, strict curriculum guidelines, lots of paperwork, and tests, which prevent them from having much choice in their actions. Teachers find it hard to act as professionals, which reduces their motivation, makes them unhappy at work, and alters their sense of identity. Whitchurch, (2018) analyzed that professional space experiences are not the same for all teachers; they change widely due to gender, location, and management of the school. For example, women working as teachers in rural government schools could encounter additional challenges because of existing gender roles, poor infrastructure, or the way schools are managed. So, it is important to address systemic issues so that all teaching professionals can act with independence and confidence.

2.4 Economic Identity: Remuneration and Professional Worth

Bowen *et al.*, (2021) stated that teachers' economic identity and view of their value in the community are strongly shaped by their pay. Besides allowing people to live, fair compensation for nurses is tied to their dignity, their motivation, and their commitment to the profession. There are many cases where teachers in India at the elementary level complain about late payments, low salaries, and missing benefits such as pensions, health insurance, and housing allowances. Skerritt, (2019) examined that many such financial difficulties are seen in rural and remote regions like those in Odisha,

where it is more difficult to make payments on time because of logistical issues and problems in the administration. Due to financial uncertainty, teachers feel vulnerable and discouraged, which lowers their motivation and involvement in their duties. Pennington, (2016) pointed out that under programs like Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), contract and para-teachers often have even greater problems with financial uncertainty and marginalization. They are not treated the same in terms of pay and job security; teachers working under different contracts often feel divided and less connected as one group. Lacking a steady income often challenges the traditional idea of teachers as respected members of society and reduces the respect teachers once had in Indian society.

2.5 Social Recognition and Teacher Status

Zhang, (2023) stated that the importance society gives to education links closely linked to how it sees teaching as a prestigious profession. Teachers are respected in India because their profession is thought to be essential for the progress and building of the nation. In the past few decades, views on economics have changed a lot. Movsessian, (2018) examined that lot of elementary teachers make it clear that they feel less valued and recognized in public and everyday discussions. How much respect their society has for them is being affected by their conditions of work, which include low income, a heavy workload, and not much influence over their work. How school administrators, colleagues, parents, and the wider community treat teachers heavily affects their self-concept. Muhammad, (2022) pointed out that if teachers are not included in decision-making, kept under intense supervision, or tasked with non-teaching roles, they usually feel frustrated and demotivated. Rather, good support, appreciation, and teamwork can raise their confidence and help them identify as part of the profession. The importance given to teachers in society helps determine both how people in America view education and the way teachers see themselves. Reinforcing this valuation is necessary to improve the status of teachers and to remind everyone that they are key in guiding the future of the country.

2.6 Gaps in the Existing Literature

Much research on teachers in India has examined single elements like the job satisfaction they feel, the workload they carry, and insecure finances, mainly by working with numbers and not much else. Even though these studies give useful information on certain issues teachers

encounter, they usually do not reflect how closely related these issues are in teachers' daily lives (Biswal, 2013). There is not much research that looks at how different parts of a person's identity, such as work, money, and status, interact, particularly due to changes in education policies. These attributes are felt together by teachers, shaping their view of their jobs, duties, and position in society. Educational inequalities are even greater in Odisha, a state where different economic and geographic conditions greatly affect access to and quality of education. People who are directly responsible for carrying out new education laws are rarely heard in discussions about academic and policy topics (Surya Pratap, 2019). Even though they help shape change, politicians and lawyers are usually not represented in key discussions.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Social Identity Theory

Social Identity Theory, as proposed by Henri Tajfel and John Turner, explains that the sense of self mainly comes from being part of social groups (Trepte & Loy, 2017). In addition to what they believe, teachers' professional identity is also shaped by how they are viewed by the community, other teachers, and their school system (Toom, 2019). Teachers at elementary schools are usually seen as less important and valued members of the teaching hierarchy. If their work is not respected or if they are excluded from decision-making, it harms both their collective group and their sense of self. Using this theory, researchers analyze how teachers feel included or left out and how these feelings change their willingness to stay engaged. Teachers in rural and poor regions often feel judged by society, which can lower their confidence and views of their self-worth.

3.2 Role Identity Theory

Role Identity theory, in comparison, concentrates on the identities people take on because of the social roles they have (Stets & Burke, 2000). Many teachers in elementary schools act as instructors as well as caregivers, administrators, social workers, and representatives for the community. How they see themselves as a teacher develops from what society expects and from their understanding of being a good educator. When educational policies like the Right to Education (RTE) Act, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), or teacher training from NCFTE 2009 are introduced, additional expectations are added to teachers without

providing the right support. With Role Identity Theory, we learn how teachers' ideas of their role can clash with the expectations others have for them, leading to stress and identity trouble.

3.3 Policy Implementation Theory

Policy Implementation Theory, led by Lipsky's concept of street-level bureaucrats, makes it easy to examine how teachers deal with policies daily. In the view of Lipsky, street-level bureaucrats are those who connect with the public and decide how policies are applied. Frontline educators, like teachers, help carry out and explain new educational reforms from the government (Lipsky, 2010). They frequently act under budget troubles, a lot of rules, and unclear instructions. Lipsky, (2010) shows that the ways policies are understood, adapted, or resisted are greatly influenced by what happens in daily settings. It accepts that implementing policies is not just copying a guide but relying on the judgment and local details of those involved. All these theories help explain the way teachers in Odisha deal with their identities when facing different professional, cultural, and policy challenges. The study uses these theories to help understand in more detail the lives and beliefs of teachers under different educational systems.

4. Research Methodology

The research used qualitative survey method to identify the perceptions of elementary school teachers regarding professional space, employment security, and socio-economic status with regard to the shifting educational policies in Odisha. The qualitative design was selected to obtain deeper information about the lived experiences and personal interpretations of teachers by the way in which the issues of change on national level of the survey policy affect their identity and the practice of everyday. The study population was elementary school teachers in government and private schools in Cuttack district of Odisha. Gender and location of respondents was used as the stratification technique, and in this case urban, semi-urban and rural schools to make up the sample as a way of ensuring diversity and inclusivity. The research involved 60 teachers (30 males and 30 females) as respondents. Participants were identified by purposive and incidental sampling methods in order to find individuals who could describe rich, relevant and varied views. The teachers were chosen due to their accessibility, readiness to be part of the study since they participated in the changing education system of Odisha and their experience in teaching. The interviews

followed a semi-structured interview schedule which contained open-ended questions that aimed at finding out the views of the teachers on autonomy, institutional support, awareness of the policies, remunerations and identity. It was mandatory to record the interviews, with the consent of the participants, to ensure accuracy and permit detailed transcription. Thematic content analysis was used to analyse the data collected. This included coding and classification of themes and patterns that kept emerging during the interviews. Thematic analysis enabled the researcher to not only interpret what the teachers said but also the way they expressed their experiences which gave a deeper understanding of how policy changes affected the teacher identity and well-being.

5. FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

5.1 Introduction

This research project is named Elementary School Teachers Perceptions on Professional Space, Security, and Socio- economic Status in Odisha, which aims at analysing the way the national education policy influences the everyday experience and identities of elementary school teachers in Odisha. In the current social and economic issues facing the state, teachers are crucial in basic education and nation building. In the study, a qualitative survey in which 15 open-ended questions are put to ten elementary teachers will be used to capture their perceptions about their job stability, professional freedom, wages, empowerment and social relevance. The study provides thematic accounts on how centrally developed policies influence, enable, or limit the personal and professional lives of teachers at the grassroots level, studied through their responses within the context of policies such as the National Policy on Education (1986, 2020), Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009 and NCTE regulations.

5.2 Generate Key Themes

Based on respondent opinions and relevant research questions, the following table indicates the themes, along with their subheadings.

Table 2 Key Themes

Theme	Subthemes
Professional Autonomy	Autonomy in pedagogical approach, Autonomy in organizing school events, Lack of institutional teaching

constraints, Freedom in lesson planning, Flexibility in classroom delivery

Policy Awareness & Practice Gap between training and classroom reality, Selective adoption of policy-based practices, Lack of clarity in policy implementation, Superficial understanding of new mandates

Institutional Support & Development Absence of institutional support, Government-provided training exposure, Lack of promotion opportunity, No incentives for extra duties, Inadequate infrastructure support

Remuneration & Job Security Inadequate remuneration, Partial financial security, Regular salary and CPF support, No health benefits or bonus

Teacher Identity & Social Perception Contextual variation in teacher identity, Low societal recognition of primary teachers, Respect in school village only, No presence in urban professional networks

Challenges Limited decision-making at policy level, Lack of promotion opportunities, Inadequate remuneration, Lack of recognition and respect, Poor infrastructure and support, Gap between training and classroom needs, Limited awareness of educational policies

Professional Autonomy: The teachers in Odisha elementary schools stated that they felt quite free to select the mode of teaching and design classroom activities. This independence has created a feeling of responsibility, ownership and job satisfaction. The fact that teachers were not interfered with by the School Management Committees was also appreciated as this gave them freedom to be more creative and independent in their teaching methods.

Policy Awareness and Practice: Educators were not aware of any recent changes in the educational system and they sensed some sort of disconnect between what they had been taught and the reality of classroom practice. Many took the policy of selective implementation as they lacked clarity, support, and orientation. This mismatch undermined trust in reforms and effective realization of the same.

Institutional Support and Development: Institutional support was remarkably absent and teachers were left to find their way through responsibilities with little or no guidance or resources. Training programs offered by the government were generic and inapplicable to the local demands.

Remuneration and Job Security: The majority of teachers indicated that their wages were not enough to cover the increasing cost of living that makes them insecure and discouraged in their profession. There was a lack of merit pay raises, performance pay or benefits which allowed a sense of stagnation. Even though regularisation offered continuity in jobs, there were few growth opportunities.

Teacher Identity & Social Perception: The teachers experienced status on the both local and school levels, but not on the larger society, particularly the urban areas. They thought their occupations were rendered invisible in policy and professional discourses, and this caused low self-esteem as well as the professional identity crisis.

Challenges: and Job Security: Systemic problems included marginalization of teachers in policy development, limited professional advancement, lack of training, financial straining and inadequate basic facilities. All this along with the little recognition in the society created a scene of a hardworking but underpaid workforce that cannot

relate to the vision of the system in terms of education transformation.

6. DISCUSSION

The results of the research on the background of the available literature and theoretical approaches, providing a detailed picture of the understanding of elementary school teachers in Odisha about their professional environment, safety, and socio-economic position in the conditions of changing educational policies. The responses revealed several major themes as well as the complexity and contradictions of what it means to be a teacher in our contemporary educational environment. Among the most notable trends was the high level of professional agency that the teachers experienced when doing classroom work. In line with the international literature on teacher agency, the participants reported that they had the freedom to determine how to plan lessons and implement various teaching practices depending on their individual class settings. This correlates with theory of professional capital by A. Hargreaves in which the education sector considers teacher autonomy to be key in promoting commitment and innovativeness in learning. Teachers had no decision-making authority in higher-level issues such as institutional or policy issues although autonomy at classroom level was highly valued (Somech, 2010). This paradox emphasizes a disjointed feeling of control, when the empowerment is restricted to micro-level actions, but macro-level influence is impossible to access. Many teachers have shown lack of knowledge about current reforms or lack of attachment to new policy initiatives like the NEP 2020 and the RTE Act (Singh, 2023). This is a reaffirmation of the evidence of previous studies that proposed that the top-down policy frameworks usually do not fill the divide between formulation and implementation at the grassroots level. The lack of correspondence between in-service training and realities in the classroom and the lack of systematic orientation and follow-up led teachers to be cautious to adopt change initiated by reforms. This detachment further contributes to the theory of conscientization posed by Freire, which emphasizes the significance of the understanding and critical awareness and dialogue in the transformation of educational practice, which are contributing factors that lack much in the relationship between policy and teachers in this study.

Teachers also gave a dismal picture in terms of institutional support and career development (Grollmann, 2008). They cited training like Diksha and Samarthya, but they are one-size-fit-all training with low contextual relevancy, and thus they are ineffective. Professional development literature indicates the

importance of localized sustained and responsive training, which could not be traced here. The teachers were isolated in their career paths and they had little in terms of support by the school management or education officers. The absence of professional growth opportunities or motivation to work extra left the people demotivated. This observation can be compared to the two-factor theory of Herzberg, in which lack of motivation factors, including recognition, advancement, and achievement, can cause job dissatisfaction (Alshmemri, et al., 2017). Compensation and employment security were of major concern. Teachers would constantly complain that they did not get enough salary that could sustain even their very basic needs, leave alone savings and continued growth in life (Farkas, et al., 2000). Lack of incentive on the basis of performance and the freezing of the pay scales were considered as significant de-motivators. As compared to the symbolic significance attributed to teachers through policy rhetoric, the real-life scenario presented conspicuous mismatch between institutional acknowledgment and reality. This is corroborated by the existing body of literature on teacher devaluation in developing nations, where teachers tend to exist in the margins, both socially and economically. It has also been found that there are ways in which teacher identity is dependent upon policy structures and on local realities. In their immediate school or village communities, a lot of teachers were respected and appreciated. But they felt invisible or constricted in value elsewhere, particularly in the urban or working circles (Zhi, et al., 2025). This duality is representative of a contextual and stratified identity, with the professional value only affirmed in some contexts, and denied in others. This divide can be explained with the help of social identity theory that indicates that status and self-perception are of crucial importance to social comparison and collective recognition. The low visibility of teachers in policy discussions and in the urban discourse of education reform further sidelines the voice of education experts and reduces their professional self-esteem (Miah & Hasan, 2022).

Lastly, the regional characteristics of Odisha were also a factor in shaping perceptions in the form of urban, rural, gender-based, and the type of school (governmental vs. private). Teachers in rural areas tended to face more challenges regarding infrastructure, resources and connectivity whereas urban teachers, albeit having superior facilities, experienced standardization and surveillance. Female teachers especially were burdened more with social pressure and family roles. The results can be represented as a complicated environment where elementary teachers

have to move along the lines of autonomy and restrictedness, reputation and disregard, empowerment and marginalization. Their identities are strongly affected by the overlap of policy frameworks, institutional practices, and realities of daily life, thus it is essential that future reforms find a more comprehensive, context-specific, and teacher-focused strategy.

7. CONCLUSION

The present research aimed at investigating how teachers of elementary schools of Odisha perceive their professional sphere, employment stability, and economic and social well-being, particularly in the context of new educational policies and changes. A qualitative research design employing in-depth interviews with sixty teachers in both government and private schools has provided important data regarding the daily lives and identities of teachers at the grass-roots level of the Indian educational system. It shows how complicated and sometimes conflicting life as an elementary school teacher in a state where social inequality, inhibited infrastructure, and centralization of policymaking are brought together to determine their professional and personal lives. One of the key lessons that the study unveiled is the professional autonomy paradox. Teachers were satisfied on the one hand about the freedom that they have in classroom level decisions especially the flexibility to adjust pedagogy to the needs of students (Ryan & Tilbury, 2013). Teachers did not feel they were truly participating in the changes in the system and this is part of a broader process of marginalization that is still preventing bottom-up reforms in India. They have voices but they are not heard in the planning and assessment of the educational policies, even though their voices are chief in the implementation of the policies.

Teachers often described the lack of proper policy communication, training, and institutional support and became ill-prepared to successfully employ reforms. The mismatch between the professional growth initiatives and the reality of classroom practice marks the necessity of teacher preparation that is more local and context-based. Lack of incentives, career growth prospects, and infrastructural support were often mentioned as the obstacles leading to professional stagnation and emotional burnout (Precessalas&Bauyot, 2025). These results are congruent with larger issues in educational research that point to the necessity of systemic reform to be based on the experience of the practitioners rather than the frameworks of administration. The research article also highlights how teacher identity is a major but underrecognized aspect of education policy-making. Identity, in this case, is not only about perception of

self but is also closely interconnected with the way society, institutions, and policy system see and place teachers. A large number of respondents had an overwhelming sense of purpose and commitment in their schools and their communities, yet they felt unseen or underestimated outside of those environments. This stratified identity of respect that is not absolute in its adherence and socially constrained illustrates the mental cost of laboring in a system that privileges teachers symbolically yet ignores them in material terms. Such knowledge is crucial to develop an improved policy and to regain dignity and sense in the profession.

This study has implications to educational research and policy by bringing to the fore the voices of elementary teachers, which is a group usually poorly represented in academic and policy arenas. It provides a grass-roots view of the experience of national and state-based educational reform as experienced by those charged with its implementation. It also reveals the necessity of policy making that would not only address logistical and infrastructural parameters but would also address emotional, social and professional components of the teaching experience. The study invites more participatory, empathetic and contextual solutions to educational reform. The study supports the belief that teachers are not mere instruments of policy, but are players with much influence on the possibility of successful or unsuccessful educational reforms through their perceptions, identity, and conditions of work. When their voices are heard, their struggles are understood, and their contributions are acknowledged, the policy frameworks can be redesigned and made inclusive, efficient and responsive.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS:

The authors declare no potential conflicts of interests with respect to the research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

FUNDING:

The authors received no financial support for this research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

Acknowledgements

Not applicable

Availability of data and materials

No datasets were generated or analysed during the current study

Declarations

Ethics approval and consent to participate

Not applicable.

Consent for publication

Not applicable.

Competing interests

The authors declare no competing interests.

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DOI : <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17403657>

The Apocalyptic Maneuverability of World Politics (A case study on USA under Trumpian era)

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ABSTRACT

Geopolitics is not like the cherry on the cake, and it is not as easy as having Starbucks coffee in a modern restaurant; world politics is changing more dramatically than we expect. So, geopolitics is making the future more unpredictable, like the “Black Swan Theory,” which is unexpected due to the lack of evidence to decode the future intentions of nation-states. The world had already witnessed one of the geopolitical earthquakes in 1991, which can also be called the most prominent example of the “Black Swan Theory” given by Nassim Nicholas Taleb, a Lebanese-American essayist, mathematical statistician, former options trader, risk analyst, and aphorist. Amidst the geopolitical juggernaut in the early phases of the 21st century, everyone now perceiving the heat of civil wars, invasions, regime change, political turmoil or instabilities, border conflicts, democratic backslidings, the rise of dictators cum authoritarianism, food shortages, water scarcity, deadly pandemics like Covid-19 and Ebola, acute climatic issues and challenges, drastic decreasing fertility rates and so on. The apocalyptic maneuverability of geopolitics reveals the reality of changing global phenomena. This article will elaborate on how foreign policies change due to the decisions made by world leaders. This article will highlight how Trumpism, or the Donald Trump era, molds global order, future implications, reactions and counter-reactions, and spillover effects in the international order. It will cover major countries, their approach to this global order, and how they could survive in a realistic world that primarily believes in statism, survival, and self-help according to Neorealism.

KEYWORDS: *Geopolitics, Nation-States, Juggernaut, Pandemics, Spillover, Organization.*

INTRODUCTION

“No state shall enter into any treaty, alliance, or confederation.. Without the consent of Congress, no state shall enter into any agreement or compact with another state or a foreign power.” This constitutional provision has effectively eliminated treaties between the states and foreign countries and concentrated such authority in the central government. However, agreements or compacts with other states in the United States are another matter. In this day of rapid transportation and interdependence, the states are constantly confronted with problems involving sister states. Many of these issues are comparatively minor and may be adjusted by correspondence or personal conferences between

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Received	Reviewed	Accepted	Published
08-Jan.-2025	26-Mar.-2025	22-May.-2025	01-June-2025

Volume	Issue	June	ISSN
No. 7	No. 1	2025	2583-1852(P), 2584-0878(O)

How to Cite this Article: Pattanayak, Jajnadatta; Prusty, Shishir Kumar. The Apocalyptic Maneuverability of World Politics. THE THIRD VOICE: REALITY AND VISION. 2025. Vol No-7. Issue No-1. June. Pp: 63-68, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17403657>

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DOI:
<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17403657>
Article No - TVRV00088

officials of two states. Ordinarily, only formal agreements and compacts are brought to the attention of Congress, and there has been a tendency to carry only compacts involving several states to Washington for approval.

Many questions arise about strategic autonomy and state sovereignty between the challenges. Trump 2.0 wants to glorify the Monroe Doctrine (The Monroe Doctrine of 1823, a United States foreign policy position that opposes European colonialism in the Western Hemisphere) by pushing others to materialize the MAGA(Make America Great Again). The Whole Americas countries are in the stage of illusion due to the strict policy cum tariff attack. USAID (United States Agency for International Development) recently entered the limelight due to illegal transactions. Nobody knows about the ghost people using this aid, and there is much confusion about how the previous administration used USAID to strengthen the political landscape. In Saudi Arabia, the Ukraine-Russia first round of peace negotiations occurred. Still, it was difficult to get into it due to Mr. Zelensky's immaturity in ending the war.

On the contrary, Russia is now in a very favorable position; three years have passed. More particularly, the year 2014, when the Russian Federation took control of Crimea, created a paradoxical dilemma. On February 24, 2024, the Russian military carried out a special military operation on the soil of Ukraine, detonating a possible threat from the Western-led military organization called NATO. The 2025 presidential election shocked world leaders when Donald Trump rose to power. Trump, a business tycoon and reality TV star with no prior political or military experience, has won twice for non-consecutive terms. Trump's domestic and foreign policy will leave a remarkable footprint on the US administration. His way of understanding and framing political decisions makes him unique and different from other US presidents. His administration era is interesting and important to watch to understand geopolitics in the contemporary period. The US hegemony has somewhat declined in this multipolar world. Still, the USA is the world's largest economy; technological dominance, strong military, and cultural influence play a crucial role in the global platform. A series of global shockwaves are felt due to war, inflation, COVID-19, and food shortages. This article will analyze how Trump's executive decision changes the world order. This article will cover the essential foreign policy, sidelining domestic politics.

AMERICA AND TRUMPISM

The Trump 2.0 version has already caused Volatility in global stock Markets. The investors are currently losing hope after seeing the stock market bleeding. This resulted from President Trump's trade war, particularly

with China, reverberating globally. Trump has initiated a reciprocal tariff with other countries where the USA has large trade deficits. He believes it will boost American manufacturing and create new jobs. In early 2025, President Trump invoked the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) to implement a universal 10% tariff on all imports, effective April 5 (Jennifer Clarke, May 12, 2025). Tit for tat, trade wars, especially against China, Mexico, and Canada, have put barriers to US market access. China has already started to shift a few of its manufacturing industries to Laos and Vietnam, disrupting the supply chain. According to economic experts, this may lead to a rise in the prices of commodities, which may directly affect US citizens. His campaign was fueled by promises to "Make America Great Again," which has generated trust among its citizens. Now, his executive orders are raising various questions about its citizens. What role will the USA play in the coming years, and will the motto to "Make USA Great Again" remain valid?

A REALITY CHECK FOR NATO

Geopolitics is shifting its curve from geopolitics to NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization), which gained momentum again by adding two new members, Finland (2023) and Sweden (2024), respectively. Other anti-Western blocks, such as SCO(Shanghai Cooperation Organization) and BRICS, also expanded. Only a few countries support and contribute to NATO. As a result, Trump's administration signaled that it would withdraw shortly. China and Russia are leading the anti-Western bloc, but another vital player, India, is maintaining equal distances with this organization. But Now Geopolitics is shifting its curve from geopolitical bloc security. In the contemporary era, more alternative power centers have become prisoners of their mistakes and are somehow involved in a possible conflict. Mutual antagonism is rising rapidly in every corner of the globe due to the war-mongering attitude of the emerging powers. In reality, no country wants conflict, but the fear of security dilemma, being attacked, and disrupted global governance puts questions on the state sovereignty and strategic autonomy at large, which paved the way for a fearful world order. If we take the example of the African Continent, now going through civil wars and most of the countries are still ruled by military juntas, This area has become a battleground of so-called major powers, i.e., the USA, China, and Russia. Under the presidency of India, the African Union was included as the 21st member of the G-20. Therefore, some speculations have popped up that it should address the African sentiment by bridging the North-South gaps, but the results seem dissatisfactory. However, there is a question mark: How many of the so-called superpowers

are ready to address the problems of African countries, and where does America stand on this issue?

USA HEGEMONY VS. BRICS'S DE-DOLLARIZATION

The process of de-dollarization started between the members of BRICS countries at the Kazan declaration on the sideline of the 16th BRICS summit. On the other hand, Donald Trump's vows to put a 100% tariff against the challengers of the mighty Dollar put the BRICS currency in checkmate. Over the past few years, it has expanded by adding five new members: Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Two Eurasian leaders, Russia and China, led BRICS as an anti-Western block to counter the Dollar's dominant position. However, there is a lack of consensus among the leaders. Recently, over a couple of days, Trump has used tariffs as a weapon to play the great game of carrot and stick by imposing sanctions on almost every country. China hinted up to more than 245% of tariff while the small islands, like Two tiny, remote Antarctic outposts populated by penguins and seals, are among the obscure places targeted by the Trump administration's new tariffs. Heard and McDonald Islands - a territory that sits 4,000km (2,485 miles) southwest of Australia - are only accessible via a seven-day boat trip from Perth and have not been visited by humans in almost a decade. So here the crux is: whoever is going to challenge Dollar or whoever comes in between America and the Dollar automatically becomes the enemy of America.

AMERICA-IRAN NUCLEAR EMBARGO

Trump's way of dealing with Iran's nuclear program has been marked by a series of sanctions, military threats, and diplomatic overtures, which further escalate to intense tension and complex never-ending negotiations. Trump's executive order in May 2018 to withdraw the US from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) following Iran's missile program. JCPOA, or the Iran Nuclear Deal, is an agreement to limit the Iranian Nuclear program in exchange for relieving sanctions and other provisions. The agreement was finalized in Vienna on July 14, 2015. It was done between Iran and P5 +1 together with the EU. The US, under the Trump administration, directly targeted Iran and North Korea for their active involvement in the Uranium enrichment program. After the US pulled out of JCPOA, It was further hit hard with economic sanctions on Iran. Trump is trying to compel Iran to negotiate a more comprehensive agreement. The US, under the Trump administration, demands a complete halt to Iran's Uranium enrichment program while Iran expresses complete disagreement with it and claims to continue enrichment for peaceful purposes. The people of the USA want to settle these uprising disputes through diplomatic channels over military or strict sanctions.

European nations have tried to mediate and revive the JCPOA framework, but it seems unsuccessful. The US unilateral approach makes the situation more complex to resolve. In Trump's 2.0 era, he has been actively involved in making this deal successful. It will be a challenge for the Trump administration to negotiate peacefully diplomatically. A series of talks has been seen between the heads of these two states. Trump has achieved significant milestones as a business tycoon. Now it is the time to prove himself as one of the most outstanding leaders in US history by making this deal successful.

THE RISE OF THREE 'H' IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Trump already hinted at making Gaza the Riviera of the Middle East. West Asia is acting like a boiling pot due to the power tussle between state and non-state actors. Meanwhile, another front has been opened now for Putin in Syria amid the separatist militia groups that took over the second-largest ancient city known as Aleppo, and Damascus has also fallen into the hands of Ahmed-al-Sharaa. On one front, Russia, Iran, and Syria are fighting with Israel, Turkey, and the USA-backed militias in this region, and they are also providing indirect ground support to the three radical groups. It can also be called the three Hs'-Hezbollah, Hamas, and Houthi. The doomsday clock ticks every second and reminds the world community how much closer to the apocalypse of the world. The Iranian nuclear program gained momentum, and Russia used a middle-range intercontinental strategic non-nuclear warhead with the capacity of MIRV (Multiple Independently Targetable Reentry Vehicles) on Ukrainian soil, again raising the threat of future nuclear catastrophe. The so-called breadbasket of Europe is now on the brink of war, and post Nord Stream Pipeline sabotage halted the cheap gas transportation to the European countries from Russia—Mr—Trump's "Drill, Baby, Drill" campaign.

Last but not least, the move was probably intended as a curtain raiser for President Trump's high-profile state visit to the Kingdom with Al-Saud wishing headlines screaming of blood. Just when you had your surfeit of to be seen as heeding Mr. Trump's call for and gore, come the drumbeats of lower oil prices to help contain US a new conflict. However, in this domestic inflation, despite his higher new one, the belligerents do not swap import tariffs, hurting consumers with bullets but barrels. However, this incipient defense guarantees a nuclear agreement conflict is shaping to be a "mother of all and over \$100 billion in American battles." With more universal weapon sales lined up, the Saudis have more impact than the destruction, with much to gain from the US President's momentum.

IN ASIAN CONTEXT

In the context of Asia, it is now on the brink of democratic decline; a strong democratic country like South Korea recently imposed martial law. Still, it was lifted somehow because of the heavy pressure from the ordinary people and the opposition parties. The Indo-China region always remains in the limelight due to aggressive Chinese moves, such as salami slicing, wolf warrior diplomacy, dept trap policy, etc. On the contrary, recent border settlements between China and India raise the question of Chinese assertiveness towards Tibet, Bhutan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Aksai-China, Xinxiang, Myanmar, Sri-lanka, Pakistan, Hong Kong, Vladivostok, Indo-Pacific or Asia Pacific, South China Sea and Taiwan through expanding its presence by making up artificial islands located in the Spratly, which are made up of islands, islets, submerged reefs, and other maritime features. This area became a zone of turmoil in the 18th century; when the French wanted to dominate the South China Sea, Japan expanded its arm throughout the region with the policy of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere(1940). The Philippines also claimed this region as freedom.

On the other hand, Formosa(Now Taiwan) under Chiang-Kai-Shek came forward with an imaginary 11-dash line, and to counter this, Mao Zedong claimed over the South-China Sea through the nine-dash line. Still, this area became a Zone of turmoil—the Bangladesh government, under the chief advisor of the interim government, Noble laureate Prof. Muhammed Yunus, took fearsome anti-Indian and pro-Chinese steps that raised tension. The Trump administration wants to revisit the security arrangements, especially to strengthen the QUAD. Through the Quad, America, and Trump want to contain the Chinese, whatever serves the interest of those four countries and the rest of the countries sharing their boundaries with this region. The Bangladeshi government is now drifting its stands towards North yards. As a result, India also temporarily suspended the export of ready-made garments to India to counter Bangladesh port restrictions on the export of Indian Yarn via land ports. It seems to be a democratic decline in Bangladesh after the ousting of Sheikh Hasina.

Bangladesh indirectly supports Pakistan and China in the name of national security and strategic autonomy. The demography is sentiment toward Islamic Fundamentalism. According to Hegel, history repeats itself, but Karl Marx added another phrase, saying that history repeats itself, first as tragedy and second as farce. So, between the two countries, it is happening. Look at the incident of Dhanmondi, the residential place of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who sacrificed himself and his family and was assassinated by security personnel; his dream contribution seems to be outdated. The people of Bangladesh are no longer ready to accept and

remember their past glory whatsoever the MuktiBahini, the Indian army, and the Soviet Union did to liberate East Pakistan from the clutches of cruelty by West Pakistan. Now, the interim government has to think about India's contribution repeatedly.

On the other hand, an election is required immediately because the current government is abandoning democratic values and misleading the sentiments of the people. So, an election is a way to bring back a democratically elected leader in Bangladesh to make the region politically stable. Donald Trump's administration maintains a status quo for the Bangladesh row. Some speculation is also rising due to the American interest in Saint Martin's Island, But Bangladesh denied the deal. Somehow, it fuelled up to get Sheikh Hasina out of power. What has been seen in Pakistan-Bangladesh eating food on the same plate. As a result, the Indo-Pak countries and India, by Operation Sindoor as a response to the Pahalgam attack, triggered further nuclear escalation. Finally, Donald Trump intervened and discussed the future implications of the nuclear conflict. So, Both countries showed maturity, and a ceasefire was declared. However, Trump took it as an advantage to showcase his ability to stop war. He was the 1st among all the world leaders to call pm Modi to condemn the Pahalgam terror attack. Half an hour before the ceasefire announcement by Foreign Secretary VikramMishri, Mr. Trump took up his social media accounts (Truth Social) and claimed credit for a US-brokered ceasefire.

The trump era also showcased the rough face of tacit diplomatic failure between the 2 South Asian countries. India's temporary abeyance of the Indus Water Treaty altered Pakistan's water sovereignty. It has the upper hand in the rivers of the Indus River system. However, according to the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties (1969), scholars are arguing over India's strategic pause. Still, according to this treaty, no country has the exclusive power to expel or suspend unilaterally. On the other side, the Prime Minister of India said, "Water & Blood cannot flow side by side, "which symbolizes that Indo-Pak relations still move through the status quo principle. Operations carried out by both countries (Operation Sindoor by India and Operation. It seems to be Pakistan's nuclear blackmail somehow countered by India with the just quotation, "Terror and talks cannot go together; terror and trade cannot go together; water and blood cannot flow together."

POLITICS OF DE-HYPHENATION IN THE ARCTIC

Rapid militarization over the Arctic by multiple alternative power centers undermines the Ottawa Declaration of 1996, and some studies reveal that the next battleground will be the Arctic Region. Most

powerful countries are now eying this region mainly for two areas. Firstly, It will help to create and navigate a new transactional cum transport line; secondly, The untapped natural resources like rare earth materials, natural gas, and petroleum. However, it is impossible without the complete melting of the ice glaciers. Somehow, we are witnessing severe climatic maneuverability due to climate change; at the same time, climate change and its spillover effect upon the Arctic may create many opportunities for greedy countries. As we have seen, the geopolitical race is going on between countries to legalize their respective claims to grasp some of the untapped resources, e.g., America wants to buy Greenland from Denmark to have full access to the glaciers.

On the other hand, Russians are on the way to breaking the iceberg by using the giant icebreaker. The COP-29 was hosted by one of the Global South countries. Still, the Baku declaration became half a success because the Western countries agreed to provide \$300 MN for climate mitigation, which is likely the tip of the iceberg. Countries must address how to protect Mother Earth by the principle of "National Interest with International Responsibility." The Prime Minister of India has rightly said that "this is not the era of war," which elucidates that the time has come to show sensitivity and maturity and improve understanding of "Just Peace."

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AT THE CENTER OF THE WORLD SYSTEM

The nation revolves around the United States, just as the planet orbits the sun. The gravitational force keeps the Earth in its orbit. The United States uses its economic and political power to make the nation evolve around it. Being the sole power for a decade after the USSR disintegration, with the rise of multipolar and regional powers, the United States still manages the central position around which global politics continues to rotate. In the 21st century, the United States continues to play a multidimensional and influential role worldwide, navigating a complex landscape of economic, political, and security challenges. It is clearly visible observing the Trump foreign policy that he aimed at repositioning the United States at the center of global political and economic system. Trump vision were based on a transactional, interest based approach. His approach has already challenged the global status quo.

RISE AND FALL OF TALIBAN IN AFGHANISTAN

The rise of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan was caused by the USA's failure, which demonstrates once again that the term 'graveyard of empire' has been properly attributed. From 2001 to 2021, the USA was involved for almost two decades, responding to the 26/11 attack

and the increasingly close ties between the Taliban and al-Qaeda.

The USA launched Operation Enduring Freedom in October 2001 to combat terrorist activity sponsored by al-Qaeda and the Taliban. In the beginning, it was easy for the US forces to oust the Taliban regime with the help of the Northern Alliance. Still, after nearly 20 years of struggle, the USA decided to quit and withdraw its military forces. The USA remains a major humanitarian donor to Afghanistan's history, but with the rise of the Taliban resurgence, the USA has cut its financial support. The future of Afghanistan in the hands of the Taliban is a debatable topic. Still, the US, somehow other than the other due to its miscalculation and haphazard withdrawal policy, led the Taliban to rise in a matter of time. Now it is more important to analyze and observe Trump policy towards Afghanistan under Taliban regime. Trump positive outlook towards Taliban by stating them as 'tough' but 'businesslike' negotiators. He further gave the Taliban international recognition by negotiating directly without the Afghan government. But interesting things never going to stop in international relations. Recently President Donald Trump's travel ban on Afghans raises question on future relation between the two nation. The top Taliban leader slams Trump's travel ban on Afghans and calls the US an 'oppressor'. The USA has a lot of interest towards the Afghanistan from time immoral. It will be quite interesting to watch the future episode between the two nation under Trump's administration.

FUTURE SPECULATION OF AXIS OF EVIL'S

Iraq, an oil-rich country, was attacked by the USA and its allies due to its possession of weapons of mass destruction. The Bush administration took a significant step in 2003 to topple Saddam Hussein's regime and establish a democratic government in Iraq. After the invasion, no weapons of mass destruction were found in Iraq. All the assumptions made by the US were baseless. It further led to the rise of sectarian violence and the emergence of ISIS. The USA categorized Iraq, Iran, and North Korea as the axis of evil, fueling the narrative of a global threat. The timing of the US's attack on Iran and North Korea is unknown, as they are also on its radar. Was the Iraq War justified?

Is it possible to predict what will happen with any other nation that the US considers a global threat in this changing geopolitical scenario? Understanding the system, historical trends, and changing patterns within the geopolitical landscape has become crucial for analyzing and predicting global events. It is going to be interesting to see how other nations, especially Iran and North Korea, retaliate against the USA's foreign policy. The North Korean leader Kim Jong-un is well prepared

and aware of the United States' intentions, particularly regarding its security concerns and nuclear program. The United States has already imposed a lot of economic sanctions on North Korea for developing its nuclear capabilities. The current situation in North Korea is quite pathetic to observe due to the adverse effects of economic sanctions. Further, US military deployments, such as the basing of Reaper drones in Japan and the frequency of B-52 bomber flights near the Korean peninsula, are increasing the complex relationship between the two nations. The current Trump administration is willing to pursue better diplomatic and healthy negotiations with Iran but ended with no permanent deal mediated by Oman. The ongoing Israel-Iran conflict is adding ghee to the fire, further inflaming US-Iran tensions and pushing the region closer to all-out war.

CONCLUSION

However, the apocalyptic nature of this maneuverability also highlighted risks. The erosion of trust in institutions, heightened polarization, and the unpredictability of policy shifts strained global cooperation on existential issues like climate change and pandemics. The Trumpian era exposed the limits of flexibility in a hyper-connected world, where rapid maneuvers could destabilize as much as they innovate.

In conclusion, the Trumpian era serves as a case study in the dynamic interplay of chaos and adaptation in world politics. It revealed global systems' resilience and vulnerabilities, demonstrating how a single actor can catalyze profound shifts. As the world moves forward, the lessons of this period—about the power of disruption, the importance of adaptability, and the need for robust multilateral frameworks—will remain critical in navigating an increasingly complex and maneuverable geopolitical landscape.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS:

The authors declare no potential conflicts of interests with respect to the research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

FUNDING:

The authors received no financial support for this research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

Acknowledgements

Not applicable

Availability of data and materials

No datasets were generated or analysed during the current study

Declarations

Ethics approval and consent to participate

Not applicable.

Consent for publication

Not applicable.

Competing interests

The authors declare no competing interests.

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UNDERSTANDING MENSTRUAL STIGMAS IN TRIBAL SOCIETY OF ODISHA: The Politics of Purity and Pollution

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ABSTRACT

Menstruation, an essential natural and physiological process, continues to be downplayed and pushed into the private realm. Throughout history, curiosity concerning menstruation has led to multiple taboos and stigmas, widely considering it to be polluted and evil. The constant expectations from family and society to put the topic under the carpet and normalize hiding issues surrounding menstruation are extremely problematic.

Menstruation being a universal experience for all women, the stigma attached to it depends upon location, culture, religion and family background. Tribal society despite being viewed as a less patriarchal culture, hold serious taboos and stigmas that exclude women from engaging in social, cultural, and religious activities. Even though women are regarded as an asset in tribal societies, that doesn't help them escape the monthly taboos and isolation. The study aims to shed light on the widespread centuries-old stigmas and taboos around menstruation among Odisha's tribal population. The chapter reviewed various literatures on menstrual taboos and stigmas to gain a thorough understanding of the severity of the taboos and stigmas in multiple societies and communities and subsequently enquire into the notions on menstruations in the indigenous culture in Odisha.

KEY WORDS : Menstruation, Tribal women, Taboos, Stigmas

I. INTRODUCTION

Menstruation, an essential natural and biological process, has long been downplayed and pushed into the private realm. It is often considered a taboo and not meant to be spoken of in public. Various euphemisms are attached to it such as "aunt flow," "time of the month," and "on the rag", reflecting the stigma and taboo associated with it (Newton, 2016). Menstruation is a universal experience for all women, although the stigma attached to it depends on location, culture, and religion. For instance, in Bangladesh, it is prohibited to consume fruits during menstruation, whereas in Nepal, home tasks and religious rituals are not permitted. The stigma of purity and pollution remains ingrained in Indian society also. The diversity within Indian society such as region, religion, caste, class, tribes and ethnicity etc further

complicates beliefs and cultural practices around menstruation. Certain countries forbid menstruating girls

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Received	Reviewed	Accepted	Published
07-Jan.-2025	09-Mar.-2025	22-May.-2025	01-June-2025

Volume	Issue	June	ISSN
No. 7	No. 1	2025	2583-1852(P), 2584-0878(O)

How to Cite this Article: Mohanty, Rupali Rupajita. UNDERSTANDING MENSTRUAL STIGMAS IN TRIBAL SOCIETY OF ODISHA: The Politics of Purity and Pollution. THE THIRD VOICE: REALITY AND VISION. 2025. Vol No-7. Issue No-1. June. Pp:69-76, DOI : <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17403695>

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DOI:
<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17403695>
Article No - TVRV00089

from attending school as they believe a school to be a holy area. Women in Nepal are not allowed to enter or touch their homes during menstruation, thus they live in a separate shelter known as Chhaugoth or Chhaupadi. They are also not permitted to touch male members, newborns, pregnant women, or holy persons, and they are not allowed to engage in sexual intercourse (Mishra, 2023). As noted by (Johnston-Robledo and Chrisler, 2020), some people find menstrual blood to be more repulsive or undesirable than other biological fluids like breastmilk and sperm (as cited in Bramwell 2001; Goldenberg and Roberts 2004). As a crucial area of analysis, the notions around menstruation need contextual and critical examination.

In certain cultures women are considered to be unclean during their menstrual cycles and require them to take a ritual wash before engaging in sexual activity (as cited in Cicurel, 2000; Goldenberg and Roberts, 2004). Cultural ideas that the menstrual cycle induces physical or mental disorders can stigmatize women as unwell, disabled unfeminine, or even mad (as cited in Chrisler 2008; Chrisler and Caplan 2002). A pilot study in West Bengal, suggest that in India Menstrual behaviors are determined by two significant factors. The principal obstacles to managing menstruation are societal pressures to keep it private, as well as a lack of accessible facilities for young girls and women. These conventional cultural norms and behaviors encourage negative impressions of the female body, perpetuating patriarchal subjugation of women and girls (Karki and Espinosa, 2018). The existing notions persist because of lack of knowledge and awareness around menstruation.

Goffman identified three types of stigma: abomination of the body, blemish, and social sign (Goffman, 1963; Johnston-Robledo & Chrisler, 2020). Abomination of the body refers to bodily defects such as bleeding; blemish refers to “blemishes on one’s character,” and social markings refer to (discriminated) group identification. Johnston-Robledo and Chrisler (2020) utilize Goffman’s stigma categories to define menstrual stigma as a negative impression of menstruation and persons who menstruate. They consider it a concealed stigma because revealing it could result in shame.

The constant requirement of women to keep their menstrual experiences concealed from society at large is rooted in cultural standards that see it as shameful or dirty. This phenomenon is what Houppert refers to as the “culture of concealment”. The culture of concealment creates a “menstrual mandate” when menstruation is expected to remain secret and invisible. The mandate guides behaviour. The regulation calls for meticulous menstrual stain control and inventive product

concealment before, during, and after usage. It also restricts mention of specific times, except in certain companies and under specified situations (Bobel, 2019). The notion goes to an extent that it remains a “girl thing” that needs to be hidden from generic conversation.

1. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Traditional customs of restricting everyday activities during menstruation, influenced by society, religion, and culture, might impact women’s health and well-being positively, neutrally, or negatively (Garg, et al, 2021). Newton offers a historical framing of menstruation in which the concern towards women’s health frequently corresponds with concepts such as inadequacy and weakness, sustaining the culture of patriarchy. Ancient medical thinkers considered menstruation’s potential significance in reproduction. The Hippocratic School considered menstruation to be crucial for the process of reproduction, and any irregularity was supposed to cause numerous health issues in women.

Greek philosophers, such as Aristotle, claim that menstruation blood lacks the vitality of male sperm owing to women’s weaker souls. Menstruation, he believed, was both an essential aspect as well as a sign of the inferiority of women. These early works of literature defined ‘women’ from a male standpoint and characterized women as ‘what man is not’. In Pliny’s work menstrual blood is presented a hazard to both men and their inventions, leading to crop failure and loss of shine in man-made materials. Thus, women have a natural ability to cause damage using their biology, and if left to their own devices, they represented a threat. In contrast, if women were regulated, their strength might be used to heal ailments and be productive in agriculture. The Romans derived a similar notion to that of pliny, connecting menstruation with agricultural productivity. Although menstruation was still regarded as an essential aspect of women’s health in the early modern period, medical theories diverged, one viewpoint looking at menstruation as a means of purifying the women’s body and the other as the elimination of excessive blood produced by the women’s body. These explanations reflected the beliefs of the Hippocratic School of thinking; however they were rapidly challenged owing to medical discoveries made possible by William Harvey, Marcello Malpighi, Regnier de Graaf, Johann Ham, and others. But these developments happened alongside with the stigmas.

Throughout the 19th century, it was still widely held that menstruation was essential for women’s health and that if it didn’t happen, the retained blood might cause health issues. It was commonly believed that bathing, hair washing, and paddling should be avoided during

menstruation. In the late nineteenth century, medical attitudes concerning menstruation grew more politicized. Menstruation became a topic in the battle for women's independence, and research gained political significance. For instance, in 1883, Henry Maudsley said that young women were unsuitable for higher study due to their menstrual cycles. However, with the outbreak of World War I, women began to perform previously male-dominated tasks, demonstrating their abilities. In the 20th century, anthropologists started examining menstruation and its accompanying cultural rites and taboos. It was at this time that Frazer, Mary Douglas, Marilyn Strathern and Delaney, and Shuttle critically engaged with the theme of menstruation. Hence, this period witnessed resistance to the prior patriarchal interpretation of menstruation, which was often employed to silence women.

Apart from the Western approach to menstruation, which was mainly driven by patriarchal thoughts, non-western approaches diverged in their attitudes toward menstruation; for instance, Samoan girls viewed menstruation positively due to their cultural attitude and family dynamics. The Airo-Pai of Amazonian Peru practice menstruation seclusion, which interrupts routine and alters gender roles within the group. During menstruation, women must remain in a corner of their home, surrounded by banana leaves, while their husband undertakes chores at home. Menstruation is not associated with shame, and the health of menstrual women is a public priority. Other ladies and children approach her to ensure she doesn't feel left out. Men are believed to experience headaches and be unwell if they come into touch with a menstruating woman. The Beng people of Ivory Coast observe various monthly taboos to safeguard women from the pollution (e.g., staying away from corpses), rather than framing them as pollutant. Food produced by menstruating women is honored.

Johnston goes on to say that menstruation has always piqued people's interest since it was thought to be mystical and poisonous. Buckley and Gottlieb (1988) believe that this view emerges from an absence of understanding of the phenomenon. Men may have been terrified of menstrual blood due to their lack of familiarity with it. They may have been concerned about potential bodily harm or contamination from the female body. Thus, menstruation may have appeared dangerous (as cited in Buckley and Gottlieb, 1988).

Menstrual stigmas can negatively impact women's health, sexuality, well-being, and social position (Johnston-Robledo and Chrisler, 2020). Self-consciousness and hyper vigilance are among the most

often reported findings in the literature. Women are typically anxious about disclosing their menstruation status and exhibit self-policing habits such as wearing baggy clothes and preferring tampons over pads. They avoided swimming and sexual activities while menstruating. Secondly, the persistent internalization of a critical "male gaze" is societal that exacerbates menstrual shame and can cause both physical and psychological distress. Thirdly, menstrual stigma might lead to abstaining from intimate sexual connections during menstruation (Garg and Anand, 2015; Johnston-Robledo and Chrisler, 2020).

Girls transitioning into womanhood often experience embarrassment, shame, and low self-esteem, which can impact their school attendance, academic performance, and social interactions. Additionally, they may be confined to segregated spaces during menstruation (Karki and Espinosa, 2018). Women are expected to keep their menstrual cycles private. They have to follow the norms, such as avoiding discussing menstruation with anybody except their mother, doctor, and few close girl friends. They may discuss their periods with a long-term male partner, depending on his feelings about it (Young, 2005). Sometimes, stigmas surrounding menstruation even make it challenging for women to express their concerns with healthcare practitioners (Miller, et.al, 2023). The isolation of women as a result such stigma exacerbate their physical and mental health. Furthermore, women and girls often see and internalize that the menstrual discomfort is a normal part of the process and avoid discussing or meditating on it (Menstrual Hygiene Management - A Pilot study, West Bengal, India, 2008).

Menstrual stains should not be visible on the floor, towels, bedding, or chairs. And this need for concealment can cause stress and challenges for women, making the monthly experience a source of frustration (Young, 2005). The societal standard demands menstruating women to align with the normality, reinforcing the notion that a normal body is one that does not bleed. And this sense of normalcy forces the women into what Young refers to as a "menstrual closet," in which their acceptance is conditional on having the ability to completely cover up the signs of their menstruation (Ibid.).

The study of 1100 adolescent females in Delhi found that nearly two out of every three participants followed social and work-related constraints while on menstruation. The participants' most prevalent constraints were connected to practices of religion, domestic chores, and personal hygiene. And 60% of them admitted to not attending class when menstruating (Garg, et al).

2.1 Menstrual Taboos and Stigmas in Indian Scenario-

Most of the girls when they first get menstruation they are passed on with the ‘message of impurity’. She is indoctrinated to consider herself unclean during menstruation. The girl’s movement and engagement with boys are restricted; she is forbidden from playing with boys her age group and is instructed not to run, leap, or move freely. She is not permitted to go anywhere alone. During this time, girls are instructed to prioritize ‘family honour’ and avoid contact with males, including family members (Menstrual Hygiene Management - A Pilot study, West Bengal, India, 2008). With such stereotypes and stigma women are restricted to the realm of home which affects their liberty in aspects of life. Indian society, at large, is not exception to harboring stigma around menstruation. Irrespective of caste, class, tribe, region or religion, there are various notions attached to menstruation. A critical examination of such identities and their social conducts vis-à-vis menstruation would be helpful to enlighten.

Menstruating women are not allowed to prepare food, handle pickle, curd, or spice containers, use cooking equipment, or enter the kitchen or puja room (a holy space for idol worship). In agricultural employment, she is instructed not to touch crops since they would perish (Sukumar, 2020). Participation in religious events includes marriages, rice eating ceremonies (annaprasan), thread ceremonies, women’s rites during marriage ceremonies (stree achaar), and funerals and death ceremonies. Domestic prohibitions applies on touching cooking utensils, drinking water pitchers, consuming sour food and entering cow stalls (Menstrual Hygiene Management - A Pilot study, West Bengal, India, 2008). Menstruation can be particularly painful for women working in agricultural fields with fixed hours, as well as those performing household tasks that require hard labour and long walks, such as water collection and open defecation (Ibid, 2008).

Even within what is thought of as a single religion, there are different perspectives on menstruation. Menstruating women are considered ‘low-caste’ in Manu Smriti and are identified as someone to avoid (Cohen, 2020). The menstruating women are not allowed to participate in daily activities. She must be “purified” before she can resume her family and daily responsibilities (Garg and Anand, 2015). Brahmin males are not allowed to share a bed or have intercourse, eat or converse with them. And by following these codes would lead to man’s wisdom and longevity. The vedic tale reaffirms and reinforces the rigidity of tying the idea of impurity to menstruation. The deity Indra commits Brahmanicide by slaying Vicvarupa, a demon-like Brahmin. In order to

cleanse himself of this “sin,” Indra asks the land, trees, and women to each bear one-third of his guilt; they all do and receive a boon (reward) in return. When the women take on Indra’s shame, “it became (a woman) with stained garments which is why, to converse, sit or eat the food prepared with a menstruating women is considered bad, for she keeps emitting the colour of guilt (Chawla, 1992; Cohen, 2020).

In contrast to the Brahminical justification of menstrual taboos, the non-Brahminical approach, such as the Sangam literature, celebrates it as a divine energy connected to Shakti, and taboos must be followed in order to harness and safeguard this energy. (Cohen, 2020). Tantric rites, originated in tribal and peasant cultures, sometimes included presenting of menstrual blood to the goddess. In Assam, cultural practices involve menstrual goddesses (Kamakhya temple ceremonies), while in Odisha, festivals such as Raja are held, which correlate with beliefs in mother earth’s cycle, wherein menstruation signifies rest, fertility, and rejuvenation (Chawla, 1992).

Menstrual experience in India varies depending on social caste, class, and tribe. The social position of the women shapes the taboos that surround them. Despite viewing menstruation as a symbol of pollution, higher caste women celebrate their first period with puberty ceremonies, often referred to as “coming of age” or “becoming a big girl,” in order to announce to the society that a girl is available for marriage. On the contrary, Dalit women who are engaged in labour intensive roles are hardly concerned about menstruation taboos (Sukumar, 2020).

Menstrual taboos perpetuate caste and patriarchal structures, favouring males from the touchable castes. Menstrual taboos, which label women as filthy and polluting during their periods, reinforce the perception that women are inferior. This monthly shaming of women’s bodies as unclean and inferior issues has enabled males to dominate and control women and their sexuality. Cultural traditions like as menstruation seclusion, ceremonial fasting, and covering one’s head and face in the company of males place a heavy duty on women to defend the superiority and purity of the male caste (Sukumar, 2020).

One of the most significant disparities observed among Indian women in rural areas is their lack of knowledge about menstruation and the proper hygienic practices that women should follow each month throughout their periods. No one is prepared to discuss it freely since it is such a taboo subject. This implies that women lack the knowledge necessary to make decisions that will benefit their well-being. The hazards that young girls

and women confront each month are made worse by the culture of shame and silence around this fundamental issue (Goonj, 2019) . (Kumar and Srivastava, 2011) Menstrual behaviours are influenced by various factors like family's religion, education and economic background. Girls from privileged backgrounds acknowledged using sanitary napkins; however those from urban slums do not due to financial constraints. Additionally, they reported having limited access to private restrooms. Girls with higher education levels are more aware of appropriate menstrual hygiene practices. In this regard, parental education, particularly that of women, is extremely important. Hindu females limit their religious behaviours during menstruation, whereas Muslim girls refrain from touching holy literature, reading "Namaz," or visiting shrines. Sarna tribe females do not visit the "Sarnasthal (Worship site of Sarna people)" during menstruation (cited from Engineer (1987) and Fischer (1978). However, Christian girls can worship and attend church during menstruation, including touching and reading the holy Bible.

2. MENSTRUAL TABOOS IN TRIBAL SOCIETY OF ODISHA –

Society is a manifestation of human imagination that ensures the safety, security and sustenance of human beings. The existence of society is complex as it consists of innumerable complex interactions of beliefs traditions and customs that humans make for their convenience and well-being. The age-old tribal or indigenous populations are the ones who have been very specific and religious about their traditions and their uniqueness lies in preserving such traditions for time immemorial. They have their tales and stories about the origin and development of the world in vis-a-vis their community at the center. In the course of its development, society tends to progress in multiple ways and at the same time it tends to adhere to certain behavioral patterns in the form of tradition and culture that are obsolete. The stigma and stereotypes are widespread in every society and permeate to crucial aspects of individual life. Since tribal groupings are mostly concentrated the stereotypes, stigma and taboos are rooted in their communal psyche.

Many indigenous women in Balosore, Odisha, believe that menstruation is a private matter that should not be discussed publicly. Most tribal menstruation girls endure several restrictions on attending or participating in religious ceremonies and activities, which are enforced by their families, notably their mothers. Many indigenous girls in the research regions think that burning used menstruation cloths or pads may cause belly burning in their later years (Mahapatra, 2022). Women, particularly pregnant and menstrual women,

are forbidden from participating in a sacrifice event. These prohibitions appear to have a twofold purpose: On the one hand, because the food is hazardous as woman is considered to be a weaker vessel and child bearers and must be safeguarded from it as eating such food may make them unwell. On the other side, the food is sacred and must be kept clean, as women are seen to be more impure than males due to the contamination that comes with menstruation. If unclean people ate ceremonially hunted animals, the community's hunting efforts would fail (Luzzi, 1975).

Every year, the Kui tribe in Kandhamal, celebrates "Raja Praba," a four-day celebration that honours menstruation and women. Girls play on swings suspended from trees as a variety of indoor and outdoor games celebrate the celebrations. When on their period, the Kui tribe follows similar taboos to that of other tribes, such as skipping church and staying out of the kitchen. However, washing garments with wooden ash is a unique taboo followed by the community. Women's financial limitations and feelings of shame and secrecy around menstruation cause them to engage in unsanitary menstrual cloth practices, endangering their reproductive well-being (Goonj, 2019). Due to taboos, shame, and secrecy surrounding the topic of menstruation, tribal girls are prevented from seeking guidance from their parents and school on appropriate MHM (Menstrual Hygiene Management) practices. Tribal females in Odisha do not follow proper menstruation hygiene. Most of them cannot use sanitary napkins because of financial constraints, accessibility issues, and a lack of knowledge. Menstrual problems are another common occurrence for them. As they get from the school, girls use both sanitary napkins and clothing (Jena et al, 2022). There are significant cultural limitations on Ho tribe of Mayurbhanj during menstruation, including bans on certain foods, social events, cooking, and religious activities (Rout and Jena, 2024).

Women have been the subject of sociocultural stigma for quite a long time. (Ramesh, 2020) examined the stigma around menstruation among rural and tribal communities of multiple states such as Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, and Orissa. Women on menstruation are forbidden to make contact with food or elders or visit places of worship or kitchens. According to one research, the religious notion that women are dirty or "impure" when they menstruate, is the root cause of these restricted customs. Some of the popular myths on menstruating women area) the female body while on period may generate rays that can infect goods if she comes into contact with them, b) a woman on her period would cause a cow to become infertile if she touches it, c) the pickles will decay sooner if she touches a jar of pickles.

Some of the primary health issues that are prominent among the diverse tribes in India are TB, dysentery, diabetes, jaundice, menstruation disorders, snakebite, skin illness, diarrhea, anemia, discomfort, backache, toothache, body ache, and headache (Singh, et al, 2022). It is needless to say due to lack of proper information and awareness women suffer severely. The menstrual education appears to be essential to deal with such taboo.

3.1 Menstrual Taboos and Particular Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)

The Particular Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs), while being indigenous, are among the most marginalized populations, living in isolated areas of the country (Thamminainaa, et al, 2020). Reaching out to indigenous communities in remote areas is challenging due to their geographical isolation. They still have profound convictions and taboos about menstruation. Understanding menstruation hygiene and health is crucial for indigenous communities. Sanitary menstrual hygiene habits seem exceedingly uncommon among Indian tribal women (Mittal, et al, 2023). The absence of menstrual hygiene amongst rural populations is concerning. Unclean rags and old garments can lead to Reproductive Tract Infections (RTIs), such as urinary, vaginal, and perineal infections. Serious infections often go untreated, which can lead to toxic shock syndrome and even death (Health Status of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) of Odisha, India).

Kharia women are often excluded from religious celebrations and rituals, such as menstrual segregation, due to a tribal belief that menstruation attracts evil spirits, rather than a perceived inferior rank of the women. Gond culture prohibits touching menstruation women since it is believed to ruin the harvest. Women washing their menstrual linen directly in stream water are one of the leading causes of water pollution, resulting in the spread of water-borne illnesses (Study on Traditional Medicinal Healing Practices among Selected Scheduled Tribe Communities in Odisha). According to popular myths in the Kondh culture, there were no restrictions forbidding people from accepting food or tobacco from menstruation women, previously. However, this enraged the Dharani Penu (the community's supreme god), who subsequently communicated to the shaman in a dream that consuming food touched by a menstrual woman is one of the causes of crop failure (Elwin, 1954).

In the Kondh tribe of Rayagada, menstruating women are required to stay in an isolated location and refrain from touching or performing domestic tasks. Tribal culture is often less patriarchal than mainstream Hindu culture. However, it is uncertain if these traditions were indigenous Kondh customs or influenced by Hindu

culture during the 'mainstreaming' process (MATERNAL HEALTH IN TRIBAL COMMUNITIES: A Qualitative Enquiry into Local Practices and Interactions with the Health System in Rayagada District, Odisha, 2015). In Dongria Kondh, adolescent girls adhere tightly to the taboos. Although, the sanitary napkins are becoming more popular among this demographic, some girls still use conventional ways for menstruation, such as using old cloths as absorbents and unsanitary activities. The use of sanitary napkins is not very much prevalent in marginalized group in India. Furthermore, it is an uncommon habit among rural and indigenous women. Unsanitary living conditions at the time might lead to multiple diseases (Das and Gautam, 2022). The Dongria Kondh tribe believes menstruation as dirty and impure. The women conform to all taboos carefully. Some of the taboos include: a) refraining from entering the home during menstruation (Akupeda) and b) sleeping on the rear porch (Akadiki) of the house. c) They were not permitted to visit the front side (Rachapada) of the home and the middle of the hamlet, where the local gods (Kudi) are located. d) After the seven-day impure phase (Dakadigi) of menstruation ends, women must clean their sleeping and sitting areas using cow dung paste (Dapi) and take a bath (Das and Gautam, 2022). (Mudi, et al, 2023) finds the restrictions on menstruation among Juang women. Their study reveals that approximately 85% of women were barred from engaging in activities related to religion. Some women believe that visiting holy locations during menstruation invites a wrath from God due to their perceived impurity. 75% of the participants avoid particular foods, while 94% avoid social gatherings as they perceive attending social events would upset the Gods. 18% of women reported taking a bath just after their menstruation. Furthermore, touching family members and strangers during menstruation is seen as bad, as the woman may spread impurities.

3. CONCLUSION-

Menstruation is a universal experience for all women, although the socio-cultural narratives changes according to the location, culture, and religion. However, there are certain taboos that are found common throughout the country such as prohibition from entering kitchen, places of worship, food and crops, avoiding contact with males and so on. The anxiety around menstruation stems mostly from a firmly held belief in mysticism. Menstruation has long been seen as impure, polluted, and evil and it must be avoided in spaces believed to be pure and sacred, such as religious and holy sites. The traditional cultural lenses that symbolized menstruation as both magical as well as poisonous remain prevalent in today's Indian socio-cultural fabric. Although tribal women are largely equal to the males of their tribe, the

shame and taboo surrounding menstruation puts the women into a stereotypical role. Even while the above literature suggests that some tribal communities in Odisha adhere to taboos and beliefs similar to the mainstream, often blurring the distinctions between taboo practices in mainstream culture and indigenous societies, there are some practices that are typical to the tribal communities such as a) Dongria Kondh refraining from entering the home during menstruation and purifying their sleeping and sitting spaces with cow dung paste following the seven-day impure phase. b) Kui women, washing garments with wooden ash and so on. The above studies shows that the taboo and practices around menstruation are being followed religiously as there is sense of fear and apprehension of bad luck and disaster to the family and community. The blind acceptance of taboos and stigma can cause physical and psychological anguish. Tribal groups, particularly PVTGs, are the most vulnerable and require our immediate attention due to their low literacy levels, pre-agricultural level of technology, economic backwardness, and dwindling or static populations. The PVTGs' geographical isolation further pushes them to the corner. Since they lack literacy, awareness and resources they are more likely to strictly follow societal norms than others.

Stigmas and taboos exist in every community and require serious engagement. The taboos surrounding menstruation severely limit women's individuality and freedom to participate in community life. Since, women account for half of the population and that we have lately concentrated on women's engagement in sociopolitical life, we must critically deal with the stigma and taboos associated with menstruation and actively counter the stigma and demystify the taboos and stereotypes. Women of the tribal community participate and contribute in multifaceted aspects of their community life, and they play a substantial part in passing down indigenous knowledge to coming generations. Hence, it becomes essential to carefully examine the well-being of tribal women in general and menstrual health in particular, because women have to endure nearly seven days of rigorous taboos, which may bring about severe psychological and physiological strain.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS:

The author declare no potential conflicts of interests with respect to the research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

FUNDING:

The author received no financial support for this research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

Acknowledgements

Not applicable

Availability of data and materials

No datasets were generated or analysed during the current study

Declarations

Ethics approval and consent to participate

Not applicable.

Consent for publication

Not applicable.

Competing interests

The authors declare no competing interests.

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Archaeological and Historical Insights from Dharmasala: A Study of Ancient and Medieval Settlements

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ABSTRACT

This article presents an archaeological study of the Dharmasala region in Odisha, focusing on its geographical significance, ancient settlements, and material culture spanning from the ancient to early medieval periods. The region's strategic location, with its proximity to major rivers like the Brahmani and Genguti, is explored alongside significant archaeological findings. Key sites such as Kadala (Saroi) hill and Dakshina Shasana reveal a rich history of habitation, as evidenced by surface discoveries of pottery, stone tools, and sculptures. Among the most notable finds is the joint image of Shiva and Parvati, worshipped as the village deity Duarasuni, and numerous artifacts suggesting local iron production and medieval settlement. The study highlights the continuity of human habitation in the area, from ancient times through the medieval period, providing insights into the cultural, religious, and socio-economic practices of the people. The disturbances caused by modern quarrying activities have limited further exploration, but the collected antiquities offer valuable evidence of Dharmasala's historical significance. The article concludes that the region played a crucial role as a settlement area, with its rich material culture reflecting the evolution of both religious practices and daily life across centuries.

KEY WORD: Settlement site Kadala, Saroi Hill, Dakhinsasan Settlement Site, Radhanagar early historic Site.

INTRODUCTION

In ancient times, Jajpur district played a key role in shaping the reconstructed history of the region's social, religious, and political foundations. Archaeological studies conducted across various sites in the district have identified **Dharmasala** as a significant area, rich in archaeological findings. This area, in particular, has contributed greatly to the region's historical narrative. Over time, many important sites in the district have been known by various names. For instance, **Radhanagar**, an ancient historical site, is sometimes referred to as **Tosali**. Excavations conducted in different seasons have uncovered a wealth of archaeological artifacts, shedding light on the area's rich history.

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DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17403720>
Article No - TVRV00090

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Received	Reviewed	Accepted	Published
18-Jan.-2025	15-Mar.-2025	22-May.-2025	01-June-2025

Volume	Issue	June	ISSN
No. 7	No. 1	2025	2583-1852(P), 2584-0878(O)

How to Cite this Article: Rout, Manas Kumar. Archaeological and Historical Insights from Dharmasala: A Study of Ancient and Medieval Settlements. THE THIRD VOICE: REALITY AND VISION. 2025. Vol No-7. Issue No-1. June. Pp:77-80, DOI : <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17403720>

The district is also renowned for its Buddhist heritage. Notable Buddhist sites include **Langudi**, **Deuli**, **Tarapur**, **Kantigadia**, **Neulpur**, and **Kayem Hills**. All these locations contain Buddhist remains, reflecting the area's significance in ancient Buddhist culture.

The district also features several religious sites, such as the **Gokarneswar Temple**, **Narayani Temple** at Deoda, **Syamasundar Temple** at Mirzapur, **Jagannath Temple** at Madhupurgarh, and **Jagannath Temple** at Badabarisahi. Additionally, there are two important fortification sites in the area: **Madhupur Garh** and **Baramagarh**. However, due to a lack of detailed archaeological investigation, much of their historical significance remains unexplored.

Historical texts inform us that **Xuanzang (Huen-Tsang)** visited this region and mentioned a great stupa in his writings, *Si-yu-ki* (Xuanzang's account). This stupa, called **Pu-so-pi-kil**, is considered one of the greatest stupas in the **Odisha Desa** region, and some scholars suggest it may be located in this area. Furthermore, it is believed that the stupas at **Langudi** were constructed under the supervision of the great Mauryan Emperor **Ashoka**.

At Langudi, sculptures depicting kings and queens have been found, but unfortunately, they have been damaged due to human vandalism. This paper aims to reconstruct some of the archaeological findings in and around the **Dharmasala** area, which were personally explored by the author but have not been published previously. These findings are described in detail below.

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

Dharmasala is a separate Tahsil located between 20°30' to 31°10' North Latitude and 85°40' to 85°45' East Longitude. It is situated 65 km away from the state capital, Bhubaneswar. Two national highways pass through this area. The major rivers Brahmani and its tributary Kelua, along with the river Genguti, flow through this region.

Archaeological Findings

Kadala(Saroi) Hill Site

The site is located at Kadala (Saroi) hill, at coordinates 20°43' North Latitude and 86°08' East Longitude. It is situated in the middle part of the hill near Kadala and Saroi villages under the Neulpur RI circle of Dharmasala Tahsil. The site has a sloping terrain and was locally known as "MahisiPadia" (buffalo field). The area, approximately one hectare in size, is covered with pottery fragments, primarily gray ware.

During a visit, plantation and digging activities by the forest department unearthed more pottery pieces. From the site collected several antiquities, including iron nails, iron fragments, beads, and stone materials. The site also features two water distributaries, Jhara and a lake named KadalaHuri, located below the site. A temple named ParavatShenda (mountain bull) and a sacred ShivaLinga were unearthed at the bottom of the site. Unfortunately, local contractors have disturbed the site due to moram quarrying. As the conculed of the material found from the surface it should be early medieval site where a group of people lived for a specific purpose. We can't find any structure as well as the house building evidence from the site.

ANTIQUITIES COLLECTED SURFACE FINDINGS

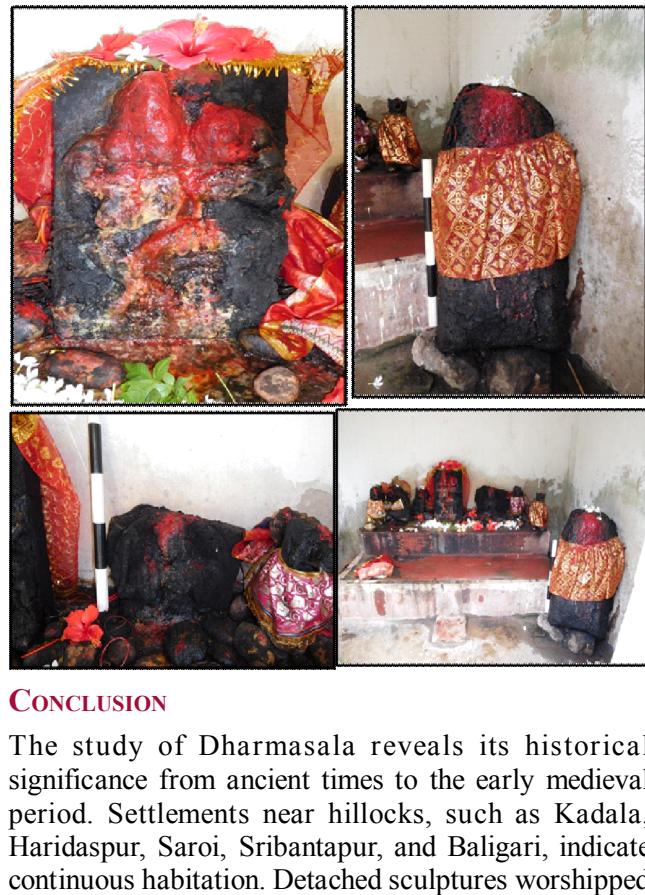
- **Iron Nail:** A 7-inch-long iron nail was found during plantation digging.
- **Hard Stone Container:** A broken and polished stone container, likely used for special purposes.
- **Agate Stone:** A bead-making agate stone with two cutting marks, suggesting its use in bead production. Locally called as *khadipathar*. It has yellow, white and brown color,
- **Polished Stones:** Two polished stones possibly used for grinding.
- **Muller Stone:** A broken part of a muller, likely used for grinding objects like spices.
- **Un identified Stone Materials:** Three unidentified stone materials were found.
- **Bangle Pieces:** Black-color earring fragments were collected.

DETACHED SCULPTURE OF DUARASUNI VILLAGE DEITY

Many villages have local deities worshipped under different names based on local legends and traditions. At Kadala village, the deity worshipped as "Duarasuni" is actually a joint image of Shiva and Parvati. The sculptured depicts Shiva in Lalitasanamudra with his lefthand on Parvati's shoulder. Below the image, Shiva's mount (Nandi) and Parvati's mount (a calf) are present. The deity, carved from a single khondalite stone, measures 41 cm in height, 29 cm in breadth, and 13 cm in thickness. Vermilion smearing obscures Parvati's hands.

OTHER SCULPTURES

- **Mangala (Durga):** A broken sculpture resembling Durga in a killing posture, worshipped as Mangala. It measures 23 cm in height, 33 cm in breadth, and 10 cm in thickness.
- **Un finished Sculpture:** An unfinished stone piece, possibly a column fragment, measures 69 cm in height and 37 cm in breadth. The low-quality stone prevented its completion.
- **Broken Sculpture:** A broken piece, possibly a dancer figure or part of a Navagraha, measures 12 cm in height and 6 cm in breadth.



EARLY MEDIEVAL SETTLEMENT AT DAKSHINA SHASANA

Dakshina Shasana, situated 64 km from Bhubaneswar and 42 km from Cuttack, is another significant site under Dharmasala Tahsil. The site features gray ware pottery fragments scattered around agricultural fields near a medieval Shiva temple. The temple, reconstructed by villagers, stands on the basement of an older structure. Surface exploration revealed several antiquities:

COLLECTED ANTIQUITIES AND POTTERY

- **Polished Stone Muller:** A broken muller piece measuring 5cm in height, 4.4cm in breadth, and 6 cm in diameter.
- **Broken Stone Muller:** An other broken piece measuring 7cm in height, 3.4cm in breadth, and 4 cm in diameter.
- **Circular Stone (Ring Stone):** A circular stone with a diameter of 15cm.
- **Unidentified Material:** An unidentified object of unknown material and purpose.
- **Broken Bangle Piece:** A 3cm fragment of a bangle.
- **Pottery:** Grayware pottery fragments, alongwith a few black-colored pieces, were collected. Rim and base portions of the pottery suggest medieval origins.

CONCLUSION

The study of Dharmasala reveals its historical significance from ancient times to the early medieval period. Settlements near hillocks, such as Kadala, Haridaspur, Saroi, Sribantapur, and Baligari, indicate continuous habitation. Detached sculptures worshipped as village deities, like Duarasuni, are often joint images of Shiva and Parvati. The presence of gray ware pottery and iron fragments suggests local production and usage during the medieval period. However, disturbances like moram quarrying have limited further discoveries. The archaeological vestiges found from Dharmasala area of Jajpur very much rich and a concrete evidences from the early period to early medieval periods. The archaeological source gives much importance to add new pages of ancient history of Odisha as well as to medieval and modern history. The researcher can be analysis the evidence should be create a new history of era in odisha history. The DakshinaShasana site, with its medieval Shiva temple and gray ware pottery, further supports the area's historical continuity. The findings underscore Dharmasala's importance as a settlement area from early historical to modern times.

ENDNOTE

This research is part of an ongoing study aimed at uncovering and preserving the rich archaeological heritage of the Dharmasala region. Despite the challenges posed by modern construction and quarrying activities, the continued discovery of artifacts and monuments underscores the region's importance in understanding the historical and cultural development of Odisha. Future research and conservation efforts are

essential of further explore and protect these invaluable sites, ensuring that the legacy of Dharmasala is preserved for future generations. The collaboration with local communities' institutional, instrumental in advancing our understanding of this region's archaeological significance.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS:

The author declare no potential conflicts of interests with respect to the research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

FUNDING:

The author received no financial support for this research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

Acknowledgements

Not applicable

Availability of data and materials

No datasets were generated or analysed during the current study

Declarations

Ethics approval and consent to participate

Not applicable.

Consent for publication

Not applicable.

Competing interests

The authors declare no competing interests.

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India and Climate change Challenges: Programmes and policies of Modi Government

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ABSTRACT

Now the World is facing two crises. One is International Terrorism and second is Global Warming. With industrialization based on fossil fuels, the emission of CO₂ and other greenhouse gases since the 15th-century scientific revolution has resulted in rising the temperature of the earth, which is known as global warming. This rise in temperature of the earth, or global warming beyond 1.5°C, is a disaster for the eruptive human civilization. As predicted by the scientists, the rise of temperature beyond 1.5°C will be the doomsday for the entire globe. Since the Earth Summit (1992) there have been many climate change summits among the nations, such as the Kyoto Protocol, the Copenhagen Treaty, and very recently the 2015 Paris Summit, followed by many Conference of the Parties (COP) meeting among the nations. All these summits are insisted on reducing the emission of CO₂ as determined by the sovereign nations below 1.5°C and reducing the dependence of nations on the use of fossil fuels. The dilemma before all nations, as before India, is how to reduce emissions of CO₂ by decreasing dependence on fossil fuels and meeting the energy needs of a growing population by seeking alternative sources of energy. The Government of India under Shri Narendra Modi has been trying to meet the challenges of global warming by increasing renewable sources of energy. In this background this paper discusses new Indian climate policy directions and their impact to minimize the negative impact of climate change under Modi's leadership.

KEYWORDS: Climate Change policy, India, Global, Environmental politics, Commitments

INTRODUCTION:

The twenty-first century is neither a century of the United States of America, nor will it be a century of Asia. It is a century which will decide whether human beings will continue to exist in the future or not. To be sure, climate change is the greatest threat to human civilization that has ever existed; failure to adequately address it might lead to the extinction of all humans. Instead of collaborating to address the environmental catastrophe, prominent figures from developing, developed and poor nations are placing blame on each other. From 2007 to 2010, climate diplomacy was the centre of extraordinary public interest.

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DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17403753>
Article No - TVRV00091

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Received	Reviewed	Accepted	Published
11-Jan.-2025	13-Mar.-2025	22-May.-2025	01-June-2025

Volume	Issue	June	ISSN
No. 7	No. 1	2025	2583-1852(P), 2584-0878(O)

How to Cite this Article: Devidasi, Krishna; Dash, Dipak Kumar. India and Climate change Challenges: Programmes and policies of Modi Government. THE THIRD VOICE: REALITY AND VISION. 2025. Vol No-7. Issue No-1. June. Pp: 81-93, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17403753>

When the issue of global warming arises India is among the most susceptible nations. Half of the population works in agriculture or other industries are vulnerable to climate change. Almost three quarters of the population subsists on less than \$2 per day. According to the 2010 United Nations (UN) Human Development Report (HDR 2010), the 26 poorest African nations have it worse than the eight states of India, which are home to 421 million people living in extreme poverty. India's carbon dioxide emissions from fuel combustion alone tripled between 1990 and 2011 and between 2008 and 2035, those emissions are expected to climb by about 2.5 times. It makes the country the World's third greatest producer of greenhouse gases (GHG). (Jogesh: 2011)

Developed nations like the US and other European countries have declined to join a binding agreement to control emissions of greenhouse gases, citing the increasing emissions of emerging nations like India. But developing nations have argued that these nations have carried the burden of reducing emissions for the past and that their emissions are modest relative to the population, hence they are unwilling to commit to legally enforceable reductions. The fact that the three major frameworks for calculating carbon emissions national, per capita, and historical lead to different findings on who is responsible for climate change is one reason why United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) talks have failed to progress.

The environment has emerged as one of the most significant concerns in international politics in the twenty-first century, and the politicization of the environment has emerged as a distinctive characteristic. In the history of world politics, the environment has never been of such great significance as it is now. Consequently, it is of the utmost importance to investigate the way the environment became so prominently integrated into the realm of mainstream international politics that it started to capture the attention of researchers. Nonetheless, sev-

eral researchers have pointed out that India's stance in both local and international forums has begun to evolve in the last few years. To combat energy security and other climate change vulnerabilities, the Prime Minister established a Council on Climate Change in 2007. He ordered eight national missions to do the same. India voluntarily pledged in 2009, just days before the pivotal COP 15 summit in Copenhagen, to reduce the carbon intensity of its GDP from 2005 levels by 20-25% by 2020.

Concerning the specifics and trajectory of these changes, nevertheless, there are those who disagree with the Indian government and non-governmental organizations. These discords were underscored in a leaked private letter that Jairam Ramesh had sent to the Prime Minister. The letter's author, Ramesh, pleaded for domestic mitigation legislation and said that India should tone down its rhetoric on its failure to set emission reduction targets. Environment Minister Ramesh tried to influence India's bargaining position during the Copenhagen climate negotiations, but top Indian delegates, including Prime Minister Shyam Saran's Special Envoy on Climate Change and other negotiators, rejected this approach. Without achieving other Indian objectives, such as securing legally enforceable emission reductions for industrialized countries and funding for adaptation and mitigation efforts in India from industrialized nations, Ramesh has previously suggested the prospect of voluntary pledges. (Jyaaraman: 2009)

Some have claimed that India, the United States, and other BASIC countries are trying to be more flexible by embracing bottom-up pledges rather than the multi-government UNFCCC consensus process for binding emissions reductions (in the "Kyoto style"). This includes the voluntary commitments made by India, China, and the United States prior to COP 15. But this is not enough to keep the global temperature increase below 2 °C.

Some foreign observers viewed India as a "deal breaker" during the 2011 COP 17 summit in Durban because it

refused to adopt a new, legally enforceable structure which would involve both developing and developed nations. In her parliament address, India's new environment minister, Jayanthi Natarajan, stated there is no discussion of signing a legally binding pact at this stage. Several researchers have raised concerns that the new environment minister may have limited the international negotiation stance from Cancun's wider openness to a "Ramesh deep" approach.

DOMESTIC CONSTITUENCIES

The Indian political establishment has long ignored climate change since it stands out in comparison to more immediate local issues like alleviating poverty, ensuring access to essential services, and managing the recession. According to an ex-minister of forests and the environment, climate change is not a topic that moves constituencies. Also, within the current framework, climate change has been getting more and more attention from the organized political system. The two parliamentary discussions that took place before and after the COP in Copenhagen are quite illuminating. Developed nations' duty to combat climate change was clearly and often stated throughout the Lok Sabha debate, which is the lower house of parliament in India. The debate also included some talk of local implications. Climate change was the dominant topic of discussion in the Rajya Sabha following the Copenhagen climate summit.

One thing that stood out was that nobody asked if the Copenhagen Accord tackled the issue of climate change adequately. Instead of focusing on a strong global climate deal, India's priorities have always been on expanding its own national growth area. An indicator, although a subtle one, of a tendency towards involvement with the matter in ways directly pertinent to local constituents is the fact that elected Parliamentarians do pay some attention to local repercussions. One indicator of national politics is the growing amount of coverage of climate change in the media. However, most studies have only looked at print media in English. Jogesh showed that between 2009 and 2010, 57% of English-language news coverage was devoted to climate politics on a global scale, while 21% was devoted to local politics and policy, including speculation about India's negotiation team's make-up. Only 5% of the articles were about business and 10% were on climate science. In terms of climate coverage, these numbers point to the ongoing preeminence of the international negotiation process.

While most opinion articles blamed industrialized nations for the issue, a small minority of papers pointed out that emissions from developing economies can no longer be disregarded in international negotiations. The consensus was that developing nations should step up their game, but only when given the green light by developed nations and the resources to do so. These tendencies point to a conviction in the duty of developed nations to spearhead action on climate change. This is a persistent preponderance of the international process in climate change coverage in the media, with some acknowledgement of the importance of domestic policies and initiatives.

Understanding the political currents around climate change may be achieved, in part, by listening to and learning from influential groups whose views could influence public opinion. For instance, it seems to reason that environmental experts and activists in India would be avoided supporters for national mitigation initiatives. There is a common misconception among Indian environmentalists that environmental protection in the South is inherently linked to issues of inequality. Because of this, they end up joining or even starting the national narrative on industrialized nation's responsibilities. In addition, there is debate among Indian environmentalists about whether local environmental ambitions would be undermined by the climate agenda and its potentially disastrous ramifications.

The Prime Minister and the Minister of the Environment were both issued a joint memorandum in the run-up to Copenhagen by a broad coalition of progressive persons, including social groups, individual organizations, and unions, among others. In their hysterical portrayal of climate change as an international catastrophe, they demanded that developed countries cut emissions and pay the ecological debt, while calling on emerging powers like India to pledge to quit their path of excessive consumption and pollution by establishing legally binding mitigation objectives. The Indian young Climate Network is another young coalition whose platform calls for action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, expand access to energy, and ensure that all people are treated fairly in the face of climate change.

There has been a gradual and patchwork awakening among India's corporate elite to the reality of climate change. The business world was "immobilized and uninvited" according to one observer in 1998. A denunciation of the objective was published by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and

Industry. The group said that any action taken by India and its businesses should be accompanied by financial backing. Both perspectives are grossly biased and fail to consider the whole spectrum of India's medium and small enterprise.

TRANSFORMATION OF INDIA'S APPROACH TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Government officials in India have started several plans and policy development procedures guided by the emerging co-benefits frame as the defining architecture for climate change policy in India. Due to its youth, ongoing nature, and lack of accessible analysis, this process resists simple summary. Furthermore, the comprehensive collection of policy initiatives is vast and disjointed, including international commitments, national strategies and regulations, and state-level plans. Although the exact causes of each of these processes remain unclear, one of the most significant is probably the increasing global pressure leading up to Copenhagen, which has included climate discussions at G20 summits. (World Bank: 2008).

Perhaps most importantly, the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) serves as the central policy document for all these initiatives. Its foundation was the creation of eight national "missions" with the overarching goal of incorporating climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies into various national policies. An example of a mission with a defined purpose and timeline is the Solar Mission, which sought to enable 20,000 MW of solar electricity by the year 2022. A National Water Mission is one example of an organization with more general and far-reaching goals, such as promoting integrated water management at the district phase, conserving water, and building an information system. On one hand, there are many in India who believe that the country's per capita position is questionable because of internal disparities; on the other hand, there are many who believe that the developed world is hiding behind India's wealthy just as much as the wealthy in India are hiding behind the poor. Though it has added complexity to the discussion by drawing attention to India's internal distributive difficulties, the hiding behind the poor argument has not succeeded in dispelling widespread support for the per capita rule as a method of tackling climate justice.

A State Action Plan on Climate Change (SAPCC) has been mandated by the central government for each state since 2010. The purpose of the SAPCCs is to standardize

climate action plans from state to state. They were also established to acknowledge that states have authority over some topics covered by the NAPCC, especially those pertaining to adaptation. Although these SAPCCs are still in their early stages, early signs indicate that these programs will face significant conceptual and practical hurdles. Planned actions will face the same familiar difficulty of integrating climate change into development practice as those in other nations: addressing the interconnectedness of development challenges and their climatic components. Realistically, concerns related to the federal structure of India and practical difficulties regarding the availability of funding are likely to provide obstacles to implementation. Example: although states and municipalities have jurisdiction over urban ecosystems, the federal government has a comprehensive plan to guide urban growth in the future. Addressing climate change will need incorporating it as a goal into an already chaotic institutional framework.

Although it is early to judge the efficacy of these strategies, it is becoming clear that putting low-carbon growth into practice in India will be a major oversight hurdle. Although there has been a gradual shift of power away from the Indian government and towards the states, the overall approach has been one of top-down policy making. Up until now, there has been a tendency towards more state-level policymaking rather than a national one, and the effort has been mostly top-down. Gujarat, for example, has begun solar power programs and had a Department of Climate Change long before it had a state action plan.

The Paris Agreement and India's Revised First Nationally Determined Contribution:

The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) received India's Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) on October 2, 2015. Herewith, India provides the following information as an update to its first NDC, which was filed on October 2, 2015, for the period up to 2030:

- To counteract climate change, it is crucial to promote a healthy and sustainable lifestyle that adheres to conservation and moderation principles. One approach to do this is by organizing a public movement called "LIFE- Lifestyle for Environment."
- To compare with other countries at the same economic level, India needs to take a more environmentally friendly and cleaner approach.

- By 2030, we want to produce half of our power from non-fossil fuels via technology transfer and reasonable foreign finance, primarily from the green climate fund (GCF).
- By increasing the amount of forest and tree cover, we aim to produce an extra 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of CO₂ equivalent carbon sink by the year 2030.
- To increase funding for development programs in areas most at risk from climate change, including agriculture, water resources, the Himalayan region, coastal regions, health, and disaster management, so that these areas can better adapt to the changing environment.
- By increasing the amount of forest and tree cover, we aim to produce an extra 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of CO₂ equivalent carbon sink by the year 2030.
- To fill the resource gap and execute the adaptation and mitigation measures, it is necessary to raise domestic and fresh and extra money from developed nations.
- To facilitate the rapid dissemination of state-of-the-art climate technology in India and to facilitate cooperative collaborative research and development of such future technologies, it is necessary to establish capabilities, set up domestic frameworks, and design world-wide framework.

Modi Government's Steps on Climate Change:

Traditionally India has treated climate change as a diplomatic challenge, emphasizing that developed nations due to their historical responsibility for the crisis should take the lead in reducing emissions and provide financial and technological support to developing countries. This stance is both justifiable and has served India's interests well in international negotiations. However, there are now compelling reasons for India to reconsider its climate strategy, both globally and domestically.

Firstly, the impacts of climate change are expected to be especially severe for India, posing significant obstacles to development and poverty alleviation. Secondly, India has access to several cost-effective measures that can simultaneously advance its development goals and address climate concerns. Rethinking its approach could enable India to actively participate in, or even lead, a 'coalition of the willing' advocating for a robust and ambitious global climate regime based on clear rules.

Domestically, India must chart low-carbon growth pathways that not only drive economic development but also strengthen climate adaptation and resilience. Achieving this dual transformation both at home and on the global stage requires the creation of robust institutions dedicated to effective climate governance. Often described as the "defining issue of our time," climate change is already having far-reaching impacts on natural ecosystems and human societies. India is particularly vulnerable due to its 7,500 km coastline, densely populated low-lying areas, underdeveloped infrastructure, and the heavy reliance of its population on climate-sensitive sectors like agriculture. Even with a global temperature rise of just 1°C since pre-industrial times, India is experiencing severe climate-related disruptions, including the retreat of Himalayan glaciers and an increase in the frequency and intensity of heat waves, droughts, extreme rainfall, and floods.

If global temperatures rise by 2.6°C to 3.2°C as projected based on current national commitments India faces grave and potentially irreversible consequences. These would not only affect ecosystems and human health but also have far-reaching implications for economic growth, livelihoods, and overall well-being. For instance, climate change is projected to reduce agricultural incomes in India by 15–25% by the end of the century.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and India have often been praised on the global stage for their environmental leadership. Former Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, Erik Solheim, commended Modi's leadership, highlighting India's economic growth and its transformation from an "environmental laggard to an environmental leader." This positive view of India's progress is shared by many in the international community. Notable achievements, such as the country's large-scale rural electrification efforts and substantial investments in solar energy and other renewable sources, have drawn international acclaim.

However, India's environmental and climate leadership under Modi remains complex and, at times, ambiguous. While India has played a prominent role in international climate negotiations since the inception of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 1992, it has also been cautious about taking on binding commitments under agreements like the Paris Accord. India consistently emphasizes the principle of "common but differentiated

responsibilities,” advocating for a clear distinction between developed and developing countries similar to the provisions of the Kyoto Protocol, which did not impose emission reduction obligations on developing nations like India.

To advance this stance, India actively participates in several negotiating blocs, including the Like-Minded Developing Countries (LMDC), the Group of 77 (G77), and the BASIC group (comprising Brazil, South Africa, India, and China). These alliances, particularly the LMDC, often adopt firm positions that call for developed nations to take the lead in emissions reductions before expecting similar commitments from the developing world. Thus, while India has made notable strides in green energy and sustainability, its climate diplomacy continues to reflect a cautious and strategic balancing act between development priorities and global environmental responsibilities.

Despite ongoing complexities in India's climate policy, Prime Minister Modi has taken notable steps to enhance bilateral and multilateral climate cooperation, particularly in sectors aligned with national growth interests. A key example is the launch of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) in 2015, a joint initiative with France aimed at promoting solar energy adoption globally. However, the international climate governance landscape has become increasingly fragmented and decentralized, with a proliferation of actors and initiatives at various levels. This evolving structure raises important questions about how new forms of leadership might emerge and what role rising powers like India can play within a more bottom-up climate regime.

Domestically, one of India's most significant recent achievements has been the near-universal electrification of households. Electrification is critical for development, as it enables access to education, healthcare (by replacing polluting kerosene), and digital communication improving welfare, particularly in rural areas. This milestone is the result of sustained efforts over many years by successive governments. Prime Minister Modi, though credited with the achievement, has benefited from being in office at the time when these efforts came to fruition. Nonetheless, the electrification story is not without controversy. While official data suggests that all households have access to electricity, questions remain about the accuracy of reporting, and many areas continue to suffer from unstable and unreliable power supply.

Despite ongoing efforts to expand electrification, approximately 835 million people in India still depend on traditional biomass fuels for cooking and heating, according to the International Energy Agency (IEA). As the population continues to grow, electricity demand is projected to rise sharply, with coal expected to remain a major source of energy in the near term. While the Modi government has reaffirmed its commitment to expanding the share of renewable in the national energy mix, solar and wind despite their rapid growth still contribute only a modest share to overall electricity generation. India's continued reliance on coal highlights the complexity of transitioning to a cleaner energy system. Achieving this transition will require sustained investment, technological innovation, and policy support over the long term.

The rapid expansion of wind and solar energy in India has significantly slowed the construction of new coal-fired power plants. However, the existing coal infrastructure remains deeply entrenched and is expected to operate for decades, posing ongoing challenges. This reliance on coal contributes heavily to global carbon emissions and is a major source of domestic air pollution, which is linked to extensive health issues and premature deaths. Although the Indian government is actively encouraging the development of renewable energy, this shift is largely driven by economic factors renewable are now cheaper than new coal projects and can be deployed more quickly due to fewer regulatory and logistical hurdles. (Dasgupta:2012)

Despite the economic case for renewable, the government continues to support coal through a range of policy initiatives. These include easing regulations for building coal power plants, expanding coal mining, and improving coal transportation networks. Moreover, coal plants have long been permitted to exceed pollution limits. Even when new environmental regulations were introduced, the deadline for compliance initially set for 2017 was extended by five years, delaying necessary reforms.

While India has made significant strides in solar energy, policy inconsistencies have hindered its full potential. For instance, the imposition of a 25% tariff on imported Chinese solar panels raised costs for developers, while frequent cancellations of solar tenders by state governments despite competitive bids have created uncertainty in the sector. India's commitments under the Paris Agreement remain modest and are likely to be met

even without substantial new policy measures. However, these commitments still allow for a notable rise in emissions in the coming decades. If the government prioritized removing policy barriers to renewable and enforced stricter pollution controls on coal, India's future emissions trajectory could be significantly reduced.

Understanding India's developmental context is essential when evaluating its climate responsibilities. Despite being one of the largest current emitters, India's historical contribution to global emissions remains relatively modest. The country continues to grapple with widespread poverty and a development trajectory that, like many industrialized nations in the past, has been heavily reliant on fossil fuels. This dual challenge of sustaining economic growth while addressing climate change makes external pressure for aggressive mitigation measures a point of contention. A more effective and equitable approach would be to strengthen bilateral and multilateral partnerships that support India's low-carbon transition. This includes aligning climate goals with development priorities through targeted financial assistance, technology transfer, and enabling policy frameworks.

Since coming to power, the Modi government's performance has sparked considerable debate across various policy areas. While significant attention has been given to flagship domestic schemes such as the *Jan Dhan Yojana* and *Swachh Bharat Abhiyan*, the government's role in international climate diplomacy particularly in the lead-up to the Paris Climate Summit has received comparatively little focus. One of the key tests of Modi's international leadership lies in how effectively his government navigates the complexities of global climate negotiations, where India holds a crucial position as a major developing economy and greenhouse gas emitter.

Climate change has long presented a formidable global challenge, underscoring the urgent need for a comprehensive and effective international agreement. Expectations for the 2015 Paris Summit were particularly high in the wake of the landmark bilateral emissions deal between the United States and China. Under this agreement, China committed to peaking its emissions around 2030 and limiting coal consumption through 2020, while the U.S. pledged to cut its greenhouse gas emissions by at least 26% below 2005 levels by 2025. While the 2014 Lima Climate Conference drew criticism from some quarters for lacking decisive action, others viewed it as a meaningful

step toward fostering a shared sense of responsibility among nations. Nevertheless, progress toward establishing a unified global climate framework has been hindered by persistent political and economic complexities, with tangible outcomes remaining limited since the adoption of the Kyoto Protocol.

India's position in climate negotiations has traditionally aligned with the broader concerns of the developing world. Ahead of the Lima summit, India maintained a firm stance against binding emission reduction commitments, arguing that its per capita emissions 1.7 metric tons in 2010 were still significantly below the global average of 5 metric tons. This position reflects India's long-standing emphasis on equity and differentiated responsibilities in climate governance, highlighting the need to balance environmental objectives with developmental imperatives. (Prabhu : 2011)

According to the World Resources Institute (WRI), India had the lowest per capita emissions among the world's top 10 emitters in 2011, with an average of approximately 1.92 tons of carbon dioxide equivalent. In comparison, Canada recorded 24.6 tons, the United States 19.6 tons, Russia 15.3 tons, and China 7.69 tons. This stark disparity has informed India's negotiating stance in international climate forums. As of March that year, India initially resisted the United Nations' push for countries to adopt binding emission caps through the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs). However, the country later updated its position, committing to reduce emissions intensity defined as carbon emissions per unit of GDP by 33 to 35 percent from 2005 levels by 2030. India also pledged that 40 percent of its cumulative installed electric power capacity would come from non-fossil fuel sources by the same year. (Dubash : 2011)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's prior experience in promoting clean energy offers a key source of optimism for India's climate future. During his 12-year tenure as Chief Minister of Gujarat, he played a pioneering role in advancing renewable energy, establishing one of Asia's largest solar parks and positioning Gujarat as a frontrunner in solar energy deployment at the state level. (Lele : 2011): However, Modi's national climate rhetoric often reflects the inherent tension between environmental sustainability and India's pressing development needs. At the 2010 Cancun summit, India took a notable step by agreeing to voluntary emissions

reductions for the first time. Yet after Modi assumed national leadership, India adopted a more assertive stance at the 2014 Lima summit, focusing on the developmental imperatives of the Global South. As the Paris summit approached, India was expected to champion the principle of “climate justice”- a concept Modi has consistently advocated which highlights the unequal responsibilities and capabilities of developed and developing countries in addressing climate change.

India’s INDC commitments reflect a clear shift toward a more sustainable energy future. Alongside its goals for reducing emissions intensity and expanding non-fossil fuel capacity, India has also pledged to create an additional carbon sink of 2.5 to 3 billion tons of CO₂, through increased forest and tree cover demonstrating a comprehensive, multi-faceted approach to climate action. However, a key point of contention in India’s climate diplomacy, particularly with countries like the United States, lies in the valuation of adaptation. Central to this debate is the financial support that developed nations is expected to provide to developing countries to help them transition away from fossil fuel-based development pathways. India estimates that it will need up to \$206 billion for adaptation efforts between 2015 and 2030. With Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s growing global influence, this moment offers a significant opportunity for India to take on a leadership role in shaping an equitable and ambitious global climate agreement.

For perhaps the first time, India has the chance to not only participate but lead in advancing international climate cooperation. Modi’s consistent engagement on environmental issues and his close diplomatic ties particularly with then-U.S. President Barack Obama could offer the momentum needed to elevate the climate talks to a significantly more ambitious level. His leadership at this juncture could be both symbolically and substantively transformative. (Vihma : 2011)

To play this leadership role effectively, several strategic steps could be undertaken.

First, Modi should use his diplomatic influence to ensure alignment between the United States and China on critical issues related to emissions and climate pledges prior to the summit. Converting informal political commitments into formal, documented agreements would be vital, especially given concerns that the U.S. may fall short of its earlier \$100 billion climate finance

pledge. This trilateral engagement could potentially result in a joint Indo-Chinese-American statement or framework ahead of the summit.

Second, India’s negotiating team should push for a broader interpretation of the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs). While the U.S. has sought to focus primarily on mitigation efforts, India and other developing nations argue that INDCs should also include adaptation financing and technical support. A compromise that includes two of these three components could pave the way for broader consensus between developed and developing countries.

Third, India should strategically leverage its influence within the broader Asian bloc, aligning with regional initiatives such as the China-led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). By coordinating efforts through such platforms, India can amplify its voice and push for a coherent regional approach that contributes meaningfully to global climate governance.

Ultimately, the success of the Paris Summit in 2015 depended on visionary leadership capable of bridging geopolitical divides. India, as a major global player, needed to assert its developmental priorities while simultaneously providing the kind of leadership that could reshape the global climate narrative. Prime Minister Modi, with his strong rapport among world leaders and demonstrated commitment to climate action most notably through the launch of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) in 2015 was well-positioned to lead this charge.

Now, with Modi securing a second term in office following a decisive electoral victory, India’s role in international climate diplomacy stands to grow even further. The first term laid important groundwork, and India’s continued efforts in mitigation, adaptation, and climate finance can serve as a foundation for more assertive global leadership in the years ahead.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s government has earned widespread recognition for its leadership in environmental security and efforts to combat climate change. Modi himself was named among the 2018 “Champions of the Earth” by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in the “Policy Leadership” category for his pioneering work in establishing the International Solar Alliance and fostering new avenues of environmental cooperation.

Following the United States' withdrawal from the Paris Agreement in 2017, India has emerged as a beacon for other developing nations, showing how ambitious environmental and climate goals can align with development objectives.(Sardar:2019)

Since 2014, the Indian government's approach to climate action has been marked by a pragmatic and forward-looking strategy. A key step in this direction was the restructuring of the Prime Minister's Council on Climate Change to revitalize and streamline the national climate agenda. At international platforms such as COP20 in Lima and COP21 in Paris, India reaffirmed its strong commitment to addressing climate change in its ambitious Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs). These include targets such as achieving 227 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2022 and reducing industrial carbon intensity by 35 percent from 2005 levels. Despite these efforts, the energy and agriculture sectors continue to be major sources of emissions, and India remains the third-largest emitter globally. Interestingly, while India's ranking on the Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) has steadily improved since 2014, its absolute share of global emissions has not declined. Looking ahead, a major challenge for the Modi government will be bridging this gap by mobilizing greater financial and technological support to realize its climate ambitions.

At the 2018 plenary session of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Prime Minister Modi highlighted the urgent need for developed nations to honor their commitments to provide financial and technological support to developing countries in the global fight against climate change. Effective climate action depends heavily on the mobilization of adequate funding to support both mitigation and adaptation efforts in the Global South. However, while global climate negotiations often center on mitigation, adaptation strategies and crucial mechanisms such as loss and damage tend to receive significantly less attention and funding. This imbalance is particularly concerning for developing countries, which must simultaneously address climate impacts and build resilience to future risks while pursuing development. In this context, India's climate diplomacy must shift from a primarily state-centric model to one that emphasizes the localized adaptation and resilience needs of vulnerable communities in developing and least-developed countries.

The international climate landscape is shaped by material structures, anarchic principles, and power dynamics, creating barriers to meaningful collective action on climate change. To overcome these challenges, India has the opportunity to develop a new framework that focuses on local, regional, and national efforts to address climate risks and policy needs. This framework should center on the interests and voices of the most vulnerable communities, ensuring a strong bottom-up approach to climate policy that can shift global climate politics in a more inclusive and impactful direction. Although progress is being made through the Paris Agreement, a more concerted effort is needed to sustain and strengthen these initiatives. As a global leader in climate governance, India must create frameworks to support climate-compatible development across other developing nations, facilitate energy transitions, and reduce socio-economic disparities and the technological divide. (Rajamani: 2016)

Prime Minister Modi has sought to frame India's environmental policy within a broader cultural context, drawing on ancient Hindu texts like the Vedas to underscore India's leadership in climate action. He has used these references to highlight the country's ethical approach to environmental stewardship, particularly during his address at COP21 in Paris in 2015. Another notable move was the announcement of an income tax rebate for electric vehicle (EV) buyers in the first budget of his second term, signaling India's commitment to combating climate change. This initiative is part of a larger ambition to transition most vehicles to electric power by 2030, alongside India's achievement of producing the world's cheapest solar power.

Under Modi's leadership, recent assessments suggest that India may surpass its own renewable energy targets for 2030, with clean energy potentially supplying half of the country's energy needs well above the original goal of 40%. However, India faces significant challenges. It has seven of the world's ten most polluted cities, and is one of the most water-stressed countries, with major cities already facing severe water shortages. If Modi can deliver substantial progress in reducing pollution, tackling climate change, and shifting the energy habits of 1.3 billion people, it would be a transformative achievement not only for India but for global climate action.

INDIA IN GLOBAL CLIMATE NEGOTIATIONS: RIO TO PARIS:

India plays a crucial role in global climate negotiations, balancing its development needs with environmental responsibilities. As one of the largest developing countries, India's position is vital in shaping climate policies that are fair and equitable. This article explores India's historical contributions, strategic positions, and the challenges it faces in addressing climate change while ensuring sustainable growth.

In the following table we can discuss the role of India in Climate Negotiations at Global level:

Year	Activities on a Global Scale	Events in India
1989	Resolution 44/207 of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) proposes for a "framework convention".	The "Expert Advisory Committee" on international environmental concerns is constituted by the Ministry of Forests and Environment (MoEF).
1990	Initial Assessment Report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).	An international gathering of developing nations is being held in India this year.
1991	The discussions were conducted by the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC).	A catastrophe has hit India's economy.
1992	At Rio, the UNFCCC was signed.	UNFCCC was signed by India.
1993		UNFCCC ratification by India achieved.
1994	The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change came into effect.	
1995	The "Berlin Mandate" is adopted by COP1.	
1997	At COP 3, Kyoto Protocol (KP) was adopted.	
2001	At COP 7, the Marrakesh Accords were approved.	
2002	"Climate adaptation" is a priority for the COP 8 conference.	The COP 8 is being held in Delhi, India.
2003		The National Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) Authority of India has been established.
2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ KP becomes legally binding. ➤ To examine the objectives for the "second commitment period," the Ad Hoc Working Group on KP (AWG-KP) was constituted at COP 11. 	
2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Heiligendamm, Germany hosted the G8+5 Summit. ➤ At COP 13, the Bali Action Plan was approved. 	Prime Minister's Council on Climate Change (PMCCC) establishment.
2008	Sessions organized by the AWG-KP and the AWG-LCA during COP 14.	NAPCC is being developed.

2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ The '2 degree C' limit has been acknowledged in the Major Economies Forum (MEF) Leaders Declaration at L'Aquila.➤ The Copenhagen Accord is "taken note of" by COP 15.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ India officially joins the MEF mission.➤ By 2020, India plans to voluntarily reduce its "emissions intensity" by 20–25 percent.
2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ At COP 16, the Cancun Agreements were promulgated.➤ COP 17 was the new deadline for AWG-KP and AWG-LCA requirements.	A "low carbon economy" expert group has been established by the Planning Commission.
2011	As a result of COP 17, the "Durban Platform for Enhanced Action" was approved.	
2012	The Doha Amendment to KP was supported and adopted at COP 18.	
2013	At COP 19, all participants are encouraged to formulate and share their INDCs.	
2014	Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)	
2015	At COP 21, the Paris Agreement was approved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Solar power target in India increased fivefold.➤ India has decided to reduce its "emissions intensity" by 33-50% by the year 2030 as part of its INDC.➤ India and France jointly initiated "International Solar Alliance" .
2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ The officially implementetation of Paris Agreement.➤ The Paris Agreement rulebook is being negotiated by the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Agreement (APA), which was formed at COP 22.	
2017	United States withdrew from the Paris Agreement was announced.	The backing of the Paris Agreement is reaffirmed by India.
2018		
2019		
2020	Updated climate plans were issued by many nations, including Canada, describing strategies to achieve further reductions in emissions.	Prime minister Modi announced 36 GW of installed solar power at the 2020 Global Climate Ambition Summit.
2021		India vowed to reach net-zero emissions by 2070 during the 26th Conference of the Parties (COP 26).

2022	Expanding on earlier climate efforts, Canada unveiled its Emissions Reduction Plan for 2030.	➤ India amended its Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC) objectives to reduce GDP emissions intensity to 45% by 2030 and switch 50% of existing power capacity to non-fossil fuels. ➤ On July 1st, a ban was implemented on some single-use plastic goods.
2023	More nations agreeing to net-zero emissions by 2050 as climate action measures are implemented.	Committees were formed by the Ministry to provide strategies for various types of trash as part of their efforts to create a circular economy.
2024	Making the switch to renewable energy sources and making for the effects of climate change are two of the main goals of many nations' climate initiatives.	India submitted its 4th Biennial Update Report (BUR-4) to the UNFCCC.

CONCLUSION:

The future of international climate cooperation is highly dependent on India's position in the climate change discussions. A more committed India may need to alter its internal policies to increase fairness between generations. A new green technology and renewable energy source, according to scientists, is the way to go. Under the Modi administration, India's foreign policy has undergone a significant shift, moving towards geo-economic strategies rather than focusing solely on military power. Climate action has become an integral part of this geo-economic approach, positioning India as a responsible global actor and enhancing its international influence. Climate policy has not only found a place in India's geostrategic discourse but has also served as a means to strengthen the country's role on the global stage. (Bidwai: 2012)

In India's case, climate policy has largely driven a cooperative geo-economic strategy. The establishment of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) is a positive stage in this direction. India's collaborative stance in climate negotiations has opened doors to deeper partnerships. These efforts also enable India to increase its influence in developing countries. This cooperative approach aligns with India's broader foreign policy goal of positioning itself as a responsible global player.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS:

The authors declare no potential conflicts of interests with respect to the research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

FUNDING:

The authors received no financial support for this research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

Acknowledgements

Not applicable

Availability of data and materials

No datasets were generated or analysed during the current study

Declarations

Ethics approval and consent to participate

Not applicable.

Consent for publication

Not applicable.

Competing interests

The authors declare no competing interests.

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