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The Third Voice Reality and Vision



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Voice for voiceless is an organization which focuses for the betterment, wellbeing and upliftment of deprived and marginalized section of the society and to bring them into the mainstream of the society. Besides various socio-political and economic problems, the environmental problem has become a matter of grave concern for this organization. The organization is gear up to undertake a variety of socially relevant constructive work as per the need and/or demand of the situation. Realizing the need of involving the intellectuals, research scholars, writers, authors and public-spirited persons in academic and cultural activities of the society, a center named "Centre for Third Voice Studies"(CTVS) has been formed. While public is considered as first voice, the government and other machineries working for them reflect the second voice. The intellectuals who cannot remain as silent observer of their activities have the force of communicating the third voice. The aim and objective of this centre is to raise voice for voiceless, to alert the common man and to awaken authorities as well as civil society through the humble and soft power of pen. The organization publishes a research journal is "The Third Voice Reality and Vision" in order to pursue the research activities.

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- Provides social science research programmes and projects;
- Indicate areas in which social science research is to be promoted and adopt special measures for development of research in neglected or new areas;
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- Advise the research scholars on all matters pertaining to social science research as may be referred to it from time to time;
- Take such measures generally as may be necessary from time to time to promote social science research and its utilization;
- To encourage research work on atrocity prevention and Gandhian way of life.

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INDIAN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS AND VIKSIT BHARAT 2047: TOWARDS AN INDIGENOUS MODERNITY

As India marches toward its centenary of independence in 2047, the national discourse is dominated by the vision of Developed India *i.e.* *Viksit Bharat*. All the modern nation-states are supposed to adopt modernization as the theory of socio-economic development. Historically, these theories viewed development as a linear trajectory. Societies were expected to transition from “primitive” traditional states to “advanced” Westernized “rational-legal states”. Anthropologically, this approach enacted an epistemic injustice. It marginalized non-Western modes of knowing as unscientific or superstitious. It is argued that, the global science is transmitted by writing, laboratory based, reductionist and long-standing, secular and value based, based on experimentation and universal. Hence, it should be the basis of development. Opposite to it, the Indian Knowledge System with various synonyms like Local Knowledge, Folk Knowledge, Traditional Knowledge, Indigenous Technical Knowledge, Traditional Technological Knowledge, Indigenous Environmental Knowledge, Traditional Environmental (or Ecological) Knowledge, People’s science, Ethno-ecology or Ethno-science are transmitted orally, field-based, Intuitive, Experiential, holistic, dynamic, Social, Spiritual, based on empirical observation, generated by the users and specific to each society.

Indigenous knowledge system is very well-known concept in all branches of social sciences. However, it is most often discussed in Anthropology with reference to indigenous or tribal communities. Out of several definitions most often discussed, the most acceptable one has been defined by UNESCO in 2012. According to this definition, “Local or indigenous knowledge refers to the cumulative and complex bodies of knowledge, know-how, practices and representations that are maintained and adopted by local communities, who have long histories of interaction with the natural environment.”

“Indigenous knowledge (IK) is, broadly speaking, the knowledge used by local people to make a living in a particular environment” (Warren, 1991)

“A body of knowledge built up by a group of people through generations of living in close contact with nature” (Johnson, 1992)

“Generally speaking, such knowledge evolves in the local environment, so that it is specifically adapted to the requirements of local people and conditions. It is also creative and experimental, constantly incorporating outside influences and inside innovations to meet new conditions. It is usually a mistake to think of indigenous knowledge as ‘old-fashioned,’ ‘backwards,’ ‘static’ or ‘unchanging.’” (Langill 2001)

“Indigenous Knowledge ... may relate to any knowledge held more or less collectively by a population, informing understanding of the world ... It is community based, embedded in and conditioned by local tradition ... [it is] transmitted orally and through experience, and repetitive practice characterizes its learning between generations.” (Sillitoe, Bicker and Pottier 2002)

The twentieth century’s high-modern, global discourse of modernization theory of development was dismissive of local knowledge, including knowledge of the environment and the rise in interest in indigenous knowledge in part a response to modernity’s deskilling vision of and consequences for local communities (Scott, 1998). It is argued that indigenous peoples possess unique systems of knowledge that can serve as the basis for more successful development interventions (Brokensha et al. 1980). Thus, recently there is a growing recognition of the need to ensure that the rights of indigenous and local communities over their traditional knowledge are respected and protected.

Applying an anthropological lens to *Viksit Bharat 2047*, the modernization theory of development is merely Eurocentric hegemony. There is the need of and recognition of the concept of plural modernities. It asserts that culture is not an obstacle to development, but the very matrix through which development acquires meaning. The Indian Knowledge System represents a holistic cognitive framework. Western thought often relies on Cartesian dualism, which separates mind from body, culture from nature, and the sacred from the secular. In contrast, IKS operates on relational epistemology. It views the individual, society, and the cosmos as an interconnected continuum. By decolonizing development frameworks, anthropology allows policymakers to view



IKS as a reservoir of social capital, community resilience, and sustainable technologies essential for a developed India.

One of the central pillars of *Viksit Bharat 2047* is environmental sustainability. Here, the anthropology of IKS provides immediate, actionable alternatives to extractive industrial practices. Indian civilization has historically generated localized ethno-ecological knowledge systems that ensure resource conservation through cultural institutions. When sacred landscapes and biodiversity is concerned, several studies have found that Sacred Groves across India demonstrate how religious taboos and community-led rituals have preserved pristine biodiversity hotspots for centuries. These are not mere remnants of primitive animism. They are sophisticated, decentralized conservation mechanisms. The traditional water harvesting structures reflect an advanced understanding of local hydrology and community-managed commons. Reintegrating this indigenous engineering into modern urban planning reduces reliance on energy-intensive, centralized water systems. It fosters local self-reliance, which is a core tenet of *Viksit Bharat*. The anthropology of IKS reveals deep-seated democratic and egalitarian impulses embedded within India's diverse pluralistic traditions, countering the critique that indigenous systems are inherently regressive. Hence, integration of IKS into *Viksit Bharat* must include the oral traditions, healthcare systems, and agricultural practices of India's Scheduled Tribes and rural communities. *Janajatiya* knowledge regarding forest management and millet cultivation (*Shri Anna*) provides crucial templates for climate-resilient food security. This philosophical worldview, framing the entire world as one family, is an active social practice. Anthropologically, it manifests as a deeply ingrained culture of philanthropy, mutual aid, and community kitchens (*Langar, Annadanam*). As economic growth hazards rising inequality, leveraging this inherent social capital can mitigate urban alienation and create a robust social safety net rooted in cultural empathy. The social and emotional value of India's medical pluralism—encompassing Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy (AYUSH)—lies in its preventative and personalized approach to health. For instance, Ayurveda views health not merely as the absence of disease, but as a dynamic equilibrium between the individual's constitution (*Prakriti*) and the environment. This system prioritizes lifestyle, diet, and mental well-being over reactive pharmaceutical intervention. The local health traditions managed by community healers provide accessible primary healthcare to millions. Elevating these practices through rigorous validation and integration into the national healthcare

architecture ensures cost-effective, culturally acceptable public health delivery. The Western industrial revolution achieved growth through hyper-automation, which frequently displaced labor and deskilled artisans. India's economy is built on a vibrant craft economy. Millions of artisans sustain handloom, terracotta, metalwork, and architectural traditions. These creative industries are vital for an inclusive economy. They offer decentralized livelihood opportunities, particularly for rural women, balancing capital growth with employment equity. Furthermore, the transmission of these specialized skills across generations preserves cognitive diversity and mathematical, geometric, and chemical knowledge systems. Embracing these techniques prevents the cultural homogenization often triggered by globalization.

For *Viksit Bharat 2047* to achieve its full potential, the cognitive landscape of the youth must be decolonized. This transformation is currently championed by the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which integrates IKS into modern curricula. The NEP-2020 recommended incorporation of the Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) into curriculums at all levels of education across the country to achieve second and third aspects of "PanchPran" resolutions i.e. "Erase all traces of servitude" and "Be proud of India's heritage and legacy", which was said by the honorable Prime Minister in his Independence Day speech. It advocates that pedagogy is the primary mechanism of cultural transmission. For generations, colonial-era education alienated Indian students from their immediate socio-cultural realities. Reintroducing of Vedic mathematics, classical arts, linguistics, and ethical texts-restores a grounded sense of identity. It cultivates global citizens who are rooted in their heritage, yet fully capable of engaging with cutting-edge global technologies.

Viksit Bharat 2047 must not become a synonym for a westernized, hyper-consumerist state. The Indian Knowledge Systems provides the theoretical and empirical tools needed to construct an alternative model of development. This model values harmony over dominance, community over hyper-individualism, and sustainability over unbridled consumption. By systematically synthesizing ancient insights with contemporary science, India can pioneer a unique paradigm of progress. The journey to 2047 is an invitation to realize an indigenous modernity-proving that a nation can reach the pinnacle of material development while anchoring its soul firmly in its civilizational truths.

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Judicial Review of Governor's Discretionary Powers: A Political Analysis of Supreme Court Interventions in India

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ABSTRACT

India is constitutionally a federal democratic country designed to balance regional autonomy with national unity in a highly diverse society. The Constitution distributes powers between the Union and State governments with strong centralizing powers to the Union Government in order to maintain country's unity and integrity. Within this constitutional framework, the office of the Governor plays an important role in maintaining the balance between the Union government and State government while protecting federalism, democratic values and constitutional morality. However, the Governor's discretionary powers, along with the process of appointment by the President on the advice of the Prime Minister and the Union Council of Ministers have frequently become a source of political controversy. During periods of intense political rivalry between the Union government and the State governments, gubernatorial discretionary powers, particularly in matters of forming state governments, giving or delaying assent to bills, and reserving bills for the President, have often been seen as an instrument of the Union government to influence or control opposition-ruled states. Such actions have repeatedly invited Supreme Court scrutiny and judicial review.

This article examines the judicial review of gubernatorial discretion from a political angle. It emphasizes the Supreme Court's role in checking the political use of constitutional authority and resolving Centre-State tensions.

The article further highlights the judiciary's evolving role as an arbiter of federal conflicts. Special attention is given to recent landmark decisions on *the State of Tamil Nadu v. Governor of Tamil Nadu* (2025) of the Supreme Court in addressing delays and inaction by Governors in the legislative process. The paper argues that judicial review of the Governor's discretion is not merely a legal exercise but a political process through which the Supreme Court seeks to preserve federal balance and democratic accountability.

KEY WORDS: *Gubernatorial discretion, Judicial review, Centre-State relations, Federalism, Supreme Court of India*

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INTRODUCTION

Federalism is an integral feature of India's constitutional governance framework. Article 1(1) states that "*India, that is Bharat, shall be a Union of States.*" The Supreme Court has also recognized federalism as part of the basic structure of the Constitution. In this system, powers are divided between the Union and the States as specified in the Seventh Schedule. Considering India's vast cultural, social and political diversity, the framers of the Constitution, particularly Sardar Patel, favored a strong Union government to maintain unity, integrity and stability (Munusamy, 2025). Indian federalism therefore combines constitutional centralization with political decentralization. This structural complexity shapes the functioning of key constitutional offices especially the office of the Governor. The Governor is appointed by the President of India on the recommendation of the Prime Minister and Union Council of Ministers without consultation with the concerned state government. Article 155 of the Indian constitution states that the "*Governor of a state shall be appointed by the President by warrant under his hand and seal*". According to Article 156, "*the Governor shall hold office during the pleasure of the President*" but his normal term of office will be five years. According to Article 159 of the Indian Constitution, the Governor is required to take an oath to preserve, protect and defend the Constitution and the law. This highlights the constitutional duty of the Governor to function within the framework of legality and democratic accountability (Government of Telangana, n.d). In certain constitutionally specified situations, the Governor is allowed to use personal judgment known as discretionary power. Recognizing India's plural and multi-party system, Jawaharlal Nehru during the framing of the Constitution argued that the Governor should remain above party politics and act with constitutional neutrality (Encyclopaedia Britannica). In practice, however, the exercise of discretionary powers has often generated political controversy.

The Constitution of India vests the Governor with certain discretionary powers, such as granting or withholding assent to bills passed by the state legislature, determining the time frame for proving a legislative majority and deciding which party should be invited to form the government in a hung assembly. However, the Constitution remains largely silent on how disagreements between the Governor and the elected state government should be resolved. Governors have been accused of siding with the Union government by abandoning their constitutional

obligation of neutrality. This is most evident in opposition governed states where many perceive Governors to be representatives of the Centre. The Supreme Court in *Shamsher Singh v. State of Punjab (1974)* held that as constitutional heads, Presidents and Governors must not engage with party politics and must act with neutrality. Keeping all such factors in mind, this article analyses judicial review of gubernatorial discretion from a political angle which has evolved beyond purely legal checks and now also helps maintain the political balance between the central and state governments in India. Supreme Court interventions are increasingly being used to manage conflicts between the Centre and the States, prevent the partisan misuse of constitutional powers and protect democratic accountability in a politically competitive environment.

CONSTITUTIONAL BASIS OF GUBERNATORIAL POWERS

The powers and functions of the Governor are derived from various provisions of the Indian Constitution. The Constitution of India deals with State executive under Part VI Chapter II which includes Articles 153 to 167 (Gore et al., 2020). Under the parliamentary system, "the Governor acts as the constitutional head of the state and normally functions on the aid and advice of the Chief Minister with the Council of Ministers as provided under Article 163". In the legislative sphere, the Governor has significant powers such as summoning, proroguing and dissolving the state legislature under Article 174. The Governor plays an important role in the executive functioning of the state, including the appointment of the Chief Minister and other ministers under Article 164 (Government of Telangana, n.d). The Governor further holds an important position in the law-making process. Article 200 stated "when a Bill is passed by the State Legislature, the Governor may give assent, withhold assent, return the Bill for reconsideration or reserve it for the consideration of the President". The power to withhold assent is usually used only in exceptional situations, mainly when the legislature passes a Private Member's Bill without support from the State Government. In such cases, the Council of Ministers may advise the Governor to withhold assent. Similarly, if a Bill is returned to the legislature for reconsideration, it is normally done based on ministerial advice. So even though the Governor holds an important constitutional office, the role still remains closely linked to the advice of the Council of Ministers. Further, if a Bill is reserved for the President under Article 201, the matter moves beyond

the State government and the final decision then rests with the President. The President may either give assent, withhold assent or return the Bill to the State Legislature for reconsideration, provided it is not a Money Bill. If the Bill is passed again by the Legislature and sent back to the President, the President is not bound to give assent and may still approve or reject the Bill. Thus, Article 201 gives the final authority to the President in respect of certain State Bills and ensures constitutional and federal balance between the Centre and the States (Indian Kanoon, n.d.). Former Chief Election Commissioner V.S. Ramadevi highlighted the importance of constitutional morality in the functioning of the Governor's office. She referred to Surjit Singh Barnala's decision not to recommend President's Rule in Tamil Nadu despite pressure from the Centre and emphasized that Governors are expected to remain impartial and act according to constitutional values, particularly during times of political uncertainty (Raj, 2022).

JUDICIAL REVIEW AND THE SUPREME COURT'S ROLE

Article 356 has been one of the most controversial provisions of the Constitution, as it has at times posed a serious threat to democracy and federalism. It deals with the imposition of President's Rule in a state on the basis of the Governor's report claiming a "failure of constitutional machinery." The first case of political misuse of the gubernatorial power happened in 1959 when the Governor dismissed the elected Communist government headed by E.M.S. Namboodiripad and recommended the President's Rule (Basheer, 2025). The use of Article 356 became highly politicized during the 1970s and 1980s. After the Janata Party came to power in 1977, several Congress-ruled state governments were dismissed. For example, within just two days (April 29 and 30, 1977) a total of eight Congress governments were removed from Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bihar, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Odisha, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh. A similar pattern was repeated in 1980 after the Congress returned to power at the Centre and dismissed a number of opposition-ruled state governments (in nine states such as Rajasthan, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh) (India Today, 2016). During this period, some states experienced it more frequently than others. In particular, Manipur and Uttar Pradesh have witnessed the highest number of instances of President's Rule (India Today, 2016). In recent years, several politically contentious situations in states such as Arunachal Pradesh (2015), Uttarakhand (2016), Goa

(2017), Karnataka (2018), Maharashtra (2019), and Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan (2020) have once again brought the Governor's discretionary role into political and judicial scrutiny.

The dismissal of the Bommai government became a major constitutional controversy and eventually led to the landmark judgment in *S.R. Bommai v. Union of India* (1994). In this case, the Supreme Court said that "the imposition of President's Rule under Article 356 is subject to judicial review and cannot be exercised arbitrarily for political reasons". The judgment played an important role in strengthening federalism and restricting the misuse of constitutional powers by the Centre. There was another significant case in Arunachal Pradesh when the Governor called upon an advanced Assembly session without the consent of the elected government. This caused a political crisis and brought about President's Rule and the formation of a new government. A five-judge Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court heard the case and delivered a landmark judgment to restore status quo ante December 15, 2015. The Court held that the actions of the Governor were illegal and unconstitutional. With the resignation of Chief Minister Kalikho Pul, Chief Minister Nabam Tuki was reinstated. This ruling was important, as it was one of the first cases wherein the judiciary reinstated a state administration that had been dismissed under President's Rule. (The Times of India, 2016).

Over the years, the scope of judicial review regarding gubernatorial discretion extended to issues beyond the misuse of Article 356 and the dissolution of state governments. More and more, constitutional conflicts have arisen concerning the Governor's involvement in the legislature, especially regarding the delays in providing the Governor's assent to State Legislature Bills. For instance, in 2023, while hearing the Telangana government's petition against the Governor's delay in giving assent to laws, the Supreme Court judges D.Y. Chandrachud and Justice P.S. Narasimha made references to Article 200 of the Constitution. According to Article 200, the Governor can return a Bill for reconsideration to the State Legislature, as long as it is not a money Bill, only after a Bill is presented to him for assent. The Court emphasized that the phrase "as soon as practicable" carries significant constitutional importance and requires timely action (Thomas, 2023). The State of Kerala filed a writ petition in the Supreme Court on November 1, 2023, challenging Governor Arif Mohammad Khan's delay in granting assent to a number of Bills awaiting approval. Later, Kerala decided to withdraw the case,

saying that the Supreme Court's April 8, 2025 judgment which directed Governors and the President to decide on Bills within a maximum of three months had already settled the issue. However, the Central government opposed the withdrawal and argued that Kerala's case was different from the Tamil Nadu case and should still be heard. (Supreme Court Observer, 2023). Similar concerns were raised in *State of Punjab v. Principal Secretary to the Governor* (2023) and West Bengal (2024) where the Supreme Court observed that Governors cannot indefinitely delay Bills passed by elected legislatures. (Joshi, 2023, Sethi, 2024).

Among these disputes, the conflict between the Tamil Nadu government and Governor R.N. Ravi became one of the most constitutional controversies about gubernatorial discretion and legislative assent. The political controversy erupted when the Governor returned the Online Gambling Prohibition Bill. The Tamil Nadu Government challenged Governor R.N. Ravi in the Supreme Court for misusing his powers and argued that the Governor was failing to discharge his constitutional responsibilities by not approving 10 bills. Then the Supreme Court gave landmark judgement on 8 April 2025 and strongly criticised governor for not approving these bills. The Court said that keeping Bills pending or refusing them without proper constitutional reason is "illegal and arbitrary". It also cleared that Governors cannot delay decisions forever, they must act within a reasonable time when a Bill is sent to them. The Governor cannot use powers like an absolute veto or "pocket veto" (NDTV (2025)). Through these judgements, the judiciary has been reminding the constitutional authorities that unnecessary delays, even silent one, can disturb the balance of parliamentary democracy. Exercising its special powers under Article 142 to ensure complete justice, the Court treated certain pending Bills as having received "deemed assent". (Banerjee, 2025). This means the Bills were treated as approved because of the long and unjustified delay. The judgment also laid down general timelines for Governors while dealing with Bills passed by State Legislatures. The Court said that if the Governor wants to withhold assent and send the Bill to the President based on the advice of the Council of Ministers, it should be done within one month. If the Governor wants to withhold assent without the advice of the Council of Ministers, then the Bill must be returned to the Assembly within three months. Also, if the Assembly passes the Bill again after reconsideration, then the Governor must give assent within one month (NDTV, 2025). The main aim of this decision was to ensure Governor's act within

a reasonable time and do not unnecessarily delay the law-making process.

The Court cautioned that constitutional governance cannot function with two parallel centres of executive authority operating within the same state (Pai, 2025). This reflected the judiciary's role in preventing executive deadlock and ensuring functional accountability within the states. Later, the judiciary overturned its own rulings on 20 November 2025, following an advisory opinion sought by the President under Article 143. The Court clarified that it cannot impose rigid or strict timelines on the President or the Governor to approving bills and a bill could not simply be treated as having received automatic assent. At the same time, it warned that "prolonged, unexplained, indefinite inaction will invite limited judicial scrutiny" (Banerjee, 2025). Since the MLAs are elected by the people and laws reflect the will of the public. If the Governor delays or refuses to approve bills without valid constitutional reasons, it means they are blocking people's mandate that poses a serious challenge to democracy and federalism. This shows that judiciary maintains and respects the separation of powers between judicial intervention and executive discretion. (The Economic Times, 2025).

CONCLUSION

In a federal state, the office of the Governor occupies a significant constitutional position in India. Constitutionally, the Governor is the head of the state and an apolitical post therefore, he/she must function as an impartial, independent and political neutral authority. As per constitution norms, he/she acts on the aid and advice of the Chief Minister and Council of Ministers. However, in reality, the office is perceived as a representative and agent of the Union government that triggered political controversy and invited judicial scrutiny as well. In India's quasi-federal structure, the debate around the Governor's discretionary powers shows how closely constitutional law and politics remain connected, almost impossible to separate completely. Over time, the role of judiciary in this area has gradually expanded beyond merely addressing the dismissal of elected state governments under Article 356. But now, judicial review entered in increasingly day to day matters such as delays in granting assent to bills, questions regarding the limits of gubernatorial discretion and questions of constitutional morality. This reflects the growing responsibility of the Supreme Court in managing the Center-State disputes especially when political institutions fail to resolve them on their own. Landmark judgments such as *Shamsher*

Singh v. State of Punjab, *S. R. Bommai v. Union of India* and the more recent *State of Tamil Nadu v. Governor of Tamil Nadu* have played a major role in defining and limiting the powers of the Governor. In an era of intense party competition and politics, the judicial review remains a strong mechanism for maintain federal balance and democratic accountability. At the same time, the judiciary cleared that court intervention alone cannot resolve every constitutional or political dispute. The effective functioning of Indian federalism therefore requires stronger constitutional conventions and greater political neutrality in the office of the Governor.

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Geriatric population in India, vulnerabilities and healthcare challenges: A Theoretical Perspective

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ABSTRACT

India is undergoing a dramatic demographic shift. Driven by declining fertility rates and increasing life expectancy, the country's population of adults aged 60 and older is expanding rapidly (Agarwal et al., 2016). Projections indicate that by 2050, older adults will constitute approximately 19% of India's total population—exceeding 324 million individuals. While this “older adult boom” reflects massive strides in public health and medicine, it presents a highly complex matrix of socio-economic and healthcare challenges. To systematically address these issues, gerontological and sociological frameworks provide vital structural perspectives. By analyzing the intersection of health, financial structures, and shifting social systems, we can unpack the multi-layered vulnerabilities of India's aging landscape. This perspective splits geriatric vulnerability into two distinct components: physical fragility (e.g., physiological decline, biological deterioration, susceptibility to chronic illness) and social vulnerability (e.g., erosion of traditional social capital, shrinking support networks) (Sahu, 2023). When a family or community views physical fragility strictly as a burden, social networks fray, triggering severe psychological distress, alienation, and elevated risks of elder abuse or neglect. This research paper is going to highlight the Geriatric population in India, vulnerabilities and healthcare challenges: A Theoretical Perspective. At present the penetration of urbanisation the elderly people are more isolated than before. The growing market economy and time constraint restricts sharing and caring concept of the family life.

KEYWORDS: *Old Age, Vulnerability, Deprivation, Geriatric, Demographic Change*

INTRODUCTION

India's geriatric (aged 60 years and above) population is growing rapidly, creating a complex interplay of demographic change, social vulnerabilities, and systemic healthcare gaps. A “theoretical perspective” on this topic typically focuses on how structural, economic, cultural, and policy factors converge to shape the health and well being of older persons rather than describing only empirical patterns. The share of people aged 60+ in India has risen from about 7.4% in 1991 to roughly 8.6% in 2011 (about 104 million), and is projected to grow steadily until mid century. This “ageing in place” is driven by declining fertility, falling mortality, and rising life

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expectancy, superimposed on an already unevenly distributed health and social security infrastructure. Theoretically, demographic transition theory helps explain why India is moving from a “young” to an “ageing” society, but without the parallel institutional maturation (pensions, LTC, geriatric care) seen earlier in many Western states. Geriatric vulnerabilities in India are strongly mediated by socioeconomic status, gender, rural–urban location, and family structure. For example, women, widows, and rural elderly often face higher poverty, limited property rights, and weaker social protection, rendering them more exposed to health shocks and neglect. The erosion of the joint family system and weakening intergenerational support networks also heighten risks of isolation, elder abuse, and abandonment, especially in urban settings. This aligns with social ecological and life course theories, which stress that long term health in old age is shaped by cumulative disadvantage across life stages.

Older Indians carry a heavy burden of non communicable diseases (NCDs) such as hypertension, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancers, and chronic respiratory conditions, alongside rising rates of multimorbidity. These are compounded by high prevalence of sensory impairments (vision, hearing loss), musculoskeletal and mobility problems, and under diagnosed mental health issues, including depression and cognitive decline. From a theoretical standpoint, the “compression of morbidity” versus “expansion of morbidity” debate is relevant: if healthy ageing is not promoted, India may experience prolonged periods of disability and dependence in late life, with enormous social and economic costs. India’s healthcare system remains largely curative, episodic, and disease specific, rather than holistic, preventive, and geriatrics oriented. Geriatric care is fragmented across vertical programmes (NCDs, cancer, mental health, etc.), with few dedicated geriatric units, trained geriatricians, and defined standards of care at primary and community levels. The National Programme for Health Care of the Elderly and integration of elderly care into Ayushman Bharat’s Health and Wellness Centres represent normative steps toward a life course and integrated care approach, but implementation gaps remain immense. Functionally, this reflects a mismatch between policy intent and institutional capacity, which political economy and health systems theories help unpack. A large proportion of elderly Indians, especially in rural areas, suffer from low literacy, inadequate health seeking behaviour, and limited awareness of entitlements under old age pensions or health schemes. Many depend on

out of pocket expenditure for chronic care, which can rapidly push poor and near poor households into catastrophic expenditure. Theoretical lenses such as capability approach (Sen) and barriers to healthcare access models show how education, income, geography, and social norms jointly constrain the ability of older persons to claim their health and social rights, even when schemes exist on paper. A theoretical perspective would emphasize that aging in India cannot be “managed” through isolated medical interventions. It demands integrated, life course-oriented health systems that combine preventive, rehabilitative, palliative, and mental health components. The Social protection and intergenerational equity frameworks that link pensions, food security, housing, and legal safeguards for older persons. The Community based and decentralised geriatric care, aligned with Ayushman Bharat and local self governance structures, also reduce inequities. Such a perspective supports viewing the geriatric population not merely as a “burden” but as a demographic reality requiring structural reconfiguration of health, social, and economic institutions across India.

VULNERABILITY

Vulnerability is a condition of a person firm about by physical, political, social, economic and environmental factors. Which increases the defencelessness of a community in general and an individual in particular, to the impact of hazards. It is a juncture of our life, inability to resist the hazard or respond within our disaster has occurred to a person or community. As a matter of fact, vulnerability depends upon several factors like physiography condition and topography of an area, people and their state of health, local environment, sanitary condition as well as quality or state of local building and their location with respect to their any hazard.

According to Dr. Brené Brown author and researcher, “vulnerability is the core of shame, fear and struggle for worthiness, but it appears that it’s also birth place of joy, of creativity of belonging and of love”. To her this is the vulnerability world we live in. The quality of being vulnerable is able to be easily hurt, influenced or attacked, or something that is vulnerable. The state of being exposed to the possibility of being attacked or harmed, either by physically or emotionally.

Vulnerability allows us to foster deeper relationships and greater acceptance, but it isn’t always easy. Example of vulnerability includes sharing our emotion, talking about our mistakes, and being honest about our

needs. Vulnerability may help us to express our feelings, whether they are positive or negative. New research on vulnerability and coping with the stress found that vulnerability was associated with higher levels of emotional expression and social support.

Vulnerability is the human dimension of disasters and is the result of the range of economic, social, cultural, institutional, political and psychological factors that shape people's life and the environment that they live in. It's human nature that it wants to feel, seen and understood; even if our fear makes us elusive. Many of us also avoid vulnerability because we want to project this image of perfection, which can also have a negative impact upon us.

Vulnerability is defined as a need of special care, support, or protection because of age, disability, risk of abuse or neglect. Being vulnerable doesn't happen in a single dramatic stroke. If we look closer at why vulnerability is a challenge for men? the cause seems to be rooted in fear. This fear manifests in a number of ways like fear of being hurt, harmed, or ridiculed to name a few. We associate vulnerability with emotions that we want to avoid such as fear, shame, and uncertainty.

The causes of the vulnerability are deprivation, which restricts someone to fulfil his/her basic amenities. Moreover, it is severe for the elderly people, those are physically and mentally not sufficient to compete with the other able people in the society. Deprivation is a stage of life, which contributes only violation of someone's right. The term 'deprivation' defines, to take (something) away from (someone or something), to not allow (someone or something) to have or keep (something). The etymological meaning of the word 'deprivation' is "removal from ecclesiastical office, rank or position," from Medieval Latin 'deprivationem' (nominative deprivatō), noun of action from past-participle stem of deprivare, from de- "entirely", (see de-) + Latin privare "to deprive, rob, strip" of anything; "to deliver from" anything. Basically, two types of deprivation prevail in our society, one is forceful and another is natural.

ECONOMIC DEPRIVATION:

When it comes to access financial resources, the elderly are less likely to be able to sustain a minimal standard of living due to economic insecurity and suffering which can be defined as income poverty, subsistence poverty (defined as lacking basic necessities), or capability poverty (defined as dependent on others). Poverty based on income is quantified in the elderly's capacity to sustain

the minimal income level at which physical efficiency is preserved and is regarded as a measure of impoverishment for the elderly. (Rowntree, 1941). Elderly people experiencing economic insecurity are also characterised by aspects of fundamental must keep up a minimal standard of living. Numerous studies conducted worldwide to demonstrate that, in nearly all developing nations that have met their demographic transition targets, economic deprivation among the elderly is a prevalent phenomenon. Lee and Shaw, (2004). The material that has already been published in both the developed and developing worlds shows that there is evidence of increased vulnerability to ageing as one ages. According to studies, the oldest people in practically every country have the highest likelihood of being impoverished (Smeeding and Williamson, 2001). Since the old are not covered by official social security, their significant economic dependency is one indicator of deprivation among the elderly (Kinsella and Velkoff, 2001). This dependency will be particularly high among the elderly in developing nations (Clark, York and Anker 1997).

SOCIAL DEPRIVATION:

Many people believe that loneliness and social isolation are issues associated with ageing. Many people outlive their friends and family as they get older, and social interaction may decrease as people stay closer to home due to greater chronic sickness and mobility issues. The shrinking of their social network may cause older people to feel somewhat unsatisfied, and for those who are, loneliness is the inevitable consequence. Most of the scholars and practitioners concur that living alone and having poor health are frequent causes of social isolation and loneliness in older adults (Ryff, 1995). While social loneliness is said to be the subjective expression of discontent with having few social contacts, social isolation is an objective indicator of social engagement. Research from the West indicates that upon retirement and their disengagement from the workforce, older people become increasingly socially isolated (Maddox, 1999; Knodel, Chayovan and Siriboon, 1992). Despite being economically successful, over 60% of the elderly in OECD countries live in social isolation according to empirical data (Helpage 2 International, 1995). Elderly social isolation is a result of a more individualistic culture brought about by the dissolution of cultural and traditional structures in many nations, which has altered social ties (Kinsella and Velkoff, 2001). The elderly in India had social security due to the traditional family structure. Research has indicated that older adults are becoming more socially isolated (Goswami, 2000; Rajan, 2004).

The elderly's way of life is impacted by their social isolation (NSSO, 2004). In the future, as the system rapidly modernises and transforms, the issue will get worse. Here, we examine living situations and family support for elderly individuals in order to examine social insecurity. The phrase "living arrangement" describes the configuration of a person's home (Palloni, 2001). Living arrangements are explained by Irudaya Rajan, Mishra, and Sarma (1995) in terms of the kind of family the elderly live in, the headship they experience, the place and people they stay with, the kind of relationship they maintain with their family members, and overall, the degree to which they adapt to their changing surroundings.

CULTURAL TABOO:

Culture promotes peace and prosperity in society and also establish truth. Particularly traditional Indian society helps to protect human rights and dignity. In addition to radical Indian society practices so many superstitions which are cause of, gross violation of human rights. History has proven that practicing superstitions like Sati Pratha and Thalaikoothal are bright example, which are at present illegal. Particularly such superstitions are targeting the older population of our society.

Thalaikoothal (Taking complete bath, including head, and also means Senicide - killing elderly people) a cultural taboo practice in Tamil Nadu which, promotes the killing of elderly person of the family. At present Thalaikoothal is not practising in India, but the practice has long received covert social acceptance as a form of mercy killing, and people seldom complain to the police. In some cases, the family informs their relatives before performing Thalaikoothal, and sometimes the victims even request it. Thalaikoothal traditionally for those who are older, incapacitated and ill health are targeted.

PHYSICAL CONDITION:

Older adults are vulnerable insofar as they progressively become ever more dependent on others due to physical condition. Indeed, due to progressive decline in their physical and cognitive abilities, older adults lose more and more control over their own daily activities, and in broad terms, lose their decision-making capacity. Adults over age 65 are more likely to encounter diseases related to aging, such as Alzheimer's disease, or more advanced chronic conditions such as diabetes and heart disease. They are also more likely to suffer from multiple conditions, and may have mobility issues that impede access to care. Common conditions in older age

include hearing loss, cataracts and refractive errors, back and neck pain and osteoarthritis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, diabetes, depression and dementia. Being vulnerable is defined as in need of special care, support, or protection because of age, disability, risk of abuse or neglect.

MELTDOWN OF THE JOINT FAMILY:

The concept of joint family has ever lasted and multi-relevance in the society. It is said that the moral education of a child started from its family. In joint families a child normally taught about the behaviours and manners to deal with others. A child taught about what to do and what not to do. All these informal education in the home is given by the grandparents, those we named as the senior citizens or the elderly people. But now a day no one is caring about the moral education of children at their own homes. They tried to replace the original teachers (Grand Parents) by the tutors to teach the children. And as the outcome of it now the society has a large segment of population with lack of moral education. As a result, the increasing number of anti-socials and the criminals are obstructing the national development.

IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY:

New tech can be a bit of overwhelming for anyone, but it's often even more intimidating for a senior adult. Many physical, cultural, mental, and even psychological factors come into play, and for some, the challenges become real obstacles. Even if somebody want to, become tech-savvy or computer literate, he/she may face obstacles. Those difficulties can seem enormous and impossible to overcome at times. But the truth is, the benefits of gaining tech ability can far outweigh the effort it takes to learn.

As the world becomes increasingly digitized, it can be difficult for older adults to keep up with modern technology expectations. However, the benefits of staying current with technology are numerous, especially for older adults. It can help them live more independently, stay connected with loved ones, and even improve their cognitive health. It is important to acknowledge that adapting to modern technology can be daunting for anyone, regardless of their age. However, it's important to remember that there are resources available to help older adults learn and practice new technology skills. New age companies dedicated to the older adults as their audience, offer a variety of classes taught by knowledgeable peer instructors who can help older adults learn the ins and outs of modern technology. Additionally,

many companies, organizations, and community centres offer courses and workshops to help older adults adapt to modern technology.

FAMILY DISPUTE & LEGAL INTERPRETATION:

Ageing is an overarching phenomenon, its effects felt across lines of region, gender, caste and other identifiers. Standards in international human rights law as well as the Constitution of India lays down broad guidelines to protect rights including ideals of equality and non-discrimination. These are reflected in the legal landscape on the ground and its working. However, both these seem to fall short of Constitutional guarantees. The abdication of responsibility by the State in terms lack of social security and inordinate delays on issues relating to rights claims outweigh the minor gains made by maintenance and domestic violence legislations that seek to ensure life with equality and dignity in times of ageing.

As a result, elderly people take their own lives. In later life, elderly individuals experience a multitude of physical issues, including basic necessities and chronic illnesses. Physical issues prevent older individuals from engaging them in physically demanding activities, thus they must rely on the support of other family members. Older adults frequently become aware of their burdensome nature to their family members due to physical illnesses and fundamental needs. After accepting the weight of their obligations, elderly individuals come to the conclusion that their departure will provide their families with more happiness than their ongoing presence.

MIGRATION & DISPLACEMENT:

Older persons in migration contexts are at risk of being overlooked, which might perpetuate vulnerabilities and inequalities. In addition, there is a lack of data on older persons left behind and their needs. Many countries are facing the burden of accelerated population aging and a lack of institutional support to meet the needs of older individuals. Migration of older adult was highly associated with poor mental health and physical health. Thus, in order to decrease morbidity among the elderly as well as to maintain and enhance the well-being of families, programs should focus on alleviating the symptoms of poor mental health among the elderly left behind and aim to reduce the differences in utilization of health care-seeking behaviour among elderly with children present in the community and elderly left behind and their health care-seeking behaviour.

HEALTH AND HYGIENIC:

Something that is hygienic is cleanliness, healthy, sanitary and pure. The elderly people should take care of their health and hygienic. But in later life, elderly individuals experience a multitude of physical issues, including basic necessities and chronic illnesses. Physical issues prevent older individuals from engaging in physically demanding activities, thus they must rely on the support of other family members. Older adults frequently become aware of their burdensome nature to their family members due to physical illnesses and fundamental needs. After accepting the weight of their obligations, elderly individuals come to the conclusion that their departure will provide their families with more happiness than their ongoing presence.

RURAL URBAN DICHOTOMY:

There are differences in social practices in rural area and urban area. In rural area most of the elderly people engaged in physical work. It has been found that during the early old age (age between 60 to 70 years) people worked normally. In many cases up to 70 years people manage their own family detached from their children. Women of the same age group having the experience of cooking and managing their houses. These were why their children preferring to stay in nuclear families. People in these age groups in rural area control their all emotions and live normally in the society as the 'elderly nuclear family'. In this time economically it became difficult to manage their lives. With the economic crisis and emotional detachment worsen the physical health as a whole. During the late old age (after 70 years), when they are unable to manage themselves, expect help from their children or the grandchildren. Health of the elderly has given no priority in these situations. In extreme situations (worsen in health) elderly taken to the hospitals for medical checkup.

WELLBEING:

Well-being has been defined as the combination of feeling good and functioning well; the experience of positive emotions such as happiness and contentment as well as the development of one's potential, having some control over one's life, having a sense of purpose, and experiencing positive relationships. Well-being also known as wellness, prudential value, prosperity or quality of life, refers to what is intrinsically valuable relative to someone. So, the well-being of a person is what is ultimately good for this person, what is in the self-interest

of this person. Wellbeing is not just the absence of disease or illness. It's a complex combination of a person's physical, mental, emotional and social health factors. Wellbeing is strongly linked to happiness and life satisfaction. In short, wellbeing could be described as how someone feel about himself and his life.

According to Merriam-Webster, "well-being" defined as the state of being happy, healthy, or successful is written with a hyphen. However, thanks to the New York Times bestseller *Wellbeing: The Five Essential Elements* written by Rath and Harter, well-being has been written in many publications as one word, no hyphen. The world health organisation defines wellbeing as a state in which an individual can realise their own potential, cope with normal stresses, work productively, and contribute to their community.

Wellness is the act of practicing healthy habits on a daily basis to attain better physical and mental health outcomes, so that instead of just surviving. To understand the significance of wellness, it's important to understand how it's linked to health. For older adults, social connection is particularly important to reduce risk factors such as social isolation and loneliness. At this stage of life, meaningful social activities can significantly improve positive mental health, life satisfaction and quality of life; they can also reduce depressive symptoms expect to live well into old age.

However, older persons are characterized by great diversity, and extended longevity is not necessary accompanied by better health. Although many enjoy healthy. ageing and live in good physical and mental condition even into and beyond their 80s. There are some easy steps that you can take in order to improve how you feel each day, they don't take up much time and they don't have to cost anything either. They're known as the Five Ways to Wellbeing and they are: take notice, connect, keep learning, give and be active. Older age is also characterized by the emergence of several complex health states commonly called geriatric syndromes.

CONCLUSION:

Throughout one's adult years he / she is busy in thinking of others, caring for others, working for others, earning for others. Whether or not he / she marries, has children, lives in a family; he / she lives amongst people. But after a life time of it he / she suddenly faces days and years of isolation. While journeying through life one has to make endless adjustments with many unexpected, perplexing,

difficult situations. In childhood and youth, one has other adults around to guide the way. As adults, the feeling that one is in-charge helps in tackling such situations. But the elderly have no one to guide and at every step of the way they are made to realize themselves, realize their deeds. It is true that old age as we know it presents frightening challenges to individuals and societies. Simply, much of what we hear about old age is not correct, that it is all and only about loneliness, depression, inter-generational wars. Like every phase in life, old age does have its problems in fact, we must agree with the accepted contention that there are more problems linked with old age than earlier life stages. Taking all these in mind we must give attention towards the elderly in our homes, own families. At least if we aware on taking care of the elders in our own then it will ensure of caring the senior citizens of the country. To Bridge the Generation Gap between two generations are relevant to the ageing population in several ways we have address.

To reduce the generation gap, communication should be the initial step. Lack of communication between parents and kids leads to this gap. One should talk to one's parents about his/her daily routine, feelings, etc. By doing so, one can bridge the gap between himself and his parents, which will help him/her to become more attached. The feeling of affection will grow stronger. Kids should spend quality time with their parents to understand each other better. They can spend quality time watching a match together or going for an evening walk. This will surely help someone get closer to his/her parents and bridge the generation gap. You can even make your parents learn new games and play with them someday. Someone should share his/her problems with your parents to help you with solutions. Initially, they might scold you, but at last, they will support you and suggest some solutions. Effective gestures often prove to be successful and can convey more than words. It can be a gift to your parents on their birthdays, anniversaries, Mother's or Father's Day, etc. Parents feel delighted when they see their kids behaving like grown-ups. As we grow up, our responsibilities also get bigger. It's better for us if we understand it as fast as possible. To sum it up, we can say that the generation gap happens due to constant changes in the world. While we may not stop the evolution of the world, we can strengthen the bond and bridge the gap it creates. Each person must respect everyone for their individuality, rather than fitting them into a box they believe to be correct.

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A Study on Challenges for Women Journalists in Electronic Media

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ABSTRACT

No nation can endure without its essential cornerstone, the media, whether print or electronic. When discussing the communication of government programs and schemes, electronic media is the primary consideration. During the third wave of feminism, the prevalence of women journalists throughout various states in India reveals a striking paradox. Additionally, a concerning tendency of 'gendered' journalism is developing, in which exclusively 'gendered' or feminine news is allocated to female journalists. Despite several opportunities in the realm of electronic media for women, several barriers persist for female journalists. This paper seeks to determine whether the pronounced disparity in the numbers and roles of female journalists exists throughout various regions of India. It examines hard and soft news articles disseminated by prominent regional English and Hindi newspapers. The analysis has been conducted about several characteristics, including the ratio of male to female reporters, the beats given to female journalists, the nature and frequency of stories they cover, and the priority of female journalists concerning key problems. This article relies exclusively on secondary data sources. Numerous cases involving women journalists in various electronic media have been studied.

KEYWORDS: *Feminine News; Gender Disparity; Gendered Journalism; Women Journalists, Electronic Media.*

INTRODUCTION

In the age of Information and Technology, journalism is a profession that should equally represent both males and females in society. Historically, journalism was regarded as a predominantly male vocation. The situation has completely transformed; educated young women have infiltrated the masculine stronghold. An exemplary case is that of the late PrabhaDutt, who graduated with distinction from the Chandigarh School of Journalism and completed her training at Hindustan Times, Delhi, in 1964. Upon her request for employment at the conclusion of the course, the editor, Mr. Mulgaonkar, stated that the publication did not hire women. Prabha departed only after receiving a formal guarantee from the editor that any future employment of a woman will be taken into account. Several months later, upon hiring

a young woman for the front desk, she intrusively entered his office and secured employment. The susceptibility of women to social pressures and their

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vulnerability to sexual harassment and physical threats cannot be disregarded. Gender sensitisation sessions and fundamental human principles should be implemented to dismantle the hurdles hindering women in media. The working environment have consistently been uninviting for women to pursue occupations beyond domestic responsibilities. The primary challenges that female journalists encounter are to transportation and communication in their offices and during field reporting. A majority of female journalists globally frequently encounter various forms of intimidation, threats, or harassment associated with their profession, with severity ranging from derogatory remarks to death threats. Shivani Bhatnagar, principal journalist for The Indian Express, was murdered in her East Delhi flat while accompanied by her young son. Shivani Bhatnagar, a journalist, passed away on January 23, 1999. Her murder escalated into a scandal that permeated the highest echelons of Indian politics. On September 27, 2002, service officer Ravi Kant Sharma was charged with murder by the Delhi Police after evading capture since an arrest warrant was issued on August 2 of the same year. Sharma purportedly murdered Bhatnagar due to his worry that she would reveal their “intimate” relationship. On 22 August 2013, a 22-year-old photojournalist in Mumbai was gang-raped by five individuals at the Shakti Mills facility, when she was on assignment with a male colleague. The males purportedly beat the coworker, restraining him with belts, then sequentially raping the female while threatening her with a broken beer bottle.

WHAT CONSTITUTES ELECTRONIC MEDIA?

In the 19th century, early innovators such as Samuel Morse developed the telegraph, signifying the advent of electronic media. The introduction of the radio in the early 20th century revolutionised communication by allowing the public to access audio content. However, the genuine transformation in electronic media occurred with the advent of television. The late 1920s witnessed the inaugural successful demonstration of a television system. By the mid-20th century, televisions significantly impacted the manner in which individuals consumed information and entertainment, as they became a commonplace household appliance. Television connected viewers to distant events by rendering sounds and sights

tangible. It significantly influenced political discourse, public sentiment, and the globalisation of culture.

The advent of electronic media has transformed communication methods among individuals. The advancement of smartphones has enabled continuous connectivity, eliminating constraints related to geography and time. Social media platforms facilitate global idea and information exchange, fostering virtual communities and linking individuals with similar interests from diverse backgrounds. The internet has significantly increased the accessibility of information. Currently, a vast array of information on various subjects is available to everyone with internet access. Social media facilitates the rapid dissemination of news and information, offering real-time updates on global events and issues. Television and streaming services have revolutionised the entertainment industry, enabling customers to access a wide array of information on demand. Viewers now possess greater autonomy in their viewing preferences due to the shift from traditional cable television to over-the-top (OTT) providers.

The emergence of electronic media has facilitated cross-cultural contact and enhanced globalisation. The distribution of materials from several cultures to a worldwide audience has led to the amalgamation of traditions, beliefs, and concepts. This may result in cultural uniformity or promote cross-cultural understanding, each with positive and negative consequences. The swift and seamless dissemination of information on the internet has led to the proliferation of misinformation and fabricated news. False information proliferates due to the challenge of differentiating between credible and dubious sources in the era of social media.

The digitisation of personal data presents significant privacy and security issues. Robust security protocols are essential to safeguard users’ data and digital identities, given the increasing prevalence of identity theft, data breaches, and cyber-attacks. Despite the pervasive utilisation of electronic media, numerous individuals, particularly in underprivileged nations, continue to encounter obstacles in obtaining opportunities and information as a result of the digital divide. To promote

digital inclusion and ensure equitable access to financial and educational resources, closing this gap is essential¹.

The persistent connectivity of electronic media may adversely impact mental health and contribute to addiction. Social media has been associated with issues such as depression, anxiety, and cyberbullying, particularly among younger users. Technologies such as virtual reality and augmented reality possess the capacity to fundamentally transform material consumption by providing immersive experiences across various sectors, including entertainment, education, and gaming.

Artificial intelligence is becoming vital in data analysis, personalisation, and content recommendation, enabling media companies to more effectively cater to their clients and address their specific requirements. The trend of cord-cutting, when people prefer streaming services to traditional cable television, is anticipated to continue. This transformation presents both opportunities and challenges for media enterprises and content creators. As electronic media evolves, governments and stakeholders must confront issues such as data privacy, content moderation, and the responsibility of social media platforms to mitigate dangerous information and disinformation².

WOMEN PROFESSIONALS IN ELECTRONIC MEDIA: THE INDIA STORY

In India, numerous news channels are accessible, and the representation of women is evident. There has been a significant transition from print media to electronic media due to the advent of electric power generation and other developments in electronic gadgets. With the proliferation of electronic media devices, the government has made significant strides in deploying numerous communication satellites to enhance communication. To enhance the efficacy of electronic media, numerous satellite TV channels have been introduced in recent years. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting's recent study on India's Media and Entertainment business reveals that there were 905 satellite TV stations in the country as of 2022-2023. This represents a 7-channel increase compared to the prior year. Subsequent to the COVID-19 outbreak, there has been a persistent yearly reduction in the number of satellite TV stations. The quantity of channels diminished by four, resulting in a

total of 914 for the 2020-2021 year, compared to 2019-2020. Furthermore, there was a notable reduction of 16 satellite TV channels throughout the 2021-22 period, culminating in a total of 898 channels.

In 2014-15, there was the most significant decrease in the number of satellite TV channels, with a loss of 38, resulting in a total of 821 channels.

Conversely, there was a 52-fold growth in the number of TV channels during the period of 2015-2016. An analogous increase in figures was observed in the fiscal year 2019-2020.³

Growth of private satellite TV channels in India from 2012-13 to 2022-23

S. No	Year	No. of satellite TV channels	Yearly growth
1	2012-2013	850	28
2	2013-2014	859	9
3	2014-2015	821	(-)38
4	2015-2016	847	26
5	2016-2017	899	52
6	2017-2018	877	(-)22
7	2018-2019	866	(-)11
8	2019-2020	918	52
9	2020-2021	914	(-)4
10	2021-2022	898	(-)16
11	2022-2023	905	7

*Source:-Ministry of I&B

When we talked out the participation of men and women in electronic media it gives another turn to the growth perspective of electronic media, because a lake in participation of men and women will affects its growth.

¹Toll, B. A., & Ling, P. M. (2005). The Virginia Slims identity crisis: An inside look at tobacco industry marketing to women. *Tobacco Control*, 14, 172-180.

²Vasiljevic, M., Petrescu, D. C., & Marteau, T. M. (2016). Impact of advertisements promoting candy-like flavored e-cigarettes on the appeal of tobacco smoking among children: an experimental study. *Tobacco Control*, 25, e107-e112.

³<https://www.exchange4media.com/media-tv-news/india-has-905-satellite-tv-channels-as-of-2022-2023-mib-130524.html>

When we talked out the participation of men and women in electronic media it gives another turn to the growth perspective of electronic media, because a lack in participation of men and women will affect its growth.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

To find out the level of increased role of women journalists in electronic media, challenges faced by the women journalist in electronic media and also future growth and development of the women journalist in electronic media.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature review's objective was to get a handy into the status that women in India have enjoyed so far, the working women and the working women journalists. Accordingly, the researcher has categorized the review of literatures into four important categories to achieve the objectives.

- A) Status of Working Women in India
- B) Overall Status of Women Journalists (Then and Now)
- C) Gender Bias in News Room

A. Status of Working Women in India

A report entitled "Educational Status of Girls and Women: The Emerging Scenario" by Sudarshan (2000) provided information about education in India from independence to the present day. The analysis assessed the strengths and shortcomings of the existing system, school attendance, literacy outcomes among states, and disparities in educational access between genders, as well as among other social groups and castes.

Sandhu and Singh (1979) conducted a study indicating that motivational factors such as the sense of achievement, utilisation of abilities, gratitude, rewards, creative autonomy, and opportunities for professional growth significantly enhance job satisfaction more than factors like the conduct of immediate supervisors, job security and advancement, salary adequacy, organisational structure, and the social status associated with the job.

A research by Vinita Srivastava (1984) examined the employment of educated married women in India. The research has analysed the occupational prestige of both spouses. The survey revealed that at every socio-economic level, the employment of wives were either

consistent with or only marginally lower in status than those of their husbands.

Locke (1979) noted a causal association between family functioning and job life. This cause-and-effect relationship may operate bidirectionally. The work attitude may influence family attitudes and vice versa. The mechanism that positively induces this effect is the emotional generalisation of spillover.

L. Krishnaveni (Status of Indian Women, 1984) defines a "Working Woman" as one who is employed outside her home for remuneration. Due to economic necessity, the majority of women are now entering the workforce to secure a livelihood. However, women in this context experience diminished or nonexistent job security relative to the organised industry.

B. STATUS OF WOMEN JOURNALISTS

Female journalists have made significant progress since the inception of journalism. They currently constitute approximately fifty percent of the newsrooms of prominent daily newspapers and are permitted to undertake historically male-designated responsibilities, such as sports reporting, police coverage, and editorial composition. Furthermore, girls receive equivalent compensation in comparison to their male colleagues (Nieman, 2001).

The 2012 Wage Indicator Salary Survey on the Gender Pay Gap indicated that female journalists earn lower salaries, receive fewer perks, and are more frequently employed without fixed contracts compared to their male counterparts. They recognise this, which diminishes their satisfaction with their salary, work environment, and, indeed, their male colleagues.

Byerly's (2011) analysis on female journalists analysed over 500 news organisations across nearly 60 countries and revealed that 27 percent of senior management positions (publishers, chief executive officers) globally are held by women. Men occupy about two-thirds of positions in the reporting sector.

The Media Awareness Network (2005) claimed that in 2001, just 38% of working journalists globally were women. The Network reported that, despite women comprising over half of journalism graduates in Canada, just 30% of news pieces were authored by women, and they were largely absent from Canadian television news.

D. Bhardwaj (2014) in his study, "Status of Working Women Journalists in India: A Study of Delhi NCR,"

finds that the working environment for female journalists is somewhat discouraging. The majority of female journalists encounter challenges while reporting in public spaces due to the apathy of the general populace.

N. Singh (2016) in her paper, “Analysing Status of Women Journalists in Indian TV News Channels,” states that factors such as social security and physical attractiveness continue to impact the progressive approach of women journalists.

C. Gender Bias in News Room

A 2014 report from the International News Safety Institute, based on a global poll of almost 1,000 female journalists, indicated that approximately two-thirds had encountered workplace violence, manifested as intimidation, threats, or abuse. Gabriel Arana (2015) asserts in the article “A Mental Health Epidemic in the Newsroom” that a 2001 survey revealed that over 85 percent of individuals encounter work-related trauma.

Neeta Mahajani (1989) in her work titled “The Problems Faced by Women Journalists in India” asserts that societal factors impede the achievement of women journalists in their careers. Contemporary society remains predominantly patriarchal. Undoubtedly, the women are serving as significant dignitaries. However, they may be regarded as alternatives to the regulations. Male supremacy is the prevailing norm in India.

According to the National Commission on Women (2004) report on the “Status of Women Journalists in India,” a remarkable 20.5 percent of existing literature indicated that women faced discrimination in promotions. Nearly half of the participants (45.5 percent) attributed it to their gender.

Aside from the minimal compensation they receive for their labour, women are more susceptible to layoffs (Greenhouse, 1984) and terminations (Kleinman, 1988) compared to men. Furthermore, they are less likely to possess sufficient health insurance and other ancillary benefits, such as paid vacations (Perman & Stevens, 1989), even when considering variables such as tenure, hours worked, and job title.

A study by Helen Castelli (1984) titled “Women in Media” examined the involvement of Indian women in the press from the 19th century to the present. The analysis indicated that few women had received formal education

in journalism. At that time, the majority of women belonged to the elite community and were pursuing self-fulfilment rather than money and social prestige.

June O. Nicholson (2006) of Virginia Commonwealth University identified persistent difficulties affecting women in newspapers, including work-family balance, wage disparity, and the glass ceiling. The survey has also indicated that the professional advancement of women in newspapers is sluggish and unpromising.

Sammye Johnson (2006), in her paper “Women’s Salary and Status in the Magazine Industry,” provides a historical review of women’s magazines and analyses women’s status within the magazine industry. Women in the magazine industry assert that the sector is equitable and that their earnings are comparable to those of their male counterparts.

Rama Jha (1992) conducted a comprehensive field survey and interviews with women media professionals in India. The study articulates the compelling narrative of women’s resolve, commitment, and accomplishments. The research also highlighted how traditional male bias seeks to marginalise women’s contributions in subtle manners.

A research conducted by S.R. Joshi in 1987 examined the opportunities and challenges encountered by women employed at Doordarshan in India. Doordarshan is a government-owned media entity. Joshi has attempted to ascertain the ratio of women employed in various roles and to determine if there has been any alteration in the trend of women’s employment over the past few years.

A research conducted by Pooja Ravi Kumar (2007) examined both male and female journalists in Bangalore, an information technology hub. It studied the pronounced disparities between males and females in their occupations and work environments concerning gender. The study’s findings indicated that reporters and editors did not regard gender sensitivity as a significant factor in news writing or broadcasting.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is based on the secondary data which has been collected through various secondary sources like, like journals, newspapers, Books, websites, conferences etc. and various cases related to women

journalist in various electronic media has been analyzed. Descriptive Research digizine has been used in this study.

DATA ANALYSIS

CHALLENGES FACED BY WOMEN IN ELECTRONIC MEDIA INDUSTRY

Case Study: Challenges Faced By Women in TV News Industry

Case-1

An individual named Manisha Kulshreshtha holds the position of senior news producer at News24 TV news station. She possesses around 13 years of professional experience in several news media establishments. Regarding her professional career, she expressed her enduring satisfaction in the field of news media and the execution of her duties. It is incumbent upon me to ensure that I do not commit any minor errors throughout the broadcast of my news article. I consistently strive to produce news articles that are abundant in substance and impart knowledge to the audience. However, I perceive a lack of recognition for both my job and my wage package. I have attempted to express my apprehension on a favourable evaluation of my wage, but my concerns have not been acknowledged. I am consistently interested in reporting on news stories that pertain to the economy, given that I have obtained a Master's degree in Economics from one of the most prestigious institutions in our nation. However, my coverage has been limited to soft news beats. When queried about her social life, she expressed a persistent sense of sleep deprivation. This is due to her tendency to sleep late at night after doing all her household chores when working the morning shift, and to work during the day for homework and caring for her children when working the night shift. She believes that she seldom expresses dissatisfaction with her busy schedule, but she believes that she deserves recognition and esteem for her professional contributions at her company.

Case 2

Involves Amita Nandal, a senior journalist currently employed at Republic TV. According to her statement, she has been employed in the field of news media for a duration of eleven years. She commenced her journalistic profession in 2009 and has since been consistently engaged in diligent and committed work. She has acquired extensive expertise in many capacities within the news

media industry, having worked in both the input and output departments. In several news organisations, she has gained experience in news reporting within the input department and has also served as a news producer within the output department. She has collaborated with her current organisation in her professional endeavours. According to her, she experiences a sense of safety and security in her profession. The organisation offers a taxi service. Regarding her employment, she acknowledges and derives pleasure from it, despite occasional work-related stress. However, she diligently and wholeheartedly works diligently during her designated working hours at her office. She expressed that she feels secure in her office due to the consistently professional behaviour of her coworkers towards her female colleagues. I am consistently accorded respect. We collaborate; we partake in shared meals during lunch or dinner. We derive pleasure from our professional colleagues. In my department, there is a notable disparity in the representation of male and female personnel. The organisation exhibits a positive attitude towards female employees. Regarding her remuneration, she asserts that the organisation provides her with a satisfactory wage in addition to comprehensive medical coverage. In response to an inquiry regarding her interactions with male coworkers, she expressed that within the news media organisation, an individual's pay grade, designation, and job profile are contingent upon their professional background. Consequently, many media professionals hold distinct positions and receive varying salaries. However, when it comes to the job, the position or salary is insignificant. What truly important is the completion of news items and other assigned tasks, regardless of one's seniority or juniority. The entire office operates as a cohesive team. A conversation was held regarding her personal and social life. According to her statement, her personal life revolves around her family and elderly parents. Following my work hours, I consistently enjoy spending quality time with my elderly parents. We derive pleasure from engaging in shared tea consumption. As an individual who remains unmarried, my family and I encounter significant societal pressures. However, I am unable to do so due to my responsibility of caring for my elderly parents, which prevents me from leaving them unattended. When queried about societal perceptions of her personal and social life, she expressed that possessing a strong cognitive ability and access to favourable career prospects consistently engenders a sense of pride within the community. I and my parents consistently garner respect from others. It is commonly asserted that the presence of a female journalist inside our society elicits a sense of pride.

Case 3

Another female journalist During the interview, Sarika Jain, a news producer employed by India News channel, provided insights into her personal experiences. She stated that she has been employed in the field of the media for the past 12 years. She stated that she has had significant challenges in maintaining her employment in this field, and she has surpassed the boundaries of diligent effort to attain some success in her professional advancement. Additionally, she noted that she was had to undertake additional tasks in comparison to her male counterparts in order to demonstrate her journalistic aptitude. Regarding her wages, she expressed dissatisfaction with the remuneration she receives. I exert significant effort and genuine dedication to my work, and as a result, I anticipate receiving fair compensation. I receive significantly lower compensation in comparison to my male colleagues who possess an equivalent level of expertise and job description. Additionally, she expresses dissatisfaction with the work climate in her office, including issues such as excessively long working hours. She has very little to reveal about her personal life. She has expressed that she experiences happiness due to the unwavering love she receives from her family.

CASE 4

In our interview, Rachna Upadhyay, a news reporter, recounted her experiences in the field of news media. Currently, she is employed at TV18 news channel. She stated that she has been employed in the field of the media for the past four years. I am dissatisfied with the nature of the task I have been allocated, but it has provided me with valuable learning opportunities in the field of news media. I am dissatisfied with the salary I receive in relation to the level of work I perform.

In relation to her personal experience, she also expressed that within the fast-paced field of the media, the safety of women is often overlooked. I am required to visit locations for news story coverage, where I have apprehension in doing reporting due to insufficient security measures in place. However, in order to proceed, it is imperative that I prioritise the preservation of my employment and diligently accomplish the assigned duty. Despite the numerous challenges, I derive great satisfaction from my work. I work under significant pressure, with minimal breaks, and for 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. In my perspective, the news media industry

lacks job stability. I am uncertain about my ability to work the following day due to the absence of a job guarantee. However, I derive satisfaction from my work and employment, as I have deliberately selected this profession and made the deliberate decision to pursue a career in news media.⁴

WHAT IS RADIO?

Radio: The process of creating and disseminating educational, entertaining, and informational material for listeners via radio waves. People used to cover interviews, engage with the audience, and provide daily and current updates on politics, the economy, and other news from other radio stations.

It was one of the most popular forms of media in the past because of its widespread appeal. Even now, a lot of people utilize the radio to stay current on traffic and weather while they're on the go. Additionally, the radio's broad reach makes it more beneficial for marketing or advertising goods and services, as well as disseminating vital information and social messages.

When started?

Broadcasting in India really started about thirteen years before AIR was founded. In June of 1923, the Radio Club of Bombay conducted the nation's first transmission. The formation of the Calcutta Radio Club came five months later. Founded on July 23, 1927, the Indian Broadcasting Company (IBC) faced collapse in less than three years. The Department of Industries and Labor launched the Indian Broadcasting Service in April 1930 as an experimental venture. In August 1935, Lionel Fielden became the first controller of broadcasting. The next month saw the launch of a private radio station in Mysore called Akashvani. The Indian State Broadcasting Service changed its name to All India Radio on June 8, 1936.

August 1937 saw the founding of the Central News Organization (CNO). The Department of Communications took over AIR in the same year, and the Department of Information and Broadcasting took over four years later. There were six radio stations in India at the time of independence: Tiruchirapalli, Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, and Lucknow. Pakistan had three: Dacca, Lahore, and Peshawar. That was just 2.5 percent of the region and 11% of the people that AIR covered. The next year saw the splitting of CNO into

⁵ Md. Afsar& Suman Kumari (2020), Case study of Urban and Rural Women Journalists in India, social science, Humanities and Education, Barlin Germany

the External Services Division (ESD) and the News Services Division (NSD). The National Broadcaster officially changed its name to AKASHVANI in 1956. Popular cinema music served as the foundation for the 1957 establishment of the VividhBharati Service⁵.

CASE:-1

Four days subsequent to the enactment of the sexual harassment at workplace Bill by Parliament, the ministry responsible for information and broadcasting (I&B) has found itself in a predicament whereby more than 25 radio jockeys (RJs) have lodged complaints against the senior management of All India Radio (AIR). The presenters have expressed grievances on the perceived inequitable treatment in relation to labour distribution, remuneration, and have reported instances of sexual innuendos and advances during the past two years.

According to the RJs, who are affiliated with the AIR Broadcasting Professionals Association (AIRBPA), their persistent grievances directed towards high-ranking officials in AIR, PrasarBharati, and the I&B ministry were received with insufficient attention.

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (I&B) has issued a statement indicating that a committee, led by a joint secretary, would investigate the charges put forth by the news presenters of AIR FM Gold and Rainbow. The group will then provide suggestions about the safety of women at these channels. The AIRBPA members have lodged a formal complaint with the Delhi Commission for Women and are contemplating initiating proceedings with the National Commission for Women as well. Presenters said that certain production executives requested their presence and accompanied them on social outings. Individuals who rejected these advancements were assigned a low grade, leading to a reduced number of shows to host and therefore lower remuneration. A duty officer commended a presentation I had presented and thereafter informed me that he had expressed his want to embrace the host of the show to his wife. He thereafter proceeded to embrace me...The presenter expressed astonishment and uncertainty on how to respond.⁶

CASE-2

After a period of six months and the completion of two inquiries, the 20 radio jockeys (RJs) who voiced their opposition to sexual and workplace harassment at All India Radio's FM Gold and Rainbow channels assert that they persistently experience victimisation.

The RJs, including the individual who has lodged a First Information Report (FIR) and initiated a legal proceeding accusing sexual harassment, have expressed grievances over inadequate working conditions, delayed remuneration, preferential treatment, and unreasonable work schedules. According to the group's assertion, they are not provided with opportunities to anchor shows and are marginalised inside the organisation. They stated. A purported offender, who was subjected to a brief suspension, has been restored in a different department within a span of two months. The director of the Delhi station remains in his current role. Only the two individuals who were employed on a temporary basis and then terminated by the management have incurred any consequences for the transgressions.

The AIR Broadcasting Professionals Association (AIRBPA) established two committees, one led by the Information & Broadcasting ministry and the other an internal inquiry committee led by PrasarBharati. Although they assert that they have not received the report from the ministry, it is worth noting that the internal inquiry committee report of the AIR was delivered to one of the complainants late last night. She asserted that the study, which exonerated all four individuals accused of harassment, was deficient and prejudiced.

CASE -3

All India Radio (AIR) informed the Delhi High Court on 20 September 2016 that there have been no reported cases of sexual harassment against female radio presenters, as stated in a Public Interest Litigation (PIL). The PIL alleges that the authorities have neglected to address multiple complaints made by female radio jockeys (RJs).

According to an affidavit submitted by the Director General (DG) of AIR, it was asserted that the organisation

⁵Growth and Development. (n.d.). Retrieved March 27, 2024, from Prasar Bharti: <https://prasarbharati.gov.in/growth-development-air/#:~:text=In%20June%201923%20the%20Radio,Radio%20Club%20five%20months%20later.>

⁶ Dhawan, H. (2013, March 6). *Radio jockeys air tales of harassment, AIR left red-faced*. The Times of India. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/radio-jockeys-air-tales-of-harassment-air-left-red-faced/articleshow/18840172.cms>

has periodically implemented measures to guarantee comprehensive security for its female personnel.

Despite receiving multiple complaints from the female RJs, the AIR has not taken any action against the individual in question, as they have stated that no proof has been uncovered against them. However, AIR is countering the charges by asserting that it has been implementing measures to guarantee comprehensive security for all female employees.

According to the AIR, the court was presiding over a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) initiated by Meera Mishra, which pertains to the purported instances of sexual harassment and exploitation experienced by female radio presenters affiliated with AIR, the national public radio broadcaster. Advocate Sugriva Dubey has filed a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) alleging that one of the Resident Judges (RJs), who had lodged a sexual harassment complaint against a duty officer, was terminated from her position.⁷

CASE-4

March 6, 2013 Sexual harassment at the workplace has been alleged by radio broadcasters employed by a PrasarBharati-run channel. On March 4, 2013, the AIR Broadcasting Professionals Association (AIRBPA) lodged a formal complaint with the Delhi Commission for Women, alleging instances of sexual harassment experienced by members of the AIR FM Gold radio station. A comparable complaint will be lodged by the AIRBPA with the National Commission for Women (NCW).

Moreover, it has been asserted that the governmental entity lacks a dedicated committee to address such grievances, as stipulated by the Supreme Court's ruling in the Vishakha case. The AIRBPA has also made allegations on instances where the crew on duty exhibited intoxication and misbehaviour against female employees. However, the officials of AIR have shown no concern regarding these allegations. Despite the AIRBPA's multiple complaints, it is asserted that no action has been taken thus far, despite the passage of almost four months when the union submitted the letter to the director of the AIR Delhi Station, as well as its copies to the CEO

PrasarBharati, director-general of AIR, and the president of NCW. The complaint accused the programme executives of the radio station of displaying bias and unethical conduct. It notably targeted FM Gold director-general LeelaDharMandloi for "undermining the self-esteem" of the female presenters.⁸

WHAT IS WEB MEDIA / NEW MEDIA

When started?

The idea of mass communication has been significantly changed by digital technologies powered by computers and the Internet. We may refer to social platforms, blogs, video games, and online news portals as new media as a whole. It provides an additional element of interaction that is mostly absent from conventional forms of communication and is the basis for digital media marketing. Digital media integrates many digital technologies to expand its audience and allow them to engage at their own leisure. Most importantly, it offers everyone the chance to stop being mere recipients and start creating.

New Media Types

There are many different kinds of new media available on the market right now. It will be difficult to combine them into a single spectrum, however, since new technologies cause communication channels to alter annually. Even the solutions that were previously regarded as outdated look outdated given the abundance of possibilities accessible in the modern day. It has advanced significantly in the area and is no longer merely restricted to websites. The kinds that are accessible in the current situation are as follows:

Web sites Social media networks, blogs, and OTT platforms such as Netflix Augmented and virtual reality Spotify-like music streaming via email⁹.

CASE 1

The ongoing Me-too movement in India is exposing significant disparities between the national media and regional press in terms of their operational cultures, as well as the mechanisms via which accountability and impunity are established. Contrary to their male

⁷ Correspondent, D., Correspondent, D., & Chronicle, D. (2016, September 27). *Deccan Chronicle*. Deccan Chronicle. <https://www.deccanchronicle.com/nation/current-affairs/270916/no-instance-of-sexual-harassment-against-female-rjs-air-to-hc.html>

⁸ Any, S. (2013, March 6). *Women staff allege sexual harassment at All India Radio*. The Indian Express. <https://indianexpress.com/article/news-archive/latest-news/women-staff-allege-sexual-harassment-at-all-india-radio/>

⁹New Media: Definition, Courses and Scope. (2023, April 3). Retrieved March 28, 2024, from Wings: <https://leverageedu.com/blog/new-media/>

colleagues in national media, numerous female journalists working in local media outlets in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Kerala have expressed their inability to voice concerns about workplace harassment, let alone lodge official complaints. Indeed, only a small fraction of these organisations possess an internal disputes resolution body. In instances where it is present, it typically lacks functionality.

In the year 2003, Jeya Rani encountered a situation where she sought to lodge a sexual harassment complaint against a male coworker at a prominent Tamil magazine. However, she encountered a lack of an internal entity with which she could legally initiate the process. The establishing of internal complaints committees was authorised by the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act, 2013, almost ten years ago. Consequently, she sought assistance from the Network of Women in Media, which subsequently requested her company to establish a committee and do an investigation. The Tamil language media had its inaugural internal complaints committee. "The investigation lasted for a duration of three years," Jeya Rani recollected, emphasising that it was the most distressing phase of her life.¹⁰

CASE 2-Swati Chaturvedi:

Swati Chaturvedi, an independent journalist and novelist, faced online hatred and threats because to her coverage of the COVID-19 outbreak in India. Chaturvedi has conveyed his criticism of the government's approach to managing the pandemic, namely in relation to the distribution of vaccines, dissemination of public messaging, and allocation of healthcare resources. She has been subjected to instances of harassment and personal insults on various social media platforms, perpetrated by members of the ruling party and individuals engaging in internet trolling.

Swati Chaturvedi and her parents have experienced a series of instances characterised by intimidation, harassment, and a multitude of phone calls and messages, which encompass explicit threats of sexual assault and even death. RSF expresses significant concern on the potential cessation of these dangers. An individual has positioned a deceased feline in close proximity to her entrance.

After a parliamentary address delivered by Member of Parliament Nishikant Dubey on August 7, 2023, the Indian journalist saw escalating instances of mistreatment and intimidation. Dubey asserted that China was offering monetary aid to NewsClick, a news website, with the intention of undermining India's reputation. During that period, Dubey made reference to Chaturvedi as an individual purportedly involved in a conspiracy aimed at undermining the reputation of India. This assertion garnered significant attention upon its nationwide broadcast on television.¹¹

CASE 3

Indrani Sarkar, a veteran Indian journalist, is a member of the executive committee of the National Union of Journalists-India (NUJ-I) and the founder and director of Riaan. This blog is published in Federation International des Journalists (FIJ). The television programme chronicles her encounters with India's media sector and the challenges she has faced in order to establish herself as a critical and autonomous journalist. The individual expressed that web media platforms exhibit reluctance in disseminating their content, prompting them to opt for independent work primarily with media sources that demonstrate a willingness to publish content that critiques the government. I possess a clear approach and maintain the belief that truthfulness is essential. Journalism is not the reverse; it is public relations. I am a proponent of ethical journalism and dedicated to serving the collective welfare. In my perspective, journalism serves as a reflection of society. Hence, I established my own broadcasting enterprise (Riaan Broadcasting Communications Pvt. Ltd.) with the purpose of narrating stories in a straightforward and unambiguous manner.

When examining the challenges encountered by women in attaining positions of authority within the corporate sphere, an additional significant issue that emerges is the issue of harassment.

Although there has been an increase in complaints, the prevalence of abuse inside the media sector remains alarming. When individuals within our professional network experience instances of bullying and harassment, they often opt to disengage from the media due to their awareness of the protracted nature of the complaints procedures, the limited provision of justifications by the

¹⁰Senthalir, S. (2018, October 11). In *South India's regional media, women can't even 'afford to outrage' against sexual harassment*. Scroll.in. <https://scroll.in/article/897520/in-south-indias-regional-media-women-cant-even-afford-to-outrage-against-sexual-harassment>

¹¹RSF urges the UN to take immediate action against escalating threats and harassment targeting Indian journalist Swati Chaturvedi. (n.d.). RSF. <https://rsf.org/en/rsf-urges-un-take-immediate-action-against-escalating-threats-and-harassment-targeting-indian>

justice system, and the potential alteration of the perpetrator's identity, particularly in cases involving stalking. Frequently, individuals who have been harmed tend to opt for departure, and it is evident that frequently altering one's place of employment makes it unfeasible to progress in a professional trajectory inside a certain industry.¹²

CONCLUSION

The trajectory of female professionals in the electronic media industry in India exemplifies a story of fortitude, resolve, and metamorphosis. In spite of encountering various obstacles, women have gradually established their presence in this ever-evolving sector, challenging societal expectations and transforming prevailing narratives in the process. Women have played a significant role in defining the landscape of electronic media in India, ranging from early pioneers who challenged traditional norms to contemporary leaders who are at the forefront of driving change. The contributions made by these individuals have not only enhanced the industry by introducing a wide range of perspectives, but have also provided future generations of women with the confidence and courage to pursue their dreams. Nevertheless, there are still obstacles to surmount, such as gender prejudice, inequitable prospects, and challenges related to maintaining a healthy work-life equilibrium. It is crucial to acknowledge and tackle these difficulties in order to foster a more inclusive and supportive environment for women professionals while the sector undergoes ongoing transformation.

To ensure the continued success and excellence of women in the electronic media sector in India, it is crucial to implement mentorship programmes, advocate for gender-sensitive policies, and promote a culture of equality and respect. By fully utilising the capabilities of female professionals, we can effectively use the influence of diversity and stimulate innovation and advancement in the media industry. Regarding gender equality in newsrooms, it is evident that 80% of coverage is occupied by men, while only 20% is occupied by women. The majority of female journalists are not in favourable positions. When it comes to expert panellists, it is typically males who hold the positions, with barely a few women being present. The following are initial findings derived

from the study titled "Gender Inequality in Indian Media 2021," which was conducted by News Laundry in collaboration with UN Women and Hyatt. The research examined the gender representation inside Indian newsrooms, gathering data from various forms of media (digital, broadcast, and print) over the period spanning from August 2019 to July 2020. The study conducted this year incorporated qualitative data collected from journalists via questionnaires and interviews.

The data collection process involved the acquisition of information from seven English publications and four Hindi newspapers. The dataset encompassed a total of seven English news stations and seven Hindi news channels. A total of ten digital media outlets and 47 radio stations were included in the poll.

The following findings have been obtained. During the surveyed period, a total of 6,467 panellists participated in 1,295 English news debates. A majority of the panellists, specifically 85%, were male. Hindi networks exhibited even poorer performance, with a mere nine percent of panellists on 985 debates being women. Furthermore, a total of 673 English debates, accounting for 51 percent, lacked any female panellists. The reported statistic for the fiscal year 2018-19 was 53%.

In the context of Covid-related debates, the representation of women's perspectives was noticeably lacking. Out of the 271 Covid-related debates held on the English news channels that were surveyed, a total of 1,300 panellists participated, with only 14 percent of them being women. Among the 125 Covid-related debates on Hindi networks, women constituted eight percent of the panellists.¹³

The Media Rumble 2022 issued a report by News Laundry and UN Women on gender representation in newsrooms. The survey reveals that 87 percent of editors and proprietors at India's leading newspapers are men.

In the aforementioned scenario, it is evident that Kashmiri journalists such as Israt Bhat, Indrani Sarkar, Swati Chaturvedi, and various other women journalists encountered numerous instances of harassment and prejudice. However, it is noteworthy that women in this area continue to actively engage and make significant contributions with utmost dedication and determination.

¹²Despite misogynistic abuse & difficulties, I am an unapologetic journalist / IFJ. (2022, December 7). <https://www.ifj.org/media-centre/blog/detail/category/end-impunity-2022/article/india-despite-misogynistic-abuse-difficulties-i-am-an-unapologetic-journalist>

¹³singh. S. (2021, July 13). *Newsroom gender gap: Men get over 80% of TV panel slots, 75% of bylines*. <https://www.newslaundry.com/>. Retrieved April 21, 2024, from

To ensure the continued success and excellence of women in the electronic media sector in India, it is crucial to implement mentorship programmes, advocate for gender-sensitive policies, and promote a culture of equality and respect. By fully utilising the capabilities of female professionals, we can effectively use the influence of diversity and stimulate innovation and advancement in the media industry.

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Tribal livelihoodsin south-western part of Odisha: A challenge to prosperity

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ABSTRACT

“Among the sixty-two tribal communities, the south-west tribal are considered most of the primitive tribal groups. They were for homicidal tendencies, habitat is popularly known as tribal hill, besides this, agreement of socio-cultural and geo-physical affiliation. Interesting features of Kond, Gond, Gadaba, paraja, Bonda, didayi ,soura etc. of south-west tribes are enjoying freedom within the family as well as in their society . Even in the field of marriage they are separated from the other part of tribes. Only these part of tribal social organization presence of dormitory organization. Among them the most important of independent forms of marriage the cross-cousin marriage, which broadly widespread among the tribal of the south-western part of Odisha.”

KEYWORDS: *Indigenous, Customs, Judicial, Humor, Hereditary, Panchayat Raj, God And Goddess, Sprit, Malevolent, Notorious, Mission .*

INTRODUCTION

The religious functionaries or spirituals need kutia, Bonda, Kondh, Gond, Saura, Didayi, Langia-Saura, Dangaria Kond, Lodha, Juang and Banjara etc. Tribals of South-west Odisha include Disari the medicine man. Disari religious head enjoys as very high status. His post is hereditary. He is remunerated. The village Disari and other villagers are sending massage for time and date of celebration of various ceremony, marriage, occasion and other activities so on. The tribes of south-west Odisha observe various festivals in different season of the year. All these are related to their socio-economic kinds. Ceremony Bhat khuani (first food eating) all such occasions are made enjoy. The very important festivals celebrated “Chait Parab” by them.

Review of literature- Many works have down regarding the tribe insouth-westpart of odishaand many foreign and Indian scholars have different findings and discuss with different ideology. But some scholars like Dalton,

RISLEY, Thurston, Russell and Hiralal have left behind a few pages about the south-west tribe in their works. Much of their writing has reproduced over and over again. This research will show a unique thought from the past research.

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Hypothesis- The article mainly discuss with both primary and secondary data. Because their superstitions, beliefs and practices have made than well known to the world outside and it is changing gradually day to day life. I have collected the data from every tribal part of Odisha and compare with the south-western part of Odisha. also compared with tribal and non-tribal area. As such, it depends on both primary and secondary data.

FINDINGS :

South-west tribal of Odisha society culture, life style is more difference from the other part of tribal people. Their magic-religious life, artistic talents and cultivation skills, indigenous cultural identity with ethics, values, morals, customs and traditions is Indian culture identity. That is unique inter personal relations. It gives governed for their status. Their indigenous customs are related to general life. The conception and customs are transfer to generation.

DISCUSSION :

Being tradition south-west tribes each village acts as an independent of justice. Village association has both at the village and inter-village. This indigenous village panchayat head named as "Naik". He is the most powerful. He is to deviants for maintenance of peace among them. The Naik, he enjoys high prestige and enough power. Naik is not for generation to generation carry, it is very short time 2/3 year. Naik is selected by the villagers. Naik holds his terms of office for a period. For his good work, he can be extended one more term. Gana (gram rakhi) is giving massage for all, he is belonging from SC community it is called village DARBAR In India or other part of Odisha tribal areas.

Independent and carefree attitude of south-west Odisha's tribe. Every community prefers individuals to act their behavioral activities. The indigenous custom of judicial organizations has to regulate them. All system of south-west tribal of Odisha are losing control to community. Now, in a panchayat raj, there are new leadership has grown up. it disintegrated and disrupts the tradition.

The social organization of the south-west tribal of Odisha is self-sufficient for identity. Family forms of their association; they have patrilineal and patriarchal in nature. The senior male member is the powerful for every decision. But tribal woman is not power to exercise customary right in rituals activities.

It observed very influence for their society and importance economic growth and various domestic activities. They think as a asset for their life price is paid to family. The tribal society is totally centralized in women centric. The women are more powerful than the male. But in the field of village, leadership by type Jani or Majhi is effective. After independence the panchayat raj instituting have accepted it their style.

The tribes believe in May gods and goddess who are worshiped by different ritual functionaries in different months in different ritual occasions. The different ritual functionaries who offer worship to different deities reside in this original village. The functionaries who are connected with the worship to the god and goddess like-Disar, Pujari, Jani, Jhankar etc.

Problem focus by tribes is deep rooted diminution of productive of swidden. The govt. of Odisha imposed to shifting cultivation as well as hunting. It is opposed to their forest economy. Exploitation by some merchants group of people, the tribe have experienced with all the evils from many years. They have a simple, shy and peace-loving folk culture and indigenous traditions.

The rapid grow of the Modern administrative set-up and political situation of the country and their exposure to the external modern world have influenced to the tribal way life example: abolition of intermediary systems has got the tribal free from the clutches of the oppressive feudal lords and their immoral sub ordinates. This has good help to the modern world from their political organization.

Tribal of south-western Odisha is very artistic people. Artistic skills are revaluated wall-painting cloth, bamboo design, mad plate etc. and their dance and music also very interesting. All they have cultivate the art of dancing and singing. It is spontaneous and natural habit. one can find of humor, Romance and melody in their songs easily. All tribal communities of south-west Odisha man and women jumble up, while dancing. The colorful costumes are wearing while dancing. They used many types of instruments like Dhap, Mandal, Ghumra, Wooden instruments etc. they observed various domestic ceremony for example: - Rites de passage during pregnancy child birth (they believed in duma) seclusion and aborting (Use traditional medicine) Khoda-Damna, Name giving ceremony (BY Dhashan or Jani) Kanabura (Women when get Maturity) Purification rites (Dadi Ejumina) etc. is unique ceremony of them.

The traditional methods of treatment among communities of south-west tribes are same with other parts of Odisha tribe also believe in same type of treatments and gerbil medicines. But they use different herbal medicines among their communities overall we can divided into two type of methods such as magic religious treatments and herbal wood and leaf medicines.

The sprits supernatural agencies are village deities, ancestral sprits hunting deities, agricultural sprits household malevolent spirits cause to disease and danger evil spirits like; - ghosts of people who met with unnatural death.

The image of the supernatural entities is fluid and vague, thus one cannot find the portrait of their gods and witch diagnosed by Jani, Disari, Gurumai of Bajuni, Beju and Baid. South –West tribe of Odisha is mainly five causes of Diseases.

1. Worth of Gods and Goddesses.
2. Sprit intrusion.
3. Sorcery
4. Evil eye
5. Breach of norm of taboo.

In order to improve basic services and facilities in tribal villagers with significant tribes, it has been decided to alter the scheme so that an integrated tribal village development program can be executed in an outcome-oriented and time –bound way. Accordingly revamped as “ Prodhan mantra adidarsh Gram Yojana. (PMAAGY)” to be implemented during the year 2021-222 to 2025-26. This is the only schemes for specific tribal village.

- i. The odisha millets mission (OMM) as a tailored response, nurturing this intricate relationship between millets and tribal cultures, preserving tradition while paving a path for sustainable development.
- ii. Mukhya Mantri Janajati Jeevika Mission.
- iii. Odisha Tribal Empowerment and live hoods program plus.(OTELP)
- iv. PVTG Empowerment and livelihoods improvement program (PELIP)
- v. PVTG nutritional improvement program (PMIP)

EDUCATION AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT:

- i. The problem of education stands as a beacon of hope , offering pathways to break the chains of poverty and empower marginalized communities. The urban Education program “Anwasha” spearheaded by the Government a pointing endeavor in providing quality education to scheduled tribe.
- ii. Multilingual education takes center stage through SAMHATI, spotlighting innovative curriculum designs and language pedagogy.
- iii. The forest rights act, 2006 stands as a season of hope for forest dealing scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dialers.
- iv. Another transformative scheme the pradhan mantra adi Adarsh Gram yojana (PMAAGY). It aims to transform villages with significant tribal population into model villages.

Above mention all policies and schemes are acting in the level of Government life but in ground level is not actually running even tribal. They do not know about of such schemes . it need to aware them.

Which they will be followed same easily OMM Schemes and PMAAG policies are exercising other schemes and polities are in comma state. South-West Tribal of Odisha is more PVTGS Area. Govt. should announce package special for the area.

Currently, the Central Government has a project plan to provide flood protection in the forest areas. But the implementation has been stopped till date. The Central Government in October 25/1980, when Forest Conservation has done and the tribal who were in possession of the land were protesting for the provision of land. It was unsuccessful.

A bill in this regard was introduced by the Government of India in Lok Sabha 2005. Its name is Schedule Tribe (Re-organization of Forest Rights) Bill; the bill includes how to help tribal living in forest areas if they are displaced. There is a proposal to provide a maximum of two and a half acres of land per tribal family. But that has not been implemented yet. During elections, political parties sometimes promise this to the tribal. But no action is taken.

They earn money by selling of minor forest product. The yield of this crop is not sufficient. Their agricultural activities include various stages of festivals such as sowing

seeds, sowing seedlings, planting rice plants, getting pregnant with rice flowers, harvesting rice and many more. South-western part of Odisha's tribal family is a communal family. Even if it is just for food and drink, they need money for their daily needs, housing, etc. In the areas near Malkangiri district, Koraput district, Niamgiri, Perumunji, Lanjarh areas in Kalahandi district. In these areas' tribal included in the Karlapat sanctuary of Kalahandi, Minajhola, Gumma, Chatikona range of Rayagada district, Laxmpur, Balda Cave m Deomali range of Koraput district, Chitrakunda of Malkangiri district pulses like- Kolath, Maandia, Baajra, Kaandul, Katting, Beerli, Jhudung are mainly produced.

Under the influence of modernity, they have adopted rice as their staple food, but it is not sufficient. They selling products in the market at a low price, but when others bring some from them to the market, it is sold at double the price. As a result, the tribe are getting less profit in the form of money, while the traders and middlemen are getting more money.

Therefore, the government should make arrangements for business. So that, they can get actual profit from their products like-Rice, Maandia, Gurji are their main food. The Mandia Rani festival is celebrated. It is also celebrated by other groups and caste in south-western Odisha. In modern term is the Nuakhai festival. It was started by the tribal firstly, there is no doubt about it. Earlier they did not pay attention to food and dress. But after coming in contact with the people of the modern era, they have led a new life. Due to the impact of this modernity, their expenses have increased. But on the other hand, their income is not that much.

However, the agricultural system has improved with their indigenous technology. They do not get agricultural schemes properly from the government. They have been collecting forest produce and growing some vegetables for their household expenses. Due to this vegetable farming, the economy has improved very slowly.

In addition, although they are unfamiliar with modern farming methods, they are using their own equipment and collecting food using various techniques. Now, with the improvement of their life, the form of money is being affected in many ways. For this, some people have learned to work as daily wage labourer to earn money, there is a shortage of money because they have no income, they only get money from the things collected from the forest and from the pulses. Their expenses are more than their income.

As a result, that is why they are still the same as they were before. In this way, the negative impact is inevitable in any region; the lifestyle of this area's tribe is regulated by the natural structure and environmental conditions. In Kalahandi, Koraput, Malkangiri and Rayagada' approximately 50 percent of the land is mountainous. Of this, half of the land is not suitable for agriculture.

In the plains, the farmers improve their economic misery to some extent by producing Rabi crops. The land of the tribal Sarvaswa groups is unsuitable for agriculture. They mainly depend on the forest for 8/9 months of the year. The Mahul tree, the Turnip tree and Salap tree are identified as their specific personal assets. They get some money from the alcohol prepared from it. One makes a living by making mehu and rice wine all year round. Similarly, alcohol is prepared from the salap tree. One makes 5/6 months from the money earned by making alcohol from the salap tree.

When the salap tree dies, it is cut down, the seeds are taken out, dried and rolled into a mat and made into cakes and cakes. During the rainy season, they take out many types of roots, dry that in the sun, roll them in a mat, make cakes and eat that. Similarly, mango takua and kaslakanda are also the means of their economy.

The Rayagada tribal of Lanjarh earn money by harvesting mangoes, bananas, oranges, plantains, turmeric, mustard etc. They burn the forest and harvest the first year's harvest of kandul, seed, beeri etc. in the second year mustard, kangu, kasla and in the third year, when the land becomes fertile, they harvest paddy. In this way, the production of the tribal, fruits and hunting etc. continues. Traders or merchants go to the houses of the tribal to buy forest products at a low price and sell them at a higher price in the plains. Therefore, the economic pressure on their livelihood is particularly high.

During the British rule, missionary doctors used to provide medicine for diseases in tribal areas and free of cost. The tribal of this land faced still drink water suffering. There are no tube wells or ponds. Due to contaminated drinking water and food, various deadly diseases are spreading. For this, various steps were taken, and the tribal around that hill have started observing fasts from there. Since they are not allowed to go there, when doctors are denied, they believe in Gunigaredi Mannatantra Dai, Chiriguni etc. and observe fasts from government medical treatment. Although efforts were

made to provide modern treatment to these tribal, it has not been possible.

CONCLUSION :

Child mortality, malaria, cholera, worms, and obesity are particularly common among the tribal of Kalahandi and undivided koraput. Therefore, a hospital should be established in the place where they are settled and it is only right to provide medicine free of cost. Their population is decreasing compared to other castes. Research has shown that the government has made arrangements for them in agriculture, cooperative animal husbandry, education, industry. Irrigation, women and they have provided education system and road construction system for children. But none of them have been implemented yet. If all those systems are implemented, their education and economic livelihood will be improved.

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Civil Society and the State: Connections and Interjections

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ABSTRACT

Theoretically, the paper discusses the meaning of the state and its association with civil society. It highlights the origin and development of civil society in the Western intellectual discourse. Does civil society emerge from reason? In comparison to the state, how may civil society be understood? Can it be understood through importance of the state? Are state and civil society dependent categories or are autonomous to each other? Does civil society represent as a political category? The paper discusses the idea of civil society given by Hegel, Gramsci and Adam Ferguson. It also discusses how Ferguson's idea of civil society is relevant in contemporary times. Ferguson's idea of civil society is significant because it contributed a different set up meanings from other early modern and modern political philosophers. The paper also narrates Hegel's idea of civil society and compares it with Ferguson.

KEYWORDS: *Civil Society, State, government, political society, association, institution.*

INTRODUCTION

Civil society, the term, is one of the most confusing concepts. It became popular during modern times; as political theorists noted that its relevance in contemporary times goes back to the social contractarians. More importantly, with the Hegelian notion, meaning of civil society has drastically got changed. Because, Hegel expresses civil society as a sphere of egoism where they (individuals) promote their selfish interests. However, the forms of civil society are non-governmental organizations, social movements and other private organizations which function for the progress of individual. Also, it promotes welfarism. The basic purpose that the civil society institutions serve is to protect the rights and liberties of the marginalized and depressed sections. On the other hand, state refers to a broad array

of things. Government is part of the state. It is the apex and primordial institutions among all institutions in society. The laws and institutions of the state protect society from

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violators. State came into existence with an emergence of the social contract among individuals. Those who violate the very ethos of society in which it is stood, it is the duty of the state to secure its citizens and maintain law and order.

THE TRADITION OF CIVIL SOCIETY

The connection of the state with institutions of civil society is one of the complicated one. Andre Beteille, a former sociologist of the Delhi School of Economics at Delhi University argues that, civil society is described through a set of institutions; they are either distinguished from the social movements or from the voluntary institutions. However, the meaning of the modern state is found in the writings of political philosophers like Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau who are important political philosophers to contribute to the meaning of civil society. Their writing possesses meanings of the state and relationships of the individuals with the state. It means, for political philosophers like Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau, the state acts as an important agency for the development of the individual self. The idea civil society became popular during modern times, primarily, during eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth century and was distinguished either from sphere of the state or were used in an interchangeable manner. In Hobbes and Locke's texts, civil society and the state mean the same. Philosophers like Adam Smith, David Hume found civil society as a socio-economic sphere. They rejected political institutions as a part of civil society. Neera Chandhoke argues that, to understand the meaning of the state, we need to first understand civil society (Chandhoke, 1995). Then, what is civil society and why it is so special? Because it is the starting point from where the state shall be understood. However, the space civil society is now way valid without locating the state. This has been found in Hegel for whom interconnectedness or mutuality exists between both the spheres. Corresponding to Hegel, civil society do not form meanings unless and until it is related to the state. Hegel, in *Philosophy of Right* asserts, the community of civics in which individuals are found themselves is a space of diversity and is a balancing point between the family and the state (Hegel, 2001). With the creation of state, the creation of civil society may become possible.

Further, Hegel asserts that, within civil society, individual connect others to establish a community where s/he promotes his/her selfish interests. So, by establishing connection with other individuals, s/he satisfies his/her own need. Hegel emphasizes on 'civic community' in

Philosophy of right. Every individual maximizes their interests inside this 'civic community' and he/she can maximize their interests through the means of others; the help of the universality is important to maximize the individual potentialities (Hegel, 2001). Further, civil society creates those spaces where individual connect others to establish a community by promoting selfish interests.

In a similar way, Gramsci points out the complications of civil society and the state. He found civil society and state both represent in an equal as well as in distinct ways. He sometimes refers civil society both as the state and political society and sometimes the state as civil society and political society. Civil society in Gramsci is understood as it protects the dangers that comes on the state. He illustrates the link between civil society and political society by directing to a certain period. The Church, according to him, represents both a sphere of civil society and political society. For better comprehension we must move further. The existence of civil society is inherently contingent upon the presence state. Also, the concept is so vast which includes an array of things and is so complex to interpret. During contemporary times, there are disagreements among scholars regarding the meaning. In this sense, it can be understood in two ways. It can either work independently from the sphere that the state maintains or can be interpreted from three strands: liberal, radical and conservative. From the liberal stand, civil society is understood through economy, rights of the individual, property and markets. It is independent from the sphere of the state in a radical standpoint where it demands rights of the individual and future actions for those who wish to violate societal norms. So, creation of associations and free exchange of ideas may occur without any compulsion. Individuals may join and quit an association in his/her own choice. Freedom of the individual is given primacy and civil society creates awareness among individuals to protect their liberties. Conservatives believe that civil society's meaning lies in cultural associations and the ways civil society represents itself as a historical concept. I mean, they more stressed on the civility of civil society.

Civil society involves institutions for the protection and promotion of democracy. These institutions are functioning to serve the interests of the individual, group interests and community interests. Andre Beteille asserts that when civil society is considered from the institutional point of view, it must reflect those characters that must

bear certain secular values for example rational-legal intermediary institutions like universities, schools and hospitals are some of the examples. These institutions may be distinguished either from the voluntary associations or from social movements. Even, social movements and voluntary associations may acquire as institutions in due course of time (Beteille, 2012).

Civil society promotes the interests of individuals and protects their rights. The civil society institutions become dormant as long as the state acts in an authoritarian manner. Civil societies are more robust and powerful in liberal democracies. Civil society during Mao Zedong in China and Stalin in the Soviet Union became unsuccessful for which the rights of the individual were taken away. The dictators and their dictatorships not only curbed civil society movements rather it created chaos in society. Therefore, the institutions of democracy in these societies, were in the hands of the dictators. They did whatever they wanted. Individuals voiced their rights against excessive tyranny and betrayal and what they were committed in most of the Eastern European states failed. Protecting individual rights and right to live with dignity was important in these Communist East European states.

Further, as per Beteille, rational legal intermediary institutions are important from the concept of freedom, equality and liberty because they can be realized and describable. The political parties, courts and legislatures are important agencies because they are highly describable, observable and more importantly persuadable (Beteille, 2012). Rajeev Bhargava took a different direction to define civil society. He prioritizes individual autonomy and for which civil society is important. According to Bhargava, the Individual can join or leave civil society institution with his/her own choice. For Bhargava, institutions like civil society may stand as voluntaristic. What involuntary for a human being? Suppose, born in a family, having certain identity may be choiceless or are spheres where individuals have no control on it. Civil society is constructed by free individuals and they constitute associations for themselves. These associations lie outside the boundary of the state (Bhargava and Reifeld, 2005). Civil society must ensure that no state should interfere upon individual freedoms and those private areas of life where individual create associations for the protection and preservation of right to life, liberty and property.

Civil society create associations to protect freedom of press and expression. Within the sphere of civil society, right bearing individuals exist (Hegel, 2001). It includes

freedom of expression, freedom to have dissent against tyranny and authoritarianism, freedom to form associations and freedom of public opinion. It respects law, protects freedom and promotes citizenship rights. If the state goes against the very ethos of society on which it is built, it challenges the state by providing and securing societal values. Therefore, civil society challenged those authoritarian states which broke laws and orders of society. Neera Chandhoke talks the bases on which civil society is stood. It creates spaces where citizens and their rights is awful and is a privilege for democratic theorists and the whole story of democracy is based on the foundation of the democratic norms. Many authoritarian states failed due to protests and demonstrations and of massive civil society movements in Eastern Europe (Chandhoke, 1995).

Civil society will be negatively defined when it serves the state's interests. It becomes a weapon in the hands of the state. In this regard, Chandhoke asserts, the state controls social practices by weaponizing civil society (Chandhoke, 1995). Critics of civil society suggested that, the importance of the concept is required still cannot be a satisfactory condition to ensure state accountability. In order to make the state more accountable, vigilant civil societies are important. The state becomes cautious where civil society institutions are proactive. The signs of good democracy are the active participants of its individual members. A dormant civil society becomes the result of an irresponsible state, and a civil society which is politically designed may regulate state's excessive powers. In a consequence, civil society and politics are inherently connected to each other. The civility of society depends on the conscious and active individual members. These active and conscious individuals who are not only conscious of their rights but create spaces for those who are deprived of getting their rights by the state. Therefore, a self-conscious civil society overtake the political terrain on which the state is circumscribed otherwise it will face serious consequences on its legitimacy. Vigilant civil societies are important for democracies.

The significance of civil society is highly realized during contemporary times. It became prominent due to the emergence of global markets. For example, neoliberalism not only promoted global goods to local markets rather it created local markets as important spheres for neo-liberalism to flourish. Neo-liberalism wanted non-statist approach and created spaces for privatization (Chandhoke, 1995). According to Chandhoke, civil society of this type has shorter duration.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND DEMOCRACY

Further, civil society and democracy are closely linked to each other. During the reemergence of the concept, it was expected that the state would deliver social service welfares. Instead of alleviating poverty and providing necessary human securities, it failed in these areas. Chandhoke argues, civil society inspires and animates the spirit of democracy (Chandhoke, 1995). People demanded their basic rights and for which most of the Eastern-European Communist countries became unable to provide the demands of the individuals. Therefore, in these countries, civil society became the bedrock for political activism at that point of time and it demanded states to become accountable to its citizens and their rights shall be protected at any situation (Chandhoke, 1995). It is also the case that, Eastern-Europe brought experiences that the idea of civil society was more associated with freedom of speech, freedom of expression, freedom to dissent and right to live in a dignified way. Hence, the concept civil society was more important for bringing bring peace and stability. It enhances social harmony by creating spheres of trust and mutual respect. Civil society occupied a unique historical position to defend civil liberties by limiting the power of the state by launching its own movements in Eastern Europe. Consequentially, civil societies are more essential for democracies to flourish. However, it cannot create its own spheres. By politics, civil society can control the complete monopoly of the state. And this complete monopoly can be ousted only by civil society. This becomes possible when civil society is called as democratic.

Further, as posited by thinkers such as Adam Smith and David Hume, civil society is fundamentally rooted in economic transactions. Also, Adam Ferguson is an important philosopher to describe ideas on the concept of civil society and their relationship with the state. For Ferguson, both civil society and the state represent one. Civil society refers to the political state and in a similar

way, the state is referred to civil society. Army, police and judiciary are the part and parcel of it. It is the absence of rude society and is referred as polished society.

CONCLUSION

Therefore, civil society and the state in the Western intellectual tradition primarily in the works of Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Ferguson, Hegel and Gramsci brought new dimensions. The idea of civil society underwent significant transformations. Civil society during the reemergence period acted as a political category. It acted against authoritarian states to protect individual rights and freedom.

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Tracing Footprints: The Spread of Mahima Dharma Beyond Odisha

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ABSTRACT

Mahima Dharma, defined by strict monotheism, rejection of idol worship, and opposition to the caste hierarchy, originated in the Garhjat states of Odisha in the mid-nineteenth century. This study examines the expansion of Mahima Dharma beyond its place of origin and regional boundaries, as well as attempts to locate its expansion in the historical and sociological contingencies. Although frequently classified as a localised subaltern sect, the research draws on colonial administrative records and ethnographic literature to trace the movement's substantial spread into Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, Assam, and Jharkhand. The analysis explores how theological doctrines, monastic itinerancy (*paribrajaka*), and the migration of labourers to tea plantations and industrial centres functioned as key mechanisms facilitating the dissemination of Mahima Dharma beyond Odisha. Mahima Dharma, often referred to as the *Alekha* faith, has developed a trans-regional presence, particularly among tribal and rural communities, thereby influencing the socio-religious dynamics of eastern India and transcending Odisha's linguistic boundaries.

KEYWORDS : Mahima Dharma, Religious Itinerancy, Alekh, Labour Migration, Ollek

INTRODUCTION:

In the 19th century, India witnessed the emergence of various social religious movements such as the Ramakrishna Mission Society, Brahma Samaj, and Arya Samaj, within a social religious landscape marked by monotheism, opposition to caste hierarchy, and rejection of idol worship. In this context, the land of the Garhjat states of Odisha witnessed the emergence of a new sect, Mahima Dharma, founded by Mahima Swami (also known as Mahima Gosain) in the mid-19th century. It emerged not merely as a sect but as a counter-hegemonic social force. This faith propagated the worship of *Alekha Param Brahma*—the formless, attributeless, and indescribable Supreme Reality (Eschmann, 1978).

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The historiography of Indian religious movements is dominated by the reformist narratives of the Brahmo Samaj in Bengal or the Arya Samaj in the north. The Mahima Dharma is often categorised as a regional subaltern social protest movement of Odisha, but its rigorous examination of demographic base reveals a movement with a profoundly trans-regional character. This study examines the thesis that Mahima Dharma transcended the political and linguistic boundaries of Odisha, resulting in the formation of significant diasporic communities in Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, Assam, and Jharkhand. By analysing the roles of saints and the migration patterns of subaltern communities, the paper argues that Mahima Dharma served as a spiritual vehicle for marginalized groups, adapting to local social and cultural contexts while maintaining its core theological principles. Specifically, this review article aims to examine how the doctrines of this religion, *Paribrajaka* and strict rules, and labour migration played as important factors to disseminate the Mahima religion beyond the geographical boundary of Odisha.

This paper is a review article based on existing academic literature. It adopts a multidisciplinary approach that integrates historical, theological, and anthropological methodologies. The study synthesises secondary scholarship such as edited-volume chapters on Mahima Dharma's doctrine, social critique, and institutional practices, ethnographic studies with select primary sources like Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. Analytically, the paper treats "mobility" not as background context but as a mechanism linking theology, institutions, and socio-economic displacement. First, it reads doctrine as a portability-enabler: if the divine is formless and not bound to a consecrated idol or temple geography, the religion can reproduce with minimal material infrastructure. Second, it treats monastic discipline—especially the *ekaratri* (one night) principle and alms restrictions—as an institutional design that generates circulation, repeated contact, and boundary-crossing. Third, it treats labour migration as a channel that produces concentrated, vulnerable, and socially reconstituting communities in which a portable religious form can become a resource for solidarity, dignity, and moral order.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Mahima Dharma emerged in Odisha during the mid-19th century as a strong protest against Brahmanic and Royal control of religion, as well as the statues and idols of deities that governed the lives of followers through excessive caste-based discrimination (Banerjee-Dube,

2001; Eschmann, 1978). Caste separation and security of wealth through caste prestige had become very rigid by the time of the establishment of the Mahima Swami (i.e., Mahima Gosain), who, after learning asceticism at the Kapilas Hills (Dhenkanal), began to disseminate his teachings regarding the *satya dharma* (True Path) through expeditions and the establishment of *Tungis* (i.e., congregational areas) (Banerjee-Dube, 2001). The foundational beliefs of Mahima Dharmic thought held that the Absolute is *Alekh* (limitless) or *Sunya Param Brahma* (ineffable), accessible to all individuals without the need for the intermediary roles of priests, statues, or temples. This doctrine has also been referred to as *Visuddha Advaita* (Pure Non-Dualism) and emphasised the means of attaining salvation through devotion and surrender to a *Nirguna* (formless) and *Nirakara* (unfathomable) reality, rather than through obtaining merit from Brahmanical rites, travel to pilgrimage locations, or caste rank (Deo, 2015). One of the most distinct features of Mahima Dharma is that the doctrine of practice reflects the doctrine of the theory. Mahima ascetics accepted cooked food from the poor while refusing to accept food from the wealthy or elite (i.e., Brahmins and Rajahs).

An additional characteristic of Mahima Dharma is that the practice of worship of the deity has changed from the costly temple economies of old to the simplicity of collective worship within humble settings (Banerjee-Dube, 2001; Guzy, 2002). The use of Bhima Bhoi's vernacular poetry has translated the beliefs of *Alekh/Sunya* metaphysics into a vision of social equality with respect to suffering and the liberation of oppressed peoples from the control of their masters, which also served to help solidify the popularity of the Mahima Dharma movement (Mahapatra, 2017; Mangharam, 2011).

MECHANISMS OF EXPANSION

DOCTRINAL PORTABILITY

The rapid spread of Mahima Dharma can be attributed to its philosophy and practice of creating an easily portable form of religion. By identifying *Sunya* (nullity or empty space) and by rejecting the need for any form of idolatry, the practice of worship became more accessible and could be reproduced with little material support. The fundamental teachings of Mahima Dharma, grounded in *Visuddha Advaita*, present the Supreme Being as *nirguna* (without particular qualities or characteristics) and *nirakara* (without any specific form). This perspective allowed worshippers to be less dependent on the

mediation of institutions to access Ultimate Reality (Banerjee- Dube, 2001).

In addition, Mahima Dharma emphasised that all humanity is in the family of God; as such, it provided an alternative for those traditionally considered “Untouchables” as well as tribally marginalised groups (Dalit and Adivasi) in the Traditional Hindu social system (Deo, 2015).

ROLE OF ITINERANT MONKS

The growth of Mahima Dharma beyond its original geographic area was also founded on one of its major ascetic principles, *paribrajaka* (wandering monks). The Mahima sannyasis, who comprised the *Balkanadhari* (Bark Dwearing Monastic Order) and the *Kaupinadhari* (Loincloth Wearing Monastic Order), adhered to strict rules that prohibited them from settling or acquiring material wealth. These rules perpetuated the continual circulation of sannyasis (Eschmann, 1978; Guzy, 2002). One of the major guidelines governing the discipline of sannyasis was the *ekaratri* rule, which mandated that monastic practitioners (sannyasis) must never sleep in the same place for more than one night, and that a sannyasi could not eat twice from the same household (Guzy, 2002). The guidelines regarding alms further enhanced monastic mobility and independence from the established power structures; *sannyasas* could not accept *bhiksha* (alms) from a raja (king), a Brahman, or a *dhoba* (washerman), and twice from a single household (Banerjee-Dube, 2001; Proceedings of Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1882). Mahima Svami created temporary places of worship (known as “*tungis*”), used them to attract followers, destroyed them, and left followers to keep the faith alive in the community (Banerjee-Dube, 2001).

LABOUR MIGRATION DYNAMICS

Like the itinerant monks, Mahima Dharma spread due to the migration related to colonial labour in Eastern and North-Eastern India. From the mid-19th century, tea plantations in Assam and the Dooars were built with tribal labourers from Odisha and Chotanagpur, often through coercion, thus creating a “Tea Garden Diaspora” (Barman, 2021; Pati, 2020). The isolation of the plantations, along with the management’s discipline, made faith a necessary ingredient in the workers’ ability to survive and to build community. Philosophy of Mahima Dharma’s aniconic and no-cost nature provided the foundation for workable practices of non-casteism (Eschmann, 1978; Guzy, 2002; Pati, 2020). In many cases, the migration to the industrial belts of Chotanagpur

has helped to sustain the portable moral community among many migrants.

REGIONAL ILLUSTRATIONS

ANDHRA PRADESH (OLLEK DHARMA)

In the tribal agency areas of Northern Andhra Pradesh, particularly in **Srikakulam and Vizianagaram** districts, Mahima Dharma underwent a process of localisation. Here, the faith is widely known as “*Ollek Dharma*” (Venkata Rao, 1999). The Mahendragiri hills, situated in the Gajapati district of Odisha but historically influential in the Srikakulam region of Andhra Pradesh, served as a crucial node. The region is inhabited by the **Saora and Kandha tribes**. Since Mahima Gosain’s early activities involved the conversion of a Savara (Saora) named Sadananda at Kapilas (Nath, 1977), the faith had an early entry into the Saora cosmology. The movement spread southward along the Eastern Ghats through these tribal corridors. Ethnographic evidence indicates that tribal villages in the **Araku and Paderu** regions adopted Mahima Dharma as a means of social mobility. By adopting the “clean” practices of the Mahima cult, such as vegetarianism and teetotalism, and rejecting the Brahminical caste hierarchy, these communities established a distinct social identity (Venkata Rao, 2019). Scholarly research has identified the presence of *Alekh Gurumais* (female shamans) associated with the Mahima tradition (Guzy, 2012). This phenomenon illustrates the integration of the abstract concept of *Alekh Brahma* with indigenous healing systems and spirit possession practices. The participation of these mediums enabled the acceptance of Mahima Dharma among non-literate tribal populations in the Andhra agency areas by offering a version of the faith that addressed immediate concerns related to health and sorcery.

The **Alekh Mahima Mandir** in Panthulunga (Koraput, near the border region of Andhra Pradesh) acts as a critical spiritual anchor for this region. Although geographically in Odisha, its location near the Andhra border makes it a pilgrimage site for Telugu-speaking devotees who cross over for the *Magha Mela* and other festivities. The presence of Mahima devotees in Srikakulam and Vizianagaram is characterised by the *Alekh* ascetics who wander these districts, identifiable by their saffron or bark garments and *Badi* (large palm-leaf umbrella).

CHHATTISGARH (ASHRAMS AND BHIMA BHOI)

The expansion of Mahima Dharma into Chhattisgarh constitutes the most significant success of the movement beyond Odisha. Cultural and geographical continuity between Western Odisha and the Chhattisgarh plains enabled a seamless transmission of religious ideas. The proximity of these regions, along with shared tribal demographic patterns, enabled the transmission of religious ideas through direct contact and gradual population drift.

This westward spread was institutionally anchored by the **Khaliapali Ashram**, near Sonapur, established by the poet-saint **Bhima Bhoi** following Mahima Swami's death in 1876. Bhima Bhoi's residence at Khaliapali from 1877 until his death in 1895 transformed the ashram into a major centre of Mahima activity. His extensive poetic and philosophical output—especially *Stuti Chintamani* and numerous bhajans—circulated widely as vernacular religious literature, resonating deeply with tribal and low-caste communities across Central India.

The intensity of Mahima Dharma's presence in this western belt is evident in the 1 March 1881 attack on the Jagannath Temple, carried out by a group of Mahima Dharmis (Kumbhipatias) mobilised from Sambalpur, at a time when Raipur functioned as the headquarters of the Sambalpur Division. The group was led by Dasaram (also referred to as Dasharam), a follower from a village in Sambalpur, who claimed to have received divine instruction to burn the image of Jagannath (Banerjee-Dube, 2001; Pati, 2009). The Mahima Dharma movement began as a radical rejection of the caste system, and idol worship, and garnered significant interest and support from tribal populations and people of lower castes residing in western Odisha and the surrounding areas of central India

Consequently, it stretches from coastal Odisha to locations in the hinterlands and regions adjacent to the current borders of Odisha and parts of present-day Chhattisgarh, including significant cities like Raipur, which form much of the upper half of the state of Chhattisgarh today.

The Mahima Dharma movement, within contemporary Chhattisgarh, has been institutionalised via an interconnected network of ashrams (spiritual retreats) and temples, which function as both places of worship and places for community gathering. Some examples of such ashrams/temples include the **Alekh Mahima Mandir** at **Saraipali** (Raigarh District), as well as the Mahima Ashram at Rampela (Bilaspur District). These institutions function not merely as monastic residences

but as centres of *niti* (ritual practice), where *Brahma Muhurta* prayers and *sarana* (ritual surrender) are performed daily, sustaining orthodox Mahima traditions beyond their Odia linguistic homeland.

WEST BENGAL AND ASSAM

In West Bengal and Assam, Mahima Dharma expanded in tandem with the colonization of the tea industry and the labour displacement associated with this plantation economy. In addition to the labour market demands of the tea plantation industry in Assam and the Dooars of northern Bengal, a great many of the plantation labourers were sourced from the original tribal areas of Orissa. Migrant labour brought not only their own traditions but also the *Tungis* of Mahima Dharma to the remoteness of the tea estates (Pati, 2020).

The expansion of Mahima Dharma across the region can largely be attributed to the extensive travels of **Brahmabhadhuta Biswanath Baba** throughout Orissa and neighbouring states (Nath, 1977). Baba attempted to gain the Mahima Dharma's legitimacy by publishing treatises to redefine the Mahima Dharma from an irrelevant 'tribal cult' to an established philosophical tradition (*Visuddha Advaita*), thus providing the opportunity for educated members of society, such as those in cities like Cuttack, Raipur, and Kolkata, to accept the Mahima Dharma as an acceptable belief system (Nath, 1977)

In West Bengal, records indicate the presence of an **Alekh Mahima Ashramat Borsole**, Midnapore, which suggests a stable monastic or congregational community rather than solely itinerant preaching. In Assam, the **Pertabghur Alekh Mahima Mandir** in Sonitpur district, located within a tea-estate area, serves as a centre for preserving Odia identity and the egalitarian ethos of the faith. These shrines provide spiritual dignity to workers who face exploitative conditions far from their native regions

IN JHARKHAND

The industrial development of the Chotanagpur plateau, particularly the emergence of Jamshedpur as a major industrial centre following the establishment of TISCO (1907), generated massive labour demand drawing upon Odia and other Eastern Indian populations.

According to Mathews Arreparamil, **Bokudi Dharam** represents an adaptation of Mahima Dharma that became popular among the Tantis and Jharuas, lower-caste groups in the Singhbhum region near Raj Kharsawan

railway station. Emerging around 1930, this movement employs religious texts written in Oriya. Adherents greet each other with the phrase “Olek Mahima” and sing praises of “*Olek Bhagawan*”. The faith is centred on the worship of a single deity named ‘Olek’ and explicitly rejects traditional animal sacrifices. Adherents follow strict practices, including vegetarianism, which prohibits the consumption of fish and meat, and conduct prayers and ‘*stutisorono*’ (meditation) in secrecy, often during nighttime hours (Arreparamil, 1993).

ANALYSIS OF MAHIMA’ SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION BEYOND ODISHA

Mahima Dharma should be understood as a trans-regional socio-religious movement rather than a localised sect; the presence beyond Odisha is proof of this. Doctrines such as the worship of *Param Brahma*, opposition to caste hierarchy, and rejection of temple-centered rituals involving priests become mechanisms for mobility in other regions. Itinerant Monks operated as mechanisms of diffusion, reinforced by strict disciplines such as the *ekratri* and alms rules, which prevented stable settlement and dependence on elites. Labour migration served as a moral community for the spread of tea plantations & industrial regions. Across regions, Mahima Dharma appealed to tribals, Dalits, and other marginalised groups due to its anti-caste ethics and its low-cost worship, which offered dignity and an alternative to Brahmanical mediation. The paper shows patterned localisation without loss of core principles and practices (such as *Ollekdharam* & *Bokudidharam*). Institutional anchors (*tungis*, *mandirs*, *ashrams*, and literature) stabilized the faith beyond its geographical boundaries.

RESULTS

As a result of this study, it can be concluded that Mahima Dharma should not be seen as a local subaltern movement; it is very much a product of Odisha’s monotheistic, aniconic belief system and has a history of rejecting caste hierarchies and the mediating role of priests and religious authorities. There are two main avenues to understand how Mahima Dharma grew and spread beyond Odisha. First, the disciplined itinerant life of monks led to numerous connections being established between the various areas where the monks travelled. Secondly, as Indian society industrialised and people became economically displaced, many former workers took their beliefs with them to their new homes. Mahima Dharma essentially required little material assistance to establish itself because its practice was based on formless

perceptions of God rather than on physical objects (an idol) or place-based worship (a temple). Changing regional names, for example, “Ollek”, suggests how the movement has adapted, but nonetheless remained true to its core values of equality and the simple forms of worship. This research contributes to the historiography of subaltern religious movements by presenting that marginalized communities played an active role in constructing alternative spiritual frameworks that addressed caste discrimination, economic displacement, and cultural alienation.

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From Bharatiya Jana Sangh to Bharatiya Janata party: A study of evolution and growth of Bharatiya Janata party in contemporary Indian politics

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ABSTRACT

Democracy is one of the most popular form of government that is follow in most of the country of our world in contemporary age because of its flexible nature, it respects political equality of all citizen through right to vote without any type of discrimination. On the other hand, to facilitate voting free and fair form of election is the basic essence of democracy, India which is presently considered as one of the largest democracy of the world follow the multiparty system which allow Multiparty to compete in election to acquire power through constitutional means. This paper going to analyze how BJP evolve as a political party in Indian politics. This paper aims to explain the historical root and its ideological basis and with the passage of time how the party has emerged in so many states of India by replacing their regional party and developing itself as a popular party in the government there by this paper argue in context of one-party dominance system which was earlier coined by Rajani Kothari to show the congress hegemony in the country. This paper basically follow qualitative research approach through existing literature like books, articles, research paperes, media coverage and the descriptive analysis will be applied to show the result by following the data from the election result.

KEYWORDS: *Political Party, Indian Politics, One Party Dominance, BJP*

INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century most of the countries of the world has followed the democratic form of government. As it is one of most popular form of government which respects individual's individuality. It upholds the idea of political equality of all in terms of right to vote.

As democracy prioritize right to vote is the fundamental things of all individual here the question arises who vote to whom and on what basis the voting will be ensure.

Therefore, the political party comes in picture. Political party is the backbone of society it acts as a problem-solving tool by governing the citizens by respecting constitution, on the other hand it addressed the demands

of the people in front of the government as well as check the government monopoly by acting as an opposition.

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If we try to understand the notion of political party which is one of the essential tool for the working of an successful democracy according to the words of Gilchrist a political party is “An organized group of citizens sharing views, acting as a unit to control government”.

As per this definition we can simply understand that a political party is basically a organization of like minded people who are organized on the basis of a common ideology and have one primary aim and it is to contest in election and achieve more and more political power in order to form the government through constitutional mean which is a smooth, stable and peaceful way for power transfer in the current age. One of the famous statologist Maurice Duverger have divided the political party into 4 types on the basis of their organization such as “Branch party” it’s one of the most common type of political party seen in democratic setup, “Cell party” the structure is based on the organization of communist party, “Militia party” this type of party is organized along military lines and finally the “Caucus Party” an elite-based or cadre party.

2.OBJECTIVE

Some of the objective of this paper are

- 2.1** To examine the historical evolution of Bharatiya Jana Sangh and how it has emerged as Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)
- 2.2** To analyse the factor which are responsible to made BJP as a dominant party.
- 2.3** To evaluate how the growth of BJP has revived the one-party dominant system in Indian politics.

3. RESEARCH QUESTION

And on the basis of above research objective this paper critically tries to answer some of the major Research question as like

1. How a Bharatiya Jana Sangh converted to Bharatiya Janata Party(BJP)?
2. What are the factor made Bharatiya Janata Party(BJP) as a dominant party in Indian politics?
3. Whether the one-party dominant system has revived in Indian politics in contemporary time?

4.EVOLUTION OF BHARATIYA JANATA PARTY:

From Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS) to of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)

The growth of presently one of the largest political party BJP can be directly seen and traced from the rise of Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS), which is founded by Dr. Syama Prasad Mukherjee in 21 Oct 1951. Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS) basically develop as a response a reaction against the idea of Nehruvian secularism, as ideologically we basically can witness Bharatiya Jana Sangh was right-of-centrewing nationalist political party which completely rejected the idea of Nehruvian secularism and gave a greater emphasis to the idea of Positive secularism.

However, with the rise of several unavoidable situation in the regime of Indra Gandhi where we can witness the use of national emergency as an tool to safeguard her own government in 1975-1977 era this event ultimately let the suspension civil liberty, press freedom and democratic institutions and there was huge need felt for a united democratic front against authoritarian rule of current governance as a result as per situational demand to provide an alternative to the Indra one party authoritarian rule a grand anti congress alliance was formed where multiple party including Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS), Indian National Congress (Organisation) – Congress (O), Bharatiya Lok Dal (BLD), Socialist Party and so on which ultimately let this massive alliance defeat the Congress and with this for the very first time an non congress government was formed in national level and Morarji Desai became the first non-congress Prime minister of India.

However, with passage of time there was a slow and sharp rise of power politics and internal rivalry within the alliance of Janata party and with this even question like dual membership was also raised to the member of Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS) because of there relation with Rastriya Swayam Sevak (RSS), and the member of Jana Sangh was left with a simple choice Either the people of the Jana Sangh should quit the Janata Party or they must end their relationship with the RSS. Hence, it was seen large number of leaders of Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS) have left the alliance with Janata party on 06 April 1980 and formed Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on the basis of “Panch Nishthas” (Five Commitments) which include Nationalism (Rashtravaad), Democracy, Positive Secularism (Sarva Dharma Sambhava), Gandhian Socialism, Value-based Politics. On the other hand, Atal Bihari Vajpayee was elected as the first founding president of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

5.ONE-PARTY DOMINANCE SYSTEM AND EMERGENCE OF BJP IN INDIAN POLITICS

Since, India's independence, one party dominance has been the characteristic of Indian political system. Although, the coalition politics came at center, however, dominance of one party in several state politics as well as national politics. The emergence of BJP in several states along with national politics highlights the emergence of BJP at the center and states like Odisha, Delhi, Maharashtra, and Bihar. As a theoretical discourse, Rajani Kothari has conceptualized the One-party dominance where INC was dominating in Indian politics from 1950s to 1960s. A similar trend can be seen in Indian Politics since 2014-2024 where Bharatiya Janata Party has been dominating in several states with majority of seats and key portfolio.

6. DATA ANALYSIS

In the following's states of India, BJP's dominance is seen;

1. BJP has secured 78 seats out of 147 seats in 2024 state legislative assembly election of Odisha. It has secured 105 seats out of contested 164 seats in state legislative assembly election of Maharashtra in 2019.
2. BJP has secured 105 seats out of contested 164 seats in state legislative assembly election of Maharashtra in 2019. BJP has secured 132 seats out of contested 149 seats in state legislative assembly election of Maharashtra 2024.
3. It has secured 74 seats out of contested 110 seats in state legislative assembly election of Bihar in 2020. It has secured 89 seats out of contested 101 seats state assembly election of Bihar in 2025.
4. It has secured 8 seats out of contested 67 seats state assembly election of Delhi in 2020. It has secured 48 seats out of contested 68 seats state assembly election of Delhi in 2025.

The reason to take these states as a case study to examine emergence of BJP in Indian politics whereas previously in these states like Odisha and Delhi BJP was invisible in regional politics, however, it has emerged as a dominating party in Indian politics in present times. To examine the trend how the BJP has emerged from merely a competitor to dominant party in Indian politics these above states are taken.

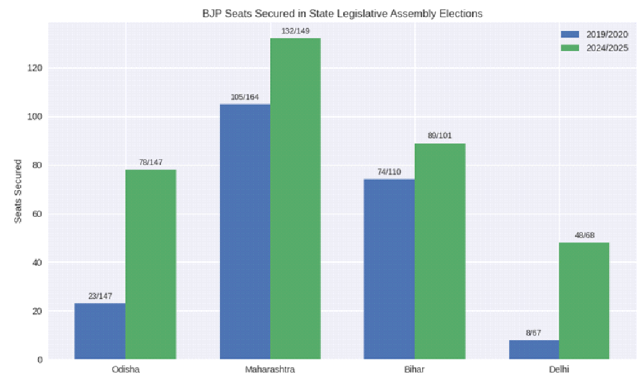


Figure 1: BJP seats secured in State Legislative Elections
Source: Election Commission of India, 2025

7. FACTORS RESPONSIBLE

Several factors are together contributing to One-party dominance in Indian politics for rise BJP like party of consensus, **charismatic leadership** and **women centric welfare policies**.

7.1 CHARISMATIC LEADERSHIP

Charismatic leadership of Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Narendra Modi are contributed in rising of BJP in Indian politics. Under the leadership of Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the Bharatiya Jana Sangh which is previously made its alliance with Janata Dal got a new identity as Bharatiya Janata Party under which we can see multiple members from Bharatiya Jana Sangh left the Janata Party and created a new political party named Bharatiya Janata Party. And it was under his leadership this newly emerged party got its prominent role and emerged as a nationally acceptable political party in Indian politics. On the other hand, we can also trace Vajpayee's visionary leadership in form of multiple initiative that is taken in international level to ensure world peace and growth during his tenure as we can witness to establish peace and mutual growth with Pakistan he have also let the Lahore bus yatra to let more flow of people to people communication which will further act as a symbolic as well as a systematic gesture to promote trust peace understanding among both nation and transform an hostile relation into a peaceful one. we can also trace his realistic leadership as in 1998 India tested its second series of nuclear in Pokhran- II in Pokhran test range Rajasthan under the name of Devi Sakti at the same time in domestic level although because of his dynamic leadership in 1996 general election

Bharatiya Janata Party emerged as the single largest party for the first time making Atal Bihari Vajpayee as the Prime Minister of India. However, this government was short lived as soon after the formation the Atal Bihari Vajpayee's government fall apart in 13 days hence in order to establish a stable government he also formed NDA alliance in 1998 which provided an alternative to the rule of congress in center as well as in state level and as a result again we can witness this alliance have successfully won the 12 Lok Sabha election for which first BJP led coalition government formed in center. However, this government was also fall within 13 months as party like AIADMK withdrawal its support but again in 13th Lok Sabha election NDA once again managed to gain popular support and finally this let the formation of first stable BJP led coalition government from 1999 to 2004 where Atal Bihari Vajpayee became the Prime Minister of India for the 4th time. In continuation of the BJP's charismatic leadership, Shri Narendra Damodar Dash Modi has become MLA for five times and two-time chief minister of Gujarat along with a three-time prime minister of India this show the weightage of his charismatic personality. He won from Maninagar constituency as MLA for three times along with one time from Rajkot II. From a chief minister to become Prime Minister of India this journey showcases the transforming leadership of Narendra Modi from regional politics to national politics landscape and dramatic shift of BJP in Indian politics.

7.2 Women centric welfare policies

In several states women centric welfare policies had played a vital role in enabling BJP to secure major seats in the states. As a result, **Subhadra Yojana** in Odisha played a great role for BJP's victory where the pre-poll promises attracted women voters towards BJP. This welfare scheme provides financial assistance Rs. 10,000 annually to eligible women from aged 21-60. **Ladki Behan Yojna** of Maharashtra provided the monthly financial assistance to its eligible women's voter this also resulted in a huge mass support of BJP in Maharashtra which ultimately led BJP to secure huge victory from a big margin where as in Bihar Mukhyamantri Mahila Rojgar Yojana as part of JEEVIKA Didi a women welfare flagship scheme had promised to provide Rs.

10,000 to its eligible women during pre-poll of Bihar legislative assembly election 2025.

8. KEY FINDINGS:

From the above contest we found that how Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) "BJP" has revived the one-party dominant system in Indian politics.

8.1 Replaced Regional Party:

In 2024 Odisha election, shows how BJP gained the power to form the government in the state by replacing Biju Janata Dal which considered one of the prominent regional political party of the state.

At the same time the Bihar election shows BJP got higher seats with compare to RJD.

This shows how BJP occupies a central position in many of the state by removing its regional parties there by it directly led to the revival of one-party dominant system.

8.2 Ideological Orientations:

BJP by introducing the inclusive idea of "Hindutva" BJP have successfully manage to avoid the fragmentation of Indian society on the basis of caste as a result people have moved beyond from their societal barriers such as caste, class and collectively engage them with the identity of Hindu. This further let BJP to gain mass support which ultimately revive the idea of one-party dominant system.

8.3 Populist Policy Agenda.

The welfare flagship scheme of BJP has attracted the numbers of population. Consequently, in several states schemes such as women centric policies as like Subhadra in Odisha, Ladki Behen in Maharashtra and Jeevika Didi in Bihar led to the successful victory of BJP with huge margin.

9. CONCLUSION

As Indian politics experience one party dominant system since its independent but the emergence of coalition politics not able to remove the one-party dominance in its political spectrum rather from 2014 the NDA government has been increasing the popularity of BJP there by strengthening the one-party dominant system as earlier propounded by Rajni Kothari. However, the term used by Kothari is not same in today's one-party dominant system in Indian politics due to the absence of party of pressure within BJP.

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Bridging Gaps in Menstrual Health: A Review on Specially-Abled Adolescent Girls

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ABSTRACT

Menstrual health and hygiene (MHH) is a most important but under-researched aspect of adolescent health, particularly in girls with physical and mental disabilities. These girls have secondary social, cultural and structural hindrances. Menstrual health among Indians is influenced by the cultural beliefs, gender norms, and lack of access to inclusive health education. In particular, such challenges are a lot more severe in sub-urban and semi-urban places. This is an overview paper that involves the compilation of the available literature, policy frameworks, and research. It explores the concept of menstrual health awareness in physically and mentally challenged adolescent girls in the suburban Odisha. The four dimensions that are interrelated, and the emphasis of the paper is knowledge and awareness about menstruation, cultural beliefs and taboos, access to sanitary products and supportive infrastructure, and the effectiveness of educational interventions in facilitating inclusive menstrual health practices. Through the interdisciplinary perspective that relies on public health, gender studies, disability studies, and education, the paper identifies areas of constant unawareness, inaccessibility, and a lack of institutional support. It further explains ethical, policy, and governance issues which can be applicable to design relationships of women-led as well as community-focused interventions.

The abstract locates urgent research gaps and highlights the necessity of disability-sensitive culturally responsive and ethically informed menstrual health interventions. This paper will inform researchers, policymakers, educators, and care providers and seek to add to the creation of equitable and inclusive menstrual health policy among adolescent girls with disabilities.

Keywords: *Menstrual Health and Hygiene; Adolescent Girls; Disability Inclusion; Cultural Beliefs; Sanitary Product Access; Educational Interventions; Women-Led Development; Suburban Odisha*

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INTRODUCTION

Menstrual health has come to be regarded as a major issue in the field of public health, gender equality and human right. It has aroused issues of education, dignity, social inclusion, access to healthcare, and not only biology. Menses' can be negative to the physical and psychological well-being of poor women, lower school attendance, and limit social activities. In India as in the rest of the world, misinformation, exclusion, and unequal access remain alive due to stigma, silence and the distortions of culture. Menstrual health should be addressed to attain gender equality, inclusive growth, and human dignity. Female children with physical or mental limitations have an even bigger obstacle in the form of menstrual health. They are managed by disability-related restrictions, inability to live independently, societal invisibility, and the inability to exercise control over their bodies. Daily struggles are the physical barriers, such as poor toilets, lack of assistive tools, lack of privacy, etc. Moreover, intellectually or psychologically disabled women could find it difficult to communicate, obtain minimal education in menstruation and be informed that they are unable to know and handle menstruation. Caregivers and institutions often opt to protect and control instead of empower people and decrease bodily autonomy and informed choice. This demonstrates that thoroughly we have to have disability-sensitive menstrual health strategies that are inclusive, ethical, and rights-based (Babbar et al., 2022).

The Indian culture influences the menstrual health through cultural beliefs, religious taboos, and gender norms that govern the control of the women body and movement. The forces are most prominent in the suburban and semi-urban regions where the traditional values clash with the modernity of urban living. Odisha is a convenient case study due to its diverse social and economic background and disequilibrium between health and education access. Although, the government has put in place policies to enhance complications to improve menstrual hygiene and health of the adolescents, it has not addressed the needs of girls with disabilities. Schools and health facilities are

inadequately prepared; teachers and caregivers are not trained, and schools and health departments do not include the perspective of disability in their menstrual health initiatives, which prevents grassroots interventions. Paper is about menstrual health in the wider background of women-led development and inclusive health. Women-led development is all about inclusion of women and girls, hearing their voices and making community based, gender responsive decisions. The inclusion of menstrual health into this framework can be useful in addressing deeply rooted inequalities associated with gender, disability, and economic status. The health of menstruation is also related to a number of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals with this consideration; SDG3 (Health), SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities). By providing adolescent girls with disabilities with equal access to menstrual care, the health outcomes of this group increase, gender inequality is decreased, and social exclusion is minimized (Garg & Anand, 2015).

The rationale of applying an overview paper is that research conducted up to date relating to menstrual health, disability, and adolescence is disjointed. Though there are studies in the field of public health, education, sociology, gender studies and disability studies, these studies are usually separated. Thus it is necessary that we should merge these divergent views so that we have a holistic picture on the issues and interventions on physically and mentally challenged girls in their adolescent stage. An overview paper enables us to critically discuss the evidences, identify gaps, as well as integrate the policy, practice, and ethics without binding the study to one setting. The primary aim of the overview paper is to synthesize and discuss available literature, policy reports and strategies that would target the menstrual health-related knowledge to physically and mentally challenged teenage girls in suburban Odisha. The paper will examine what girls know, cultural beliefs, access to sanitary products, and the role of the educational programs all in an inclusive rights-based framework. In such a way it will become a comprehensive source of information to

the researchers, policymakers, teachers, and the healthcare professionals interested in enhancing the establishment of equitable menstrual health and inclusive, feminist development.

CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS OF MENSTRUAL HEALTH AND DISABILITY

The multidimensional concept (MDC) of menstrual health and hygiene (MHH) exists. It extends beyond dealing with menstrual bleeding but inner aspects of bodily health, mental condition, honour and partaking of society. The MHH as per global public-health agendas involves having correct information regarding their monthly bleeding, the availability of approachable and cost-effective menstrual products, water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) amenities, and an encouraging social climate. This is an environment where menstruating individuals must feel free to control their cycles without feeling stigmatized as being discriminated. Therefore, menstrual health is not necessarily just a biological matter but a marker of gender equity, health rights and social inclusion particularly at the adolescent stage when individuals undergo a considerable number of physiological, emotional and social transformations. The issue of menstrual health in teenagers with disabilities needs to be perceived in a subtle way when it comes to disability. During the adolescence stage, disability manifested as limits within the physical capabilities in terms of mobility or motor abilities. It may also be in the form of intellectual disabilities which interfere with cognitive processing and learning. Also, it can have psychosocial disabilities, including emotional, behavioural, or mental health ones. These forms of disability tend to interlock and play with environmental and social limitations, which form the experiences that the young people lead. In menstruating adolescents, disability can limit access to appropriate facilities, diminish chances of adequate menstrual education, and increase the dependence of the adolescents on caregivers to take care of their menstrual needs. Such dependency may undermine privacy, autonomy, and decision-making, and menstrual health is a very sensitive and under-researched topic of disability discourse (Pandey et al.,

2025). Menstrual health is influenced by the interaction of gender, disability, socio-economic status and geographic location. Girls with disabilities have an additive disadvantage; gender expectations about the secrecy of discussion about their menstrual cycles, the stigma of disability means that visibility and inclusion is minimal, poverty limits access to sanitary materials and health care services, and suburban or semi-urban areas do not necessarily have special services and accommodating facilities. These reasons act in combination, contributing to vulnerability and exclusion. To view the role of structural inequalities in shaping menstrual health awareness and practices among youths, it is important to look at this issue through the intersectional perspective. A number of theoretical perspectives shed light on the relationship between disability among menstrual health. The social model of disability argues with the medical perspective that puts disability into the individual. It demonstrates that disability is a product of societal inequalities as exemplified by unfriendly infrastructure, discriminatory attitudes, and marginalizing policies. In the context of menstrual health, the model exposes how poor sanitation amenities, absence of disability sensitive education and cultural silence on menstruation can result in disabling conditions on young girls. He or she should improve results, which is not possible without changing social systems and not the individual impairments (Wilbur et al., 2019).

The gender and health equity framework enrich the analysis with focusing on power relations, societal norms, or institutional practices in the context of understanding health outcomes. It perceives menstruation as a gendered experience that is influenced by patriarchal culture of norms and resource inequality. These inequities are exacerbated in girls with disabilities since they are not always included in mainstream health discourse and interventions. An equal approach towards menstrual health is the ability to consider different types of menstruation, design programs that are participative, and embrace varied menstrual experiences. The capability approach is the approach to development that was developed by Amartya Sen as the ethical and

developmental approach concentrating on the real freedoms of individuals in pursuit of well-being. Based on this perspective, the health of menstrual is associated with abilities of integrity in the body, self-respect, education, and social engagements. The capabilities of the adolescent girls with disabilities are limited when they are not provided with information resources, products, and enabling environments. Promoting menstrual health in this way becomes the issue of increasing the capacity with the help of inclusive education, availability of infrastructures, and supportive care-giving (Selva et al., 2026).

These are all interrelated issues that should be addressed through an inclusive discussion on menstrual health. Such a discussion acknowledges that menstruation is a universal phenomenon that also differs depending on the person. It urges the need to incorporate the sidelined voices and that views of disability should be incorporated into the designs of health and education systems, as well as policy. Shifting menstrual health to the intersectional and rights-based theory, this paper explores the necessity of inclusive and ethical and situation-specific approaches and support to adolescent girls with disabilities.

MENSTRUAL KNOWLEDGE AND AWARENESS AMONG ADOLESCENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Menstrual awareness and menstrual knowledge are some of the main aspects of menstrual health and hygiene (MHH). They influence the perceptions, the coping mechanisms as well as the seeking behaviours of menstruation among adolescents. Studies always demonstrate that women with disabilities possess very poor knowledge about menstruation, as compared to women without disabilities. Such an imbalance will be due to social stigma, lack of access to formal health education, and beliefs about the ability of disabled teenagers. Therefore, menstruation can be shown as a startling, disorienting or unpleasant occurrence rather than as a regular biological phenomenon. Research studies indicate that there are variations in the menstrual awareness of physically challenged adolescents and mentally or intellectually disabled adolescents. Teens with

mobility problems (or disabled) are the ones who are physically challenged, and they are typically aware of the menstrual fundamentals. However, dealing with supplies, bathrooms and privacy are real-life issues they have to deal with. Their knowledge is primarily obtained during school and peer contact although inaccessible classrooms, wash rooms and study resources are interfering with their effective attendance. My comparison is different, though, since children and adolescents with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities are likely to possess little or piecemeal information concerning menstruation. Such words as menstrual cycle, hygiene practices, and changes of body are poorly explained or even not discussed. Caregivers might be ill at ease giving this information or even feel there is no need or accordingly, it is not appropriate (Atari et al., 2024). Caregivers play a central role in the development of adolescent menstrual knowledge when the adolescents have a disability. The initial information is normally given by mothers, female family members as well as residential carers particularly when it comes to intellectual siblings. However, the education they provide usually stops at the bleeding management technique, rather than complete menstrual education. There is a barrier due to cultural taboos, embarrassment, and fear of sparking sexual curiosity to enable an open discussion. There are instances in which caregivers simply withhold information because they think that ignorance helps the teen to avoid what is being perceived to be dangerous or socially stigmatizing. Teachers and schools also contribute to it, but the influence of these two factors is not equal. Health programs in schools are trying to push towards menstrual literacy but they do not teach inclusively. The materials are usually not conformed to a variety of learning requirements and teachers do not get to train on disability sensitive communication. As a result, the adolescents with disabilities (but more particularly those who are special or even inclusive and are not appropriately supported) might lack formal menstrual education. This undulation supports the dependency on the caregivers and minimizes the opportunities of learning with peers (Yilmaz, 2025)

The medical personnel may be very helpful in data on menstruation, but health care workers almost never see the challenged teenagers face to face. The communication will be directed to the caregivers rather than the teens and this limits the ability of the teens to be independent and self-aware. A significant number of professionals are also not trained on how to communicate complicated health issues in simple ways that are accessible to individuals with intellectual or psychosocial disability. These issues demonstrate the need to have the cooperation of health, education, and social care. It is difficult to know about menstruation due to communication barriers and learning dramas. Intellectually disabled teens can hardly understand abstract concepts such as hormone cycles. Language limits, sensory sensitivities and attention issues also can have an effect on them, particularly when the material to be covered is based on dense text. Other impediments are seen in physically challenged teens due to lack of access to assistive equipment or seclusion to discuss. Unless teachers are provided with adaptive approaches as visual aids, repetition, simple language, and hands-on learning, then menstrual education remains inaccessible (Bhosale et al., 2025).

There is also popular ignorance and misinformation of adolescents with disabilities documented in the literature. What most people want us to believe is that menstruation is a disease, a punishment or a condition that has to be isolated. Lack of hygiene knowledge might result in unsafe behaviour, including the prolonged retention of used materials or the refusal to take a shower. Cultural discourses tend to support these ideas, and a lack of viable and available informational sources. The consequences of poor menstrual information are broad and extensive. Adolescents are at increased risk due to lack of awareness in terms of falling ill in the reproductive tract, skin irritation, and psychological distress. Most of them develop anxiety, grace, or fear when they are on their period particularly when they are not ready to go through the changes of their bodies. Absenteeism among students is one of the cases offered with education facilities inaccessible, unsupported, or unconfident. Other

than the physical and academic effects, lack of knowledge undermines the dignity, autonomy, and social engagement and perpetuates the cycles of marginalization (Raut K. B. et al. 2019).

CULTURAL BELIEFS, TABOOS, AND SOCIAL PRACTICES

Menstruation in India is largely connected to the cultural beliefs, social norms, and religious practices that explain the ways in which menstrual bodies are perceived and managed. It is regarded as an object of impurity, pollution or a ritual uncleanliness in most communities. Such concepts result in the limitation of activities like cooking, visiting religious ceremonies, meeting social, and mobility. This impact of these norms is high in Odisha in the suburban and semi-urban spheres where tradition is in conflict with modern education and healthcare. Despite increasing educational efforts, menstruation as a subject is still very secretive, its speech is not made overt, but rather informally passed through word of mouth. Myths perpetuate stigmatisation and silence regarding menstruation by characterising girls who menstruate as susceptible, impure or morally corrupt. It is believed by many to weaken the body, invite bad spiritual entrapment or requires integration to maintain cleanliness at home. Such beliefs do not come to the fore in the normal conversation, making the female teenagers clandestine and humiliated. To most, the beginning of menstruation is accompanied by fear and lack of understanding rather than knowledge since the subject is not discussed even in families and schools. Such silence suppresses the right information and maintains the misinformation between generations (Dutta, 2023).

The image of disabled adolescent girls is more severely and even more insidiously restrained by the limitations of culture. The double marginalization happens because of the disability stigma which combines with the menstrual stigma. Families can interpret menstruation in a girl with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities as problematic or dangerous that could lead to the firm restrictions of movement, social interaction, and education. Menstruation in certain households is regarded as a liability instead of the logical step in the development of

a person, which solidifies the negative perspective on disability and women and their body independence. Physically impaired girls can also be questioned as to determine further since their circumstances of menstrual care that requires the help of caregivers are culturally acceptable in terms of modesty and control. The family structure is very essential in determining menstrual beliefs and practices. Mothers, grandmothers and other women are the largest perpetrators of the menstrual norms, transferring the cultural information and limitations on the adolescent girls. These practices might be presented as protective by the family but when it comes down to either conformity or personal comfort or even autonomy, the family tends to stress on conformity. The power of decisions among girls with disabilities is often shifted completely towards caregivers and eliminating the opportunity to express themselves and make their own menstrual health decisions. Although they are not directly involved, the other members of the male family often contribute to making the subject of the issue hush-puppy by shaming menstruation (Bazakare et al., 2025). Menstrual taboos are upheld through community demands and religion. Odisha is one of those states where during menstruation times people in many areas of Odisha tend to limit their access to temples, festival celebrations and other communal gatherings. These regulations seldom put into consideration the needs of adolescent disabled people which increases social exclusion. By shunning discussions about menstruation by schools and community organizations, girls particularly the ones with disabilities also feel that they are required to remain in the shadow during their menstrual cycles. The consequences of these taboos do not fall on deaf ears. The effect of stigma on self-esteem is incessant as girls would start feeling that their bodies are dirty or defective. Embarrassment and shame may make them remain silent and in need of help. Little freedom of movement will create barriers to education, recreation and social life. Girls with disabilities may have their limits further to divide them and become more dependent on others. The health seeking also suffers, as menstrual pain, infections or any abnormalities could go undisclosed due to fear of

facing society, embarrassment or the lack of supportive environments (Lalramnghaki, 2023).

ACCESS TO SANITARY PRODUCTS AND MENSTRUAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Availability of safe, affordable, and adequate sanitary products along with positive menstrual infrastructure is an essential element to menstrual well-being and cleanliness. In the case of adolescent girls, particularly adolescent girls with disabilities, knowledge and cultural acceptance is not the only place they can be made to manage menstruation in a dignified way due to the fact that the access to menstrual materials and physical environments are major determinants of their ability to do this. In India, discrepancies in the provision of hygienic products and facilities are great. Particularly in the suburban areas and semi-urban places, these gaps are even greater, with the services usually having to lie in between urban services and rural ones. With increased market penetration and health promotion efforts, sanitary products now include disposable pads, reusable cloth pads and menstrual cups more readily available and affordable in the recent years. However, having economic limitations continues to restrict frequent access to lower socio-economic families. In the case of adolescents with disabilities, the choice of products can also be limited by physical and mental requirements. Products that often need to be changed; those that need fine motor control and those with complicated instructions can be complex to self-operate, particularly for girls with mobility or intellectual problems. As a result, caregivers tend to choose items because of convenience and not appropriateness and in some cases, they use improvised or unsanitary materials (Jayasree, 2025).

Difficulty in using the products does not just stop at availability. Without adaptive aids or other facilities, adolescents with physical disabilities can have problems positioning or changing sanitary products without assistance. Girls who are intellectually or psychosocially disadvantaged tend to be unable to comprehend the timing and method of product change and there is a risk of leakage, discomfort, and infection. Lack of guidance

by the healthcare providers and insufficient access to disability-sensitive menstrual education exacerbates these issues. Consequently, menstrual management has become some form of anxiety and dependency instead of being part of individual care. There are a number of policy initiatives introduced by the Indian government to manage menstrual hygiene among the adolescents. Education programs like the Menstrual Hygiene Scheme as part of the National Health Mission, school-based sanitary napkins distribution, etc. are designed to enhance the accessibility and awareness of the product. Although such initiatives are essential steps to take, their execution is not properly disability-inclusive in most cases. The distribution systems might not extend to adolescents with disabilities who are out of school programs users or attend special education institutions. Besides, program materials and instructions are seldom tailored to meet a variety of other learning requirements, which minimizes their applicability with adolescents with intellectual disabilities (Karthikayini, 2021).

A significant barrier to inclusive menstrual health has continued to be infrastructure. People should have toilets with large enough size, handrails, water, and waste disposal to manage menstruation themselves. However, in the suburban regions there are many schools, public places, and community centers which lack sanitation capability in regard to disability. Privacy and safety are lowered because of narrow doorways, lack of ramps, broken locks, and lack of water. These gaps compel the adolescent with disabilities to depend on their caretakers as well as restrict their participation in school or community activities during their menstrual periods. The other aspect that has been disregarded is disposal facilities. Hygiene and dignity in used menstrual products lies centrally in safe and secret means of disposing them. There is a lack of bins, incinerators, or waste-management systems in a great number of suburbs. The disabled adolescents usually have difficulties in locating a place to dispose, if they lack mobility, stairs, or a long walkway. The lack of good disposal alternatives may impose the need to do things the wrong way, raise environmental issues, and humiliate (Kaur et al., 2018).

The disparities between the urban and suburban worlds determine access to menstrual products and infrastructure. City is normally associated with an increase in the number of products and sanitation. Conversely, the areas of suburbs are not evenly developed. They often lack a reliable funding and technical support and supervision provided in schools and health centers. Adolescents with disabilities face additional or extra gaps: there is a lack of special services, assistive technologies, and missing inclusive infrastructure. These loopholes reinforce spatial disparities in the monthly health outcomes. The dependency of caregivers is a common phenomenon in discussions regarding the problem of menstrual access and infrastructure. There is always the need of caregiver assistance, but excess dependence may destroy dignity, privacy, and autonomy. Adolescents might not like the fact that they need some kind of intimate menstrual care by others and this is particularly in institutions. The judicious balance between care and independence involves careful design of products, infrastructure, and support that will empower adolescents with disabilities without taking into account their special needs (Maharana, 2022).

Solving this issue of access to sanitary products and menstrual infrastructure needs an integrated solution that equates between affordability, the suitability of the product, disability-friendly design and responsiveness to policy. Enhancing infrastructure, redesigning government initiatives as well as inclusive dignity-based menstrual health practices are crucial measures to attain equitable menstrual health of adolescent females with disabilities in suburban India.

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND MENSTRUAL HEALTH SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Schools play a significant role in the education of adolescents about menstruation and medical assistance of menstrual hygiene. Schools, special schools and inclusive education environments are where structured information, social interaction and health support can be gained to a great extent in the case of adolescents with disabilities. The quality of such schools in providing

menstrual health makes a significant difference to attendance, involvement, pride and general health. The mainstream schools tend to cater to the general student body and might lack instruments of the menstrual health of the disabled students. Menstrual health is even a neglected concern with special schools providing personalized care, as much as their specialization is on disability-related learning. Inclusive educational environments unite both students with disabilities and without disabilities and provide an opportunity to bridge this gap. With the necessary resources, such schools would be able to not only encourage open normal discussion on menstruation but also offer students individual support when they need them. Effective inclusive paradigm, however, depends on firm institutional dedication, ready teachers and sufficient facilities (Hussein, 2022). School tickets the teachers take a middle stage in the menstrual health provision in schools. Their readiness, sensitivities and orientations have a direct effect on the manner of how the topic of menstruation is approached and treated in schools. Lots of teachers (primarily working in socio-culturally conservative environments) get less formal training about menstrual health education, much less about disability -inclusive ones. Through this, menstruation will be superficially handled or even avoided making stigma and silence stronger. The educators can also be uncomfortable in meeting the menstrual needs of adolescents with disabilities due to lack of knowledge or some fear of crossing the boundaries of professional works. Mensal education in school programs is not even and is usually biologically oriented and concentrates on reproductive sex organs and not whole menstrual health. The co-curricular activities like health talks and life-skills training, peer education programs can offer more flexible platforms of discussion. Nevertheless, such programs are hardly developed to accommodate adolescent disabled individuals. Educational resources might be in unaccommodating forms like simple language, visual materials, or physical materials. This restricts understanding and interaction especially among the intellectually, visually or hearing-impaired students

(Brown et al., 2022). Health rooms in schools, counselling and referral systems are needed to assist the students when facing menstrual issues. But these supports are not complete or even regularly utilized. The emergency menstrual staff, pain management, and hygiene are not trained in many schools. In the case of students with disabilities, the unsystematic assistance can make them skip school, drop out early, or also withdraw socially at such times. Additionally, the collaboration between schools, health providers, and families is not strong in most cases and that is a limitation to the effect of these intervention programs. Health education should be inclusive. These types of models emphasize participation, accessibility and the necessity to respect diversity because menstrual experience varies physically, cognitively and socially. They substitute a unified-fits-all strategy with customized teaching, assistive technology and culturally-related instruction. Provided that the students with disabilities get accurate, age-sensitive, and available menstrual information, they will be able to handle periods on their own and without anxiety (Caruso, 2018).

Intervention strategies implemented in schools are a solid argument in favour of the positive menstrual health in the adolescent disabled student. Schools provide a constant, consistent area of activities; thus, students are able to work with the content a number of times, and also receive continuous guidance. Some examples are training teachers, initiate peer-support groups, providing available menstrual education resources, and renovate school washroom amenities. A combination of these measures creates a friendly atmosphere. Notably, schools as well identify menstrual health issues in time, and can refer students to the required health services. Concisely, schools play an important role in ensuring menstrual hygiene equity among the students with disabilities. Improving the skills of the teachers, integrating inclusive menstrual education into the curriculum, and sealing the institutional loopholes are also important steps to consider regarding conducive school environments. School based approach coordination has the ability of enhancing menstrual control, involvement and dignity of such students significantly where the schools, the facilities and

emotional assistance are integrated to bring about these changes.

ETHICAL, POLICY, AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

Interventions and research on menstrual health amongst adolescents with disabilities are crucial in terms of the moral, policy and governance issues. Due to the overlap of the problems related to age, gender, disability, and socio-cultural vulnerability, ethical sensitivity needs to be addressed on all levels, starting with the development of the study and then continuing on to the implementation of the policy. Failure to consider them may further marginalize rather than promote inclusion and dignity. The most significant ethical problem of such investigation is informed consent. Adolescents with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities might be unable to comprehend well, both the aims and consequences of the study. Thus, it is necessary to get the consent of the adolescent themselves and the consent of the parents or their caregivers. Ethical practice also stipulates that the involvement must be voluntary and non-coercive and discussed in understandable terms, either through visual representation or any other means of communication. The researchers are also supposed to make sure that the subjects are aware that they can back out at any time without any adverse effects (Joshi & Mendhe, 2025).

The next ethical matters are privacy and dignity. Menstruation takes a lot of stigmatization through the societies and adolescents who have disabilities are always vulnerable to embarrassment, exposure, or abuse. This means that, the research and programs should employ high confidentiality measures. The data collection must be done within secure and confidential environments that are friendly to the participant. Moreover, the practices that demean or missed-diagnose adolescents with disabilities are harmful, since they are infantilizing and damaging to the feeling of self-worth. The overlap between these two issues is policy gaps in the intersection between menstrual health and disability inclusion. There are numerous menstrual hygiene and disability welfare schemes in India, but they are isolated. The policy applied to menstruation tends to concentrate on a physically able,

normally neurotypical population, and disability policy tends to be gender-unspecific. This division results in bad targeting, restricted access, and random implementation particularly in the suburbs and semi-urban regions (Egea et al., 2025).

It is important to integrate menstrual health with disability inclusion and national development. The women-led development agenda is based on agency, leadership, and empowerment yet the adolescence disabled have no much visibility in this agenda. The need to treat menstrual health as a premise issue of embodiment control and involvement is crucial in future leadership and inclusion of women in society. This orientation is also very close to ICSSR priorities that focus on interdisciplinary research, social justice, and formulation of evidence-based policies. A synthesis paper of health, education, sociology, and disability studies can hence play a meaningful part in policy discussion and research agenda. Local systems of governance are decisive in implementing the policy. Individual institutions like the panchayati raj, urban local bodies, school management committees and self-help groups can play the role of a mediator between policy frameworks and the community realities. The public health systems, especially the frontline employees including ASHA and Anganwadi employees, are perfectly placed to provide disability-sensitive reproductive menstrual health education and care. This however needs specific training and coordination of activities of the department and accountability (John et al., 2026).

The social institutions, including families, school, and community-based organizations, are very important influencers of the outcomes of governance. These groups should be involved in order to minimize stigma, generate encouraging settings and sustain interventions. Active engagement of such stakeholders in policies makes them more effective and culturally suited. On this basis, the inclusive policy frameworks must assume a rights-based, life-course approach. Some of the recommendations include integrating disability-specifications into menstrual health policies, ensuring availability of essential infrastructure and communication, strengthening of ethical

principles related to research and program provision, and participative governance. All these are meant to foster equity, dignity and inclusions, in such a way that teenagers with disabilities will not be sidelined in menstrual health and development agendas.

CONCLUSION

This is an overview because it provides evidence on several areas of study to demonstrate that menstrual health is a vital, but unfortunate, area of adolescent health primarily among girls with physical, intellectual, and psychosocial impairments. In all aspects of health, education, socio-cultural and government, the analysis finds that there are recurring knowledge gaps, access gaps, institutional gaps, and there are policy gaps. These loopholes impact disproportionately the adolescents with disabilities in the suburban and semi-urban settings. The gender, disability, poverty, and cultural stigma intergroup result in increased susceptibility of menstruation, which results in worse health outcomes, school absenteeism, loss of dignity, and decreased social engagement. Combined, these results highlight the necessity to develop an inclusive, rights-based approach to menstrual health, which extends beyond the hygienic discourse and other unified factors and focuses on the differences in body experiences and support requirements. Equipping teenage female disabled with the mechanisms and self-esteem to take care of her menstrual cycle is not only a health intervention, but also a stepping stone toward gender equality, lifelong learning, and integration into society. Inclusive menstrual health services which are based on the accessibility of education, sensitive health systems, enabling school settings, and community involvement can enhance autonomy and worthiness and minimize dependence and feeling marginalized. This empowerment is also in line with wider development objectives, such as women-led development, and Sustainable Development Goals on health, gender inequality, and lower inequalities. Being an overview paper, such chapter summarizes scattered evidence spanning the various fields and highlights some of the most important gaps in research. It provides important rationale to policy makers

on the need to have integrated frameworks that connect menstrual health and disability inclusion; served by ethical governance and localised implementation. To the practitioners, it highlights the significance of the school based, community based, and culturally sensitive intervention. In the future, research that is socially responsive and women refrained needs to embrace participatory research methodologies, give the adolescents with disabilities and their caregivers a voice, and create evidence context-specific to translate into inclusive policies. This is necessary in efforts to make menstrual health efforts equitable, sustainable and indeed transformative.

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Impact of Odisha Millet Mission on Livelihoods of Tribal Women in Odisha

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ABSTRACT

The Government of Odisha has launched the Odisha Millet Mission (OMM) for the revival of millet cultivation, enhancement of food and nutritional security and livelihood of small and marginal farmers particularly tribal community. Millets have been traditionally a fundamental component of agriculture and food system, considering their nutritional content, climate adaptability and suitability to rain-fed conditions. But over the years the cultivation and production of millets declined sharply, due to changes in agricultural practices and promotion of other types of grains. In this regard, the Odisha Millet Mission has come up as a major intervention to revive traditional millet-based farming systems. The present study basically elaborates the impact of Odisha Millet Mission on tribal livelihood in some selected tribal district of Odisha. Millets natural sources of micronutrients and can control the epidemic of nutrient deficiencies, specifically of iron and calcium and various micronutrient elements.

The study investigated the modifications to agricultural production, household incomes, food security and tribal women's participation in livelihood activities. The study is based on the secondary data such as; Government reports, Directorate Of Agriculture & Food Production Govt. Of Odisha, Ministry of Tribal Affairs and published literature. The findings indicate that the Mission has led to increase in millet cultivation, better market assess,

improved household income and enhanced food and nutritional security of tribal household.

The Odisha Millet Mission has become a key contributor to preserving traditional agricultural knowledge which encouraging climate and smart agricultural practices and enhancing sustainable tribal livelihoods. It's a boon for Tribal Women's livelihood, food security, Women Empowerment and Sustainable Agriculture in Tribal Development of Odisha.

KEY WORDS : *Odisha Millet Mission (OMM), Nutritional Food Security, Livelihood Enhancement, Tribal Women, Odisha*

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INTRODUCTION

1.2. Significance of Tribal Livelihoods of Odisha

Odisha is India's second poorest state and is the home to 62 Scheduled Tribes, making up 22.8% of the state population, the third highest tribal population of the country, for these communities' livelihood is not just income but a system which they tied with the land, forest, identity and culture (Census,.2011). Traditional practices like shifting craft-based work and collection of non-timber forest produce have sustained sustainability household livelihood and ecological knowledge for generations, but the ecological degradation, erratic rainfall and high risk of drought in the area have led to food insecurity and increase migration and continuous deaths by starvation (Annual Report. 2024-25). Ecological imbalance seriously affects livelihood and increases vulnerability. Tribals have been caught in a vicious circle of exploitation arising from rising indebtedness, inadequate land base, poor production in agriculture and low incomes.

Today, tribal livelihoods of Odisha sit at the intersection of displacement and development. Mining, industries and conservation policies have disrupted customary resource access, pushing many tribal households toward wage labour and seasonal migration. It's critical to understand how tribal livelihood function its revels not only the outcomes of policy interventions, but also how Adivasi communities negotiate industrial expansion, market integration and cultural continuity in one of India's most resource rich yet economically marginalized regions.

Why tribal livelihood of Odisha Matters, because Tribal communities form nearly one-fourth of the Odisha's population and occupy resource rich areas. Their livelihood systems which combining agriculture, wage work and forest collection are under direct pressure from land acquisition, environment change and labour market shifts. Studying tribal livelihoods in Odisha is therefore very important to assess whether current models of growth and inclusion are really benefit the tribal communities who mostly affected by industrialization.

1.3. Traditional Role of Millets

Traditionally millets have been an integral part of socio-economic, cultural and agricultural life of tribal community

in Odisha. Multiple millet varieties crops are there such as; finger millet (ragi), little millet, foxtail millet and Kodo millet have been cultivated for generations in tribal households through conventional rain-fed and upland farming system. These crops are well adapted to local ecological conditions and require minimal external inputs and exhibit a high-level tolerance to drought and climatical uncertainties. Thus, millets had been a trustworthy source of food and livelihood security to tribal population in marginal and lack of resource areas. Millets have been part of the food habits of tribal communities, apart from their agricultural importance (Saxena. L.P, 2020).

Advantages of Millets

Nutritious Security

- sources of sustainable food
- Combat Hunger
- Adapted to Climate
- Protection from illness
- Gluten Free
- Low Glycemic index
- Helps in fighting cardiovascular diseases, Anemia, Calcium Deficiency etc.
- Economic security and climate-resilient crop
- Sustainable income source
- Rich in Micro-nutrient like calcium, Zinc, iron, iodine etc.
- Bioactive compound rich improved amino acid profile

Source: -<https://doi.org/10.1186/s40066-018-0183-3>

Millets is not a simple grain in tribal community as millets are woven into culture and faith. The tribal community specifically women are use millet grains and foods in festivals, rituals and community gatherings. And community gatherings. In many Adivasi homes across Odisha, the harvest festival is incomplete without 'Mandua'. The crops have been a vessel for indigenous knowledge women's hold expertise in seeds selection, cultivation on hills slops managing crop diversity and food processing, they are not using any chemicals and maintain biodiversity which is transform within generations (Taraputia. T., Suchen. B and Mishra. C. 2014).

Tribal communities in Odisha have long cultivated multiple local millets varieties using mixed cropping which

helps in maintaining agro-biodiversity and reduce risk during drought or erratic rainfall. Millets have historically practiced as an important role in ecological sustainability, cultural heritage and tribal livelihood in Odisha (Taraputia. T., Suchen. B and Mishra. C. 2014).

1.4. Reduction of Millet Cultivation

The cultivation and production of millets in Odisha have reduced considerably in past three decades due to both market demand and supply related factors. The area under finger millet declined from 2.48 lakh hectares in 1990-91 to 1.83 lakh hectares in 2016-17, mean while productivity fell from 10.23 q/ha to 8.96 q/ha during the same period. Major reasons for this reduction which include, lack of incentives, quality seed availability for millets, state-led promotion of rice through procurement and PDS, lack of incentives absence of suitable processing technology, competition from commercial crops like cotton, maize cashew and eucalyptus and social stigma associated with millet consumption and underdeveloped or no market facilities for millet production. (Mission, 2019-20)

On 27th of January 2016, the Planning and Convergence Department, Government of Odisha convened a consultative workshop on millet revival. Chaired by Shri R. Balakrishnan, IAS, Development Commissioner and Additional Chief Secretary, the workshop was organized in collaboration with the Nabakrushna Choudhury Centre for Development Studies (NCDS), the ASHA network, and the revitalising Rained Agriculture (RRA) Network. Participants include civil society organizations from Odisha and other millet growing states, along with officials from the directorate of Agriculture and food production and the department of ST, SC and minorities' welfare, women and child development and Panchayati raj. The main aim was to draw on field experiences of CSOs and department staff to identify constraints in the millet ecosystem and develop strategies for reviving the crop. The 2016 consecutive workshop proved decisive. Following its recommendations, the Government of Odisha initiated the 'Special programme for promotion of Millets in Tribal Areas', which was later renamed the 'Odisha Millets Mission' (OMM). The programme had five core objectives. (Mission, 2019-20)

1. Increase household consumption of millets
2. Establish decentralized processing units to reduce drudgery
3. Enhance productivity of millet crops
4. Strengthen farmer collectives and develop market linkages
5. Integrate millets into state nutrition programmes and the public distribution system

Lunched in 2017, Odisha Millet Mission (OMM) began in 30 blocks across 7 tribal districts in southern Odisha. It expanded to 25 additional blocks across 7 districts in 2018-19, including 4 new districts. In 2019-20, the programme added 17 blocks in 3 new districts. Notably, all 7 blocks in Keonjhar district were covered using District Mineral Fund (DMF) support. (Mission, 2019-20)

1.5. The Odisha Millet Mission (OMM)

India's millet production reached 180.15 lakh tonnes in 2024-25, registering a year-on-year increase of 4.43 lakh tones. Rajasthan was the top producer, followed by Maharashtra and Karnataka. In terms of trade, India exported 89,164.96 tonnes of millets valued at \$37 million during 2024-25.

On the policy front, the Union Cabinet approved the MSP for ragi for the 2025-26 marketing season in May 2025, announcing the second-highest absolute hike of 596 per quintal. Among millets varieties, bajra accounted for 60.3 % of total national production, making it the dominant crop. (PIB, 2025)



Sources: - PIB, 2025

The Odisha Millet Mission was launched by the Government of Odisha in 2017 as a targeted initiative to revive millet cultivation, with a focus on ragi in tribal regions. The programme adopts a value-chain approach, addressing production, processing, consumption, integration of millets into public food schemes. Notable interventions include conditional cash transfers for millet farmers, introduction of ragi laddoos in Anganwadi centers for preschool children and the establishment of Millet Shakti Cafes that have served lakhs of consumer(PIB, 2025).

- **Implementation Approach**

The FPOs implement the programme directly. Local NGOs help with planning at the grassroots level and capacity building. District and block level division monitor and supervise the progress of the mission.

- **Odisha to set up Millet Processing units**

Millet-based products have been chosen as the One District One Product (ODOP) in two districts of Odisha, Malkangiri and Nuapada as of February 2025. Millet processing incubation centers also sanctioned. So far, 17 millet-based incubation centers have been approved in the country under the PM formal Registration of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME) Scheme. Similarly, 21 entrepreneurs in Odisha have been sanctioned loans of Rs. 1.44 crore under the same scheme to set up millet-based processing unit.

1.6. Impact on Tribal Women's Livelihood

The Odisha Millet Mission (OMM), launched in 2017, has positively impacted tribal women's livelihoods by enhancing income opportunities, food security and social agency. (Sahoo, B.K, 2025) By reviving millet cultivation in tribal and rainfed regions, where women constitute a large share of the agricultural workforce and the mission has expanded their role beyond farming. A key outcome has been rising their household incomes. Tribal women now participate across the value chain, including seeds conservation, processing, packaging and marketing of millet-based products. Many have established micro

enterprises producing millet flour, biscuits, laddoos and snacks which generating steady income and local employment. Odisha Millet Mission (OMM) has also improved household food and nutritional security. Millets has high iron, calcium, Fiber and protein content. Has contributed to reducing malnutrition, Anaemia among tribal women and children. As drought-resilient, low-water crops, millets further reduce climate-related risk for women farmers facing erratic rainfall. (Sahoo, B.K, 2025)

Beyond income and nutrition, the Odisha Millet Mission has strengthened women's empowerment and agency. Engagement with SHGs and millet-based enterprises has improved tribal women's financial autonomy, leadership capacity and participation in local decision-making many women who earlier relied on precarious seasonal wage labour now derive livelihoods from sustainable farming and village level entrepreneurship (World Food Program, 2022). The mission has also contributed to conserving indigenous agricultural knowledge. Tribal women, traditionally custodians of millet biodiversity and food practices and are increasingly acknowledged for their role in suitable agriculture in Odisha. (Majhi, Khatua, Panda, Mohanty. 2025)

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To Analyse the role of tribal women in millet-based livelihood activities.
2. To review the impact of Odisha Millet Mission on tribal women livelihood.

METHODOLOGY

The present study is based on secondary sources of data collection. Secondary data which are already collected, published and documented by government agencies, official websites, books, journals, reports and research institutions. This study focuses on analysing of the existing literature and documents concerning the impact of Odisha Millet Mission on tribal women's livelihood in Odisha.

The data for the study were collected from various sources like Press Information Bureau, India, Odisha Millet Mission, Government of Odisha, research articles, policy papers, census reports, NGO reports, books and peer reviewed journals. Data were also collected from national institutes such as Ministry of Tribal Affairs, NITI Aayog and various reports related to tribal development and millets related information.

REVIEWS OF LITERATURE

Sahoo and Samantaray. (2021), studied the millet cultivation and food security in the tribal dominated Koraput District of Odisha. The study revealed that millet cultivation is an important contributor to household food security and climate resilience of tribal farmers and it's a sustaining livelihood in the resource-poor areas.

Saxena. (2020), explained that the indigenous millet system in Odisha is preserved through community-based initiative such as the 'Burlang Yatra' seeds festival etc. it also highlighted the role of traditional millet farming practices in ecological sustainability and cultural identity of tribal communities.

Pandey, et. al. (2024) elaborately assessing the millet-based entrepreneurship among tribal women in Odisha. Research shows that millet processing and value addition activities have created new livelihood opportunities for women.

Majhi, et al. (2025) have made an elaborate study on millet farming and food security of Sundargarh district of Odisha. The study shows the socio-economic participation and decision-making power within households and communities after millet cultivation improved.

RESEARCH GAPS

While some studies have talked about women's empowerment, food security and agricultural development in Odisha, there is inadequate research on the specific as the study pivotally focused on the impact of tribal livelihood in millet production and the role of

Odisha Millet Mission (OMM). Available study majorly emphasised on revival of millet, Nutritive benefits, climate resilience and agricultural productivity but there is lack of sufficient empirical studies on the impact the scheme on the livelihood condition of the tribal women of Odisha. At the grassroot level. Most of the earlier studies have been focused on policy enforcement and agricultural conclusions instead of examining women involvement with millet cultivation. Also, there are no comparative studies at district level on the differential impact of the Odisha Millet Mission on Tribal women.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

The present study is significance as it highlights the role of Odisha Millet Mission in improving the livelihood of tribal women of Odisha. Tribal women are backbone of agriculture, seed conservation, household nutrition and food production but they are often economically and socially excluded. This research will help to understand the contribution of millet-based interventions on women's financial stability, employability as well as food security. The study also has relevance for policy in assessing the effectiveness of major state led livelihood program mission.

CONCLUSION

The Odisha Millet Mission (OMM) has emerged as a key intervention for enhancing tribal women's livelihoods by integrating sustainable agriculture, nutrition and empowerment. Through the revival of millet cultivational tribal area and Odisha Mining Mission (OMM) has expanded income opportunities for women across the value chain from cultivation and processing to value addition and marketing. Participation in SHGs and millet-based micro-enterprises has further improved women's economic autonomy and influence in household and community decision making. Moreover, Odisha Millet Mission (OMM) has supported the conservation of indigenous farming knowledge and traditional food system. Collectively, the program exemplifies an inclusive rural development model that interlink agriculture, nutrition and gender empowerment.

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Climate Change, Gender and Rural Livelihoods: Understanding Women's Pathways to Resilience in Odisha

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ABSTRACT

The paper examines the affiliation between climate change, gender & rural livelihoods in the 'KBK' region of Odisha, mainly focusing on the districts of Koraput and Nuapada. Irregular rainfall, rising temperatures, and environmental degradation have created uncertainty among rural households that continue to depend heavily on agricultural and natural resources in recent years. But these changes are experienced unevenly across their communities and rural areas. In particular, women face greater livelihood insecurity due to lack of accessibility to land, credit, institutional support, and part-taking in local administrative processes. Due to movement of men in search of work, women's responsibilities within both agriculture and household care have led to a visible 'feminisation of rural labour', and it also shows that respondents are simply left to vulnerability. Across the study area, women were actively responding to environmental stress through everyday adaptive practices rooted in local knowledge and collective support systems. In addition to adopting techniques such as millet cultivation and mixed cropping, many

households have diversified their sources of income and have depended on self-help groups for social collaboration, financial support and information exchange. These tactics are crucial for maintaining household survival in the face of shifting climate conditions. Using resilience as a conceptual lens, the study argues that it should be viewed as a socially and economically structured process shaped by institutional structures, community networks, and access to resources, rather than as a fixed capacity. The study needs more inclusive & gender sensitive policy responses in rural eastern Odisha by emphasising women's lived experiences.

KEY WORDS : *Climate Change, Gendered Pathways, Livelihood, Rural Women, Resilience.*

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INTRODUCTION

We live in the 21st century, where one of the most vital worldwide issues is ‘climate change’, which is considerably shifting social relationships, economic systems, and ecological systems. It is because livelihoods in rural areas are mainly linked to natural resources like forests, land, water and their effects are most severe there, effects include rising temperatures, droughts, irregular rainfall and environmental degradation. These create vulnerabilities in India and particularly in Odisha, as agriculture is their prime source of income. However, existing social hierarchies are particularly based on ethnicity caste and gender which mediate these vulnerabilities, so they are not perceived evenly. Among these social hierarchies, “gender” emerges as a critical axis through which the impact of vulnerabilities is both negotiated and experienced, but situation of women is very much contradictory in Indian villages. Since, they mostly rely on forest-based resources, they are disproportionately affected by climate-related instabilities. But they play a very crucial role in maintaining home economics & communal resilience through their labour contributions, adaptive practices and their indigenous knowledge systems. Women are the most important actors in climate change and rural livelihoods, because of dichotomy & great agency. Though, families are typically treated as homogeneous units in policy frameworks and scholarly calculations, and their contributions are frequently underappreciated or unnoticed, which leads to intrahousehold inequalities.

To know connection between rural livelihoods, gender & climate change, an investigation is needed, and an interesting setting is found in the state of Odisha, in eastern India. Historically marginalised ‘KBK’ (Koraput-Bolangir-Kalahandi) region of Odisha, which includes the districts of ‘Koraput’ and ‘Nuapada’, is marked by socio-economic hardship, ecological fragility and long-lasting poverty. Because the rural people mostly rely on ‘rain-fed agriculture, inadequate irrigation infrastructure, & mild ecosystems, these areas are tremendously vulnerable to climatic volatility. These sectors like agricultural production and livelihood security have been harshly impacted by repeated droughts, irregular monsoon patterns, weakening soil fertility & deforestation. Such

environmental changes have profound effects on communities that depend on forest-based resources and subsistence farming, frequently resulting in seasonal migration, debt and food insecurity.

In this larger context, rural women in Koraput and Nuapada face climate change in ways that are clearly gendered. Women now have more duties in family administration, caregiving and agricultural production due to the feminisation of agriculture, which is partly triggered by male out-migration. Concurrently, their labour burden has increased due to loss of natural resources, making it necessary for people to travel greater distances in order to gather forest products, fuel, wood and water. Their ability to effectively respond to environmental pressures is further hampered by limited access to basic needs and institutional support. Furthermore, their ability to influence adaptation tactics is often limited by intensely ingrained patriarchal norms that prevent them from joining in decision-making processes at grassroots institutional level.

Despite these limitations, they are active agents of resilience, adaptation leading towards mitigation. Women create creative solutions to deal with and adjust to shifting environmental situations by drawing on indigenous knowledge systems, social networks, and their daily routines. These include adopting climate-resilient agricultural practices like mixed cropping and millet cultivation, diversifying livelihoods through livestock rearing, wage labour and small-scale businesses and joining self-help groups (SHGs) that offer social support, information and credit. Collaborative work of women has often been essential in enhancing community resilience, making households more resilient to climate shocks and uncertainties. So, idea of resilience offers a cooperative analytical framework for understanding how rural women deal with difficulties brought on by climate change. This study takes a more comprehensive approach, emphasising the ability to adapt, transform and sustain livelihoods in the face of continuous environmental change, rather than just seeing resilience as the capability to bounce back from shocks. Access to resources, social capital, institutional support and cultural norms are just a few of the enabling and structural elements that interact intricately to create women’s pathways to resilience. Crucially these paths are

profoundly ingrained in regional socio-ecological systems and are neither consistent nor linear; they differ depending on the setting.

Impact of climate change on 'rural livelihoods' in India have been subject of an increasing amount of research, but very few studies have specifically addressed the gendered aspects of resilience, especially in understudied areas like the KBK districts of Odisha. Research that is now available frequently highlights fragility, depicting women mainly as victims of environmental change while ignoring their agency and contributions to adaptive processes. Moreover, context-specific evaluations that depict rural women lived experiences and the tactics they use to manage climate threats in their daily lives are lacking.

In light of this, study examines how gender, rural livelihoods and climate change interact in districts of Koraput and Nuapada in an effort to close this gap. By examining how women concurrently experience, react to, and influence processes of environmental change, it seeks to transcend binary narratives of vulnerability and resilience. Mainly, this study challenges, with three specific questions: What impact does climate change have on rural livelihoods in these areas? How are these effects gendered? And given the limitations of their socio-economic and ecological environments, how do women create and maintain resilience?

This research goal is to find out a more comprehensive understanding vulnerability highlighting experiences of & practices of women in eastern Odisha. The study emphasises necessity of acknowledging women as both vulnerable subjects and dynamic change agents whose labour, expertise and group efforts are essential to developing inclusive and sustainable variation solutions. So, by doing this, the study also emphasises how decisive it is to integrate it in gender views into development interventions and climate policy, especially in marginalised areas, where effects of environmental changes are most severe.

BACKGROUND:

Bond between livelihoods, climate change & gender has attracted great scholarly attention over the past 20 years

in the Global South. Major work demonstrates that 'climate change' is a profoundly social spectacle that is influenced by present power dynamics and inequality rather than environmental issues. In that dimension, gender has become a vital analytical category for grasping the local experiences, mediations and reactions to climate effects. There are three interconnected issues covered in this literature review, such as "climate change and rural livelihoods", "gendered vulnerabilities and pathways to resilience".

CLIMATE CHANGE & RURAL LIVELIHOODS

Detrimental effects of climate change on rural livelihoods especially in agrarian economies have been extensively studied. Researchers contend that agricultural productivity and food security have been severely impacted by climate variability, which is manifested through irregular rainfall rising temperatures droughts and extreme weather events (Morton, 2007; IPCC, 2014). Research has indicated that shifting monsoon patterns and more frequent droughts have exacerbated rural poverty by causing crop failures lower yields and unstable income (Deshpande & Shah, 2010).

For analysing how households deal with environmental challenges is the 'Sustainable Livelihoods Framework' (SLF) is a popular tool used. This method holds that in a vulnerable environment, access to 5 methods of capital natural human social financial and physical shapes livelihoods (Chambers & Conway, 1992). These resources, especially natural capital, are disrupted by climate change, which has an effect on the livelihood system as a whole. Degradation of natural resources directly affects livelihood security in areas like Odisha that rely heavily on agriculture and forests. Research from eastern India has shown that households have been forced to use coping mechanisms such as migration, livelihood diversification and reliance on unofficial credit institutions due to decreasing forest production, soil degradation and water scarcity (Pattnaik & Lahiri-Dutt, 2020). However, critics of the SLF contend that they frequently ignore intra-household disparities particularly gender by treating families as homogeneous elements. For this constraint, livelihood studies now majorly include gender-sensitive viewpoints highlighting the importance

of the distribution of resources and responsibilities within the households.

GENDERED DIMENSIONS OF CLIMATE VULNERABILITY

The research has shown that impact of climate change is naturally gendered. Due to their socio-economic status and restricted access to resources that they are regularly more vulnerable to environmental stressors especially in rural and marginalised populations (Agarwal, 1994; Dankelman, 2010). The concept of Feminist Political Ecology (FPE) looks at how gendered authority relations disturb access to control over and understanding of, natural resources and also offers a supportive lens through which to view these processes.

In rural India natural resources like water, forests, & land are vital to women's source of revenue. Women are excessively affected by resource scarcity caused by climate change, because they are the main gatherers of fuelwood water and non-timber forest products (NTFPs). Study shows that women's workloads are mainly increased by environmental degradation, which often necessitates longer travel times & major time spent on sustenance tasks (Rao et al., 2019). To impair their physical health also restricts their access to school, employment possibilities and community decision-making power. Another significant aspect of gendered vulnerability is that women were restricted from accessing institutional assistance and productive resources. In India, women still own very little land, which directly or indirectly limits their access to government programs, financing and agricultural supplies (Agarwal, 2018). In addition, gender biases and social conventions commonly prevent women from accessing climate-related basic information and extension services. Therefore, women are less ready to undertake climate-resilient activities and technology.

The gendered aspect of climate vulnerability is further demonstrated by the phenomenon of the feminisation of agriculture. Women are becoming more involved in agriculture due to increase in male migration. Although women are now more involved in farming activities, this change hasn't always resulted in more control over resources or decision-making authority (Deere, 2005). Studies have shown that confluence of

poverty gender and marginalisation in Odisha exacerbates the vulnerabilities that are faced by tribal & rural women. For example, previous studies conducted in the KBK area show that women's dependence on forest resources makes them more vulnerable to ecological changes which are brought on by climate change while socio-cultural norms restrict female involvement in institutions of governance & resource management (Mishar & Sethi, 2019).

WOMEN'S AGENCY AND PATHWAYS TO RESILIENCE

In early research women's vulnerability was frequently emphasised in gender & climate change, but now the more recent studies have focused on women's self-sufficiency & their part in fostering resilience. This change is telling in a larger trend that development studies away from deficit-based methods & towards more complex viewpoints that recognise the abilities & contributions of marginalised groups. The analysis shows that how people and communities react to environmental shocks has made extensive use of the idea of resilience. Scholars advised against considering resilience as a simply technical or apolitical concept, nevertheless. Rather resiliency needs to be understood in terms of social justice power and inequality (Cannon & Muller-Mahn, 2010). From a gender perspective this entails looking at how women negotiate and modify structural conditions that define their vulnerability in addition to how they deal with climate change.

A variety of adaptive tactics used by women have been documented by empirical research conducted in India & other countries of the south. These include the approval of climate resilient agricultural follows, such as mixed cropping, agroecology and the cultivation of drought-resistant crops like millets livelihood diversification such as combining agriculture with livestock rearing wage labour and small-scale businesses and collective action through self-help groups (SHGs), which offer access to credit, information and social networks (Agarwal, 2010; Garikipati, 2008).

Initiatives like the Odisha millets mission have shown how combining traditional knowledge with contemporary interventions can improve climate resilience in Odisha. Participation in these programs by women has been

associated with increased empowerment, income-generating and food security. Similarly, by easing access to financial resources and encouraging community-based approaches to development, Mission Shakti under the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) have significantly strengthened women's adaptive capacities. Additionally, women's adaptive methods are greatly influenced by indigenous knowledge systems. Research indicates that women from rural and tribal communities are well-versed in local ecosystems including crop diversification, soil management and water conservation techniques. They can create context-specific solutions to environmental problems thanks to this expertise, which is frequently passed down through the generations (Berkes, 2009). However formal policy frameworks that prioritise scientific and technocratic approaches frequently undervalue such knowledge sources.

RESEARCH GAP AND CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

A large number of studies have examined gender rural livelihoods and climate change yet several important areas remain underexplored. Much of the existing research mainly highlights women's vulnerability to environmental change while giving less attention to the everyday experiences coping strategies and practical efforts through which women gradually build resilience in their daily lives. In many climate studies, India's social cultural and ecological circumstances are not replicated satisfactorily. The KBK region of Odisha, in particular, has received very little academic attention despite of facing serious climate-related challenges & persistent socioeconomic deprivation. Moreover, these ideas, such as adaptation and resilience, are often debated in general terms, with a partial understanding of how these processes actually operate within houses and local societies. In this situation, this study focuses on their real life experiences in districts of Koraput and Nuapada and examines how they perceive, manage, & respond to climate change in their everyday lives. Using insights from feminist political ecology and livelihood approaches, this study purposes to provide a deeper understanding of their resilience within a marginalised regional setting.

MATERIALS & METHODS

This study has used a mixed-method to understand the link between gender, rural livelihoods & climate vulnerabilities in districts of Nuapada and Koraput, in Odisha. Specifically, the study used both qualitative & as well as quantitative approaches so that study can capture not only the assessable impact of climate unpredictability on rural livelihoods but also the everyday experiences and responses of women living in these conditions. This research is mainly descriptive and exploratory in nature even though analysing how climate change creates different forms of vulnerability and resilience among women. Throughout the study, a gender-sensitive standpoint has been followed to ensure that women's experience local knowledge and everyday realities, remain at the centre of the research. The study has chosen 2 districts i.e, Koraput & Nuapada, which are situated in the KBK (Koraput-Bolangir-Kalahandi) area of Odisha. These 2 areas were selected due to their highly vulnerable to climate related challenges and mainly the socio-economic scarcity. Among these 2 districts Koraput is known for its large tribal population dependent on natural resources and forest. Similarly, Nuapada district is taken due to recurring droughts & has a strong dependence on rain farming & seasonal migration for its survival. Reviewing these 2 districts at a time helps to understand that the different environmental & social situations influence livelihood practices & shape women's replies to climate pressure. A multistage purposive sampling has been used for selecting the study areas as well as respondents. First, the district was chosen based on dependence on natural resources, climate vulnerability & poor socio-economic conditions. In the second phase, blocks were taken that were more affected by climatic changes, identified within each district. Then villages were selected purposefully to represent their different livelihood patterns such as forest-related activities, agriculture & wage labourers. In the last phase, those rural women were chosen as respondents for this study, who are engaged in climate-related occupations, meanwhile they are directly involved in dealing with both household responsibilities & livelihood related activities. So, their experiences are more central for understanding the resilience & adaptation at the community/societal level.

The study has taken a total of 60 respondents, which was considered sufficient to capture variations across the selected areas, while also permitting detailed qualitative interaction. Most of the respondents belong to socially and economically marginalised groups, including scheduled tribes (STs), scheduled castes (SCs), and other backward classes (OBCs), reflecting the broader demographic structure of their district. The major focus of this study is on women in 25 to 60 age group. As per the study, they play a vital role in nourishing family livelihoods & coping with environmental & economic challenges.

Table 1: Sampling Profile of Respondents

Category	Description
Study Area	Koraput & Nuapada Districts
Sample size	460 Respondents
Respondents	Rural Women
Age Group	25 to 65 years
Occupation	Agriculture, NTFP Collection, Labour
Education Level	Illiterate to Secondary
Social Category	ST, SC, OBC
Sampling	Multi-stage Purposive sampling
Source: Field study, 2026	

The table 1 represents the basic sampling features of the respondents selected for the study. It distributes an outline of the study area, sample size, respondents, age group, occupation, education, & sampling relevant to understanding the research theme.

The primary data collected has been designed to understand both individual experiences & shared communal realities. To explore their understanding regarding climate change, changes in livelihood patterns, gender responsibilities, the qualitative interviews were carried out with rural women, & the ways they cope with environmental difficulties in everyday life. Here, respondents were allowed to speak openly & explaining their experiences, in their local language, which makes the data richer & more detailed one. Not only interviews but also FGDs were engaged, especially in self-help groups (SHGs). These discussions were helped to capture their collective experiences of the women group, and how they adopt & their replies to climate-related

challenges. Case studies were also taken to understand women lived experiences in greater depth. These case studies provided detailed explanations of how women & their families deal with environmental & economic stress and emphasised different pathways of resilience and their adaptation ability. Further, non-participant observations strengthened the study more academically and found the insights from their day-to-day life, livelihood practices, use of local resources, & gendered based division of work within their families and also in their societies.

Furthermore, primary data and secondary information were gathered from several sectors such as academic studies, district statistical handbooks, government reports, climate policy documents, and reports published by 'NGOs. Qualitative data were analysed using thematic analysis, for identifying common patterns related to gendered vulnerabilities, climate impacts & adaptation tactics. For a better understanding, narrative analysis was used, and also case studies for in-depth data with their everyday experiences and findings were organized into tables to ensure clarity and easy interpretation.

The entire research process was cautiously followed, and ethical principles & all contributors were informed before data collection. Their involvement was entirely voluntary; anonymity & privacy were continued at every stage of this research. Certain care was also taken to adopt a "gender-sensitive approach" during fieldwork, especially while appropriately interacting with women respondents. On the other hand, the study has certain limitations. Since the research was conducted in only two districts, with a relatively small sample size, which may not fully generalise to other regions, the limited duration of the research may not capture the seasonal nature of climate changes, and also the long-term effects on livelihoods.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Hence, an interdisciplinary theoretical framework that combines 'Feminist Political Ecology' (FPE), the 'Sustainable Livelihoods Framework' (SLF), and 'Resilience Theory' to understand the gendered vulnerabilities in the Koraput and Nuapada districts of Odisha has been adopted. Together, these perspectives help to explain how environmental changes interact with

existing social inequalities & influence patterns of vulnerability, adaptation, & livelihood sustainability among rural women.

“Feminist Political Ecology” forms the fundamental origin of this study. It argues that tenure and ownership over natural resources were influenced by unequal social & gender relations. Mainly in rural areas, contextual analysis of eco-feminism needs to be analysed. As a result, the effects of climate change & environmental degradation are more often experienced more unswervingly by women in their normal lives. This perspective shows that women possess central environmental knowledge developed through their regular interaction with local atmospheres, but they frequently remain excluded from decision-making processes & institutional support systems. In areas like Koraput and Nuapada, where livelihoods mainly depend on forests and rain-fed agriculture, these inequalities become more visible under conditions of poverty & environmental uncertainty.

The “Sustainable Livelihoods Framework” further supports the analysis by focusing on how houses depend on different livelihood assists. Climate change affects the foundation of rural livelihoods, which are the resources, mainly forests, water, and agricultural land. This framework helps to enlighten how females respond to changing livelihood circumstances through plans such as wage labour, livestock rearing, seasonal migration-related work, & participation in self-help groups. However, they are often having restricted access to financial resources, land, technology, & institutional support, which affects their capacity to withstand livelihoods throughout ‘environmental stress.’

“The Resilience theory, make available as supplementary perspective for understanding how individuals and societies respond to ‘environmental ambiguity and tragedy situations. It refers to the dimensions of rural women to handle with, regulate to, and reorganise their livelihoods under changing climatic situations. This theory also includes both short-term & long-term adaptive tactics such as crop variation, climate-resilient farming practices, and collective public contribution. The study also recognises that vulnerability and resilience are interconnected & rural women may experience it due to

poverty, social marginalisation, & unequal access to resources, while simultaneously indicating resilience in sustaining families & dealing with livelihoods under problematic situations. The study developed a comprehensive framework analysis for the multidimensional impacts of climate change on rural women, by integrating “feminist political Ecology, the Sustainable Livelihoods framework & resilience theory together. These perspectives explain how women in the Nuapada & Koraput convey environmental challenges, sustain their livelihoods, and donate to local governance processes despite structural limitations.

RESULT OF THE STUDY

People in the districts of Nuapada & Koraput depend mainly on rain for farming, forest resources for their survival & informal labour; that’s why even small environmental fluctuations have serious consequences for their livelihoods, because climate change has become deeply entangled with the everyday lives of rural people. Field survey findings show that local people experience it directly through declining agricultural productivity, food insecurity, and lower income, increasing stress for their family survival. These problems strongly affect women because they accept the dual responsibility of handling family work along with their livelihoods.

One of the greatest visible result in the study area, is the increasing irregularity of rain-fall. There are several respondents continuously describing about late monsoons, sometimes sudden heavy rains, & volatile weather situations that severely disturb agricultural activities. In both the district (Nuapada & Koraput) farming depends deeply on monsoon rainfall, and these changes directly disturb sowing, crop growth, & harvesting patterns etc. Such crops as pulses, paddy, millets, & vegetables have become gradually unclear, resulting in condensed yields & unstable domestic incomes. Drought has historically been a recurring problem, seasonal insecurity, repeated crop failures have deepened economic hardship found in Nuapada. In Koraput, fluctuating rainfall patterns, soil erosion, and declining soil fertility have weakened subsistence farming, particularly among tribal people that they rely closely on local ecological systems.

The study also discloses that ‘climate change’ is contributing to the weakening of natural resources, especially forests & water sources that rural households depend upon for daily survival. Forests mainly provide fuelwood, fodder, fruits, medicinal plants, and other non-timber forest products that support both subsistence and income generation. Women, explained that forests are gradually becoming less productive and more difficult to access, those who are mainly responsible for collecting these resources. In that area, water scarcity has similarly become a serious issue, with streams drying up seasonally and wells losing water much earlier than before. These certain changes not only affect agriculture and livestock but also increase the burden of domestic work within the families.

The workload of women has increased significantly, as ecological resources become scarce. Alongside family responsibilities, women are actively engaged in agricultural activities such as sowing, transplanting, weeding, harvesting, caring for livestock, and collecting forest products. Women were travel longer distances & places in search of water or firewood, which adds another stress in their daily routine. This increasing stress in their daily lives creates what may be described as “time poverty,” leaving women with scratched chances for education, income-generating work, rest, or involvement in community-level & ‘decision-making processes.

There is another significant pattern observed in this study, i.e., growing pattern”feminisation of agricultural labour.”From our previous knowledge, we known that farming becomes more undefined&economically uneven, &male migration in search of wage labour from rural to towns & other states has become verycommonly found in both Nuapada& Koraput. That’s why women are left behind in families &in many cases to manage agricultural work as well as theirfamily responsibilities, they struggle a lot. Though,women gradually takingaccountability for farming, & supervised their own agricultural field, still they have minimal rights over land & restricted access to formal credit system, technology, &official support, due to their gender.

There is another serious implication i.e., ‘climate stress’for food & nutritional security within families. In

the time of crop failure, tiny agricultural productivity,lower profits, that time also women sacrifice their own nutritional foods, to prioritise their children, aged family members, &other dependent relatives. These coping mechanisms shows that how environmental crises intensify existing gender inequalities within the societal & family system. Gradually, the females are combining farming with other income sources such as, wage labour under rural employment schemes, livestock rearing, leaf-plate production, petty trade, &small-scale activities linked to self-help groups etc. the study findings also shows that their continued indigenous ecological knowledge helps in building resilience. In koraput, a tribal based district, found that tribal women continue to practiseoldfarming methods such as, millet cultivation, seed preservation, mixed cropping & local water protection techniques. These indigenous practices are often more sustainable & better modified to changing climatic situations than commercial. Mainly the self-help groups help a lot in rural areas, their collective small economic support system helps the women very strongly & strengthen their status in their society. It not only supports the women financially, but also SHGs work as place, where women share their raw experiences, exchanging their own knowledge, discussed about livelihood problems, &provide emotional support to their colleagues & their family. Through these groups, women found access to small loans, learning tactics for dealing with crop failures and in the time of household crises how to survive, & also sometimestake part in collective livelihood events. Overall, the study findings recommend that generated vulnerability in Nuapada& Koraputhas its impact on food security and other socio-economic challenges linked with rural livelihoods & survival of people. It also suggests that women are the most vulnerable group in rural areas due to their minimal income, family responsibilities and agricultural burden, but they also appear as main actors in the processes of adaptation, adjustment & resilience.

DISCUSSION:

Women’s Pathways to Resilience: Case-based Findings

The field reports from Nuapada& Koraput make known that, how the rural women respond to climate change

and how they deal with this & what are the strategies they follow. Climate is a long-term effect which can reduce the fertility, creates problem mainly for the human being. Due to everyday interactions with changing social, economic & environmental situations, their resilience capacity develops. Constantly, women adopt the uncertainties happening in their areas by their indigenous knowledge, & collective societal support. Though there are many problems faced by women like poverty, inequality, ecological imbalance, degradation of fertility, minimal financial support, still women sustain their livelihoods & families due to their strong determination.

One of the most visible forms of resilience, found in Koraput district that they return to old-style farming systems. Particularly from the tribal communities, many women slowly decrease their dependence on water related cultivation or farming & they shifted their farming from paddy cultivation to millet & mixed cropping methods. This is not simply an agricultural change but a new strategy to revive their indigenous knowledge, that declined the spread of commercial farming. Among the case studies “one woman said that irregular rainfall made their cultivation loss, & this loss encouraged her to restart millet cultivation in their paddy field, which was earlier done by their previous generations.” In passing time, she started millet farming with some vegetables, non-timber forest products, pulses etc to create a more diverse cropping that reduce the risk of crop loss. These small adjustment in their cultivation method shows that how resilient the women are & their connection with ecological sustainability & local knowledge system. Those women who are dependent upon non-timber forest products (NTFPs) have modified their old farming practices, in declining to forest availability. They choose that instead of selling raw forest products at low price, now they selling the tamarind & leaf plates in their local markets, in better prices. So, it is found that SHGs helps the women in these activities by giving them small loans & providing them market supports. Through this support women strengthen their bargaining ability & become less exploited by intermediaries & local traders.

In opposite the Nuapada district were facing drought situations, which directly affected their livelihood

diversification & labour mobility. In many family's people migrate for survival, due to repetitive crop failure & less agricultural productivity.

In that time women are the key actors whose role is “responsibility”, they are trapped & managed family responsibility, agricultural activities, taking care of their family members, & another side they do wage labour simultaneously. One case study shows that “one women respondent shared her life that after passing years due to poor harvests, her husband travelled to another state for construction work. While her husband worked out of state, she started a small plot for farming for their family consumption and also, she joined daily wage labourers. Additionally, for more stable income she started keeping goats, sheeps etc. this story shows that how resilience built through rely on multiple resources for their survival rather than depending on fully in agriculture.

Another serious challenge found in the district of Nuapada, e.g., “Water scarcity” where they play main role in dealing with the local water resources as well as scarcity. Women collectively organize in one village to ensure the fair distribution of water in the period of water shortage. These collective works lessen the conflict in between them and they keep in mind that the distribution should be equal & equal access to water. Even if such local systems are rarely acknowledged & recognized in formal policy discussions, but these are important for sustain their livelihoods during crises. Though women are directly involved in water collection and family management, but in the time of solution they were ignored, they have practical experience that can bring solution. So, it is found that across both the districts SHGs have become an important source of resilience and mutual support. The field case studies suggest that resilience & coping mechanisms are usually built through everyday adjustments rather than sudden changes. Where women uninterruptedly adjust farming practices, diversify income sources, & depend on social networks & community relationships to cope with environmental uncertainty. These strategies are shaped by local ecological conditions, cultural traditions, and the availability of resources.

In the last, most significantly, the findings challenge the simplistic assumptions that women are portrayed either as helpless or victims, or as idealised symbols of resilience in climate change discussions. The study, instead, represents a more compound reality in which vulnerability & agency co-exist. Women in Nuapada & Koraput face significant hardships due to environmental instability & socioeconomic inequalities, yet they continue to demonstrate resilience through everyday wage labour, local knowledge, & collective, cooperative action.

CHALLENGES AND CONSTRAINTS TO WOMEN'S RESILIENCE

Even though, women in Nuapada & Koraput show notable strength & adaptability in dealing with climate change, their ability to respond effectively is shaped by deep-rooted social, institutional, & economic challenges. As a result, most adaptation strategies remain focused on immediate survival rather than long-term livelihood security and sustainable development. The major barrier is unequal access to productive assets, particularly land. In rural Odisha, land ownership remains largely male-dominated despite women's active participation in agriculture. Since most women lack formal land rights, they face difficulties in accessing institutional credit, government schemes, insurance facilities, and agricultural extension services. Although women contribute significantly to cultivation and food production, they are rarely recognised officially as "farmers," which limits their visibility within policy frameworks and reduces their access to climate adaptation programs and improved technologies.

Limited financial & institutional support further weakens women's adaptive capacity. While self-help groups have improved access to savings & small loans, the available assistance is often insufficient for larger livelihood investments or long-term adaptation. Formal institutions such as banks, agricultural offices, and climate advisory services frequently fail to reach rural women because of bureaucratic procedures, low awareness, and gender bias. Consequently, many women remain dependent on low-income livelihood activities that provide only temporary support.

Mainly in Odisha, the gender roles and systemic oppression reduce their independence & decision-making authority. Regardless of their increasing participation in productive labour, they continue to be viewed exclusively

as caregivers, accountable for domestic duties and family care. Balancing family responsibilities with livelihood activities creates a heavy workload and leaves little time for training, community participation, or alternative economic opportunities. In many households, decisions regarding farming, land use, and financial investments are still dominated by men, even when women contribute most of the labour.

'Climate change has additionally, intensified women's workload and created severe time poverty. Environmental degradation, declining forest resources, and water scarcity have made everyday survival tasks more demanding. Women often spend long hours collecting water, fuelwood, & fodder, leaving them physically exhausted and limiting social exclusion and marginalization. In many cases, resilience is sustained only through additional labour & personal sacrifice, placing significant pressure on women's physical and emotional well-being.

Another important challenge is the lack of access to climate-related information & technological support. Many rural women do not receive timely information about weather changes, crop management, government schemes, or adaptation measures. Agricultural extension services are generally designed with male farmers in mind and rarely address women's specific needs and constraints. As a result, women often depend mainly on traditional coping practices without adequate institutional support to strengthen their adaptive capacities.

The study also highlights the limited recognition of indigenous ecological knowledge within formal climate and development policies. Women possess valuable traditional knowledge related to farming, seed conservation, forest use, and water management developed through generations of interaction with local ecosystems. However, policy interventions often prioritise technical and top-down solutions while overlooking local knowledge systems, reducing the effectiveness of adaptation efforts. Market-related challenges further weaken women's livelihood strategies. Women involved in small-scale enterprises and value-added activities often struggle to access markets, receive fair prices, and compete with larger producers. Dependence on middlemen, poor transportation, and limited bargaining

power reduce their earnings and discourage further investment in livelihood activities.

These challenges are intensified by the broader conditions of poverty and regional underdevelopment in the KBK region. Poor infrastructure, limited employment opportunities, weak institutional support, and long-standing socioeconomic marginalisation create additional barriers to resilience. Overall, the findings show that although women in Koraput and Nuapada continuously demonstrate resilience, their adaptive capacities remain constrained by structural inequalities and institutional limitations. Strengthening women's resilience therefore requires addressing unequal access to resources, gender discrimination, weak institutional support, and exclusion from decision-making processes while creating conditions that enhance women's rights, agency, and long-term livelihood security.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND WAY FORWARD

To report the organised challenges of vulnerabilities, the study mainly highlights the need for 'gender-sensitive & locally grounded policies' in Koraput & Nuapada. Though rural women validate substantial liveliness in working environment & livelihood weights, their adaptive capacity remains restricted by unequal access to resources, weak organised support, & social marginalisation. Therefore, setting resilience requires recognising women not only as vulnerable groups, but also as dynamic contributors to climate adaptation and rural growth, and one important policy concern is the recognition of women as farmers & resource managers. Women are often excluded from formal agricultural documents & official benefits, despite their major role in rural agricultural activities. Escalating women's land rights, encouraging joint land ownership, & improving access to credit, insurance, & welfare services can strengthen livelihood security & support climate-resilient agricultural practices.

The study findings indicate that there is more inclusive institutional support needed for them. Different Govt schemes, such as the 'National Rural Livelihoods Mission' (NRLM) and 'Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act' (MGNREGA), can play a stronger role in supporting women's flexibility if they are

implemented with greater attention to women's everyday realities. Providing this access to women, like training programs, information related to climate, sustainable farming realities, and a financial support system, can improve women's adaptive capacity under changing environmental situations. Further, this study gives more emphasis to self-help groups & local organisations at the grassroots level. These groups create space for collective learning, mutual support & livelihood cooperation, beyond financial support. The SHGs can enhance women's economic independence & societal adaptation through better market linkages, skill development initiatives & formal assistance.

It is correspondingly significant to promote both the climate-resilient & livelihood practices. In the farming sector, encouraging drought-resistant crops, diversified farming systems, water conservation, & agroecological methods can reduce climate-related hazards. In conclusion, taking part in native ecological knowledge with scientific strategies can create more sustainable & locally suitable variation strategies. This study not only emphasises the status of reducing women's labour load but also increasing their participation in local governance. Livelihood opportunities can be upgraded by investigating the infrastructure in rural areas such as water, sanitation, transport, & energy facilities, & it can also cut the amount of unpaid labour. At the same time, strengthening their representation in local institutions such as forest committees "Panchayati Raj Institutions" (PRIs), & water management groups can make climate governance broader & more responsive to local needs. Finally, the study findings recommend that climate resilience in the districts like "Nuapada & Koraput" can't be separated from issues of gender equality, sustainable livelihoods, & social justice. Therefore, policies must move beyond short-term measures & address the deeper structural variations that shape women's vulnerability & adaptive capacity in village areas.

CONCLUSION

In India & particularly in Odisha, 'Climate change is not merely an environmental concern in the districts of Nuapada & Koraput, but also a serious social challenge that directly or indirectly affects the rural livelihoods.

Here women are facing the major difficulties in every sphere such as, in their family, in changing climate situation, rainfall patterns, droughts, less productivity, deforestation, ecological degradation etc. which is growing vulnerability. This is because rural women are heavily dependent upon natural resources for their household survival, & due to their limited access to land, finance, institutional support & participation in decision making, they also experience the impacts of climate more intensely. Women are not simply the victims of climate change; the study makes it very clear. They enthusiastically reply to environmental ambiguity through various adaptive practices such as continuing traditional farming methods, participating in forest-based activities, and engaging in self-help groups and community networks & diversifying livelihoods. Their resilience capacity is shaped by cooperation, local knowledge & everyday efforts to sustain household & livelihood security under shifting circumstances. Yet, women's ability to adapt remains delimited by structural barriers such as inadequate institutional recognition, limited market opportunities, unequal access to resources, and persistent gender discrimination. As a result, much of their resilience is centred on coping & survival rather than achieving long-term empowerment, security, & independence. Therefore, the study highlights the reputation of developing climate policies that are gender-sensitive & grounded in local realities. Recognising women as vital contributors to 'climate adaptation' & 'sustainable development' is essential. Escalating their access to resources, formal support, and decision-making places can benefit in building more inclusive, equitable, & sustainable forms of rural resilience in the face of climate change.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The Research Assistant was primarily responsible for the execution of the study, including literature review,

research design implementation, data collection coordination, data cleaning, data analysis, interpretation of findings, preparation of tables and figures, and drafting the manuscript. The Principal Investigator provided overall conceptual guidance, project supervision, and critical review of the manuscript. The Co-Principal Investigators contributed to the study design, methodological inputs, interpretation of findings, and manuscript review. The Field Investigators conducted field data collection and assisted in respondent coordination as well as in case analysis. All authors reviewed, revised, and approved the final version of the manuscript.

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COMPUTING INTEREST:

The authors declare no competing interests.

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