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Where Truth is Strenger Than Fiction: Reality of A Blind Girl's Life

Dr. Shampa Bhul
Assistant Professor, (Department of English)
PDC Girls' College, Bolpur, Pin:731204, West Bengal

Abstract

It is often mentioned that literature mirrors society. But sometimes even author's imagination cannot fathom the depth of socio-cultural mechanism or his observation cannot reach to the core of human psyche because truth is sometime stranger than fiction. This paper endeavours to bring out the reality of growing up of a visually impaired girl and the extant of incorporating this reality in its literary portrayal in the socio-cultural milieu of India in the last few decades of last century through a comparative study of a novel and an autobiography each portraying a female protagonist with deteriorating visual impairment.

Key Words: visual impairment, literature, Indian society, double marginalization

Introduction:

Among the various models of disability, like-Moral Model, Charity Model, Medical Model, Human Rights Model, Social Model, Economic Model and so on, the Social Model of disability has lately gained popularity in the academia, especially in the discipline of Disability Studies, (Davis,1986), (Addlakha,2013).This model claims that the inaccessibility in social infrastructure is responsible in disabling any individual with impairment more than the impairment itself. As this socio-cultural infrastructure is not in same stage of development in every part of this human world so any individual with a particular impairment does not face same level of disabling barrier everywhere. For example, a wheelchair user will face more difficulties in a wood house in the hilly village of Assam than a multi-storied apartment in the metropolitan city of New York. Or a student with blindness does not find a digital or a brail library disabling where as in a print library he is disable for its complete inaccessibility to him. These barriers of such architectural and commercial infrastructure can make a person only physically disable but the socio-cultural approach, precisely the human interpretations, concepts, attitudes towards impairments or the persons with impairment inculcate disability in one's psyche and creates a disability identity. Though as a result of globalisation, the third world countries are accessing information, devising new theories and involving with new disability discourses and gradually upgrading themselves in this regard but still they are lagging behind in enabling the persons with impairment both physically and psychologically than that of the western countries. An all over reformation, rearrangement and reconstruction of disability concept both in human psyche and human society can erase most of these disabling barriers but that is still a faraway cry for these third world countries. Disability studies as a discipline in academia has been launched primarily in USA and Europe and still, they are dominating the discourse. So consequently, the literature concerning disability issues also come primarily from those countries. This condition sometime creates a discrepancy between the ground label experience and literary portrayal & documentation regarding disability concepts in the countries of global south. The picture is not very different in India in this regard (Ghai, 2015). Life and living of the characters with disability in the corpus of Indian literature are most often influenced by either conventional stereotypical notions and concepts of this society and culture or, more recently, the new discourses, records and events of those advance countries regarding disability issue. As a result of which some disparities can be witnessed between the real-life experience of a person with impairment and its representation in literature. Literature of modern time in a way tend to romanticise the achievements and abilities of a disable person. The evidence of which can be gathered from the parallel study even of a single text of two different genres like fiction and a nonfiction, a novel and an autobiography to be precise. Both these literary pieces are contemporary addition to the depository of Indian English Literature, both of the authors present a female individual

with visual impairment as protagonist, and both these protagonists share the common socio-cultural milieu that is of Indian city life. The novel is Sagarika Ghose's *Blind Faith* and the autobiography of Preeti Monga named *The Other Senses*. Both these texts portray a visually impaired girl and depict their psychological and social journey during the last decades of twentieth century. The novel is set in the year 2001 when Indira, the blind protagonist, is a let middle aged woman, so she was growing up from girlhood to womanhood around that period, and there is also a reference of Indira Gandhi as the then Prime Minister in the novel which further asserts the time-frame of Indira's life as well as the novel. Preeti Monga was born in 1959, so the time frame of her life and reaching womanhood is also around the same period. So, a comparative study of the growing up of these two visually impaired females, social attitude, infrastructure, facilities and challenges that they face, disabling barrier and enabling accessibility that they experience is sure to bring forth the reality of the life and living of a visually impaired girl in Indian socio-cultural environment and the extent of western influence in creating a utopian setting for such a person in any work of fiction. Along with that, the impact of such socio-cultural attitude and ambiance on a woman's psyche and on her character formation will also come out from this comparative analysis.

***Educational facilities*:**

Both, Ghose's protagonist Indira and Preeti, loss their vision gradually since their girlhood. Indira is depicted as bright and brilliant student. In spite of her deteriorating sight, she always tops the classes in her school. She aspires to be a civil service officer so she spends hours in reading with difficulty with her glasses and a strong table lamp as mentioned in the novel without the help of any other assistive device or accessible study materials and even then, she scores well in the civil service and become an IAS officer. She faces no discriminations in her schooling or barrier in appearing in such high-profile national level examinations. Her journey to reach to her destination and achieve her success in career is smooth and hurdle free instead of being full of accessibility issues or attitudinal barriers in a country like India where the infrastructure of education system and educational institutions is not up to the mark to meet all the requirements of a proper inclusion in teaching learning process and professional criteria. Not only the infrastructure but also the social attitude is also not very supportive or in favour of such inclusivity. Preeti in her autobiography attests to this fact. In Agartala she started her schooling in a general school namely Shishu Bihar when she was considered fully sighted. But when she is diagnosed with partially paralysed optic nerve, becomes absent in school for few months to get diagnosis and treatment, she returns to a different ambiance all together in school. As if she becomes an alien to all around her, "Little did I know that life was never going to be the same again; everything had changed! Friends, teachers, and neighbours, all regarded me with pity; I seemed to have been transformed into a strange pitiful object to be handled with extra consideration or simply left alone!"(Monga, 2012, p.22). In Delhi, initially she gets admission in Loretto convent but when her impairment gets in the way she is removed from the school, "…I the only one picked upon for dismissal from school…not relegated for poor performance."(Monga, 2012,p.35). As today's inclusive education was not in question till then so she is compelled to put an end to her academic career because "…as no regular school was willing to admit me due to my visual impairment, a school for the blind was the only answer." (Monga, 2012, p.36). After searching thoroughly, they find only one special school for the blind girl students which is also fully residential. Due to the disagreement and over protectiveness of the family she is not allowed to a hostel life which brings an end to her regular formal education for the time being. Her urge for learning and career plan however leads her to different fields of learning. She is subjected to the popular social concept or myth associated with a blind person, "'When God takes away a person's eyesight, he makes an unfailing gift of an ear for music.' Where was mine?"(Monga,2012,p.40). But she confesses, as she doesn't have the gift of singing or music so even after years of rigorous practice and dedication, she comes across with a flat declaration from her music teacher about her incapability in that area. She even goes way beyond the common subject for a visually impaired person and choses to learn aerobics as a prospective profession but there too initially she confronts with straight rejection from her instructor in the ground

of her impairment. Mostly this is lack of awareness, involvement, investment of time, thought and finance that the required accessibilities, facilities and acceptance are still rare opportunities to the persons with disability in India.

Professional scopes:

Professional establishment is much more difficult to achieve and perform than academia to a disable person in this country till now. First, they are segregated, discriminated, neglected in most educational institutions, which almost deprived them of their educational rights and thus their academic eligibility remains unsatisfactory to match the criteria of most of the respectable and secured formal professions. And even if after conquering all the hurdles in their path they become successful in securing any suitable profession still they face various setbacks in successfully accomplishing their professional duties. As Preeti does not have higher degrees to meet the eligibility criteria for suitable regular government jobs or even in private sector for that matter so she is advised to take music lesson to become a music teacher, and this advice is a common alternative to a person with blindness or visual impairment. She fights with the conventional concepts and norms of her society and quite exceptionally establishes herself as an aerobics instructor. The urge and necessity for financial independence and self-satisfaction goad her to more challenging and daring profession for a girl with visual impairment. She takes the offer to be a saleswoman of a pickle manufacturing farm. She creatively uses her inborn talent and life's lesson in varied fields without any hesitation or regret. She takes the service offer in a five-star hotel, she volunteers her service in different NGOs, from a saleswoman she promotes herself to sales branch manager to a business partner, eventually she joins her family business, she also comes out as a motivational speaker and initiates her own organisation. This struggle for professional establishment and stability turns more troublesome for her because of the callousness and ignoble approach and treatment of the so-called colleagues. She may not have the formal degrees but she is confident enough about her abilities and capabilities, "Yes, they did have a formal education as far as books and certificates were concerned; but everything else was missing. On the other hand, I had acquired an excellent personality, very good communication skills, and a vast amount of general knowledge, along with excellent survival skills. I had lived in mainstream society and was perfectly capable of conducting myself in any given situation without evoking too much pity or unnecessary alarm." (Monga, 2012,p.75). But, instead of appreciating and encouraging her struggle and success people of this society take it as her high-flying ambition that being a disable girl she tries to come at the same label as themselves. Hence, she only gets mistreatment, insult, deprivation from all around her. She is used by her friend cum business partner Sunil when he invests her loaned money in their business but deprived her of the share. The co-workers in the hotel make strong protest against her joining the offered job and working at the same platform with them and insist on her dismissal. Even she receives rude and harsh conduct from her own brother in their business-related issues. From all these uncalled-for mistreatments of the social members make her draw her own view regarding the people of this society in general, that perhaps they think a person with disability is undeserving of any parallel platform as them, "'You blind girl, be thankful for our sympathy; do not attempt to walk our paths, and if you don't desist, we'll stop you in your tracks by one means or another.'"(Monga,2012,p.73). This scenario does not match with the smooth and pleasant professional experience of Indira. She is not subjected to any setback or social taboo and hurdles in becoming a successful IAS officer on the contrary she meets with cooperation, admiration more over respect from all around her in her professional territory. Her subjects feel a sense of awe around her and "her booming voice and flashing eyes became an incarnation of goddess Durga. Like the blind saints of the past, Indi passed into the local pantheon as an avatar of Shakti."(Ghose,2006,p.141). Because she is indomitable and invincible in her dominion in spite of her disability or her society which brings her the national award from the then Prime Minister and her namesake Indira Gandhi along with her personal admiration and encouragement. Not only as an officer but in her retired life she also emerges as a successful business woman. Though she gets Justin, her lifelong admirer, at hand to help and support her in every possible way but she single-handedly runs her beach hotel in Goa with ease and

flourish. This disparity in the professional field may sow seed of doubt within the readers about the extent of reality and fictionality of this issue.

The institution of marriage:

The question of marriage or romantic relationship in Indira's life is also depicted ideally and liberally than its factual counterpart. India is yet to come out from all of its conventionalities concerning the institution of marriage. So, for an Indian girl of a respectable bureaucratic family like that of Indira, to enjoy such liberty and emotional detachment in marital and extra-marital question, is indeed a pioneering portrayal, that is too few decades back. Indira determinately spoils the negotiations for her marriage by soiling her own character and reputation before the prospective groom and his family. She neglects rather insults the lifelong love and dedication of Justin by making him the puppet of her hand. Staying in an ambiguous and uncertain relationship with Justin she unhesitatingly marries another man without any attachment or feeling for him. After a week of her marriage, she losses her husband with no regret or sorrow and soon after that she gets physically involved with Justin. She gives birth to Justin's child but refuses to marry him or even accept him as her child's father. In spite of everything they continue their strange love-relationship till their retired life, till the death of Justin. The destruction come to their lives quite dramatically by their own son just for this immorality in their characters especially for Indira. Also, her family breaks all ties with her only for these shameful acts of her. But interestingly she smoothly gets away with all these actions which are considered immoral and therefore disapproved in India. And in spite of everything she easily finds admirers and partners to satisfy her whim, to play with them and treat them with neglect. The real picture in fact differs a lot from this representation in this concern even in today's India. Preeti unhesitatingly confesses "…after assessing the pros and cons of my situation in relation to matrimony, if I took an honest look at the present state of affairs, there were not many men who would readily marry a blind girl." (Monga, 2012, p.70). This sad state of affairs not only creates an unpleasant effect on the psyche of the girl in question but also creates social pressure on the family. Sometime the situation becomes so despairing that the family members are instigated to take dishonest means to marry their daughter off, "Then one day, my grandfather called my father and informed him that he had advertised in the matrimonial section of the Sunday newspaper for me. 'I have not mentioned her handicap,' he said, 'in this way, we will attract a sizable number of suitors for Penny;" (Monga,2012,p.76). Many Preeties of India still go through humiliation and consequences brought by such unreasonable act of desperation of the care givers. Society still fails to realise that lack of eye sight does not make lack or even difference in a girl's emotion and her romantic expectation. Like most common and 'normal' girl of this country she also "…hope once more of finding the life partner of my dreams; the man who would love me more than his life." (Monga, 2012, p.72). The care givers and the friends and family members and the well-wishers of that girl though understand her psychology and situation better than the people in general and behave with her accordingly but they also look at it as lack, deficiency or defect not a difference. As a result of which they try to avoid, ignore or at least lessen the impact and importance of the impairment and highlight the qualities, accomplishments and eligibilities of her as to meet the requirements of the marriage market. Preeti under goes such well-meant but denial of her impairment from her own mother who is her most reliable confidant, "she would continue encouragingly, 'You are so pretty you know, and also such an intelligent and bright person, that if we could trim off the excess weight, no one would bother about your vision impairment! everyone has negative aspects, and yours is your eyesight,' she always said, with a confident smile, 'and, when all the rest of your positive qualities sparkle, the one defect you have to live with will be become insignificant.'"(Monga,2012,p.43). But instead of increasing one's strength and confidence to overcome hurdles in her path born out of her impairment such avoidance and denial can leads one to escapist mindset and unfit for the struggles of life and harsh treatments of society. Thus, such conflicts and confusions among individual expectation, familial responsibility, prevalent conception and social treatment around the marriage of a girl with visual impairment as well as with any other disability is sure to have a harmful impact on a girl's life and living and badly affect

her psyche, which comes out in Preeti's own words, "The issue of my marriage was becoming a nightmare, and was blown out of proportion by everyone. Thank heavens my parents had a very different outlook towards the matter, which kept me sane and in a reasonably positive frame of mind."(Monga,2012,p.77). So, this living experience of Preeti presents more of a hopeless and bleak picture of the prospect of marriage for a disable girl in India than the contrary experience of Indira in this context.

The psychological journey:

Indira's growing impairment is shown to have tremendous impact on her psyche. In one side her own despairing condition due to her inevitable impending blindness on the other side the rejective attitude of her family towards her dis-ability as well as her special abilities make her hostile towards her reality, her circumstances and the people around her, (Sommers). As a result of this conflict and complexity she turns not only disregardful but down right revengeful towards her near and dear ones, her family and society even the almighty. Intentionally she creates unpleasant, shameful and insulting situations for her parents. Justin, who has dedicated his life and soul to her and left his family and friends, his country, profession, even his moto of life only to win her love, gets only her repeated rejection. She misuses and misvalues his devotion and love for her and makes him a puppet of her hand, ruthlessly plays with his emotion, even keeps their son away from him and conceals his relation to his son. She does not even spare her son Vikram. She consciously neglects him since his infancy, unbelievably grows envious towards her own son, his health and good fortune, and intentionally pushes him towards a harmful disease like diabetes at the early age of ten. She excels in academia and gets facilities and opportunities to pursue her carrier, she achieves success in her profession, gets recognition, reputation and rewards. She is also fortunate enough to earn the lifelong support and selfless love and devotion of a noble person like Justin. Still, she has reared the painful sore of her heart and cultivated the ugly sides of her character, turned into an envious, ruthless, revengeful wretch, only because of her family didn't support and accept her as she is. These actions and psychic journey of Indira go beyond the causality of her life's happening and makes her a little unreasonable in this context. Human being is positioned at the top most label of animal hierarchy because only a human being has this power of reason and logic. More over the woman kind have the reputation to possess considerable tolerance. But Indira, to an extent, belies these concepts through her unexpected psychological moves which takes her to the verge of the unnatural. In reality one is bound to go through many a difficulty in order to live and establish oneself in this society in general or in this world. And when this one is a woman and more over one with disability then her struggle grows into manifold but even then, she has to overcome these stumbling blocks with dexterity otherwise she is sure to lose the battle because revolt without proper strategy and enough power can lead a person to destruction. The living example of one such victor is Preeti Monga who wins all the adversities of life with dexterity and proves her worth before the world. Her disappointments from her life and society are much more than that of Indira which is evident through these words, "This was most shocking! What had I done now? Was I so bad that no one, no one at all wished to have anything to do with me? First it was my school, then the music teacher's denial that I would be able to achieve excellence no matter how hard I worked. No one seemed to want to marry me and now hundreds of people were protesting just because I had dared to accept a humble trainee's position at a five-star hotel. This seemed too absurd to make any sense of; just because I was blind, I was apparently being denied the basic right to live in this world."(Monga,2012,p.73). All these disappointments together do not lead her to destruction like Indira rather she turns those disappointments in expectations into experience which eventually goads her to new creation. Preeti only gets the acceptance and support of her family and that is too as long as she stays within the boundary of social norms. But in every other sphere she faces failure, segregation, rejection and helplessness only because of her impairment as society is still unprepared for her. First, she did not get enough opportunities and facilities to continue her formal academic pursuit, she is refused time and again as incompetent for any established profession, she faces irreparable damage in her romantic relation. But she does not allow herself to become a

revengeful, cynical, hurtful person. In spite of all these setbacks she keeps herself poised and steady before the society or society's demands from her. In fact, she does not rather cannot even voice all of her thoughts, feelings, observations of the society she lives in, because being a social being she cannot stay out of the society, and if she has to live in this society then she needs to accept the society with all of its terms and conditions because there is no third option available so far. So, the only practical think to do for her who is marginalized with double discriminations of femininity and impairment in this society is to make best of any adverse situation or event and taking lesson from those circumstances make herself strong and capable enough to bring that much needed and much awaited change in the society as Preeti has accomplished as depicted in her autobiography.

Conclusion:

Two characters whose life and experience have been discussed and compared above, belong almost to the same socio-cultural milieu of same era. Naturally it is expected that they will share similar experiences, similar facilities and hindrances, similar attitude and approach of society in their lives' journey but instead they go through quite a different almost contrary experiences in all these aspects. The values that Indira believes in, the opportunities she gets to fulfil her ambition, the accomplishments that she acquired for herself, and the way she treats her relationships, nothing of these is common or regular occurrence in the life of a visually impaired girl in a country like India. Preeti through her own life narrative asserts to this statement. Person like Indira and her lifestyle and achievements better fit in the contemporary socio-cultural scenario of the advance countries and states of Europe and America. However, there might be some reason behind such disparity between the reality depicted in a autobiography and a realistic portrayal of a similar subject or individual in a fiction. One of such possibility is the availability of the recorded primary resources regarding disability concern in these developing countries. As disability studies as a discipline emerges in the west so the discourses, archives, theories, interpretations, depictions and discussions regarding disability evolve around disability concern of west primarily. So, when a person from these third world countries, without any first-hand experience, gets acquainted with and gathers knowledge about this community and their concerns from these literary sources then that reader's concepts and views about disability question will surely be influenced and tinged by western discourses. The authors, readers and scholars of India of this discipline are no exception in this regard. And it will continue to affect the academia and the literary world of India as well as alike countries until they create their own discourse, theory and history around disability and the disable.

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Emergence of National Consciousness Through Cultural Apparatus: The Role of Bhartendu Harishchandra

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Abstract

National consciousness emerged as a significant historical phenomenon in nineteenth-century India, shaped by political, economic, social, religious, and cultural transformations. This study, entitled "Emergence of National Consciousness through Cultural Apparatus: The Role of Bhartendu Harishchandra," examines Bhartendu Harishchandra's contribution to the development of nationalism through Hindi literature, language, journalism, and cultural awakening. His literary activities coincided with the expansion of British colonial rule, the growth of Western education, the development of newspapers, and the emergence of social and religious reform movements. These developments contributed to a growing awareness of colonial exploitation, economic dependency, racial discrimination, and the need for national unity. Bhartendu Harishchandra played a pioneering role in transforming literature into a tool for public education, social criticism, and national awakening. Through his plays, essays, poems, and journalistic writings, he highlighted economic exploitation, poverty, famine, caste discrimination, child marriage, religious orthodoxy, and the decline of indigenous industries. His emphasis on developing Hindi and promoting Swadeshi reflected his belief that linguistic and economic self-reliance were essential to national progress. Works such as Bharat-Durdasha, Andher Nagari, and Bharatvarsh Ki Unnati Kaise Ho Sakti Hai expressed his concern for the nation's condition and encouraged collective self-reflection. The study also explores his efforts to promote cultural unity, strengthen national self-respect, and bridge social and regional differences. His ideas encouraged people to recognise their collective identity and help advance the nation. Although his writings sometimes reflected loyalty towards British rulers, they also articulated concerns about colonial exploitation and India's future.

Keywords: National Consciousness; Bhartendu Harishchandra; Hindi Literature; Cultural Renaissance; Swadeshi Movement.

Introduction

Bhartendu's lifetime coincided with the rise and development of national consciousness in India. During this period, nationalism began to emerge due to various factors, culminating in the formation of the Indian National Congress in 1885. Nationalism in India arose – and the realization that British rule was responsible for their wretched condition grew among the people – as a result of several elements: the political and administrative unity established by British rule; religious and social awakenings; historical research and the ensuing pride in ancient Indian civilization and culture; the development of Western-style education, transport, and communication; the growth of Indian newspapers and indigenous literature; the discontent caused by British colonial and imperialist policies of economic exploitation; discriminatory racial policies and the exclusion of Indians from high government posts; and Lord Lytton's repressive policies alongside the controversy surrounding the Ilbert Bill. This national consciousness gave birth to the All-India Congress. In the Hindi-speaking region, Bhartendu made a significant and praiseworthy contribution to awakening national consciousness through his literature; he was a vigilant writer who fostered a spirit of nationalism.

He was a revolutionary writer who created literature for the masses and ushered in a new era. He raised the voice of nationalism at a time when uttering even a single word against the British government was a crime, and no one dared to speak out. This courage of his will always be lauded in

history. The various facets of life – economic hardships like inflation, famine, taxation, and the drain of wealth to foreign lands; religious issues such as polytheism and sectarian conflicts; social ills like the caste system, dietary taboos, and child marriage; moral discord and mutual strife; the neglect of language and traditional attire; and political subjugation and servitude – all found expression in his literature. British rule was characterized by the severe economic exploitation of India – a reality Bhartendu Ji eloquently highlighted by noting that, despite the availability of material comforts, wealth flowed out of the country under British governance. His guiding principle for the advancement of the Hindi language and the nation – "One's own language is the root of all progress" – will continue to serve as a source of constant inspiration.[1]

The culture for which Bhartendu laid the foundation was national in character. His core objective was to foster the country's progress by protecting it from the plunder of British rule. Instead of looking to the aristocracy, landlords, kings, or traditional scholars for direction, he taught the people to rely on themselves. He told the educated class that without the masses, they were rendered helpless, and he encouraged them to forge unity with the common people. He urged Hindus and Muslims to set aside their mutual differences and unite for the upliftment of the nation. In contrast to the British systems of justice, policing, and the judiciary – which were underpinned by divisiveness and terror – Bhartendu made the welfare of the people the true yardstick for justice and injustice, while opposing both British machinations and their reign of terror. In this manner, he awakened the national self-respect of Indians, drawing upon archaeology, history, and ancient culture to further this cause.[2]

During the Bhartendu era, the public was gripped by a multitude of caste-based conventions, hypocrisies born of false beliefs, ostentatious religious displays, and distortions stemming from superstition – spanning the religious, social, and cultural spheres. Various sects were tearing apart the fabric of the ancient faith while championing their own self-serving interpretations. Ancient traditions and culture held the minds and souls of the people in their distorted grip. Such was the religious, social, and cultural state of the populace during that period.

Foreign rule was exerting the influence of alien culture upon the country. The might and grandeur of the foreign state had rendered the countrymen passive and bewildered. They were dazzled by the glitter of foreign civilization, resulting in a distorted way of life born of a disjointed and unbridled fusion of cultures. The country's economic condition was also deteriorating due to exploitation under foreign rule; wealth was being drained abroad, and indigenous businesses were collapsing. The land was plagued by high prices, famine, disease, and epidemics. Under foreign rule, even contemplating national reform was considered a crime. Native rulers and Nawabs had become mere pawns in the hands of the foreign government. The wealthy and elite classes were preoccupied with schemes to enhance their own riches and prestige. The religious community was engrossed in hypocrisy, while the educated class blindly toed the line of foreign civilization and the government. The common people remained utterly devoid of consciousness and spirit; no one gave a thought to the betterment of the nation.[3]

Through his literature, Bhartendu raised a powerful voice to confront the challenges arising from these circumstances; phrases such as "wealth flows to foreign lands – this is the ultimate ruin" and "India's own distinct identity" give expression to his keen national consciousness. Bhartendu's concept of "selfhood" corresponds to what is known today as "ethnic identity" or simply "identity." For Bhartendu, the primary prerequisite for this identity was one's own language – encapsulated in the sentiment that "progress in one's own language is the root of all progress." This advocacy for one's own language culminated in the 'Swadeshi' movement, which emphasized the development of indigenous industries in opposition to the economic and industrial policies of British rule. Bhartendu's Ballia lecture resonates with the call for political independence alongside economic autonomy.

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[1] . Bhartendu Harishchandra (1999) : Publications Division, Government of India, p. 129

[2] . Sharma, Ram Vilas (2019) :Bhartendu Harishchandra aur Hindi Navjagran ki Samasyaen, Rajkamal Prakashan, Patna, p. 94

[3] . Singh, Ram Gopal (1957) :Bhartendu-Sahitya, Vinod Pustak Mandir, Agra, p. 48

Acknowledging him as the father of the Hindi Renaissance, Lakshmi Sagar Varshney observes that Bhartendu Harishchandra belongs to that select group of epoch-making figures whose personalities converge the scattered forces of history into a unified whole, thereby forging a definite and robust path of synthesis for the future. In the cultural history of the Hindi-speaking region during the nineteenth century, Bhartendu Harishchandra's name draws our attention not only to the Indian history of the preceding century but also to those European forces that – during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries –catalyzed unprecedented transformations and revitalized life not just in India, but across all Asian nations. Bhartendu Harishchandra and the Hindi region, under his leadership, demonstrated dynamism by actively participating in this universal historical process. Under his guidance, a synthesis of the ancient and the modern emerged within the life of the Hindi region. This synthesis gave birth to novelty in literature and sparked the movement known as the 'Renaissance' – a movement that subsequently gave rise to various religious, social, political, and economic movements in both life and literature. On one hand, Hindi speakers endeavored to replace the old reliance on Puranic tradition with a scientific outlook; on the other, while influenced by the progressive ideas of Western civilization, they vehemently opposed the encroachments of British imperialism. They began to envision a golden dawn for India. Foremost among such enlightened individuals was Bhartendu Harishchandra. Despite being born into the affluent family of Seth Amichand – and into the tradition-bound milieu of the merchant class – Bhartendu Harishchandra was a socially conscious individual who opposed orthodoxy and blind imitation in both society and literature, remaining keenly attuned to the exigencies of the times. He dedicated himself wholeheartedly to the service of the Hindi language and literature. Although he lived for little more than thirty-four years, in that brief span, he edited several newspapers, authored or edited approximately 238 works, and played a significant role in public life.[4]

Bhartendu accomplished commendable work for Indian cultural unity. He revived the spirit of patriotism or nationalism, which had seemed lost prior to his time. He awakened the self-respect of the masses. Bhartendu lifted the veil obscuring the collective cultural consciousness ('jatiyachetna'), liberated religion from orthodoxy, countered Western influence, and expanded public knowledge. No other medium fostered mass education as effectively as Bhartendu's writings did. Bhartendu was a thinker; he heralded the Indian Renaissance. He cultivated a sense of nationalism through his creative genius and constantly contemplated and wrote about India's progress. Describing him as the architect of this collective culture, Ram Vilas Sharma notes that the cultural foundation Bhartendu laid was meant for the entire nation, yet it held special significance for the Hindi-speaking populace. To foster this culture, he established the importance of his own language vis-à-vis English, Sanskrit, and Arabic-Persian. Bhartendu was perhaps the first Hindi writer to use the word ''jati'' (usually meaning 'caste' or 'community') to denote 'nationality.' In his essay titled ''Jatiya Sangeet'' (National Music), the term ''jatiya'' does not refer to 'varna' or caste. Concern for the progress of the 'North-Western Provinces' is evident in many of his essays. In the play 'Prem-Jogini', the character Sudhakar speaks of the neighborhoods inhabited by people of specific communities, remarking, "When one visits the localities settled by people of a particular community, it feels as though one has arrived in that very region; for instance, the Bengali quarter evokes the feel of Dhaka, the Lahori quarter that of Amritsar, and Brahmaghat creates the illusion of being in Pune." While Bhartendu was concerned about the entire nation, he was particularly anxious about this: "Alas! When will the people of the North-Western Provinces shed their cowardice? When will they progress? And when will God grant them the civilization that the inhabitants of other regions of Hindustan have attained?". That is why it would be fitting to call him the architect of a distinct cultural identity.[5]

In the Hindi-speaking region, Bhartendu was the first national leader to ignite a sense of patriotism among the people. A true glimpse of his national consciousness is found in his essay "Bharatvarsh ki Unnati Kaise Ho Sakti Hai" (How Can India Progress?), where he states: "Anyone

[4] . Bhartendu Harishchandra (1999) : Publications Division, pp. 17-18
[5] . Sharma, Ram Vilas, op. cit., p. 94

living in Hindustan – regardless of color or caste – is a Hindu. Help the Hindu. Bengalis, Marathas, Punjabis, Madrasis, Vedic followers, Jains, Brahmos, and Muslims – join hands with one another. Engage in crafts and industries that flourish here, ensuring your money remains within your own country. Observe how the Ganges merges into the ocean through a thousand streams; similarly, your wealth flows out in a thousand ways to England, France, Germany, and America. Even a trivial item like a matchstick comes from there. Just look at yourself: the 'markin' dhoti you wear is made in America; the 'longcloth' coat you wear is from England; you comb your hair with a French-made comb, and a German-made tallow candle burns before you. It is like the anecdote of a carefree man who attended a gathering wearing borrowed clothes. Recognizing the garments, one person remarked, 'Hey, this coat belongs to so-and-so,' and another added, 'And the cap belongs to someone else.' He laughed and replied, 'Well, the moustache is at least my own.' Alas, you have reached a state where you cannot even produce the items you use in your daily lives. Brothers, wake up from your slumber now; strive for the all-round progress of your country. Read books, play games, and engage in conversations that foster your well-being. Do not rely on foreign goods or foreign languages. Achieve progress within your own country and through your own language."[6]

In these lines, Bhartendu gives an indication of his intense patriotic spirit. According to him, regional and caste-based diversity is natural; yet, the unifying thread binding all Indians amidst this diversity is 'Hindutva'. To interpret 'Hindutva' here in a purely religious sense would be an injustice to Bhartendu. By the concept of a 'Hindu nation,' Bhartendu refers to that specific geographical entity which holds a distinct and unique place in the world – bounded by the ocean on three sides and the Himalayas on the fourth – where cultures from various lands arrived, contributed to the local culture, and forged a composite culture; consequently, despite apparent external differences, there exists an underlying unity of culture, sentiment, and fundamental values.[7] In this passage, Bhartendu clarifies the nature of the task involved in reviving the waning national spirit in India. The foundation of nationalism lies in self-reliance – specifically, the adoption of 'Swadeshi'. His perspective on nationalism is remarkably subtle and incisive. He holds that as long as we remain economically dependent on others, a state of mental subjugation will persist; therefore, it is essential that we become self-reliant.

Dr. Shyamsundar Das traces the very inception of national sentiment in Hindi literature to Bhartendu's play 'Bharat-Durdasha'. Indeed, he wrote: "The day Bhartendu Harishchandra, at the beginning of his play 'Bharat-Durdasha', addressed all his countrymen and invited them to shed tears over the nation's fallen state – that day is no less significant in the history of this country and its literature than the birth anniversary of any other great figure. On that day, a literature that had slumbered for centuries began to awaken. On that day, a powerful revolution was proclaimed against the harmful traditions of orthodoxy; on that day, the noble aspiration to unite a fragmented nation emerged; on that day, a true poet revealed a glimpse of authentic national life to the soul of the country and its people; and on that day, to put an end to narrow provincial mindsets, Goddess Saraswati herself took up residence in the voice of the national language's representative poet, giving rise to a surging spirit of nationalism."[8]

Through his plays, essays, and poems, Bhartendu successfully awakened nationalist sentiments across the country. According to Dasharath Ojha, the era of Bhartendu Harishchandra was a period of renaissance. Witnessing the deplorable state of society deeply pained the heart of every patriot. Bhartendu's sensitive heart was deeply agitated by the social, religious, political, and economic decline of the nation. He was a born poet and an accomplished playwright; consequently, he resolved to awaken society through literature. Drama proves to be a most potent medium for rousing society; Bhartendu recognized this fact and advanced the cause of national awakening through

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[6] . Bharat Varsh ki Unnati Kaise Ho Sakti Hai, Bhartendu Samagra, Servants of Knowledge; Azim Premji University; Jai Gyan, p. 1013

[7] . Prasad, Mangala (1995) :Punarjagran Yug aur Bhartendu, Sharda Prakashan, New Delhi, p. 52

[8] . Cited in "Bhartendu Harishchandra", Publications Division, p. 130.

his innovative works. During Bhartendu's childhood, the new religious ideas propagated by Swami Dayanand and Raja Rammohan Roy were gaining ground. In the political sphere, an atmosphere of despondency prevailed in the wake of the failed revolution of 1857.

A visionary writer like Bhartendu saw the public at the intersection of despair and hope. Therefore, he strived to light the lamp of hope in the darkness of despair. Precious funds were being sent abroad from India. Hypocrisy was prevalent in the name of wealth. It was under these circumstances that Bhartendu's plays were composed. He composed a total of thirteen plays, of which Vidya Sundar, Karpoor Manjari, Mudrarakshasa, and Durlabh Bandhu are translated, but the remaining nine plays – Pakhand Vidamban, Vaidiki Hinsa Hinsa Na Bhavati, Prem Jogini, Satya Harishchandra, VishsyaVishmaushadham, Chandravali, Bharat-Durdasha, Andher Nagari, and Neeldevi – are original. Even the translated plays are imbued with Bhartendu's national spirit. Wherever he had the opportunity, he emphasized character building. Strength of character has always been at the core of his nationalist sentiment.[9]

In 'Bharat Durdasha', Bhartendu expresses deep concern regarding the country's current state. He is haunted by memories of the nation's glorious historical heritage and takes pride in its past. However, witnessing the country's present condition of subjugation causes his sense of national pride to cry out in anguish.[10]

Bhartendu Harishchandra was born into a family loyal to the British Crown. The pro-British Raja Shivprasad had been his mentor. When Shivprasad received the title of 'Raja' in 1874, Bhartendu celebrated the occasion with festivities. He dedicated his work 'Mudrarakshasa' to the "lotus feet of the highly revered Shri-yukt Raja Shivprasad Bahadur, CSI," in the capacity of an "affectionate student." Although there was no connection – however distant – between 'Mudrarakshasa' (or Chanakya) and Queen Victoria, he nonetheless appended a 'Bihag Thumri' at the end to be sung: "Like a bowl of pure nectar, may Queen Victoria live forever." In 1861, upon the death of Victoria's husband, he wrote a poem dedicated to Prince Albert. When the Duke of Edinburgh visited India in 1869, he penned a "Welcome Address to the Royal Prince." In 1871, when the Prince of Wales contracted typhoid, he prayed to God for his recovery. There are other such poems of his as well in which he demonstrated his loyalty to the Crown. Towards the end of his life, he wrote a piece praising Lord Ripon, placing him on par with legendary figures like Shivi, Dadhichi, Harishchandra, and Karna. In 'Premyogini', while describing the glory of Kashi, the character Sudhakar says: "Here, numerous officials – such as commissioners, judges, and collectors – who operate under the authority of the illustrious Empress Victoria (whose footstool is revered by the circle of world rulers), diligently attend to their duties while keeping the populace under their charge; and the people sleep soundly every night, secure in the knowledge that the authorities are ever-vigilant to mete out stern punishment."[11]

Conclusion

The emergence of national consciousness in nineteenth-century India was closely associated with political transformation, colonial exploitation, social reform, and cultural awakening. In this historical context, Bhartendu Harishchandra emerged as a prominent literary figure who used Hindi literature as a medium for expressing national aspirations and encouraging public awareness. His contribution extended beyond literary innovation to the promotion of cultural identity, social reform, and economic self-reliance.

Through his plays, poems, essays, and journalistic activities, Bhartendu highlighted the problems confronting Indian society. He drew attention to poverty, famine, taxation, the drain of wealth, the decline of indigenous industries, caste-based discrimination, child marriage, and religious orthodoxy. His writings encouraged readers to reflect critically on the prevailing social and political conditions. In this respect, literature became an instrument for communicating the experiences of ordinary people and awakening a sense of collective responsibility.

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[9] . "Bhartendu Harishchandra", Publications Division, p. 122

[10] . Bharat Durdasha, BhartenduSamagra, Vani Prakashan, New Delhi, pp. 460-61

[11] . Sharma, Ram Vilas, op. cit., p. 60

Bhartendu's emphasis on the Hindi language and indigenous production was central to his understanding of national progress. He believed that linguistic development, economic independence, and cultural self-respect were interconnected. His advocacy of Swadeshi challenged excessive dependence on foreign goods and encouraged the development of domestic industries. Similarly, his appeals for unity among different communities reflected his desire to overcome narrow social and regional divisions in the interest of national advancement.

His literary works, particularly *Bharat-Durdasha*, expressed the contrast between India's glorious historical heritage and its contemporary condition under colonial rule. Although some of his writings expressed loyalty towards British authorities, his broader literary contribution revealed a sustained concern for India's economic difficulties, cultural identity, and collective future. This apparent tension demonstrates the complexity of nationalist consciousness during the early stages of its development.

In conclusion, Bhartendu Harishchandra played a significant role in connecting literature with national consciousness. By using cultural and literary resources to promote public awareness, social criticism, linguistic development, and economic self-reliance, he helped establish important foundations for modern Hindi literature and the wider Indian nationalist movement. His legacy demonstrates the capacity of literature to shape collective identity and inspire social and political change.

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Government Welfare Schemes and Women's Mental Health in India: Exploring Psychological Pathways to Well-Being

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Abstract

Women's mental health is shaped not only by individual and clinical factors but also by economic insecurity, gender inequality, unpaid care work, violence, limited autonomy, and access to health and social services. This paper examines how selected Government of India welfare schemes may influence women's mental health through five interconnected psychological pathways: economic security, perceived safety, reduced care burden, agency and self-efficacy, and social support. Schemes considered include the Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY), Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY), Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram (JSSK), Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY), Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana–National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM), Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana–Gramin (PMAY-G), POSHAN 2.0, PALNA, One Stop Centres, Women Helpline, Shakti Sadan, Sakhi Niwas, and Beti Bachao Beti Padhao. Published evidence is strongest for selected pathways rather than for every scheme as a direct mental-health intervention. A quasi-experimental study in Uttar Pradesh linked JSY cash receipt with lower maternal depressive symptoms, while studies of women's self-help groups and PMAY-G report benefits in empowerment or subjective well-being indicators. Research on anaemia and maternal depression supports the relevance of nutrition, but does not establish a direct mental-health effect of POSHAN 2.0. The paper argues that scheme evaluation should combine service-delivery indicators with validated measures of depression, anxiety, perceived stress, safety, self-efficacy, social support, and subjective well-being. It also distinguishes evidence of association from evidence of causation and proposes a more psychologically informed, gender-responsive approach to welfare evaluation.

Keywords: *Women's Mental Health; Psychological Well-Being; Government Welfare Schemes; Self-Efficacy; Social Support; Women's Empowerment; India*

1. Introduction

Mental health is more than the absence of a mental disorder. The World Health Organization (WHO, 2022) presents mental health as an integral part of health and well-being, shaped by individual, social, and structural conditions. Poverty, insecure employment, violence, gender discrimination, reproductive health concerns, limited decision-making power, and unequal responsibility for unpaid care can expose women to chronic stress and reduce opportunities for recovery and personal agency. A metaethnography synthesising 13 qualitative studies of women's experiences and perceptions of depression in India identified interpersonal conflict, caregiving burden, domestic violence, financial insecurity, adverse reproductive events, and widowhood as recurring contexts in which distress was experienced (Bhattacharya et al., 2019). This supports a social-determinants perspective: psychological distress cannot always be understood solely as an individual problem when its sources are embedded in unequal living conditions. Welfare policies may therefore have psychological relevance even when their primary purpose is income support, maternal health, housing, nutrition, childcare, or protection from violence.

In India, schemes such as PMMVY, JSY, PMUY, DAY-NRLM, PMAY-G, POSHAN 2.0, PALNA, and Mission Shakti-related services address different material and institutional risks. Their potential mental-health significance can be examined through established psychological concepts. Stress-and-coping perspectives suggest that resources can reduce the intensity of perceived threats; self-efficacy theory highlights the importance of confidence in one's ability to act; and social-support perspectives emphasise emotional, informational, and practical assistance. These concepts help

explain plausible pathways, but they do not automatically prove that a particular scheme reduces depression or anxiety.

This paper offers a narrative, conceptually organised analysis of selected welfare schemes and the psychological mechanisms through which they may be relevant to women's well-being. It draws on scheme descriptions, official assessments, and published research. A 2026 systematic review identified only eight eligible studies of economic interventions and women's mental health/well-being in South Asia; the evidence was heterogeneous and had moderate risk of bias (Katiyar & Keynejad, 2026). This paper is not itself a systematic review and does not estimate causal effects across all schemes. The central question is: through which psychological pathways might welfare provision influence women's mental health, and how strong is the available evidence for those pathways?

2. Welfare Schemes and Psychological Pathways to Women's Mental Health

The proposed framework links welfare provision with mental health through five overlapping pathways: (1) economic security and reduced uncertainty; (2) perceived safety and protection from harm; (3) reduced domestic and caregiving burden; (4) agency, autonomy, and self-efficacy; and (5) social support and access to help. These pathways may influence stress appraisal, perceived control, daily functioning, and subjective well-being. However, outcomes depend on actual access, adequacy and continuity of benefits, implementation quality, household power relations, and the woman's wider social context. Scheme reach or benefit receipt should not be treated as a proxy for psychological improvement.

2.1. Economic Security and Maternal Mental Health

Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY)

PMMVY provides maternity-related financial support to eligible pregnant and lactating women (Ministry of Women and Child Development). From a psychological perspective, financial assistance may reduce anticipatory worry about food, healthcare, transport, and income loss. In stress-and-coping terms, material resources can increase the perceived ability to manage demands; they may also strengthen a woman's sense that her needs are recognised by public institutions. These are plausible pathways, not proof that PMMVY directly prevents depression. The amount, timing, accessibility, and control over the payment may shape its actual psychological value.

Official MWCD dashboard data (last updated 25 September 2026) report 5.04 crore beneficiaries enrolled, 4.32 crore beneficiaries paid, and total payments of ₹20,344 crore. (MWCD, PMMVY Dashboard)

Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY)

JSY promotes institutional delivery through conditional cash assistance for eligible women. It is one of the clearest examples in this paper where scheme-specific mental-health evidence is available. In a quasi-experimental study of 1,695 women in Uttar Pradesh, Powell-Jackson et al. (2016) found that receipt of JSY cash assistance was associated with an 8.5% reduction in a continuous measure of maternal depression and a 36% reduction in moderate depression. The study found no clear associations with happiness or worry. The authors suggested that reduced financial strain related to delivery care may explain this. This is evidence about JSY and maternal depression in the studied setting; it should not be generalised automatically to every welfare scheme or all dimensions of emotional well-being.

Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram (JSSK)

JSSK entitles pregnant women delivering in public health institutions to free and cashless delivery, including caesarean section, medicines, diagnostics, blood where required, diet during the hospital stay, and transport (National Health Mission). The possible psychological pathway is reduced uncertainty and lower out-of-pocket expenditure during a period of heightened physical and emotional demand. Reduced financial threat may make childbirth-related stress more manageable and facilitate timely care-seeking. However, evidence that JSSK itself reduces depression or anxiety should not be assumed without scheme-specific studies. Research could examine whether actual receipt of free

services, respectful maternity care, and lower out-of-pocket costs are associated with maternal stress and postpartum depressive symptoms.

2.2. Clean Energy, Domestic Labour, and Psychological Well-Being

Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY)

PMUY supports access to LPG connections for eligible households, with connections issued in women's names (Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas). The official PMUY portal reported 105,685,306 LPG connections released as of 23 September 2026; 2,442,525 connections had been released under the latest 25-lakh extension by that date. (PMUY official portal) Clean cooking can be relevant to women's daily burden and agency, but receipt of a connection is not the same as sustained use. Gaikwad et al. (2024) assessed women's empowerment among rural women using and sustaining clean cooking fuel; the paper should not be cited as direct evidence that PMUY reduces depression or anxiety. A difference-in-differences study by Nandwani and Jain (2026) found that PMUY substantially increased LPG connections but had a more limited effect on consumption; the authors reported improvements in women's mobility, financial autonomy, and decision-making power, while health, employment, and education effects were limited. These findings support a cautious argument about agency and access, not a claim of demonstrated clinical mental-health benefit. Evaluations should assess sustained fuel use, time burden, perceived autonomy, and validated mental well-being outcomes.

2.3. Economic Empowerment, Self-Efficacy, and Mental Health

DAY-NRLM and Self-Help Groups (SHGs)

DAY-NRLM organises rural women into self-help groups (SHGs) and supports livelihoods, savings, credit, and financial inclusion. SHGs may offer more than economic participation: regular meetings can create social networks, shared problem-solving, information exchange, and opportunities to practise decision-making. These experiences are relevant to self-efficacy—the belief that one can take action to achieve desired outcomes—and collective efficacy, or the perceived capacity of a group to act together. A 2024 study of rural tribal women in Jharkhand using propensity-score matching reported improvements in self-esteem, self-confidence, self-efficacy, autonomy, knowledge, skills, and quality-of-life indicators associated with SHG participation (Mahato & Jha, 2024). A district-level analysis using NFHS-4 and SHG concentration data found associations with selected maternal-health, empowerment, and asset-ownership indicators, but did not measure clinical mental-health outcomes and cautioned that association does not establish causation (Saha, 2021). SHGs may therefore support psychological empowerment, but mental-health outcomes should be measured directly and possible burdens—such as repayment pressure, time demands, or household conflict—should also be considered.

2.4. Secure Housing, Dignity, and Self-Worth

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana–Gramin (PMAY-G)

PMAY-G aims to provide pucca houses to eligible rural households. Housing security may reduce uncertainty and exposure to unsafe or overcrowded living conditions. From a psychological perspective, stable housing may support privacy, safety, dignity, and perceived control. A systematic review of longitudinal studies found that several forms of housing disadvantage were associated with later adverse mental-health outcomes, including depression and anxiety (Singh et al., 2019). However, that review was not an evaluation of PMAY-G and was not specific to rural India. Future evaluations should distinguish the effects of housing quality from ownership, household relationships, and neighbourhood safety.

2.5. Nutrition and Mental Health

Mission Saksham Anganwadi and POSHAN 2.0

POSHAN 2.0 includes supplementary nutrition and related services for pregnant women, lactating mothers, and other eligible groups (MWCD, n.d.-b). Nutrition is relevant to psychological functioning because nutritional deficiencies can affect energy, fatigue, physical functioning, and the capacity to manage daily demands. A systematic review and meta-analysis by Kang et al. (2020)

examined the association between anaemia and maternal depression. This evidence supports the relevance of nutritional status to maternal mental health, but it does not establish that POSHAN 2.0 itself reduces depression. Evidence about a risk factor is not automatically evidence about the effectiveness of a particular programme. A psychologically informed evaluation could examine whether service access and improvements in nutritional status are associated with fatigue, perceived stress, depressive symptoms, and subjective well-being over time. It should also consider food insecurity, gendered food allocation, workload, and access to health care.

2.6. Childcare, Care Burden, and Women's Mental Health

PALNA

The MWCD website reports that 3,130 Anganwadi-cum-Crèches were operational as of 31 March 2026. (MWCD, PALNA) PALNA provides crèche facilities intended to support safe childcare and enable mothers to participate in employment or other activities (MWCD, n.d.-c). The psychological relevance of childcare is linked to role conflict, time poverty, and chronic demands. When a woman is expected to provide extensive unpaid care while also meeting employment or household responsibilities, she may have limited time for rest, social connection, and self-care. Reliable and trusted childcare could reduce perceived overload and increase perceived control over daily life. This is a plausible pathway, not proof that PALNA reduces maternal stress or depression. Evaluations should examine affordability, opening hours, safety, accessibility, mothers' trust, use patterns, and validated measures of caregiver stress and well-being.

2.7. Violence, Safety, and Psychological Rehabilitation

One Stop Centres (OSCs)

One Stop Centres (OSCs) provide integrated support to women affected by violence, including access to medical care, police and legal assistance, temporary shelter, and psychosocial counselling (MWCD). This is among the most direct links between welfare provision and mental-health needs because violence may be associated with fear, trauma-related symptoms, depression, anxiety, shame, and loss of control. A survivor-centred response can support immediate safety, validation, practical problem-solving, and access to longer-term services. A 2026 UNFPA assessment examined accessibility, staffing, survivor-centred care, case management, referrals, coordination, and implementation challenges across 56 centres in 16 states and two Union Territories (UNFPA, 2026). This report informs service quality but is not proof that OSC access causes mental-health recovery. Outcomes should include safety planning, continuity of care, perceived support, psychological distress, and survivors' own assessments of respectful treatment. Confidentiality and avoidance of retraumatisation are essential.

2.8. Women Helpline and Help-Seeking Behaviour

Women Helpline–181 connects women with emergency and support services, including police, One Stop Centres, hospitals, and legal services (MWCD). The MWCD dashboard reports that, as of 28 February 2025, 2,14,82,611 calls had been registered, and 85,32,846 women had received assistance. (MWCD Home Dashboard) Its psychological relevance concerns help-seeking: women experiencing violence or severe distress may delay seeking assistance because of stigma, fear of retaliation, financial dependence, social pressure, or uncertainty about whether they will be believed. An accessible, confidential, and responsive helpline may lower the practical and psychological threshold for seeking help. In social-support terms, it can provide information, connection to services, and a first point of contact during a crisis. However, call volumes alone cannot establish that callers obtained safe or effective support. Assessment should include response time, referral completion, confidentiality, repeat access, safety outcomes, and whether women feel listened to and respected.

2.9. Shelter, Rehabilitation, and Psychological Stability

Shakti Sadan

Shakti Sadan provides shelter, protection, counselling, and rehabilitation for women in difficult circumstances, including women affected by trafficking and other forms of distress. The MWCD dashboard recorded 404 Shakti Sadans as of 31 December 2024. (MWCD Home Dashboard) Safe

shelter may reduce immediate threats and create conditions for emotional stabilization, practical planning, and longer-term recovery. Its psychological contribution is likely to depend on safety, privacy, autonomy, supportive relationships, access to counselling, and continuity of housing and livelihood support. Shelter alone is not sufficient: long-term well-being may also require trauma-informed care, legal support, family or community safety planning, and economic independence. Direct scheme-specific studies using validated mental-health outcomes are needed.

Sakhi Niwas

Sakhi Niwas provides accommodation for working women under Mission Shakti. The MWCD dashboard recorded 523 Sakhi Niwas facilities as of 31 December 2024. (MWCD Home Dashboard) Safe and affordable accommodation may reduce housing-related stress, insecurity during commuting, and dependence on unsafe living arrangements. It may also support employment continuity and social participation. These benefits are psychologically relevant through perceived safety, autonomy, and control over life choices. However, the presence of a facility does not guarantee that it is affordable, accessible, or appropriate for every woman. Evaluations should assess residents' sense of safety, privacy, social support, autonomy, and mental well-being rather than rely only on facility counts.

2.10. Social Norms, Education, and Self-Worth

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP)

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) seeks to address gender-biased sex selection and promote the survival, protection, and education of girls through awareness and community mobilisation. Its psychological relevance is indirect and long-term. Social norms influence whether girls are valued, supported in education, encouraged to aspire, and allowed to participate in decisions. A more supportive environment may contribute to belonging, self-worth, perceived future opportunities, and agency. However, these are proposed pathways rather than established mental-health effects of BBBP. The NCAER evaluation reported increased awareness but also identified barriers to girls' education (Jaiswal et al., 2020). A later difference-in-differences study found no statistically significant programme impact on selected educational and learning outcomes (Mukhopadhyay et al., 2024). Neither study directly measured mental-health effects. These findings caution against assuming that awareness automatically changes behaviour or psychological outcomes.

2.11. Constitutional and Judicial Perspective

Women's welfare and mental health are linked to constitutional principles of equality, dignity, and personal liberty under Articles 14, 15, and 21 of the Indian Constitution. In Suchita Srivastava v. Chandigarh Administration (2009) and Devika Biswas v. Union of India (2016), the Supreme Court addressed reproductive autonomy, dignity, reproductive health, and state responsibilities. These decisions provide a rights-based context for women's health and autonomy; they are legal foundations, not empirical evidence that a particular welfare scheme improves mental health.

3. Integrated Psychological Analysis of Welfare Schemes

The schemes considered here address interconnected determinants rather than isolated psychological problems. Cash and maternity-related support may reduce financial threat; SHGs may strengthen self-efficacy and social connection; housing may support safety, dignity, and perceived control; nutrition services may address physical conditions associated with distress; childcare may reduce role overload; and violence-response services may facilitate immediate protection and access to psychosocial support. These pathways can reinforce one another, but their effects depend on the adequacy, accessibility, continuity, and quality of services. The evidence is uneven: JSY has scheme-specific quasi-experimental evidence on maternal depression; SHG studies report psychological empowerment or associations with selected health indicators; and PMUY research reports changes in agency and decision-making, not established reductions in depression or anxiety. For PMAY-G, POSHAN 2.0, PALNA, and several protection services, the psychological rationale is plausible but direct scheme-specific mental-health evidence remains limited in the sources verified here. A psychologically informed policy framework should combine administrative indicators with validated

measures of depression, anxiety, perceived stress, subjective well-being, self-efficacy, autonomy, perceived safety, social support, and quality of life.

4. Major Challenges and Research Priorities

Several gaps may separate scheme availability from psychological benefit.

First, eligibility does not ensure access, and receipt does not guarantee sustained use.

Second, the amount, timing, and reliability of benefits influence whether they reduce financial stress.

Third, household power relations may limit a woman's control over decisions about cash, housing, or fuel.

Fourth, administrative barriers, stigma, unsafe referrals, or disrespectful treatment can undermine trust and help-seeking.

Fifth, service-delivery figures are often easier to report than psychological outcomes, while direct mental-health evidence is limited for many programmes.

Another concern is causal interpretation: improvements in beneficiaries' well-being may reflect differences in income, location, health, family support, or other services rather than the scheme alone.

Future evaluations should use mixed-method and longitudinal designs where feasible, include comparison groups when ethically and methodologically appropriate, and measure both mental-health symptoms and positive well-being.

Validated tools may be selected according to population and purpose—for example, measures of depressive symptoms, anxiety, perceived stress, general well-being, self-efficacy, social support, and perceived safety.

Qualitative interviews can clarify how women experience benefits, whether they control their use, and what barriers remain.

Evaluation should be disaggregated by rural or urban residence, income, age, disability, caste or social disadvantage where ethically appropriate, and exposure to violence.

Trauma-informed confidentiality and referral procedures are especially important when collecting information about violence or mental health.

5. Conclusion

Government welfare schemes can be understood as potential components of the social infrastructure that shapes women's mental health. Their psychological relevance lies not only in the resources or services they provide but also in whether they increase safety, reduce chronic stress, support autonomy, strengthen self-efficacy, and improve access to meaningful social support. The clearest scheme-specific evidence identified in this audit concerns JSY and maternal depressive symptoms. Research on SHGs supports psychological empowerment, while PMUY research reports improvements in women's mobility, financial autonomy, and decision-making power; neither should be overstated as proof of clinical mental-health benefit. Evidence for PMAY-G and several other schemes remains indirect or insufficiently tested in the verified sources. Integrating mental-health indicators into welfare evaluation would help determine which schemes benefit women psychologically, for whom, under what conditions, and through which mechanisms. A gender-responsive welfare system should assess not only how many women receive services, but also whether those services strengthen dignity, agency, safety, and sustainable well-being.

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Impact of Online Learning on Students' Mental Health During and After the Pandemic.

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic forced a sudden global transition from traditional classroom learning to online modes of instruction. This shift created significant academic, social, and psychological challenges for students. This study examines the impact of online learning on students' mental health during the pandemic and the sustained effects in the post-pandemic period. Using a quantitative research design, data were collected from students across various educational levels through standardized mental health and stress-assessment scales. Findings indicate heightened anxiety, stress, screen fatigue, and feelings of isolation during the pandemic, with moderate improvements afterward, although issues such as reduced motivation and digital burnout persist. The study highlights the need for integrating mental health support and balanced digital-learning strategies in future educational systems.

Keywords: Online learning, mental health, pandemic, stress, anxiety, digital fatigue, student

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted educational systems worldwide, transforming face-to-face teaching into online instruction almost overnight. While online learning offered continuity, it also introduced challenges related to accessibility, workload, social isolation, and mental well-being. Students experienced drastic changes in routine, uncertainty, and increased digital dependency, all of which had psychological consequences. Even after the pandemic, online or hybrid learning models remained common, making it important to understand both immediate and long-term mental health impacts. This study explores how online learning influenced students' mental health during the pandemic and how these effects have evolved in the post-pandemic era.

Objective

1. To assess the psychological impact of online learning on students during the pandemic.
2. To examine changes in students' mental health after returning to blended or offline learning environments.
3. To identify specific stressors associated with online learning.
4. To explore coping strategies and institutional support systems influencing student well-being.

Hypotheses

H1: Students experienced significantly higher levels of stress and anxiety during online learning in the pandemic compared to the post-pandemic period.

H2: Excessive screen time during online learning had a negative correlation with students' mental well-being.

H3: Students with better institutional support systems report lower psychological distress.

H4: There is a significant difference in mental health outcomes across different academic levels (school, undergraduate, postgraduate).

Review of Literature

Sharma, (2021); Nguyen, (2020) report increased anxiety, loneliness, and academic pressure during the shift to online learning.

Anderson (2021), Excessive screen time has been linked to headaches, sleep issues, and reduced concentration.

Li & Wang, (2020)Lack of social interaction and sudden lifestyle changes contributed to emotional exhaustion. Post-pandemic analyses show partial recovery but sustained impacts such as burnout and reduced.

Methodology

Sample : A total of 200 students from high school, undergraduate, and postgraduate levels. Sample selected through stratified random sampling to include various educational stages and backgrounds.

Research Design: Quantitative descriptive design, supplemented by comparative analysis (during vs. after pandemic).

Scale Used

1. DASS-21 (Depression, Anxiety, Stress Scale)
2. Perceived Stress Scale (PSS)
3. A self-developed questionnaire assessing:
   - Screen time
   - Academic workload
   - Online learning satisfaction
   - Institutional support

Data Collection

- Online survey distributed through Google Forms.
- Data collected over a period of one month.
- Ethical guidelines maintained with informed consent and confidentiality.
- Data Analysis Based on Hypotheses and Objectives

Statistics

- Descriptive statistics (mean, SD) used to assess stress and anxiety levels.
- Correlation analysis used to examine relationships between screen time and mental health scores.

Analysis of Data

Table1: Comparison of stress and anxiety levels before and during the pandemic

Period	Mean	Sd	Correlation	Significance
Before Pandemic	2.78	0.73	0.58	($p < 0.01$)
During Pandemic	3.61	0.84		

Above the table shown mean stress and anxiety score increased from 2.78 before the pandemic to 3.61 during the pandemic, indicating a noticeable rise in psychological distress among students. The standard deviation values show moderate variability in students' responses in both periods.The correlation analysis revealed a moderate to strong positive correlation ($r = 0.58$) between stress and anxiety levels before and during the pandemic, suggesting that students who experienced higher stress earlier were more likely to report elevated stress during the pandemic as well.

Table2: Descriptive statistics of screen time, stress and fatigue

Variable	Mean	Sd	Correlation	Significance
Screen Time Stress	3.56	0.83	0.68	($p < 0.01$)
Screen Time Fatigue	3.64	0.84		

Above the table given mean daily screen time of 7.35 hours indicates prolonged exposure to digital devices due to online learning. Mean scores for stress (3.56) and fatigue (3.64) suggest moderate to high relationships between screen time and stress ($r = 0.62$) and between screen time and fatigue ($r = 0.59$). Stress and fatigue are also strongly correlated ($r = 0.68$).

Explanation

The findings demonstrate that the pandemic period—characterized by a sudden shift to online learning, social isolation, academic uncertainty, and reduced peer interaction—significantly increased stress and anxiety among students. While students with pre-existing stress remained vulnerable, overall psychological distress intensified during the pandemic, highlighting the mental health impact

of prolonged online education. The results indicate that increased screen time during online learning is associated with higher stress and fatigue levels among students. Extended online classes, continuous assignments, reduced physical activity, and digital eye strain likely contributed to mental exhaustion and tiredness. These findings highlight the negative mental health impact of excessive screen exposure during and after the pandemic.

Conclusion

Based on the findings from the two tables, screen time among the 200 students was relatively high, with an average of more than seven hours per day. The mean scores for stress and fatigue indicate moderate to high levels of psychological and physical strain during the period of online learning. The correlation analysis revealed strong positive relationships between screen time and stress, as well as between screen time and fatigue. This indicates that students who spent more time on screens experienced higher levels of stress and tiredness. Additionally, the strong correlation between stress and fatigue suggests that these two conditions often occurred together. Overall, the results demonstrate that excessive screen time associated with online learning had a negative impact on students' mental health. These findings highlight the importance of limiting prolonged screen exposure, encouraging regular breaks, and adopting supportive online learning strategies to reduce stress and fatigue among students.

Implications of the Study

1. Educational institutions should incorporate mental health support systems, including counseling and wellness programs.
2. Curriculum designers should focus on balanced workloads and screen-time management.
3. Hybrid learning must include interactive and engaging components to reduce isolation.
4. Policymakers should ensure equitable digital access and support for vulnerable groups.

Further Studies

1. Longitudinal studies to track long-term effects of digital learning.
2. Comparative studies between urban and rural students.
3. Studies on the role of parental support and socio-economic factors.
4. Qualitative research to explore deeper psychological experiences.

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Existential Crisis and Human Dignity in Ernest Hemingway's Fictions

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Abstract

Within the dimensions of war, alienation and existential crisis we find a wonderful expression in the fictional works of Ernest Hemingway. Rooted in the American literary humanism, Hemingway's thoughts rely upon the deterministic currents of modern despair, a tradition that advocates for agency, autonomy and moral action. Widely recognized for elaborative and distinctive prose style, Hemingway very successfully diagonised the complexities of human existence and suffering engulfed in war, death, love, courage, anguish, disillusionment, existential crisis and alienation. Hemingway's own personal experiences as a journalist and war correspondent contributed significantly to his treatment of conflict and also his fictions challenge the romanticized war representations exposing the physical destruction and psychological consequences.

Key Words: War, alienation, disillusionment, existential crisis, suffering, death

Hemingway is one of the finest contemporary novelists whose characters are shaped within the matrix of war, trauma and moral ambiguousness alongwith the ethical actions and uncertainities. Following ethical doctrine and social convention his characters suffer from a deep sense of disillusionment and act with courage, honesty and care even in the absence of any validation. They are neither saints nor prophets but a common man and woman, wounded and betrayed, searching for meaning out of chaos.

His novels such as*, The Sun Also Rises, A Farewell to Arms, For Whom the Bell Tolls* and *The old Man and the Sea* are not stories or chronicles of war and despair but meditations with many folds which reflect integrity, death with awareness and to live without any illusion. Hemingway advances an ethical ground rooted in practical wisdom and allows his protagonists to sustain a tragic nobility at the time when traditional or conventional morality collapses. His characters find struggle in order to preserve personal honor and dignity into the world. Hemingway's works are the representations of his interest in relationship between suffering and dignity, often presented through maintaining integrity, courage and disciplined action.

Hemingway's narratives are inseparable from their historical journey, the post- world war I, fragmented belief, rise of secular temperament and the decline of the Victorian moralities. His novels are not consolation but declaration of moral integrity reflecting the psychological and moral outcomes in the fragility of human relationships resulted because of war. The characters not only experience physical pain and emotional disappointment but also suffer from the existential anxiety.

'Lost Generation', a term coined by the American author and critic Gertrude Stein and popularized by Ernest Hemingway, in the epigraph of *The Sun Also Rises*, referring to the generation disillusioned and betrayed by war, found voice in Hemingway's novels where ethical values are deeply rooted in finite human acts without any divine or ideological command. Judith Butler writes in *Giving an Account of Onself*,

"*The question of ethics emerges precisely at the limits of our schemes of intelligibility, the site where we ask ourselves what it might mean to continue in a dialogue where no common ground can be assumed…'' (p.21).*

Despite rejecting morality, his characters live with clarity and act with intention even if they fail. At the time of institutional failure and ethical collapse his characters act with courage, love with

honesty and suffer with dignity along with refusal to surrender completely in grief and despair. Harold Bloom writes,

"The typical character faces defeat or death. But out of defeat the character usually manages to salvage something… they have maintained, even in the practical defeat, an ideal of themselves… The discipline, the form, is never quite capable of subduing the world, but fidelity to it is part of the gallantry of defeat" (p.29).

Several feminists and post-colonial scholars have aptly questioned Hemingway's vision of moral autonomy. His female characters are emotional and self-sacrificing. Brett Ashley who opposes her traditional roles in order to assert her personal autonomy in the prevailing patriarchal setting. His characters are often associated with drinking, sexual relationships and killing in war, yet never judged traditionally but in terms of authenticity, respect and consequence. Harold Bloom writes,

"his antidote, paradoxically, is almost entirely moral. Despite Hemingway's preoccupation with physical contests, his heroes are almost always defeated physically, nervously, practically: their victories are moral ones" (p.22).

Struggle, sacrifice and moral triumph

A deeper and layered sacrifice emerged in *The Old Man and the Sea*, where Santiago, an ageing Cuban fisherman as a powerful articulation of perseverance who endures sacrifice through death, and the exhaustion of his physical strength in pursuit of the marlin. After being empty handed without catching a fish, Santiago voyages far into the sea and finally hooks a giant fish, the marlin. His experience and struggle with the marlin are tests of his physical strength and mental determination. Santiago's physical suffering transforms into an ethical achievement. His physical tormentations and awakened nights challenge narrow conventions of heroism and valor. His achievements are rooted in suffering and sacrifice, embodying ethical achievement. He is a fine example of courage, patience, pride and unshakable determination despite several difficulties. His experience is very famously represented in his statement that, *"But man is not made for defeat. A man can be destroyed but not defeated" (p. 38).*

This principle is central in Hemingway's literature where physical defeat is not primarily implied the destruction of personal dignity.

The reward for human struggle, suffering and sacrifice finds purpose and meaning in vulnerability rather than victory over it. Santiago suffers not because he is not assured of any kind of reward but forces himself as an individual to embrace the finite with all dignity and courage. Hemingway embeds struggle and suffering through symbolic depth into nature. Santiago's confrontation with the huge and vast sea and the marlin symbolizes the vastness of existence. His struggle with natural forces is not for any conquest but for dignity. Here natural forces symbolize both good and evil, successfully binds mankind to the rhythms of nature. The struggle finds dignity against nature's resilience. "*Although it is unjust, he thought. But I will show him what a man can do and what a man endures" (p. 24).*

Love under the backdrop of death is an interrogation about memory and legacy. Hemingway blends love and death into a mutual acceptance, giving love a meaningful existence where the end is tragic and inevitable. Hemingway frames violence within human reach, for Santiago, redemption finds space not in one's destruction but in love and suffering.

"Fish, he said, I love you and respect you very much. But I will kill you dead before this day ends" (p.19).

Santiago's struggle not only symbolizes a physical contest with a fish but also reflects an enactment of human endurance. The marlin is not an enemy to be conquered but a noble companion in struggle, symbolizing life's worth and effort. Santiago's confrontation with the marlin transforms violence into a symbolic ceremony and a universal ritual. Here he also transforms from a fisherman into a symbolic contributor in the universal ritual. His struggle and confrontation turned into a symbolic act of dignity against death. Harold Bloom observes,

"Despite believing that it is unjust' and that he is doing it to show the marlin 'what a man can do and what a man endures' (66), despite feeling that 'there is no one worthy of eating him from the manner of his behavior and his great dignity' (75), the old man proceeds to kill the marlin anyway" (p. 218).

Santiago has a sense of responsibility for the marlin as a worthy opponent. His sense of admiration as well as determination to survive against the odds is a demonstration of conflicts in between human beings and the natural world. The novel also explores the conflict of external achievement with the inner worth. Santiago's returning back without the marlin is endurance that reveals his qualities that cannot be measured through any material success. His physical strength is a demonstration of dignity that doesn't rely upon strength, wealth, age or any social recognition.

Disillusionment and 'Lost Generation'

Followed by Hemingway's *In Our Times* (1925), an experimental novel in fragments, later published under the title *Fiesta* in London. The novel very beautifully represents the cultural disillusionment followed by the first World War, causing destruction, scattered traditional morals, beliefs and progress. To represent this generation Gertrude Stein coined the term 'Lost Generation', that refers to the disillusioned, aimless, alienated young people of the post war generation. The term was popularized by Hemingway in the novel *The Sun Also Rises*, that deals with the representation of the American expatriates who moved to Europe in order to escape from the materialistic, emotionally and morally dry American culture. The survivors of the war turned into heavy drinking and artistic experimentation.

Apart from Gertrude Stein and Ernest Hemingway writers like F. Scott Fitzgerald and T.S. Eliot have explored and presented before us the moral decay, hallowness, cultural and spiritual decay of the early twentieth century. Fitzgerald in *The Great Gatsby* questions the hallow materialism of the roaring twenties and T. S. Eliot in *The Waste Land* (1922) deals with the dead and fragmented culture far away from the spiritual awakening. Hemingway in *The Sun Also Rises* along with the cultural disillusionment also depicts the loss of traditional values that manifests in hopelessness. Love is one of the important themes of his novels in which his characters seek for emotional connect but fail to overcome from loneliness, insecurity and trauma caused because of their past experiences. Therefore, it can be said that Hemingway's treatment of love not provides an easy romantic experience but intimacy, courage and a temporary meaning that do not guarantee any happiness or protection from the loss and destruction.

Jake Barnes and Ashley Brett are having war experiences, witnessed the event and the loss of desire and ideal. This lost generation lived without purpose, accomplishment and disappointment, not to resolve but to require fear through sufferings. Their relationship is an illustration of difficulties in achieving emotional desire and its fulfilment in a fragmented environment. Their relationship is an example of disillusionment of the post-war generation seeking pleasure and companionship as a solution to their problems. Their relationship is a testament of difficulties of attraction for each other making it complicated because of Jake's injury and Brett's relationship with men making them unable

to live in a stable relationship. *"Jakes moral strength is found in what he chooses not to say, not to do, and not to claim" (p.65).*

Hemingway brings emotions through Jake Barnes and his war injuries waiting for death but becomes important and symbolizes the manifestation of desire turning into a lifelong yearing. The fierce battle between the life and death in Jake Barne's life resulted in his impotency that denied to be fulfilled. Here, Jakes exposes the futility of attempts in order to escape from emptiness. He says, "*You can't get away from yourself by moving from one place to another" (p.19).*

Brett Ashley, full of passion and freedom expresses her rebellious attitude against the conventions and reveals her own inner suffering, yet seems to be dependent outwardly. She tells Jake, "*Oh, darling I've been so miserable" (p.32).* She is free without being stable and finally leads to loneliness. Her emotions were not limited by the cultures but turned into the symbol of resistance and tragic futility. Her independence was challenged and the sexual death in the novel symbolizes the lack of sexual intimacy in the failed relationship leaving the characters in disillusionment. Their relationship is replaced by companionship in which longing and deprivation of the sexual fulfillment turns into a tragic experience and love exists only in pieces. Jake ironically remarks to Brett, *"Isn't it pretty to think so?" (p.251)*. Here Jake's remark is emotional and personal, exposing the incomplete structure. They seek meaning through external experience employing a metaphor of weakness rather than of opportunity. Jake observes, *"Nobody ever lives their life all the way up except bullfighters" (p.123).*

Brett Ashley in the story is constantly in search of passion but runs away from its real meaning. She declares herself autonomous on various occasions but she is not satisfied. Through her, Hemingway represents the gendered aspect as tragic, yet, her liberty becomes futile and her dependence lies under patriarchy. Here, Hemingway reminds us about the universality of morality. The novel is not the lack of desire but the lack of fulfilment of desire, hence seems tragic. Hemingway expresses the influence of morality in human lives while romanticizing futility and deprivation lead to suffering and disillusionment. The characters feel disconnected with the reality and turns into excessive alcohol consumption carrying barren relationships deprived of direction and consistency. Jakes says, "*It is awfully easy to be hard-boiled about everything in the daytime, but at night it is another thing" (p.42).*

Catherine Barkley and Brett Ashley emphasis on their gender that either survived in shadow or silenced. Catherine faces death with courage and says, "*I'm not afraid. I just hate it*" (p.296). On the other hand, Brett Ashley also criticized for being alone. Here the denial of the sufferings of women reveals the patriarchal restrictions imposed upon them and made them a silent subject in the tragic structures. Within the dimensions of morality, the novel has tried to create an image of resilience after loss without any cure, bringing tragedy into the life as an inevitable frontier of passiveness.

Several critics highlighted out that women's suffering in Hemingway's novels are silenced. Catherine's calmness while facing death and Brett's longing for freedom sake, patriarchal set-ups making tragic ethics more complicated. Even when these female characters are silent, they resonate. Albert Camus in *The Myth of Sisyphus* writes, "*There is no fate that cannot be surmounted by scorn" (p.37).* Catherine's final voice is muted in Frederic's silence and Brett's loneliness is seen as moral weakness. Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar argue that, *"female figures in patriarchal narratives often embody survival only through erasure or condemnation*" (p. 111).

Hemingway's survivals are the generational witness reflecting institutional breakdown resulting in individual's disillusionment beyond grief emerged after the World War I. William James writes,

"*the worth of ideas lies in their practical consequences*" (p.95). Jake's devotion to the bullfight is for survival through rituals and admiration for those who "*live life all the way up" (p.123).*

Hence, endurance here is not only moral but also leads to triumph and terrifies to loss. Peter Hays observes that, Hemingway- "*denied consolation, making survival itself the form of meaning" (p.126).*

Occupying a central position in the American literature of twentieth century, Hemingway, very economical in the usage of language presents before us themes such as life and death, love and war, courage and sufferings, loneliness and mortality that are psychologically very intense. These traits can be traced back in his characters who witness death not as an abstract idea or phenomena rather an unavoidable reality. His understanding of death does not bring promise, but a meaning in dignity, courage, sacrifice and responsibility. This attitude referred by critics as Hemingway's "code hero": an individual who suffers and ultimately dies without the loss of personal dignity. Harold Bloom writes, *"The typical characters faces defeat or death. But out of defeat or death the character usually manages to salvage something… they have maintained, even in the practical defeat and ideal of themselves… The discipline, the form, is never quite capable of subduing the world, but fidelity to it is part of the gallantry of defeat" (p.29).*

The psychological destruction caused of war has resulted in existential crisis and mirrored in fragility. Overall, Hemingway suggests that death is inevitable, though the dignified way of confrontation to it enhances the value of life of an individual.

His characters live in a world that is full of uncertainities and violence. The characters' sufferings are the representations of a generation who tries to find the roots of escape from it through drinking, travelling, bullfighting and romantic relationships. They want pleasure because they experienced sufferings. Jake's suffering in *The Sun Also Rises* is physical which prohibits him from getting into a relationship with Brett, yet his life is now going to suffer from a permanent loss. So, at last, he learns to live with it. His acceptance of reality is one of his important traits as a human being. Therefore, Hemingway's morality lies in the act of refusal to lie, speak and pretend anything falsey.

In *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, Robert Jordan, an American volunteer fights for the Republican cause enters to take part in the dangerous mission to destroy a bridge is an illustration of individual survival and collective responsibility. The novel draws its title from John Donne's idea of meditation on human interdependence. Robert Jordan's ultimate decision to die is not a classical heroic sense but a moral one. His detachment depicts Hemingway's own struggle with ethics lying in between good and evil. Here ethical realism lies not to glorify the war but to honor individual's choice to act even in odds. Robert Jordan's encounter with death is not engulfed in fear and terror but an act of collapse under emotional burden. In Hemingway's literary universe, death is inevitable but finds worth in confronting it with determination.

Robert Jordan's inner conflicts of death and love depict the complexities of life and ethics in times of war. His final sacrifice is not seen as an act of ideology or patriotism, neither seeking any universal truth but loyalty, where an individual's death can affect the entire humanity. Hemingway presents mortality not as a personal experience but reminds us of humanity's vulnerability. The novel presents the complexities of violence and political commitment. The novel explores the moral difficulties faced by the individuals participating for revolutionary causes. Here, Hemingway doesn't represent war as a simple opposition of good and evil but explores the moral ambiguousness of the violence and ideological conflicts at the cost of human lives. Thus, his novels are the representations of the conflicts between the ideals of war and suffering who experienced it. Robert Jordan's

commitment to his mission reflects that one can preserve his moral integrity only through his responsibilities and sacrifices, even the circumstances prohibit him from controlling or affecting its final outcome. Hemingway associates the dignity with the acceptance of suffering than victory over it.

For Hemingway, all fascists and loyalists are the reasons of all sufferings that have erased the line of good and evil in war. This idea echoes through the characters whose lives are on stake not because of the absence of preference but because of demand of human lives for the shake of political ambitions. War turns death not as an individual process as in the past but into a collective process. The novel is primarily set against the backdrop of the Spanish Civil War, in which the deaths of the people remind us its omnipresence The cultural disruption caused of war creates the image of death not as an eventual process but are present in human meaning.

In *A Farewell to Arms*, the experience and background of the first World War gives a tragic examination of love, suffering and morality. Frederic Henry, the protagonist serves in the Italian army as an ambulance officer. He finds an emotional comfort in relationship with Catherine Barkley in the destruction of war. They understand that even their love is not capable enough to protect them from the brutal forces of death and suffering prevailing in this world. The novel challenges the belief that love and happiness are guaranteed along with protecting from the sufferings, disillusionment and existential crisis. Finally, Catherine's death is the limitations of human control. Frederic's experience of devastation is the consequences of not accepting the reality. His confrontation against the reality neither offers him justice nor seeks for any consolation. The struggle in the novel turns out to be taking more explicit political and physical form in soldiers faces the fear, exhaustion of death. Frederic Henry's experiences very craftly reveals the conflict between patriotism and the brutal realities and sufferings of military conflicts shaped in chaos, death, disillusionment often ends in fragility. Hemingway suggests that we cannot overcome our circumstances, yet to confront it is a meaningful expression of these characters. The relationship between Frederic Henry and Catherine Barkley is an apparent refuge from the violences caused of war. They attempt to escape from the public conflict and their personal happiness becomes the subject to the circumstances that are beyond any individual's control. Nature also offers a relief from the destructions of war, though, it doesn't prevent humans from suffering, not even rewards their virtues. Nature not simply provides a background but imposes and demands patience in order to examine human courage and endurance. Therefore, nature plays an important role by dealing with the possibilities and limitations of human beings. Their relationship offers an alternate living world where they make attempts to escape from any public conflict. In the novel, war is seen as a force that not only destroys personal relationships but also exposes the sufferings that an individual goes through.

Hemingway very capably addresses the philosophical discourse of his time while implying posthumanism or ecological philosophy in relation to pragmatism and existentialism. The ecological ethics are represented through the animal images, landscape and environmental ethos. These issues are consistently brought into focus in the twenty-first century through his novels. Hemingway's fictions provide not only lessons but confrontation, no hallucination but a revelation to the readers, enable them to stand up to their circumstances. This attitude of literature uplifts the status of ethical speech which appeals not only to an individual but to the social conditions.

Hemingway through his novels challenges the readers to live their life and die without weakness and euphoria. Significantly his novels ask question which are genuine, moderate and daring. His works have many dimensions such as- histories of war, love and survival along with the praise of life and

death. His works are challenge to a responsible life along with the value of survival in this post-war magnanimous world.

Hence, Hemingway's fictions remind us that human beings cannot be able to overcome from the circumstances that threaten them but their attempt to face those adverse circumstances with courage, dignity and honesty give a meaningful expression to these characters.

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Comparative Assessment of Phytochemical Constituents in *Acacia nilotica* Bark and *Calotropis gigantea* Flowers"

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Abstract

Conventional medicine frequently uses the bioactive compounds included in medicinal plants. This study looks at the phytochemical makeup of extracts from the bark and flowers of two medicinal species: *Acacia nilotica* and *Calotropis gigantean*. Several solvent extracts were prepared and put through qualitative phytochemical screening in order to identify bioactive compounds such as alkaloids, flavonoids, tannins, saponins, and glycosides. The results confirmed the presence of several important phytochemicals that may support antioxidant, antibacterial, and therapeutic properties. The phytochemical analysis of bark extract from *Acacia nilotica* and flower extract from *Calotropis gigantea* is the main focus of this study. This study focuses on the phytochemical examination of floral extract from *Calotropis gigantea* and bark extract from *Acacia nilotica* Before being extracted, plant materials were collected, dried, and crushed using the proper solvents. The extracts were subjected to qualitative phytochemical screening to ascertain the presence of important secondary metabolites. These plants aid in the utilization of phytochemicals. According to the study, both plants may possess pharmacological properties and be useful in the production of natural medications. Further research is required to identify and describe these bioactive compounds.

Introduction:

Traditional medical systems including Ayurveda, Unani, and traditional folk medicine have long used medicinal herbs. They are believed to be a significant source of naturally occurring bioactive substances that may be used to prevent and treat a wide range of illnesses. Phytochemicals are naturally occurring substances found in medicinal plants that are used to treat a variety of illnesses. The phytochemical screen is used as a quality analysis to assess the phytochemicals present in various plant parts and investigate the Ayurvedic system's medicinal usage.

Numerous factors with various modes of action are taken into account, and various herbal extracts have been employed in various countries **(1,2**). The biological chemical system is the reason for this. Alkaloids, tannins, flavonoids, and phenolic compounds are among the most significant chemical active chemicals present in plants. Many natural, indigenous medicinal herbs are used for therapeutic purposes **(3,4).** Phytochemical analysis can identify physiologically active compounds including alkaloids, flavonoids, tannins, saponins, and glycosides that give medicinal plants their therapeutic properties **(5,6).**

The Apocynaceae family includes the well-known medicinal plant Calotropis gigantea. Also known as Crown Flower or Giant Milkweed, it is commonly found in tropical and subtropical parts of Asia and Africa. This plant is native to India's wastelands, roadside ditches, and arid areas. The plant's latex, roots, flowers, and leaves have all been used medicinally in the past. Among other biological actions, these substances exhibit antibacterial, anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, and analgesic properties. Due to these qualities, the plant is frequently used in traditional medicine to treat infections, respiratory conditions, digestive issues, and skin conditions. One well-known medicinal plant in the Fabaceae (Leguminosae) family is *Acacia nilotica* **(7).** Known as the Babul or Gum Arabic tree, it is extensively spread in tropical and subtropical countries, particularly in Africa, India, and the Middle East. The plant is typically found by the sides of roads, in agricultural regions, and in wastelands. It grows on its own in dry and semi-arid areas. Traditional medicine has traditionally made use of *Acacia nilotica* 's bark, leaves, pods, and gum. **(8, 9).**

Tannins and other phenolic chemicals, which have potent antibacterial, antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and astringent qualities, are especially abundant in the bark. The bark extract has historically been used to heal wounds, infections, dental issues, diarrhoea, and dysentery **(10).** The

bioactive components of *Acacia nilotica* are identified through phytochemical analysis of the bark. These substances determine the plant's pharmacological and therapeutic properties. Examining the phytochemical makeup of *Acacia nilotica* bark is crucial to comprehending its medicinal potential and developing novel plant-based drugs. For many years, traditional healthcare systems have heavily relied on medicinal herbs. They contain a variety of bioactive substances that aid in the treatment and prevention of many illnesses. Important secondary metabolites like alkaloids, flavonoids, tannins, saponins, and glycosides that give medicinal plants their therapeutic properties are identified through phytochemical study.

Material And Methods:

Plants Sample collection: the barks of the plant *Acacia nilotica* and flowers of *Calotropis gigantea* were collected from the local area of Districts Vidisha M.P. India. It was authenticated by the botanical department of the institute and a virgin specimen watch reserved in the herbarium record in pest control and Ayurvedic drug research laboratory Vidisha MP from further reference the Barack watch stored under the normal environmental condition and the microscopic characters were studies as per the produce given in WHO guideline **(12)**.

Preparation Of The Plants Extracts:

1. Physicochemical Studies:

The loss of drying, ash value (total ash, acid soluble ash, water soluble ash) **[13]**, extractive value (petroleum ether, benzene, chloroform, ethanol, and water), were determined according to the official methods of Ayurvedic Pharmacopoeia of India **[14]**.

2. Extraction Method

The extraction was performed according to the method given by Harborny **[15]**. The barks (*Acacia nilotica*) and flowers (Calotropis gigantean) of the plant were washed with water, shade dried and ground into powder by using pestle and mortar. The powder of the plant material was extracted in Soxhlet apparatus using different solvents of increasing polarity. The extraction was done for 48 hrs. duration and up to 8 cycles of extraction. The crude extracts were concentrated in a rotavapor below 40 °C. After that, the crude extracts were evaporated on a water both to get dryness. The extracts obtained with solvents were weighed and their percentages were calculated as compared to the initial weight of the plant material to get the extractive values. The extracts were subjected to qualitative phytochemical investigation and thin layer chromatography for the preliminary identification of the phytoconstituents.

3. Total Ash:

About 1.21 gm of the powdered drugs was accurately weighed and taken in a silica crucible, which was previously ignited and weighed. The powdered drug was spread in a fine even layer at the bottom of the tarred crucible. The crucible was kept inside the muffle furnace and the temperature increased to make it dull red hot not exceeding 450°C until free from carbon. The crucible was cooled, kept in desiccators and weighed. The procedure was repeated to obtain the constant weight. Percentage of total ash was calculated with reference to the air-dried drug. The total ash value of the sample was noted.

Results And Discussion:

Table 1: Preliminary phytochemical analysis of *Acacia nilotica* and *Calotropis gigantea*

S no.	Plants Material	Protein	Alkaloids	Flavonoids	Saponins	Carbohydrates
1	*Acacia nilotica*	++	++	++	-	++
2.	*Calotropis gigantea*	--	++	++	+	+

Ash Value: One of the inorganic residues that remain after a drug has burned completely is ash value.Silicate and carbonate were among the pollutants that were found. entire ash, or the entire amount of ash soluble in water, was used to signify acid-insoluble ash.

Table 2: Comparative Ash Values of Bark and Flower Samples

S.No.	Parameters analysed	Plants	Percentage
1	Total Ash	*Acacia nilotica*	24.2%
		Calotropis gigantea	18.8%
2	Water soluble	*Acacia nilotica*	24%
		Calotropis gigantea	32%
3	Acid soluble ash	*Acacia nilotica*	55%
		Calotropis gigantea	25%

Comparative Phytochemical Screening of *Acacia nilotica* and *Calotropis gigantea*

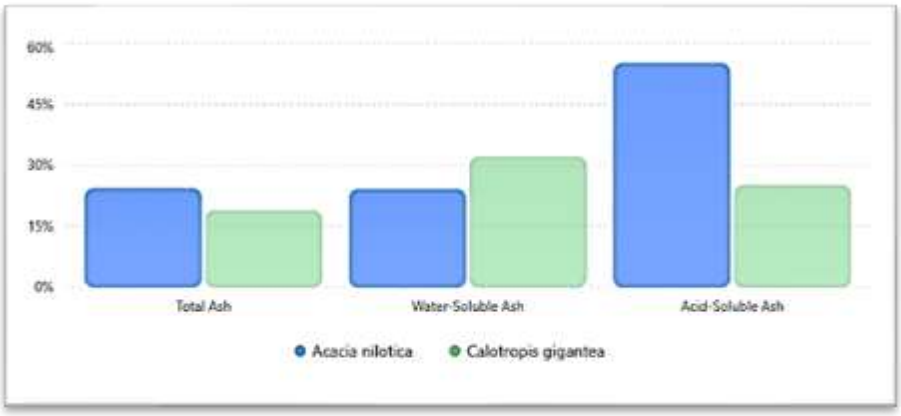


Table 3: Phytochemical Screening of Different Extracts of *Acacia nilotica* and *Calotropis gigantea*

Phytochemical Constitution	Plants	Water extract	Ethanol extract	Petroleum ether extract	Benzene extract	n-hexan extract
Alkaloids	*A. niotica*	+	+	+	+	+
	C. gigantea	+	+	+	+	+
Flavonoids	*A. niotica*	+	+	+	+	+
	C. gigantea	+	+	+	+	+
Steroids	*A. nilotica*	+	+	+	+	+
	C. gigantea	+	+	+	+	+
Carbohydrates	*A. nilotica*	+	+	+	-	+
	C. gigantea	+	+	+	-	+
Protein	*A. nilotica*	-	-	+	-	+
	C. gigantea	-	-	+	-	+

Number of positive (+) reactions observed across five different extracts.

According to a preliminary investigation, the phytochemicals that comprise the medicinal plants used in this study play a variety of significant biological activities. Alkaloids have been shown to have pharmacological actions that include antibacterial **(16),** antiarrhythmic, analgesic **(17),** and antihyperglycemic. Flavonoids have been shown to have strong anti-inflammatory properties **(18),** which can help treat a variety of illnesses. The plant bark and flower extracts of *Calotropis gigantea* and *Acacia nilotica* show a substantial therapeutic effect.

Alkaloids have been linked to its detoxifying properties, and the ethanolic extract contains phenol. The findings show that the plant's therapeutic qualities are caused by a variety of secondary metabolites found in the aqueous floral extract. The findings showed that both plant extracts included a variety of phytochemicals, including alkaloids, flavonoids, tannins, saponins, glycosides, and terpenoids. The antibacterial, antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and medicinal qualities of these bioactive substances are well-known. *Acacia nilotica 's* bark exhibited a high concentration of

phenolic compounds and tannins, but *Calotropis gigantea's* floral extract had notable levels of flavonoids and glycosides.

Discussion:

Numerous bioactive substances, including alkaloids, flavonoids, tannins, saponins, glycosides, and terpenoids, were found in the aqueous flower extract of *Calotropis gigantea* using phytochemical screening. The therapeutic qualities of medicinal plants are known to be significantly influenced by these compounds. The anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties of flavonoids are widely recognized. Tannins have astringent and antibacterial qualities that aid in the treatment of wounds and infections. Alkaloids are physiologically active substances with analgesic and antibacterial properties. Saponins are well known for their antifungal and immune-stimulating qualities. The traditional therapeutic usage of *Calotropis gigantea* to treat a variety of illnesses, including skin infections, respiratory ailments, and inflammatory conditions, is supported by the presence of these phytochemical substances. Similar results have also been documented in previous research, where the presence of these secondary metabolites in the flower extract of *Calotropis gigantea* demonstrated notable biological activity. As a result, the current study's findings validate that *Calotropis gigantea* flower extract is a rich source of phytochemicals and may have significant medical and pharmaceutical uses.

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Algorithmic Personalization, Political Content Exposure and Political Polarization Among Young Instagram Users

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Abstract

This study examines the Impact of Algorithmic Personalisation, Political Exposure and Political Polarization on young people's use of Instagram in India. This research aims at understanding the relationship between algorithmic recommendation system and political information exposure, level of political opinion exposure and level of impact of algorithmic recommendation system on individual's political opinion and polarisation. The qualitative, Descriptive and Analytical research design is Based on the data collected from research articles, review and books from 2021 to 2026. Content Analysis show the impact of algorithmic recommended personalised media, incidental political exposure, selective exposure, opinion leaders, fake news, echo chambers and democratic communication. This research establishes a positive relationship between algorithmic personalisation and exposure to politicised information, with effects varying based on viewer's preferences and engagement modes and on the type of recommended content. According to this content analysis, algorithmic personalisation and exposure to politically sensitive and sensationalised material leads to higher media engagement. Exposure to politically sensitive and sensational material through recommendation system also establish furthered inter-group negativity in content disagreement, along with the impact of leanings on identity discourse. In contrast, experiments find no significant effect of alterations in recommendation system on political thinking and polarisation. This research finds a distinction between ideational and affective polarisation and between effects of media and content. India's factors influencing exposure such as region, multilingualism, social groups, and political interest found to impact on exposed content and thus on media effect, with proposed solution, including media education and journalistic accountability. The study concludes that model of 'Recommendation System---Exposure---Political polarisation' among young person in India needs further research.

Keywords: Algorithmic Personalization, Instagram, Political Content Exposure, Political Polarization, Indian Youth, Digital Political Communication

1. Introduction

As a popular platform, Instagram makes a significant contribution to contemporary political communication, especially due to the platform's favorite photo sharing, short videos, memes, captions, and polls (Bast, 2021). Due to the visual and interaction features, this media is a good object for analysis to understand how political information diffuses among young audiences and how it facilitates political consciousness and involvement (Gupta & Bhardwaj, 2024). In India, the growing trend of digital spaces in political campaigning reflects the dominant style of political communication, audience mobilisation and building image of political personalities (Varughese & Semetko, 2022). A review of Indian political communication research illustrates the strong attracting power of visuality, emotionality and influencer-oriented political discourses.

This involves the differential algorithmic curation that is recommendation algorithms – that will determine what a user is shown based on signals associated with their behaviour, engagement and preferences (Kelm et al., 2023). Curated media environments can influence what political information a user is exposed to, how often they are exposed to it, and the range of different opinions they are exposed to in their normal media consumption (Sonny et al., 2026). But the connection between algorithmic curation and political polarization should be approached with caution, because experiments show that exposure to like-minded political arguments can cause polarization even without evidence that algorithmic curation has a polarizing effect (Kelm et al., 2023). Separate from

ideological polarization, which is variation in political ideas, there is affective polarization, which is hostility or negativity in the evaluation of political opponents (Kubin & von Sikorski, 2021).

Prior Indian research on political awareness through Instagram and political polarization through social media build the foundation for the potential analysis of relationships between digital content exposure and political attitudes (Borah & Singh, 2022; Gupta & Bhardwaj, 2024). Recent research about young Indian voters provides some insights into how network homophily, algorithmic recommendations and, consequently, echo chambers might be associated with political polarization (Sonny et al., 2026). Still, the association between algorithmic personalization, exposure to political content through Instagram's Feed, Explore and Reels, and polarization among Indian young users remains to be studied (Akash & Mochish, 2026; Sonny et al., 2026). This paper thus investigates these questions about exposure, personalization and polarization in the Indian context and considers the multilingual, state and political dimensions of India with the aim of contributing to research about digital journalism, youth political communication and political discussions on digital platforms (Bast, 2021; Varughese & Semetko, 2022).

1.1 Algorithmic Personalisation the Shift in Digital Political Communication

With algorithmic personalisation, there have been profound changes in the information flow: information that is visible and accessible to the public is increasingly determined not only by the logic of interests of mass media actors but also by the browsing behaviour or past behaviour of individual users (Van Bavel et al., 2021; Garz & Szucs, 2023). This explains why platform interfaces rely on digitally ordered algorithms to rank and recommend digital content to users according to relevance and specific platform goals, creating a distinction from traditional broadcasters and editors as entities that decide how information reaches the public in sequence (Knudsen, 2023; Guess et al., 2023a). In this sense, political communication incorporates computational mobilization as well as the dissemination and reception of political messages (González-Bailón et al., 2023; Bouchaud et al., 2023).

Instagram, where photos, Reels, Stories, comments and influencer videos have many different avenues to reach people's media consumption, political ideas can still emerge even if the person does not look for the news (Vermeer & van den Heijkant, 2024; Harff & Schmuck, 2025). One does not have to actively look for news nor actively participate in the political process for ideological content to be suggested to a person, as they could come "by accident" while talking with friends or celebrities or enjoying entertainment (Nanz & Matthes, 2022; Dreston & Neubaum, 2023). Personalization by algorithms is therefore not a predictor of polarization, as experimental research shows that large variations of social media feeds did not produce statistically significant results in participants' political ideologies (Guess et al., 2023a; Liu et al., 2025).

1.2 Source of Political Information and Engagement of Youth in India

Political actors can use Instagram to communicate via visual storytelling, video clips, memes, influencers, or interaction which is easy to access in order to understand difficult topics, especially with young users (Vermeer & van den Heijkant, 2024; Peter & Muth, 2023). These different formats can also provide the basis for political learning and engagement but depend on whether and how the users are willing, interested and willing to interpret and look for more information than the post (Dreston & Neubaum, 2023; Harff & Schmuck, 2025). In particular with young users, influencers are not only a place where one can turn to for political information, but they can also shed light on the "politics industry" through their personal interpretations in role models of perceived expertise and parasocial relationships (Harff & Schmuck, 2025; Peter & Muth, 2023).

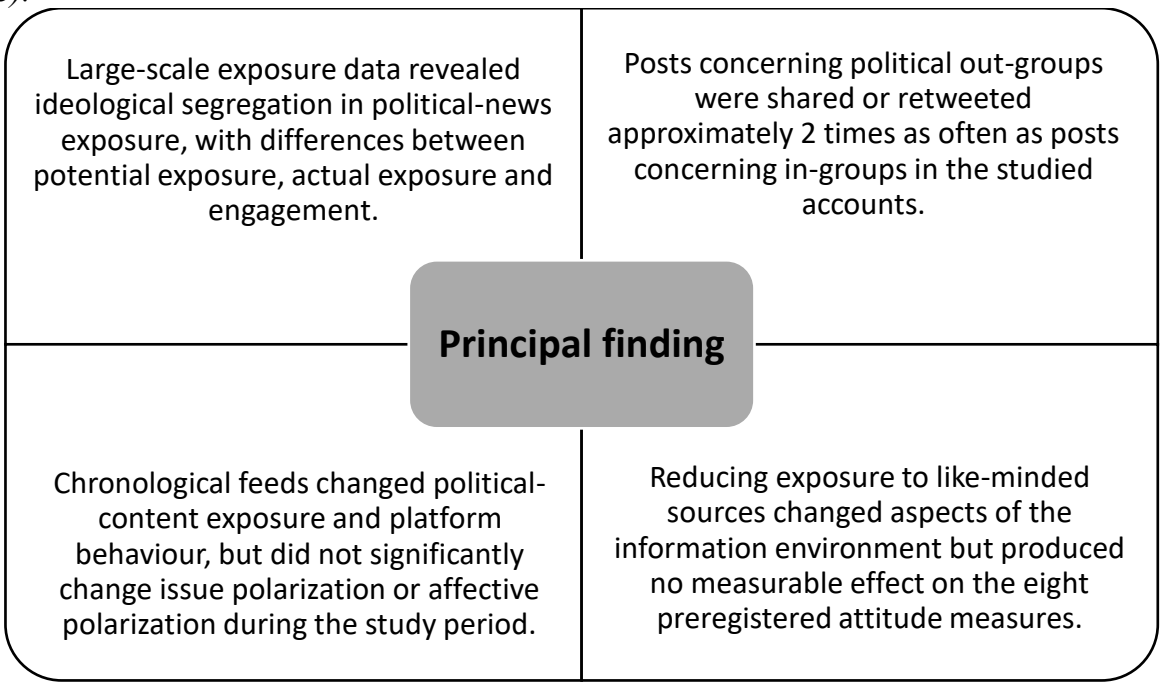
When narrowing down to only the study of Instagram for political communication in India, additional variables such as linguistic competition, regional identities, party-motivation, religious narratives and the digital gap may also be significant (Daxecker et al., 2025; Singh & Goswami, 2025). Already existing literature on election misinformation in India, indicates that negative divisive messages using collective identities of particular in-groups can lead to hostile inter-group relations, therefore, political communication can influence much more than just factual information (Daxecker

et al., 2025). Conclusions drawn on WhatsApp, Facebook or X usage in India, from over studies do not have to be extendable to Instagram, without dedicated platform-based analysis (Daxecker & Prasad, 2025; González-Bailón et al., 2023).

Table 1. Numerical evidence illustrating the scale and potential consequences of algorithmic political communication

Published study	Numerical evidence	Principal finding	Source
González-Bailón et al. (2023)	208 million U.S. Facebook users	Large-scale exposure data revealed ideological segregation in political-news exposure, with differences between potential exposure, actual exposure and engagement.	Science article
Rathje et al. (2021)	2,730,215 social-media posts	Posts concerning political out-groups were shared or retweeted approximately 2 times as often as posts concerning in-groups in the studied accounts.	PNAS article
Guess et al. (2023a)	3-month field experiment	Chronological feeds changed political-content exposure and platform behaviour, but did not significantly change issue polarization or affective polarization during the study period.	Science article
Nyhan et al. (2023)	8 preregistered attitudinal outcomes	Reducing exposure to like-minded sources changed aspects of the information environment but produced no measurable effect on the eight preregistered attitude measures.	Nature article

Sources: González-Bailón et al. (2023), Rathje et al. (2021), Guess et al. (2023a), and Nyhan et al. (2023).



[Figure 1. Numerical evidence illustrating the scale and potential consequences of algorithmic political communication]

1.3. Objectives of the Study

1. To comprehend the influence of personalization algorithms on the visibility of political content within young Instagram users.
2. To investigate the dynamics of political content visibility on Instagram Feed, Explore, and Reels.

3. To explore the effect of like-minded political content exposure on political polarization.
4. To study the effect of selective exposure, political interest, and echo chambers on political attitudes towards other political groups.
5. To research the implications of personalized political communication for the media literacy and political participation of Indian youth.

1.4. Research Questions

1. How does the process of personalization influence the visibility of political content on Instagram Feed, Explore and Reels among young Indians?
2. What kind of political content and opinions do young people consume through Instagram?
3. What is the relationship between the exposure to like-minded political content and the phenomena of political polarization?
4. What is the link between the political interest, selective exposure and echo chambers and the political attitudes of young people towards other political groups?
5. How does the personalization process influence the political awareness, media literacy and democratic participation among Indian youth?

2. Review of Literature

Buçinca et al. (2021): To Trust or to Think: Cognitive Forcing Functions Can Reduce Overreliance on AI in AI-Assisted Decision-Making. In the experiments we have learned critical thinking provides us an antidote to over reliance and this is central to managers' decision making and their wise Trust.

Dwivedi et al. (2021) They investigated a multidisciplinary research agenda for the artificial intelligence of technological change and artificial intelligence ethics and the influence of artificial intelligence on research, practice, and policy. These two articles give an understanding of how to implement artificial intelligence responsibly within the organizational environment.

Raisch and Krakowski (2021) mentioned the automation-augmentation paradox: "Automation and human-AI interaction are iterative, evolving processes and are not adversarial to one another." Managers might consider evaluating the relative value of augmented technology in decision-making through an efficiency lens as opposed to a human powers lens of expertise, interpretation and responsibility.

Hunkenschroer and Luetge (2022) has investigated the ethical issues about AI recruitment and selection through analyzing 51 articles. They have found issues of discrimination, transparency, privacy and responsibility and recommend the applicable implications for HRM of Indian companies. Bankins and Formosa (2023) investigated the ethical issues of artificial intelligence and meaningful work. This post demonstrates how technologies can impact a worker's ability to do meaningful work, independently, professionally and with purpose and discusses a proposed solution that seeks to take a human-centred approach to designing the solution without diminishing one's role and dignity.

Wu et al. (2023) released a review of literature in the field of human-AI collaboration for decision-making through the lens of these theories on affordance actualisation. The key learnings from their review of the article on AI capacity, collaboration and decisions would underpin future research in the area and the application of the technology within organisations.

De Brito Duarte et al. (2023) empirically tested in recommender setting the proposition that decisions involving AI are more justified when the system can be explained. They showed 215 participants that explanations positively affected trust, whereas low system reliability brought about unwarranted trust, especially for users unwilling to rely blindly on explanations.

Martin and Waldman (2023) argued about the legitimacy of algorithmic decisions - that is, both the result of algorithms and the decision-making process itself. The findings of the study found that the implementation of various types of solutions affects perceptions of justice.

Deepthi and Bansal (2024) looked at AI adoption in the banking and financial services industry in India, covering their use today, what room there is for them to expand into, and barriers to adoption.

They provided an interdisciplinary base upon which to develop the solution adoption research for the finance sector, specifically within India.

Leoni et al. (2024) study 52 companies in the world, as in the expert interviews, and show - according to the organisation in some companies - how to more information about the role of artificial intelligence and organisational knowledge. This is a study on the extent to use the AI for what a business organisation does not want to do, about the ways of information and knowledge and organizational capabilities do the same.

From a systematic review and meta-analysis of 106 experimental studies on human-AI collaboration, Vaccaro et al. (2024) conclude that human-AI combinations are not the answer in every situation. Therefore, the specific tasks for which human-AI cooperation works should be targeted in the actual implementation of these solutions at work.

Wang and Ding (2024) study regarding the influence of explainable AI in trust and decision-making success. The authors found that while these results enhanced prediction accuracy, it does not mean that people are likely to trust its results, which should be an essential caveat to keep in mind before this technology is embraced.

2 Zeiser (2024) addressed the issue of responsibility concerning the application of systems with artificial intelligence, especially the attributability gap. The article challenges the fact that those decisions, which have been reached with the aid of such systems, do not align with the values that human agents formally associate with them and proposes that explanations need to be improved to blame managers.

Khanfar et al (2025) arranged a systematic review on 90 prior research articles which examined various impacts of factors concerning the organisation and individual on the odds of using AI. Various triggers of institutional change and the factors that influence employees' attitudes towards change have been proposed in earlier research, which is crucial for the adoption of this technology by Indian businesses.

Cao et al. (2026) investigated manager perception of AI's trustworthiness as a critical barrier to adoption. Cao et al. tested using data from UK managers an association between perception and the use of AI and also found that AI trustworthiness affects AI-perceived impact.

3.4. Dang and Li (2026) studied antecedents and consequences of trust on AI and the culture. Because different aspects of culture may have an impact on how an individual perceives technology, the primary contribution of this research is the other aspects of the culture to the theory that this paper takes into consideration, which are critical for the application of AI into organisations.

An integrative framework of human - artificial intelligence collaboration in organisation: a semi-systematic review This article is interesting to us due to the focus on trust in human - artificial intelligence collaboration, which is critical for the implementation of artificial intelligence in the company.

Miedema et al. (2026) developed a lifecycle of trustworthy AI for decision making, comparing knowledge-driven and data-driven approaches. The findings of the research showed that the aspects of interpretability and trustworthiness are relevant during the whole lifetime of an AI system, not solely at some stages.

Montealegre-López (2026) in a systematic review of 70 articles of trust in decision making with AI, identified different types of trust, i.e., AI Augmented decision vs automated decisions. It provides a working definition and also distills the foundation, characteristics, and implications of trust that is helpful in employing this technology in managers' decision-making processes.

Souza et al (2026) tried an experiment to find out the effect of transparency on the use of AI as a decision maker. The experiment shows that AI matters to managers' attitude of decision-making which is conditioned by the decision-making skill of employees. This factor along with technological characteristics is important for the organization willing to use AI for decision-making.

Research Gap

The examined research currently frames the Human Centered AI context as one wherein a balancing act exists between technological advancement, explainability and managerial accountability. Yet, there is an existing gap between the information collected on the intersection of AI trust, explainability and managerial responsibility on the Indian realm of business decision-making. Most information has been obtained in the global set-up of organizations and cannot reflect the Indian businesses' specific combination of contextual factors - institutional settings, organizational structure, language terrain, digital readiness-different to other environments (Cao et al., 2026; Dang & Li, 2026).

There are studies on trust, transparency, explainability and accountability as separated elements rather than their interpenetration as factors of managers' decision making. While there is much research on risks of relying on AI system and issues of farness of human agency, there is lesser understanding of what mechanisms do Indian managers relied upon to counter the internal bias of AI suggestion and claim for accountability in decision making (Buçinca et al, 2021; Zeiser, 2024). Sector-wise literature on AI use in banking and finance sectoring makes India specific literature sector wise overview, but makes comparatively lesser sector wise observations at organisational levels.

Therefore, it will be worthwhile to further explore the fundamental contributions of XAI regarding, among others: the impact of the how, why, and when of XAI on calibrated trust; the impact of the how and when of managerial AI literacy on the acceptance of AI recommendations; and the impact of the how and when of organizational governance on accountability.

3. Research Methodology

The research methodology of the paper would be qualitative research with descriptive and analytical methodology from secondary sources. Empirical research, reviews, books, book chapters and research articles from 2021 to 2026 on algorithmic personalization, political communication and political polarization. These would be available through scholar database by searching in the keyword that directly relate to the algorithmic personalization, content of political posts on Instagram, young people's political engagement, echo chambers and polarization of content of political content in the Indian context. The article would be selected based on relevance and design of the research. Thematic analysis would be used to find the themes that would relate to question of the role played by algorithmic recommendations in consumption of the political content in the Instagram, and thus, contributing to the phenomenon of political polarization. Existing literature suggests the importance of differentiating between exposure to targeted like-minded content and algorithmic suggestions that are responsible to target like-minded content that may be likely to be polarizing (Kelm et al., 2023). In addition, more recent articles on young voters on social media can also be beneficial to understand Indian context (Sonny et al., 2026).

4. RESULTS

4.1 Algorithmic Personalization and Platform Governance

4.1.1. AI-Based Ranking, Recommendations, and Personalization of Political Content

AI recommendation algorithms, which combine activity, content features and probabilistic relevance, can rank political content in a few ways, depending on the company's ranking algorithm (Knudsen, 2023; Garz & Szucs, 2023). Analyzing data from 208 million Facebook users in the US, González-Bailón et al. (2023) found a high degree of ideological segregation, and large differences between content deemed possibly visible to users and that which they actually view or interact with. But these results do not show that algorithmic ranking is responsible for all differences in political exposure (Robertson et al., 2023; Guess et al., 2023a).

4.1.2. Engagement of Users, Personalization Cues, and Visibility of Politics

Increased user interaction, such as time spent viewing, sharing, commenting, and re-sharing popular content, can further amplify content that taps into the human tendency to define oneself in opposition to others, which is often accompanied by intense emotion (Rathje et al., 2021; Brady et al., 2021). In their observation of 2,730,215 posts from US Congress members and news-media organizations, Rathje et al. (2021) observed that content referring to political rivals was shared or

retweeted close to twice as often as content referring to political allies. While this demonstrates that out-group-based hate can lead to increased engagement, this finding is not relevant for Instagram Reels or Indian youth (Rathje et al., 2021; Harff & Schmuck, 2025).

Political visibility should also be conceived of as a combined effect of rankings and users' agency, rather than just an algorithmic one (Robertson et al., 2023; Knudsen, 2023). Garz and Szucs (2023) have documented how the number of significant political news stories in Facebook news feed increased by an estimated 30%, before returning to previous levels following alterations in Facebook's news-feed algorithm and the flow of news content by media outlets, which shows how logic of ranking affect both what is visible to and hidden from news audiences.

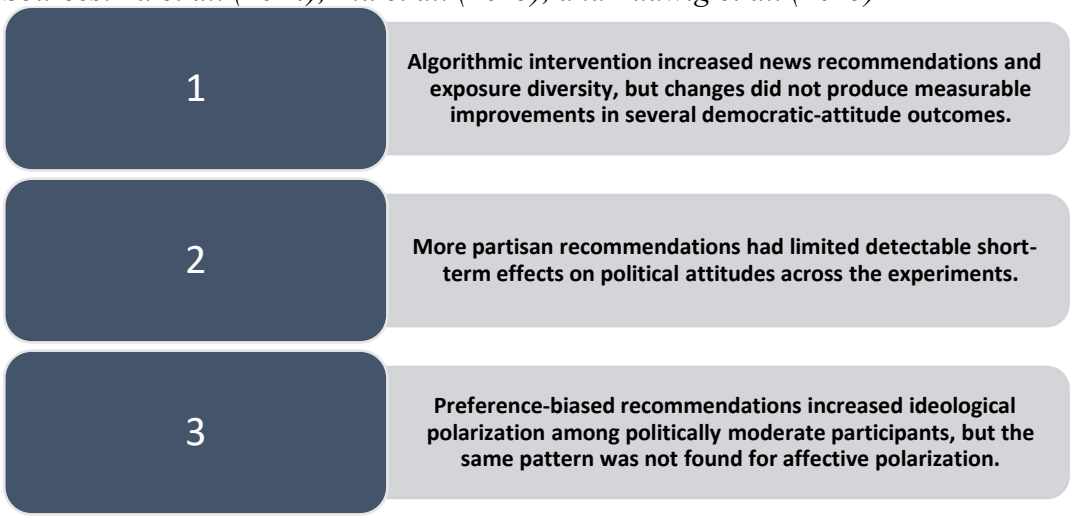
4.1.3. Transparency, Algorithmic Accountability, and Platform Governance

The value of transparency here is that users do not have any way of knowing what aspects of their activity and the recommendations do or do not make certain types of content (Bouchaud et al., 2023; Shin & Zhou, 2024). Bouchaud et al. (2023) crowdsourcing Twitter's recommendation algorithm and found variations in amplification of politically relevant relationships and emotionally-laden topics, suggesting that an analysis of what is actually recommended can be more revealing than subjective assessments of user experience on the platform. For Instagram, algorithmic accountability entails greater transparency around the logic of recommendation curation, including non-AI chronological and depersonalized sorting options, and independent analysis of the extent of political content (Mattis et al., 2024; Guess et al., 2023a).

Table 2. Numerical evidence from algorithmic recommendation studies

Study	Sample or experimental scale	Principal result	Academic source
Yu et al. (2024)	8,600 automated accounts; 2,142 human participants	Algorithmic intervention increased news recommendations and exposure diversity, but changes did not produce measurable improvements in several democratic-attitude outcomes.	PNAS Nexus
Liu et al. (2025)	4 experiments; combined N = 8,883	More partisan recommendations had limited detectable short-term effects on political attitudes across the experiments.	PNAS
Ludwig et al. (2025)	Germany: N = 1,786; United States: N = 1,306	Preference-biased recommendations increased ideological polarization among politically moderate participants, but the same pattern was not found for affective polarization.	Information, Communication & Society

Sources: Yu et al. (2024), Liu et al. (2025), and Ludwig et al. (2025)



[Figure 2. Numerical evidence from algorithmic recommendation studies]

4.2. Display of Political Information to Minors on Instagram

4.2.1. Incidental Exposure – Reels, Explore, Stories, Feed Suggestions

Incidental exposure When people receive political information in the course of watching television shows or other programmes to which they are watching television shows or other programmes for a different reason, such as entertainment or social reasons (Nanz &Matthes, 2022; Lee et al., 2022). Nanz andMatthes (2022) also realized, through their panel studies, that it was necessary to clearly differentiate between scanning versus processing; incidental exposure showed no effect on knowledge while higher levels of processing influence online political participation. They argued that "exposure to political news content is conceptually distinct from attention, understanding, and political consequences" (Nanz &Matthes, 2022 p. 77).

Instagram Stories could be an appropriate angle to analyze youth's knowledge about political news because the effects of a short-formed visual story with a 'hook' were similar to those of a news story (Vermeer &van den Heijkant, 2024). Vermeer &van den Heijkant (2024) concluded that the affective, behavioural and cognitive effects of a story with a link to a news story and the effect of a story with an 'interactive element' did not differ in an experiment conducted among Dutch adolescents (13-18 years old). Participants' interest in politics increased during the experiment; it becomes questionable why we need to separate 'our exposure' and 'our engagement' (Vermeer &van den Heijkant, 2024).

4.2.2. Selective Exposure, Political Information-Seeking and Engagement Patterns

"Selective exposure" was a term more used in the 1950s and it is the ability of audiences to select based on their own choices, ideals and interests which can be much higher with the availability of more than one medium (Knudsen, 2023; Robertson et al., 2023). When doing the data with the search engines' findings, the research found that the polarization of the engagement of the audience was more prevalent than the partisanship that was in the news and this meant that the audience's self-selected options had as much power as the algorithms within the websites (Robertson et al., 2023). When studying what Instagrammers were exploring, researchers need to look at the four layers there: what is available, what audiences look at, and what audiences choose to look at/discuss (Knudsen, 2023; Yu et al., 2024).

4.2.3. Cross-Cutting Exposure, Viewpoint Diversity, and Exposure to Opposing Viewpoints

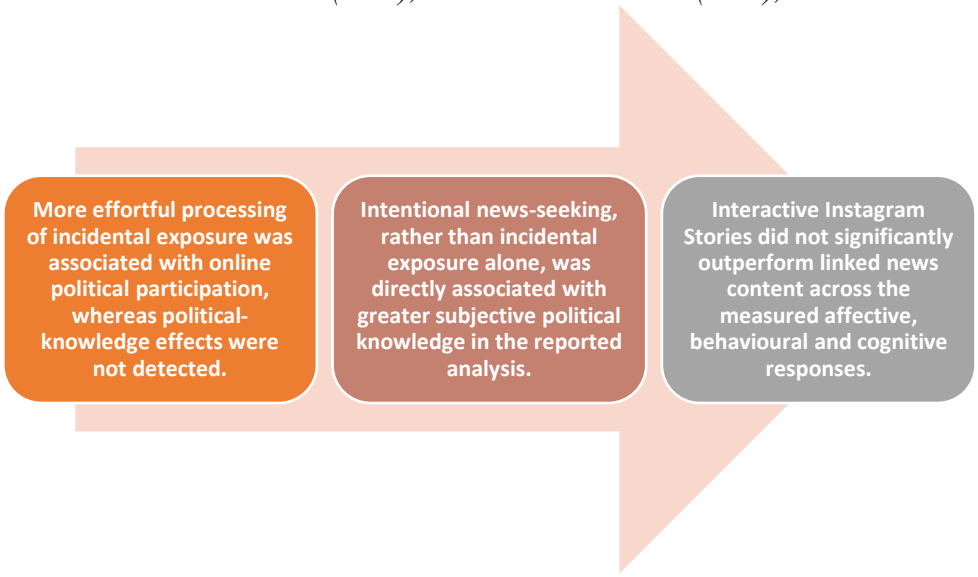
Cross-cutting exposures was that users could access to politically diverse news and users in social media (We can also define the cross-cutting exposure as those exposing users to diverse opinions regarding a political issue. From Mattis et al. (2024) We can know that the recommendations for viewpoint diversity can lead to tolerant attitudes toward op-posing perspectives, and the recommendations for browsing multiple news sources could be designed so as to lead to browsing multiple news sources for users without compromising (individualized) news experience, but the recommendations are based on news diversity. The result of news diversity design can be seen that the effects are to be different due to the design of specific recommenda-tions and the political characteris-tics of users, but not due to exposure to news diversity. (Mattis et al., 2025; Ludwig et al., 2025).

Table 3. Numerical evidence on incidental political exposure

Study	Sample or observation period	Reported result	Source
Nanz and Matthes (2022)	Cross-sectional N = 1,660; three panel samples: N = 450, 524 and 901	More effortful processing of incidental exposure was associated with online political participation, whereas political-knowledge effects were not detected.	Computers in Human Behavior

Dreston and Neubaum (2023)	N = 1,223 social-media users	Intentional news-seeking, rather than incidental exposure alone, was directly associated with greater subjective political knowledge in the reported analysis.	Frontiers in Psychology
Vermeer and van den Heijkant (2024)	N = 149 adolescents; 7 days	Interactive Instagram Stories did not significantly outperform linked news content across the measured affective, behavioural and cognitive responses.	Journalism Studies

Sources: Nanz and Matthes (2022), Dreston and Neubaum (2023), and Vermeer and van den Heijkant (2024)



[Figure 3. Numerical evidence on incidental political exposure]

4.3. The polarization of algorithmically shaped political realities

4.3.1. Ideological Reinforcement, Affective Polarization, and Perceptions of Political Out-Groups

Distinguish between instances of the two types of polarization: ideological (policy) and affective (attack) polarization (Van Bavel et al., 2021; Liu et al., 2025) was found as the second may not translate into harder policies or more extreme policy preferences (Daxecker et al., 2025; Daxecker & Prasad, 2025). In India, it was also observed that those exposed to false information in identity frames showed increased hostility towards other groups, emphasizing the importance of investigating the influence of affect and identity in political communication (Daxecker et al., 2025).

4.3.2. Echo chambers, confirmation bias and the replication of political attitudes

An echo chamber is when people are exposed only or predominantly to community consensus, while a filter bubble is a hypothetical scenario in which information is filtered to limit exposure to outside information (Cinelli et al., 2021; Knudsen, 2023). Filtering of the content even in studies of social media show that social media environment, group homophily and in-group bias towards confirming information did not lead to the prediction that everyone in the same group received the same information, nor that that information led to attitude change (Cinelli et al., 2021; Nyhan et al., 2023). Nyhan et al. (2023) explain that although a large proportion of the Facebook feed was like-minded in the U.S., reducing the sharing of the articles had no effect on eight pre-registered attitude measures.

4.3.3. Political conflicts, animosities between groups and democratic discussion on Instagram

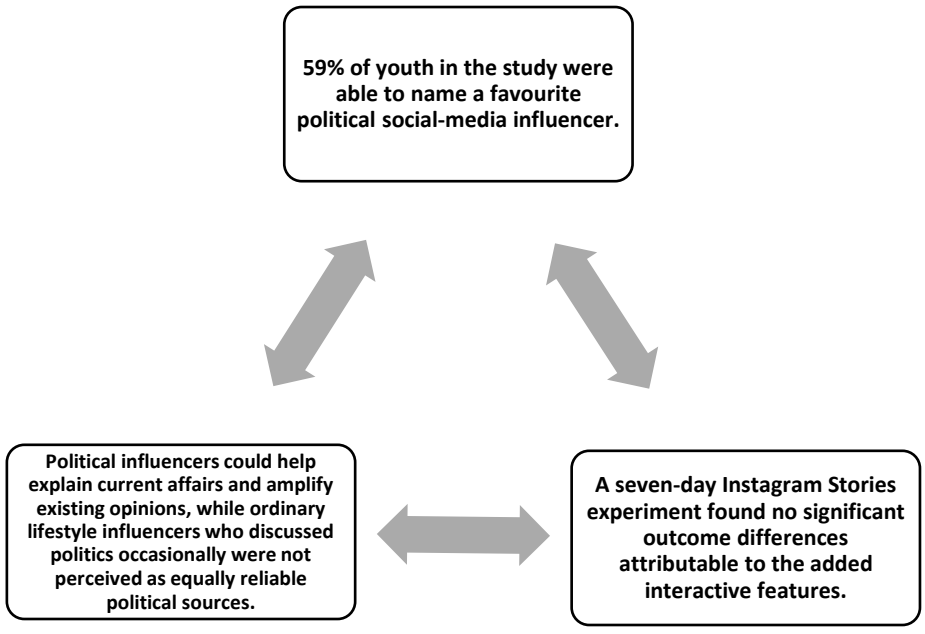
Discussion about politics on digital media can promote political participation of young people if they are provided with quality information, critically discuss with various opinions, and take part in such (Heitz et al., 2022; Alodat et al., 2023). The algorithm filter bubble, on the other hand, stimulates controversial discussion, as it leads to an increased confrontation with a post and consequently to

greater exposure to toxic speech, than with a classic explanatory news article (Rathje et al., 2021; Brady et al., 2021). The political ability of Instagram, therefore, also depends on whether users use it to share and consume political information, the amount of information about an issue, the plurality and amount of relevant information available, the way users contribute to the discussion and elaborate, as well as whether they reconsider their positions (Mattis et al., 2025; Daxecker & Prasad, 2025).

Table 4. Numerical evidence on political influencers and youth exposure

Study	Participants or proportion	Finding	Source
Harff and Schmuck (2025)	Germany: N = 559; Belgium: N = 495; ages 16–22	59% of youth in the study were able to name a favourite political social-media influencer.	The International Journal of Press/Politics
Vermeer and van den Heijkant (2024)	N = 149; 55.7% female; mean age 15.05	A seven-day Instagram Stories experiment found no significant outcome differences attributable to the added interactive features.	Journalism Studies
Peter and Muth (2023)	Qualitative interviews with young people aged 16–22	Political influencers could help explain current affairs and amplify existing opinions, while ordinary lifestyle influencers who discussed politics occasionally were not perceived as equally reliable political sources.	Media and Communication

Sources: Harff and Schmuck (2025), Vermeer and van den Heijkant (2024), and Peter and Muth (2023)



[Figure 4. Numerical evidence on political influencers and youth exposure]

4.4. Indian socio-political and digital media context

4.4.1 Youth in Politics and Platformization of Indian Political Communication

In India, political messaging can come through traditional press, (2) social media, (3) digitally posted campaign messaging, and (4) elite debates from the press (Singh & Goswami, 2025; Siddique et al., 2026). While this type of political messaging can potentially increase youth motivation to turn out in both elections and in related political issues, having political messaging in any of these four ways does not imply that individuals will learn the information in a proper form and remain political (Alodat et al., 2023; Dreston & Neubaum, 2023). A study from the U.S. regarding misinformation in

India suggests the effects of political messaging had to do with whether it was in support of group members and whether group members had prior voting intentions (Daxecker et al., 2025; Daxecker & Prasad, 2025).

4.4.2. Party-Based Narratives, Identity Politics and Regional-Language Political Content

Parties advertise to audiences through short videos, memes, graphs, and personalized content, through a link between the voter and meta representations of relevant identities, policy spaces, personas of political actors, and community representations (Singh & Goswami, 2025; Siddique et al., 2026). With the heterogeneity of Indian languages and community cultures, this opens interesting questions as to how audiences take in and contribute to political content that should be teased out in the Indian case of diversity of exposure (Daxecker et al., 2025; Daxecker & Prasad, 2025). An Indian Instagram voter case study should test whether the respondent is exposed to political accounts, and which parties, identities, languages, and opinions are encountered among the respondent's recommended content (Singh & Goswami, 2025; González-Bailón et al., 2023).

4.4.3. Misinformation, Political Influencers and the Unequal Presence of a Broad Range of Political Views

The perniciousness of misinformation is especially acute when what is being communicated is politically provocative messages activating threat with socially or religiously salient outgroups, when the downstream effects of intergroup attitudes rather than simply the attitude change itself was implemented in this design (Daxecker et al. 2025). One pre-registered vignette experiment in a probability sample of 2,900 West Bengal citizens in India in a face-to-face interview showed that the social identity salient information increased outgroup negativity, even when corrected (Daxecker et al. 2025). This example highlights why it is necessary to investigate the emotions of the effects of political messaging without a "one size fits all" model of the effects of political cues (Daxecker & Prasad, 2025; Van Bavel et al., 2021).

Table 5. Quantitative evidence from Indian political communication studies

Research study	Numerical data	Research significance	Source
Daxecker et al. (2025)	2,900 citizens in West Bengal	A preregistered experiment examined identity-related misinformation and its association with hostile out-group attitudes.	The Journal of Politics
Daxecker et al. (2025)	Approximately 75% treatment; 25% control	The study varied whether intergroup attitudes were measured before or after exposure to a misinformation message.	The Journal of Politics
Singh and Goswami (2025)	120 BJP advertisements and 95 Indian National Congress advertisements; 215 posts in total	Political advertisements published on X during the Haryana Assembly election campaign were examined for narrative and engagement patterns.	Mass Communicator

Sources: Daxecker et al. (2025) and Singh and Goswami (2025)

4.5. Relationships Between Personalized Content, Exposure, and Polarization

4.5.1. The relationship between algorithmic personalization experienced and exposure to political content

Plots of users' perceptions that Instagram recommends the same political opinions, though distinguish between recommendation of the algorithm measured objectively (Knudsen, 2023; Bouchaud et al., 2023). Facebook data on a massive scale suggest ideological segregation is emerging from possible, actual, and active exposure, leading to measurement of all three (González-Bailón et al., 2023). Observational data on Google Search demonstrate that users might have picked more

extreme content than seen, which complicates their accounts of recommendation algorithm motivated polarization (Robertson et al., 2023).

4.5.2. Variety of Exposure, Political Engagement, and Past Ideological Loyalties

It could also be that political interests influence if, what, and how young users to mindlessly consume the political information they receive when scrolling past their feeds or watching videos recommended from them (Nanz & Matthes, 2022; Dreston & Neubaum, 2023). As the experiment further reveal, recommendation systems that set different optimization priorities can also trigger the increases or decreases of selective exposure, which means that personalization may not yet lead to polarization (Knudsen, 2023; Mattis et al., 2024). On the other hand, our findings suggest that what one gets from increasing a diversity in opinion ranks is insignificant to spark the political tolerance and participation (Mattis et al., 2025; Ludwig et al., 2025).

4.5.3. Differences According to Age, Sex, Place of Residence, Use of Instagram and Language

Other variables such as age, sex, political interest, institutional trust, language and regional backgrounds, are also interesting to explore in relation to variations in young users' exposure to political content (Harff & Schmuck, 2025; Daxecker et al., 2025). In their investigation of emerging adults, Harff & Schmuck (2025) and Daxecker et al. (2025) sampled 559 and 495 German and Belgian young people respectively, finding that 59% of the samples were able to state the name of one of their favourite political influencers, and that influenceors differed depending on different participant characteristics. The authors' findings can therefore be used to hypothesise whether and not the same young identity groups are also present among young Instagram users in India (Harff & Schmuck, 2025; Alodat et al., 2023).

Table 6. Comparative evidence on recommendation systems and political polarization

Study	Numerical design	Reported relationship	Source
Wagner (2023)	Experimental sample: N = 433	Allowing selective exposure rather than forcing exposure to a common set of issues increased individual-level agenda diversity in the experiment.	Frontiers in Political Science
Mattis et al. (2025)	715 respondents; 2 × 3 experimental design	Normatively designed news diversity had, at most, very small effects on several outcomes when demographic and attitudinal characteristics were controlled for.	Information, Communication & Society
Ludwig et al. (2025)	Two studies: N = 1,786 and N = 1,306	Preference-biased recommendations increased ideological polarization among moderate users in the tested settings, but results differed for affective polarization and politically extreme participants.	Information, Communication & Society

Sources: Wagner (2023), Mattis et al. (2025), and Ludwig et al. (2025)

4.6. Effects on journalism and democratic communication

4.6.1 The Algorithmic Curation and the Reception of the Political information Available to Young Citizens

Algorithmic curation of content affects not only reach and engagement but also political content fidelity, plurality, and contextuality (Garz & Szucs, 2023; Heitz et al., 2022). In a recent study, which examined the algorithmic amplification of the news, we show the causal impact of an increase in ranking position in a platform's algorithm on relevant political coverage produced and shared by users (Garz & Szucs, 2023). Newsletter reporters on Instagram should include the source and mention authors and platforms: Is the visual story always coherent? Link sources, mention authors, and give credit to originators (Vermeer & van den Heijkant, 2024; Peter & Muth, 2023).

4.6.2. Media Literacy, Algorithmic Awareness and Exposure to Diversity of Political Opinion

Media literacy ought to help young users to differentiate between how generic messages and factual information is presented to them, to notice aggressive and affective frame in the contents, and to evaluate the source's reliability before sharing political information (Peter & Muth, 2023; Daxecker & Prasad, 2025). Since users are aware of algorithmic atworks, they should realize that the contents suggested for sharing do not represent the full range of political and societal contents (Knudsen, 2023; Mattis et al., 2024). Platform design should provide more possibility for searching and filtering; might include more interactive and diverse contents of politics, assuming that exposure to various contents would not lead to attitude change (Yu et al., 2024; Liu et al., 2025).

Table 7. Evidence relevant to journalism quality, exposure diversity and democratic engagement

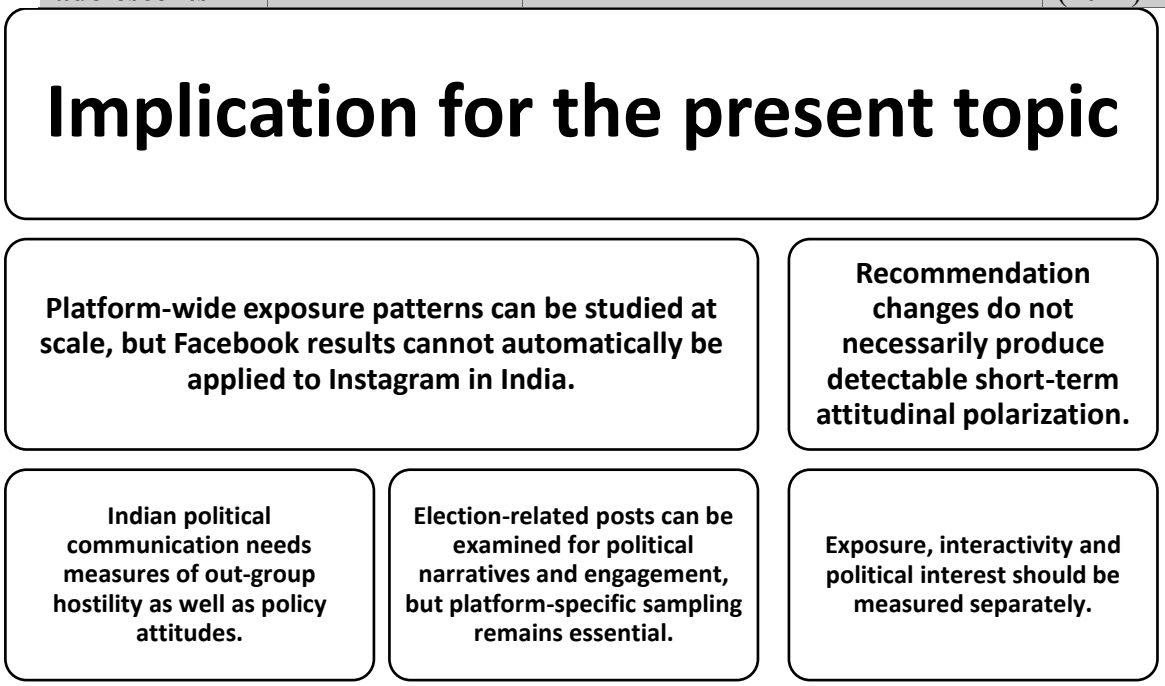
Study	Numerical benchmark	Implication for journalism and democratic communication	Source
Garz and Szucs (2023)	Approximately 30% increase in substantive political news on Facebook in the examined setting	Algorithm changes can influence the supply of substantive political journalism, not merely the content users select.	Information Economics and Policy
Yu et al. (2024)	8,600 automated accounts and 2,142 human users	Carefully designed recommendation interventions increased news exposure and ideological diversity, but did not change several measured democratic attitudes.	PNAS Nexus
Vermeer and van den Heijkant (2024)	149 adolescents; 7-day field experiment	Interactive political-news Stories did not yield significantly different affective, behavioural or cognitive outcomes from the comparison condition.	Journalism Studies

Sources: Garz and Szucs (2023), Yu et al. (2024), and Vermeer and van den Heijkant (2024)

Table 8. Benchmarks for interpreting the proposed Indian Instagram study

Evidence area	Published numerical benchmark	Implication for the present topic	Source
Large-scale algorithmic exposure	208 million Facebook users	Platform-wide exposure patterns can be studied at scale, but Facebook results cannot automatically be applied to Instagram in India.	González-Bailón et al. (2023)
Short-term recommendation effects	4 experiments; N = 8,883	Recommendation changes do not necessarily produce detectable short-term attitudinal polarization.	Liu et al. (2025)
Indian identity-related misinformation	2,900 citizens	Indian political communication needs measures of out-group hostility as well as policy attitudes.	Daxecker et al. (2025)
Indian political advertisements	215 advertisements on X	Election-related posts can be examined for political narratives and engagement, but platform-specific sampling remains essential.	Singh & Goswami (2025)
Instagram news exposure	149 participants over 7 days	Exposure, interactivity and political interest should be measured separately.	Vermeer & van den

among adolescents			Heijkant (2024)



[Figure 5. Benchmarks for interpreting the proposed Indian Instagram study]

5. DISCUSSION

Findings indicated that "the devil is in the data and it's algorithms" – because the algorithms determine whether a political message is displayed, the order it is in and the reach it is given, and the extent to which it has high reach – which all is affected by what users are doing and are interested in (González-Bailón et al., 2023; Robertson et al., 2023). When examining 208 million Facebook users, political-news exposure was where the ideological polarisation was, spanning both actual and potential and end-user and engagement.

Another demonstrated that positive emotional content in politics actually reached and was interacted with more than out-group content. In 2,730,215 social-media posts, data from the accounts they studied suggest that in-group and out-group content were retweeted/shared to a similar degree, but out-group content was retweeted/shared twice as often (Rathje et al., 2021). Whether being in the algorithmic feed causes (or does not cause) more political polarisation is less clear, but use and exposure to platforms changed for three months in a feed-experiment while several political attitudes did not (Guess et al., 2023a).

Incidental political exposure is different from effortful political learning because increased cognitive processing increased political participation on the Internet but not increased political knowledge (Nanz & Matthes, 2022). A different study over seven days using 149 teenagers and Instagram Stories found no differential effect (also interactive functions) between the affective, cognitive and the behavioural outcomes (Vermeer & van den Heijkant, 2024).

The articles discovered demonstrated the importance of political persuaders, social identity and disinformation in young citizens' conceptualization of the political disinformation (Harff & Schmuck, 2025; Daxecker et al., 2025). One of the papers conducted with 2900 West Bengal citizens found that disinformation based on identity created negative emotions toward out groups, justifying the investigation of affective polarization in India.

Research advises to Instagram should be compared, because of involving the younger Indian sex in connection to political-content special needs, language, local, political passion, and views bias (Daxecker et al., 2025; Singh & Goswami, 2025). Results should be recognize to several types of media proficiency as well as features associated with media use, calculation of tips and low degree of

talk across various political info that does not have cause-and-effect correlates of use by young Indian (Yu et al., 2024; Liu et al., 2025).

8. Conclusion

6.1 Key Findings

Impact of algorithmic influence on visibility, political experience, and consumption engagement is associated with political polarization in complex ways, and not always causative (Van Bavel et al., 2021; Knudsen, 2023; Guess et al., 2023a). Instagram's Feed, Reels and Stories, and the Influencer ecosystem, may be critical sites of researching young citizens' political attitudes given how crowded and crowded India's marketplace is (Vermeer & van den Heijkant, 2024; Harff & Schmuck, 2025; Singh & Goswami, 2025). The analysis of Facebook's active use across 208 million adults emphasizes the importance of measuring potential and active exposure and engagement to political news, explicitly (González-Bailón et al., 2023). Short-term 4 experiment with 8,883 participants has small impact on political attitudes, while another 8,600 bots and 2,142 humans experiment shows recommendation-based interventions can push ePUblic exposure and diversity without changing democratic attitudes (Liu et al., 2025; Yu et al., 2024).

Additionally, further studies re-affirm that it is important to distinguish between ideological versus affective polarization, since these elicit different effects of policy disagreement and hostility towards out-group opponents of different political orientations (Ludwig et al., 2025; Van Bavel et al., 2021). For example, when researches analysed the content of 2,730,215 posts published by US news-media accounts and congressmen, the content of out-group member's source-language were shared or retweeted twice as much as the source-language of in-group members (Rathje et al., 2021). Moreover, the former study in 2,900 citizens from India's West Bengal state also observed that the negative attitudes of hostility against out-group members increased with identity-based false news content whereas corrective false news did not neutralise these effects (Daxecker et al., 2025). In conclusion, the results further support studies of the interaction among political identity, emotion and source credibility and framing among content consumers on a more personalised level (Daxecker & Prasad, 2025; Daxecker & Fjelde, 2022).

Engagement with political content via reading does not promote learning, participation or attitude change (Nanz & Matthes, 2022; Robertson et al., 2023). In an experiment with 7 days of Instagram stories (+149 teens), there were no effects for affective, behavioural or cognitive outcomes, but there was a general increase in political interest (Vermeer & van den Heijkant, 2024). The Indian literature should therefore focus on compare feed, explore, reels and stories, passive v active info-gathering, and ideological and affective polarisation among young people (Harff & Schmuck, 2025; Dreston & Neubaum, 2023). Getting rid of misinformation and misjudgement requires not only combatting disinformation but also requiring right journalism and literacy, source checking and transparency, and platform transparency and research transparancy (Heitz et al., 2022; Mattis et al., 2024; Bouchaud et al., 2023; Peter & Muth, 2023). Which and how memes spread on election day, the political efficacy of images and the influence of voter choice attest to the importance of context and interpretation (Memes as Political Commentary, 2025; Siddique et al., 2026). As only one form of communication, personalisation is influenced by platform algorithms, social identities, and user sovereignty, rather than fixed theory that leads to polarisation (Bail, 2022; Eady et al., 2023; Mattis et al., 2025).

6.2 The Significance of the Research

My paper focused on the relationships among algorithmic personalization, engagement with political content and political polarization for the young audiences in India on Instagram, which contributes to the debate over mass communication and journalistic practices by putting into a distinction between exposure to political information, learning about political issues, ideological and affective polarization (Nanz & Matthes, 2022; Van Bavel et al., 2021). In general, the authors found that political influencers, fake news, regional pluralism and social identities could influence political

communication (Daxecker et al., 2025). Hence, this paper could contribute to the community of research working on media literacy, journalistic practices and political polarization in terms of the India Instagram users.

6.3. Recommendations and Future Direction of Research

1. Encouraging media literacy for youngsters on instagram it will be interesting to be able to make them more critical of what they read, watch or publish about politics.
2. In a box below, one could explain the algorithm maybe Instagram could be a little more upfront.
3. Encourage multiple perspectives- users should be able to encounter different perspectives (such as opposing ideas).
4. Help journalism: publish good quality, accurate and timely reports of political news.
5. Counteract false information: create resource to reduce distortions and to stimulate fact-based explanations of political processes.
6. Explore the impact of political exposure & activism by Indian instagrammers: In the study to learn whether exposure differs for people of different regions, languages, genders, ages.
7. Long-term research: Conduct an extensive research project to find out if access to certain types of content may affect changes in a user's viewpoints over an extended period of time.
8. Combination of approaches: Integrate quantitative and qualitative approaches into one research to study the exposure-engagement relationship. For instance, survey a wide range of attitudes and behaviors in a large sample, and conduct interviews and observations on the political content and influence of the Instagrammers (Yu et al., 2024; Daxecker et al., 2025).

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Career Aspirations Among Girls in Semi-Urban Areas of Madhya Pradesh: Opportunities, Challenges and Gender Perspectives

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Abstract

Career aspirations among girls are an important indicator of educational advancement, gender equality, and women's empowerment. Although educational opportunities for girls have expanded in India, their career choices continue to be influenced by family expectations, socio-economic conditions, gender stereotypes, digital literacy, and access to career guidance. Semi-urban areas occupy a distinctive position between rural and urban environments, offering growing educational opportunities while often lacking adequate professional training and employment facilities. This article examines the factors shaping career aspirations among girls in semi-urban areas of Madhya Pradesh. Drawing on secondary literature and policy perspectives, it discusses the influence of family background, educational institutions, economic circumstances, digital access, social norms, and professional role models. The article argues that career aspirations cannot be understood independently of the opportunities available to girls to realise their ambitions. It highlights the need for gender-sensitive career counselling, digital inclusion, financial assistance, vocational education, mentorship, and safe mobility. The article concludes that empowering girls to make informed occupational choices requires coordinated efforts by families, educational institutions, communities, and government agencies.

Keywords: Career aspirations, girls' education, semi-urban areas, Madhya Pradesh, gender equality, career guidance, women's empowerment.

Introduction

Education is an essential instrument of social transformation and economic development. For girls, education creates opportunities for personal growth, financial independence, social mobility, and participation in public life. However, educational attainment does not automatically translate into professional independence. Girls' career aspirations are influenced by the interaction of individual interests, family expectations, social norms, and the availability of educational and employment opportunities.

Career aspirations refer to the occupational goals individuals wish to achieve in the future. These goals may include becoming teachers, doctors, engineers, civil servants, entrepreneurs, researchers, healthcare professionals, or information technology specialists. Such aspirations are shaped by exposure to different professions, perceived abilities, educational experiences, and expectations regarding future life.

Semi-urban areas are particularly important for studying career aspirations because they combine features of rural and urban environments. Small towns and developing settlements may offer better access to schools, colleges, transport, and digital communication than remote villages. However, specialised educational institutions, professional training facilities, internships, and employment opportunities may remain limited.

In Madhya Pradesh, differences in educational infrastructure, household income, social background, and geographical accessibility influence the opportunities available to girls. Although many families increasingly recognise the importance of girls' education, traditional gender expectations and financial limitations may continue to affect occupational choices.

The Annual Status of Education Report 2024 reported that 16.1% of girls aged 15–16 in Madhya Pradesh were not enrolled in school. This finding highlights the importance of educational continuity,

although it does not directly measure career aspirations or isolate semi-urban populations (ASER Centre, 2025).

Against this background, the present article examines the factors influencing career aspirations among girls in semi-urban Madhya Pradesh and identifies measures that could help translate their educational ambitions into meaningful professional opportunities.

Conceptual Understanding and Review of Literature

Career aspirations encompass occupational preferences, educational ambitions, perceived competence, and expectations about future employment. They are influenced by both individual agency and the opportunities available within the surrounding social environment.

Chaturvedi and Sahai (2019), in their study of women's aspirations across three Indian states, highlighted the importance of family attitudes, social expectations, and geographical context in shaping women's future goals. Their research provides a useful perspective for understanding how social environments influence aspirations, although findings from other settings cannot automatically be generalised to all semi-urban areas of Madhya Pradesh.

Agrawal (2015) examined career aspirations among rural and urban girls in relation to vocational education. This line of research highlights the importance of educational pathways that connect students' interests and abilities with employment opportunities.

Research on gender and educational aspirations in Madhya Pradesh also draws attention to the influence of families, teachers, schools, and community expectations. These institutions can either encourage girls to explore diverse professions or reinforce conventional ideas about appropriate occupations for women.

Digital technology has created additional opportunities for accessing career information, online learning, and professional networks. However, the availability of devices and internet connectivity does not necessarily guarantee independent access or digital competence. ASER Centre (2025) highlights continuing differences in digital access and skills among adolescents, reinforcing the importance of digital inclusion in educational planning.

Despite these contributions, more location-specific research is needed to understand how girls in semi-urban Madhya Pradesh perceive professional opportunities, negotiate family expectations, and respond to financial and institutional barriers.

Objectives of the Study

The article has the following objectives:

1. To examine the major factors influencing career aspirations among girls in semi-urban areas of Madhya Pradesh.
2. To understand the influence of family background, education, and socio-economic conditions on occupational choices.
3. To analyse the role of digital literacy, career counselling, and professional role models.
4. To identify the social, economic, and institutional barriers affecting girls' career development.
5. To suggest measures for strengthening career guidance and women's empowerment.

Research Methodology

The article adopts a conceptual and secondary-literature-based approach. It draws upon relevant academic studies, educational reports, and policy perspectives concerning girls' education, gender equality, and career development.

No primary survey or interview data have been collected for this article. Consequently, the discussion identifies relevant themes and potential relationships rather than presenting original empirical findings.

Future empirical research could use a mixed-method approach involving questionnaires and interviews with girls aged 15–24 years studying in selected semi-urban settlements. Variables could include parental education, household income, preferred occupation, digital access, career awareness,

and perceived barriers. Quantitative analysis could identify associations between these variables, while interviews could provide insights into family expectations and individual experiences.

Factors Influencing Career Aspirations

1 Family Background and Parental Attitudes

Family is one of the most influential institutions shaping girls' educational and occupational aspirations. Parents who value education and encourage independent decision-making can help daughters explore professional opportunities beyond conventional gender roles.

Parental education and occupational background may influence awareness of career pathways, entrance examinations, scholarships, and professional qualifications. Families with experience of higher education may be better positioned to guide their daughters through educational transitions.

However, support for education does not always imply support for every career choice. Some parents may prefer occupations perceived as secure, socially respected, or compatible with family responsibilities. Careers requiring relocation, extensive travel, or irregular working hours may encounter resistance.

Therefore, family support should be understood not merely in terms of school attendance but also in relation to subject selection, higher education, occupational choice, and employment decisions.

2 Economic Conditions and Educational Opportunities

Household income significantly influences access to higher education and professional training. Tuition fees, coaching expenses, transport, accommodation, digital devices and examination charges can create financial difficulties for economically disadvantaged families.

Girls may consequently restrict their aspirations to occupations requiring shorter educational pathways or employment available within commuting distance. Some may discontinue education because their families cannot meet the associated costs.

Scholarships, affordable educational institutions, financial assistance and accessible information about government schemes can reduce these barriers.

Importantly, limited financial resources should not be interpreted as limited ambition. Girls may aspire to highly skilled professions but lack the material support necessary to pursue them. Effective policies must therefore address both aspirations and the resources required to realise them.

3 Gender Stereotypes and Social Expectations

Gender stereotypes continue to influence perceptions of occupational suitability. Teaching, nursing, and certain administrative positions may be regarded as acceptable careers for women, while engineering, policing, technology, entrepreneurship, and other occupations may be perceived by some communities as less appropriate.

Such expectations can influence girls' subject choices and confidence before they enter higher education.

However, career preferences vary considerably across families and communities. Choosing a government job because of its stability, for example, may represent a practical and informed decision rather than evidence of restricted ambition.

Career counselling should therefore expand awareness of available opportunities while respecting individual preferences. Girls should be encouraged to evaluate occupations according to their interests, capabilities and informed choices rather than restrictive assumptions about gender.

4 Educational Institutions and Career Counselling

Schools and colleges play a vital role in developing occupational awareness. Teachers can encourage students to identify their interests, understand their abilities and explore educational pathways.

However, inadequate career counselling may leave girls dependent on informal advice from relatives, friends, or social media. This can result in limited awareness of professional courses, vocational qualifications, competitive examinations, and scholarships.

Educational institutions should organise regular career-awareness programmes, aptitude-related guidance, interactions with professionals and workshops on higher education opportunities.

Counselling should cover academic, vocational, technical, professional, and entrepreneurial pathways. Such an approach would enable girls to make informed choices based on their abilities and aspirations.

5 Digital Literacy and Career Awareness

Digital platforms provide access to educational resources, scholarship information, online courses, employment opportunities, and competitive examination materials. Girls who possess digital skills can explore careers beyond their immediate geographical environment.

Nevertheless, access to a household smartphone does not necessarily mean that girls can use it independently for educational purposes. Restrictions on internet use, limited connectivity, and inadequate digital literacy may reduce the benefits of technology.

Schools and colleges can address these inequalities by providing digital learning facilities and training in online research, application procedures, document preparation, and the identification of reliable information.

Digital literacy should be treated as an essential component of career development rather than merely a technical skill.

6 Mobility, Safety, and Professional Role Models

The availability of educational institutions and employment opportunities within a reasonable travelling distance can influence girls' occupational choices. Concerns about transport, personal safety, accommodation and family approval may discourage girls from pursuing education outside their localities.

Affordable transport, safe accommodation, accessible campuses, and appropriate grievance mechanisms can improve access to educational and professional opportunities.

Professional role models are equally important. Interactions with women working as doctors, teachers, civil servants, scientists, entrepreneurs and technology professionals can provide practical information about career pathways.

Mentorship programmes can help girls understand the qualifications, preparation and resources required to pursue different occupations. They can also challenge assumptions that certain professions are unsuitable for women.

7 Marriage Expectations and Social Inequalities

Expectations regarding marriage and family responsibilities may influence girls' educational planning and professional ambitions. Where early marriage is anticipated, families may be reluctant to support lengthy educational programmes or employment requiring relocation.

These experiences are not uniform and should be investigated rather than assumed. Supportive family environments and accessible educational opportunities can help girls make informed decisions about education, marriage, and employment.

Career aspirations are also shaped by caste, tribal identity, disability and socio-economic background. Girls from disadvantaged communities may face overlapping barriers involving financial insecurity, discrimination, geographical isolation, and inadequate institutional support.

An inclusive approach must recognise these differences while avoiding stereotypes about particular communities.

Career Aspirations and Women's Empowerment

Career aspirations can strengthen women's empowerment by encouraging educational achievement, independent decision-making, and participation in economic life. Girls who understand the opportunities available to them may be more likely to plan their education and seek professional qualifications.

Nevertheless, aspirations alone cannot guarantee successful career outcomes. A girl may wish to become a civil servant but lack access to appropriate preparation. Another may aspire to entrepreneurship but have limited access to finance, training, or professional networks. The relationship between aspirations and empowerment therefore depends on three essential conditions: personal agency, access to educational and financial resources and supportive social institutions.

Empowerment should also be understood more broadly than entry into paid employment. It includes the freedom to choose a career, access to fair remuneration, opportunities for advancement, and the ability to participate meaningfully in decisions affecting one's future.

Recommendations and Policy Implications

First, schools and colleges should strengthen career counselling and provide accurate information about professional courses, vocational qualifications, scholarships and competitive examinations.

Second, financial assistance should be made accessible to girls from economically disadvantaged households. Institutions should help students understand eligibility requirements and complete scholarship applications.

Third, digital literacy programmes should equip girls with the skills required to identify reliable career information, apply for educational opportunities and participate in online learning.

Fourth, mentorship programmes should connect girls with women professionals, alumni, and trained career counsellors. Career fairs, workplace visits and professional interactions can broaden occupational awareness.

Fifth, local authorities should address barriers involving transport, accommodation, accessibility, and safety. These interventions should enable girls to pursue educational and employment opportunities rather than restrict their mobility.

Sixth, vocational education should be linked with credible labour-market information and opportunities for further learning. Girls should have access to technical, digital, entrepreneurial and professional training without being channelled into gender-stereotyped occupations.

Finally, government agencies and educational institutions should monitor outcomes beyond enrolment. Indicators such as educational continuation, career awareness, scholarship participation, vocational training and employment outcomes can provide a more comprehensive understanding of girls' opportunities.

Conclusion

Career aspirations among girls in semi-urban areas of Madhya Pradesh are shaped by the interaction of family expectations, economic circumstances, educational opportunities, gender norms, digital literacy, and access to employment. Although semi-urban settlements may offer greater educational access than remote rural locations, girls can continue to encounter financial constraints, inadequate career guidance, restricted mobility, and limited exposure to professional role models.

The central challenge is not simply to encourage girls to develop ambitious goals but to create conditions that enable them to pursue those goals. Accessible career counselling, financial support, digital inclusion, mentorship, vocational education, and safe mobility can help bridge the gap between aspiration and achievement. A gender-responsive approach should recognise girls as active decision-makers and ensure that their educational and occupational choices are guided by their interests and capabilities rather than restrictive social expectations. Ultimately, strengthening career aspirations among girls is essential to inclusive development and gender equality. For Madhya Pradesh, locally grounded research and coordinated policy interventions can help educational institutions and communities create an environment in which girls can pursue diverse professional futures with confidence, dignity and independence.

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Social Justice and Women in India: An Overview

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Abstract

The notion of justice is most commonly associated with an underlying assumption that justice equates to equal rights, access, and fair treatment in the legal system. The concept of social justice is the necessary implication of welfare state. The scheme of social Justice is very well incorporated in the various provisions of the Indian Constitution. The Preamble of the Constitution includes the terms like Socialist, Social and Economic Justice, Equality etc., which specify that the state would extensively involve in social welfare of people and would try to establish an egalitarian society. Moreover a distinct chapter of Directive Principles of State Policy has been dedicated towards the welfare responsibilities of the government, which lays down the norms of ideal governance for people's welfare. Various fundamental rights and its subsequent amendments also intended to ensure social justice to the disadvantaged citizens.

Keywords: Justice, welfare, disadvantaged citizens

Introduction

The concept of freedom, justice and equality are always appreciated and accepted by the people. We are interested in the ushering of a Just society, a society that maintains a balance between the competing claims of unequal persons. Since absolute equality and equal distribution of resources is neither possible nor feasible, we want a society where developmental opportunities are distributed in an equitable and justifiable manner. It should be a discrimination free society in the oppressed and the exploited and disposed and disadvantaged sections of society are not sidelined in sharing the benefits of the development. The country's notion of social Justice Stand in strict conformity with constitutional proclaims regarding the nations resolve to secure to the citizens. Social, economic and political justice and equality of status and opportunity.

The Constitution of India has solemnly promised all its citizens judges-social, economic and political, freedom of expression, belief, faith and worship, equality of status and opportunity and to promote in all the fraternity by affirming the dignity of the individual and the unity of the nation. The Constitution has attempted to reconcile the apparently contradictory claims of economic and social justice with individual rights and fundamental freedoms by laying down certain consistent provisions.

Meaning of social justice

The term Social-Justice consist by two words: one is social and second is justice The term social is concern with all human beings who lives in society and term justice is related with liberty, equality and rights. Thus social justice is concerned with to ensure liberty, provide equality and maintains individual rights to every human being of society. In other words, to securing the highest possible development of the capabilities of all members of the society may be called social justice. But, the terms 'social justice' is very much elusive cannot capture empirically. In this sense the core value of Ambedkar concept of justice is human equality, equal distribution of welfare materials and discrimination less society.

Social justice means availability of equal social opportunities for the development of personality to all the people in the society, without any discrimination on the basis of caste, sex or race. No one should be deprived, because of these differences. The issue of social justice is associated with social equality; social equality and social rights are dependent on economic equality and rights. Social justice can be made available only in a social system where the exploitation of man by man is absent, and where privileges of the few are not built upon the miseries of the many. Social Justice implies that all benefits and privileges in society should be shared by all its members. If any group in society has suffered from structural inequalities inherent in the social system special care should be taken to remove such structural inequalities.

Elements of Social Justice

Social Justice comprises three elements, liberty, equality and fraternity. These elements together form an inseparable trinity. Absence of anyone of them means denial of Social Justice. Freedom alone does not determine Social Justice. Fulfillment of basic requirement of existence is essential for securing Social Justice in society. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar contributes Social Justice under four categories.

1. Contribution to emancipation and development of the schedule costs.
2. Promotion of the interest of the minorities.
3. Improvement in the position of women
4. Betterment in the condition of labour.

In developing countries like India with welfare orientation of the state and with vast social, economic and political inequalities resulting from basically egalitarian social structure, minimum needs of the people will have to be satisfied and opportunities for fullest development with have to be given to everyone, particularly by adopting special measures for protecting and promoting the interest of the weaker and vulnerable sections.

Women and Social Justice

Women have been pivotal in advancing social justice, often spearheading movements for equality and inclusion. Whether through grassroots activism or leadership in international platforms, their contributions underscore the interconnectedness of gender equality with broader societal goals. Studies suggest that empowering women enhances community resilience, reduces poverty and promotes peace building.

The economic empowerment can transform social structures. By providing women with access to resources, training and networks, such initiatives enable them to challenge traditional hierarchies and contribute to broader societal development.

Women and Economic Development: Economic development and gender equality are intrinsically linked. Studies have consistently shown that countries with greater gender parity in education and employment experience higher economic growth. Women's participation in the labor force contributes not only to household income but also to national productivity.

However, barriers such as the gender wage gap, unpaid care work and limited access to financial resources continue to hinder women's economic participation. Addressing these barriers requires comprehensive policies that promote equal pay, parental leave, and childcare support, as well as programs that encourage women's entrepreneurship and financial independence.

Women and Political Participation: Political representation is a critical aspect of women's rights. Increased participation of women in governance structures leads to more inclusive policy making and better representation of diverse societal needs. The Global Gender Gap Report (2021) notes that while progress has been made, women still occupy less than 26 percent of parliamentary seats worldwide (World Economic Forum, 2021). However, achieving gender parity in politics requires dismantling structural barriers, including cultural biases, lack of access to political networks and financial constraints.

Indian Constitution and Social Justice for Women

The Constitution's preamble serves as a key to access the thinking of the framers and may reveal the general goals for why they established the constitution. It expresses the liberties and rights that the people of India wanted to guarantee to every citizen. The Indian Constitution's preamble declares that we, the people of India, are determined to guarantee its inhabitants liberty and justice on all fronts, economic, political and social as well as equality in position and opportunity. Indian Constitution Provision Ensuring Social Justice in fundamental Rights.

Article 14 states that no one shall be denied equality before the law or equal protection of the laws. According to Article 15 Prohibition of discrimination on the ground of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth. Article 15(3) contains a special clause that permits the state to use affirmative action discriminating in favor of women. Nonetheless, the state legislature can enact unique laws in support of women's emancipation. Article 16 stipulates that no citizen will face sex-based discrimination in

issues of public employment. Equal resources means of subsistence and recompense for equal labour are all mentioned in Article 39. Article 42 Provision for just and humane conditions of work and maternity relief. Article 46 Promotion of educational and economic interests of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other weaker sections. The State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and, in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation.

The Panchayati raj system's seat distribution is outlined in Article 243D (3) Not less than one-third (including the number of seats reserved for women belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes) of the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in every Panchayat shall be reserved for women and such seats may be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in a Panchayat. Article 243T(3) Not less than one-third (including the number of seats reserved for women belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes) of the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in every Municipality shall be reserved for women and such seats may be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in a Municipality. The constitution was changed in 1992 to reserve 33 percent of the seats in municipalities and panchayats in their favour. Notwithstanding this, Articles 51(A) to (E) of the constitution imposes fundamental obligations on every citizen, including the renunciation of practices that are disrespectful to women's dignity. The Constitution provides adequate protection for women against all forms of discrimination. Article 39A was added to the constitution in 1976 by the 42nd Amendment Act, to serve as a reminder to the government to make sure that the administration of justice promotes equality of opportunity and offers free legal aid. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar worked hard to ensure that women's rights were fully reflected in India's political framework and constitution.

Directive Principles of State Policy and Women

Under the constitution of India 1950, the directive principle of state policy is the reflection of governance that India is a welfare democratic state. Part IV of constitution containing Article 38, 39, 42, 43 and 45 deals with the welfare and development of women. The most important of these directive principles are, Article 38, State to secure a social order for the promotion of welfare of the people. Article 39, that the citizens, men and women equally, have the right to an adequate means of livelihood, equal distribution of material resources of community, distribution of means of production to the common good, equal pay for equal work for both men and women, promotion of health and strength of workers, men and women and the children, protection against exploitation of childhood and youth. Article 39A Equal justice and free legal aid. Article 41 Right to work, education and to public assistance in certain cases. Article 42 Provision for just and human conditions of work and maternity relief. Article 43 Living wages for workers. Article 44 Uniform civil code. Article 45 Free and compulsory primary education for Children.

Legislative Measures

Several more protective laws exist in India to stop the exploitation of women despite the Indian Constitution. To name a few, the Pre-Natal Diagnostic Technique (Regulation and Prevention of misuse) Act of 1994, the Dowry Prohibition Act of 1961, the Family Courts Act of 1984, the Protection of Human Rights Act of 1993, the Maternity Benefit Act of 1961, the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act of 1956, the Child Marriage Restraint Act of 1929, the Sati Prevention Act of 1987 and so forth. The Domestic Violence Act passed 2005 (Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005) offers actual remedies to ladies who are victims of abuse, including prohibiting their eviction from the joint family; nonetheless, this act does not criminalize domestic violence. In cases of forfeitures, a person is only found guilty of an offense if they violate a court order. To eliminate all inequities and discrimination against women, several revolutionary pieces of legislation, like the Equal Pay Act of 1976 and the National Commission for Women Act of 1990, have been passed under the supervision and guidance of our Constitution.

The result is that many women, especially those from marginalized groups like Minorities, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes lack adequate access to

educational, health care, and economic opportunities. Hence, they remain economically and socially marginalized. In order for women in India to reach their full potential, the government has enacted a policy that ensures they have equal opportunities to participate in and make decisions about the country's social, political, and economic life, as well as a set of laws that protects them, and a social and economic climate that encourages their growth and development.

Conclusion

The aim of society is the growth of individuals and development of their personality. This concept of social justice is very powerful because it provides meaning and significance to life and makes the rule of law dynamic. India is a country of different cultures and societies so it always faces many challenges of socio-economic inequality.

Social justice is one of most important ingredients to the civil society. The Indian constitution has provided special provisions to the weaker sections of the communities to established civil society. The Indian government also provides special education provisions to the weaker section. These communities, who are deprived of the right and dignity, could get their basic necessary rights and needs through education.

Equal justice is a key component of social justice, which applies to all facets of society, not only the legal system. In every area, including the environment, gender justice, education, minorities, public reforms, elections and restrictions on the constituent powers of parliament to change the Constitution, Supreme Court rulings have made a substantial contribution to effective governance. So, the judiciary plays a significant role in the advancement of social justice generally, the empowerment of women, and ensuring effective governance. Hence, a radical democratic women's movement against all forms of discrimination in every aspect of life as well as the efficient application of current law with modifications in accordance with changing circumstances are necessary to attain the aim of women's empowerment to achieve equality.

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Navigating Generative Ai in School and Higher Education: Student Learning, Pedagogical Challenges, and the Evolving Role of Teachers

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Abstract

Generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) is reshaping educational practice by making it possible to produce explanations, summaries, examples, feedback and other learning resources on demand. In schools and higher education, these capabilities may support differentiated instruction, language learning, formative assessment and teacher planning. However, benefits are not automatic. Inaccurate or fabricated outputs, bias, privacy risks, unequal access, over-reliance, academic integrity concerns and uncertainty about assessment can undermine learning. This conceptual paper examines the opportunities and challenges associated with GenAI and considers how the teacher's role is evolving from primarily delivering information towards designing learning, guiding critical evaluation, supporting ethical use and sustaining human relationships. Drawing on selected international guidance and scholarly literature, the paper uses a narrative, document-based approach rather than reporting new empirical data. It proposes a human-centred framework in which pedagogical purpose, learner agency, verification, inclusion and accountability guide decisions about when and how GenAI should be used. The paper argues that educational institutions should combine clear policies with teacher professional development, age-appropriate safeguards, transparent assessment practices and equitable access. GenAI should augment, not replace, teachers' professional judgement or students' intellectual effort. Its educational value ultimately depends on whether it strengthens understanding, creativity, dialogue and responsible participation.

Keywords: Generative artificial intelligence; student learning; pedagogy; teacher professional development; academic integrity

1. Introduction

Generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) refers to computational systems that generate new content—such as text, images, audio, code or explanations—in response to prompts. The growing availability of conversational systems has brought these tools into everyday educational settings, often faster than institutional policies and classroom practices can adapt. UNESCO's guidance stresses that education systems need a human-centred approach that protects learners' rights, privacy and agency (Miao and Holmes, 2023).

In schools, GenAI may help learners explore concepts, practise languages, receive explanations at different levels and develop questions for inquiry. In higher education, it may support literature exploration, brainstorming, feedback, coding and the preparation of learning materials. Yet a fluent response is not necessarily accurate, unbiased or appropriate to the learner's context. Students may accept generated answers without checking them, while teachers may struggle to distinguish independent understanding from work produced with extensive AI assistance.

The central educational question is therefore not whether GenAI should be universally accepted or rejected, but how it can be used in ways that improve learning while preserving human judgement, academic standards and equity. This paper discusses its possible contribution to student learning, the pedagogical and ethical challenges it creates, and the evolving role of teachers.

2. Objectives of the Paper

The paper has four objectives:

1. To examine potential uses of GenAI for student learning in school and higher education.
2. To identify pedagogical, ethical, assessment and equity-related challenges.

3. To analyse how teachers' professional roles and competencies may change.
4. To propose practical principles for responsible, human-centred integration of GenAI.

3. Methodology

This is a conceptual paper based on a narrative review of selected scholarly literature and international guidance on GenAI and education. Key sources include UNESCO's guidance on GenAI in education and research, UNESCO's AI Competency Framework for Teachers, and peer-reviewed discussions of large language models in education. The sources were read thematically, with attention to learning opportunities, risks, teacher competencies and institutional responses. No participants were recruited, no primary data were collected, and no statistical analysis was conducted. The arguments and framework presented here are therefore conceptual and should not be interpreted as findings from an empirical study.

4. Review of Related Literature

Kasneci et al. (2023) discuss how large language models may provide accessible explanations, personalised support and assistance with educational tasks, while also raising concerns about unreliable outputs, bias and academic integrity. Their analysis suggests that educational use requires careful evaluation rather than uncritical adoption. Miao and Holmes (2023) recommend a human-centred approach to GenAI, including attention to data privacy, age-appropriate use, validation of tools and the development of human capacity. This perspective places learners' rights and educational purposes ahead of novelty or efficiency. UNESCO's AI Competency Framework for Teachers identifies competencies related to a human-centred mindset, ethics, AI foundations and applications, AI pedagogy and professional learning (Miao and Cukurova, 2024). The framework reinforces the view that teachers need continuing professional development and that AI should support, rather than displace, meaningful teacher–student interaction. Taken together, these sources indicate that GenAI presents both pedagogical possibilities and systemic challenges. The literature supports a balanced approach: tools should be selected for clear learning purposes, outputs should be checked, and institutional expectations should be transparent.

5. Generative AI and Student Learning

5.1 Personalised explanations and learning support

GenAI can provide alternative explanations, examples, summaries and practice questions. A learner who does not understand a concept in a textbook may request a simpler explanation or a worked example. In principle, this can support self-paced learning and give students additional opportunities to ask questions. However, generated explanations must be checked against reliable course materials because the system may oversimplify a concept or present an incorrect statement confidently.

5.2 Language development and accessibility

For learners working in an additional language, GenAI can help with vocabulary, sentence structure, translation and writing feedback. It may also help teachers adapt reading passages or prepare varied examples. Such support is most educationally useful when learners revise, explain and reflect on suggestions instead of submitting generated text as their own work. Accessibility benefits will remain uneven where students lack devices, connectivity, digital literacy or suitable language support.

5.3 Inquiry, creativity and critical thinking

GenAI can be used to generate alternative viewpoints, suggest research questions, simulate a debate or help learners compare possible solutions. Teachers can ask students to test a generated answer against evidence, identify missing perspectives and explain why a claim is trustworthy or questionable. This changes AI from an answer-producing shortcut into an object of critical inquiry. Without such design, however, students may outsource the very reasoning that education is intended to develop.

5.4 Feedback and formative assessment

AI-generated feedback may help students notice unclear sentences, practise problems or revise early drafts. Teachers can use it as one source of formative feedback, not as the final authority on

achievement. Feedback should be aligned with learning outcomes and reviewed for accuracy, fairness and tone. High-stakes decisions about grades, progression or learner support should retain appropriate human oversight.

6. Pedagogical Challenges and Risks

6.1 Accuracy, bias and fabricated information

GenAI systems can produce plausible but false statements, invented references and incomplete explanations. Their outputs may also reproduce social or cultural biases. Students therefore need explicit instruction in source checking, corroboration and the distinction between a fluent answer and a well-supported answer. Teachers should model verification and encourage students to consult original sources.

6.2 Academic integrity and assessment validity

When students submit AI-generated work without disclosure, teachers may find it difficult to determine what learners understand independently. A simple ban may be hard to enforce and may not prepare learners for responsible use beyond the classroom. Institutions should state which uses are permitted, restricted or prohibited, and require acknowledgement where appropriate. Assessment can include oral explanations, drafts, process logs, in-class tasks, reflective notes and authentic projects that make student reasoning visible.

6.3 Privacy, consent and safeguarding

Learners and teachers should avoid entering identifiable student information, confidential institutional material or sensitive personal data into public AI systems unless the tool has been appropriately approved and safeguards are in place. Schools need age-appropriate guidance, clear consent and data-handling practices, and a process for reporting harmful or inappropriate outputs. Responsibility cannot be left solely to individual students.

6.4 Inequality and digital access

Unequal access to devices, reliable internet, paid tools and quiet study spaces may widen existing educational differences. Students also differ in their ability to write effective prompts and evaluate results. Institutions should avoid making access to a particular commercial tool a hidden requirement for success. Low-tech alternatives, accessible formats, multilingual resources and explicit AI-literacy teaching are important components of equitable implementation.

6.5 Dependence and reduced learner agency

If students routinely ask AI to write, solve or decide for them, they may practise less independent reasoning, persistence and self-expression. Teachers should therefore specify the learning purpose before introducing a tool and decide which cognitive work must remain with the learner. Productive use involves active engagement: questioning, checking, revising, explaining and taking responsibility for the final work.

7. THE EVOLVING ROLE OF TEACHERS

GenAI does not remove the need for teachers; it changes the expertise that effective teaching requires. Teachers remain responsible for interpreting curriculum goals, understanding learners, creating supportive classrooms, exercising professional judgement and building relationships. Their role increasingly includes the following functions:

1. Learning designer: selects activities in which AI supports clearly defined learning outcomes rather than replacing essential thinking.
2. Critical AI-literacy guide: teaches students to question outputs, verify claims, recognise bias and understand limitations.
3. Ethical role model: demonstrates transparency, privacy-conscious behaviour, appropriate acknowledgement and responsible use.
4. Assessment designer: uses tasks that reveal reasoning, progress and individual understanding, not merely polished final products.
5. Inclusive facilitator: adapts activities to diverse needs and monitors whether AI use disadvantages particular learners.

6. Professional learner: develops AI knowledge collaboratively, evaluates tools and revises practice in response to evidence.

These functions align with UNESCO's emphasis on human-centred thinking, ethics, AI pedagogy and continuing professional learning (Miao and Cukurova, 2024). Teachers should not be expected to become technical specialists overnight; they need accessible training, institutional support and time to evaluate tools responsibly.

8. Tables and Conceptual Framework

Table 1. Potential educational uses and associated safeguards

Educational use	Potential contribution	Recommended safeguard
Personalised explanations	Alternative examples and self-paced practice	Check accuracy against trusted materials
Language and writing support	Vocabulary, feedback and revision practice	Require learner revision and transparent acknowledgement
Inquiry and creativity	Questions, scenarios and multiple perspectives	Evaluate evidence and identify bias or omissions
Teacher planning	Draft lesson ideas, examples and worksheets	Teacher review for curriculum fit and inclusiveness
Formative feedback	Prompt feedback and further practice	Human review; do not rely solely on AI for high-stakes decisions

Source: Developed by the author from Miao and Holmes (2023), Kasneci et al. (2023), and Miao and Cukurova (2024).

Table 2. Key challenges and institutional responses

Challenge	Suggested response
Inaccurate or biased output	Teach verification, corroboration and critical evaluation
Unclear academic integrity rules	Publish task-specific rules and disclosure expectations
Privacy and safeguarding risks	Approve tools, minimise data sharing and provide age-appropriate guidance
Unequal access	Provide equitable access and non-AI alternatives
Over-reliance on AI	Design tasks requiring independent explanation, reflection and judgement

Source: Developed by the author.

Figure 1. A human-centred framework for educational use of generative AI

LEARNING GOALS AND CURRICULUM
↓
TEACHER JUDGEMENT + LEARNER AGENCY
↓
PURPOSEFUL GENAI USE
↓
VERIFY • REFLECT • REVISE • ACKNOWLEDGE
↓
ASSESS LEARNING, EQUITY, SAFETY AND WELL-BEING
↺ CONTINUOUS REVIEW AND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Source: Conceptual framework developed by the author.

9. Recommendations for Schools and Higher Education

1. Develop a clear institutional policy that defines acceptable, restricted and prohibited uses of GenAI, with examples for different tasks and age groups.

2. Provide continuing professional development for teachers on prompt design, output verification, bias, privacy, accessibility and assessment.
3. Teach students to disclose meaningful AI assistance and to take responsibility for checking every claim in submitted work.
4. Redesign assessment to include learning processes, oral defence, drafts, practical performance and reflective explanations where appropriate.
5. Protect privacy by minimising personal data shared with AI tools and using institutionally approved systems where possible.
6. Monitor equity and accessibility, and provide alternatives for students who cannot or should not use a particular tool.
7. Evaluate implementation regularly using student learning evidence, teacher feedback, accessibility reviews and safeguarding reports.

10. Discussion

The educational value of GenAI depends less on the mere presence of a tool than on the quality of the learning design surrounding it. Used thoughtfully, GenAI can widen opportunities for practice, feedback and exploration. Used without guidance, it can make misinformation easier to circulate, blur authorship, expose personal data and weaken opportunities for independent thought. The same tool may therefore support or obstruct learning depending on the task, learner readiness, teacher guidance and institutional safeguards. A human-centred approach does not require teachers to reject innovation. It asks them to make deliberate choices: what students should learn, what work they must do themselves, what AI may contribute, and how learning will be assessed fairly. In both school and higher education, transparent expectations and professional judgement are essential. The proposed framework emphasises a cycle of goal-setting, purposeful use, verification, reflection and review rather than unrestricted or purely efficiency-driven adoption.

11. Conclusion

Generative AI creates meaningful possibilities for supporting student learning, teaching preparation, language development, inquiry and formative feedback in schools and higher education. These possibilities coexist with serious concerns about accuracy, bias, privacy, inequality, academic integrity and over-dependence. The evolving role of teachers is not to compete with AI in producing information, but to design purposeful learning, guide critical judgement, protect learner agency and maintain the human relationships at the heart of education. Responsible integration requires institutional policies, teacher development, transparent assessment and equitable access. Ultimately, GenAI should be judged by whether it deepens understanding and supports inclusive, ethical and independent learning—not simply by how quickly it produces content.

12. Limitations and Future Scope

As a conceptual narrative paper, this article does not provide systematic-review procedures or empirical evidence from a specific school, college or university. The capabilities and risks of GenAI tools also change rapidly. Future research may use classroom observations, interviews, surveys or comparative studies to examine how different forms of guided AI use affect learning outcomes, critical thinking, teacher workload and equity across school and higher education settings.

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Transforming Teacher Education for Sustainable Development: Emerging Trends and Global Perspectives

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1. Introduction

The growing complexity of global challenges has created a need to rethink the purpose and practice of education. Environmental instability, unequal access to resources, social disparities and rapid technological developments require individuals to make informed decisions and act responsibly. Educational institutions must therefore prepare learners to understand these challenges and contribute to solutions that support the well-being of present and future generations.

Teacher education has a significant role in this process because the professional preparation of teachers influences classroom practices, educational values and learners' attitudes towards society. Future teachers need more than disciplinary knowledge and instructional skills; they must also be capable of encouraging critical inquiry, social responsibility, environmental awareness and cooperative problem-solving. Teacher preparation should consequently connect professional competencies with the broader goals of sustainable development.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals provide an international framework for addressing these concerns. In particular, SDG 4 focuses on equitable quality education and lifelong learning, while Target 4.7 highlights the contribution of education to sustainability, human rights, gender equality and global citizenship (United Nations, 2015). These priorities have important implications for curriculum design, teacher preparation and professional development.

UNESCO's Education for Sustainable Development framework also draws attention to the need for capable educators and learning environments that support sustainable practices (UNESCO, 2020). In the Indian context, the National Education Policy 2020 offers opportunities to strengthen teacher education through multidisciplinary learning, practical experiences, inclusion and continuous professional growth (Ministry of Human Resource Development [MHRD], 2020).

In this context, the transformation of teacher education should be viewed as a long-term educational priority. Preparing teachers to respond to sustainability challenges can help connect educational theory with social needs and encourage responsible participation in community and global development.

2. Objectives and Methodology

The present paper seeks to understand how teacher education can contribute to sustainable development. Its specific objectives are to explore emerging approaches to teacher preparation, examine relevant international and Indian policy perspectives and identify practical measures for incorporating sustainability into teacher education programmes. The study follows a conceptual research design based on a narrative examination of selected educational policies, international frameworks and scholarly literature. The material is organised around five themes: curriculum development, pedagogical innovation, technological change, educational inclusion and institutional responsibility. The discussion develops an interpretative understanding of these themes and proposes directions for educational practice. As the paper does not involve primary data collection, its arguments represent a conceptual synthesis rather than empirical findings.

3. Emerging Trends in Sustainable Teacher Education

3.1 Sustainability Across the Teacher Education Curriculum

Sustainability becomes meaningful in teacher preparation when it is connected with the subjects prospective teachers study and the teaching practices they develop. Environmental protection, social justice, responsible resource use and community well-being can be explored through different academic disciplines rather than being confined to a single course.

For instance, geography student-teachers can investigate local water management, science student-teachers can examine biodiversity, and social science student-teachers can explore inequality and responsible citizenship. Such interdisciplinary experiences help future teachers recognise the connections between academic knowledge and everyday social realities.

3.2 Development of Professional Competencies

Effective sustainability education requires teachers to analyse complex situations, evaluate information, work collaboratively and make responsible decisions. These abilities should become an integral part of professional preparation. Teacher education institutions can nurture these competencies through investigative assignments, classroom projects, educational case studies, reflective writing and action research. Assessment methods should consider how student-teachers apply their knowledge, justify decisions and respond to practical challenges. This approach places professional capability alongside academic achievement.

3.3 Technology-Enabled and Responsible Teacher Preparation

Digital learning environments have expanded opportunities for professional collaboration, resource sharing and continuing education. Artificial intelligence can also assist teachers in preparing instructional materials, designing learning activities and developing formative assessments.

Nevertheless, technological innovation must be accompanied by professional judgement. Teacher educators should address data protection, unequal access to digital resources, accessibility, potential bias and the responsible use of AI-generated content. The purpose of technology integration should be to improve learning and participation while remaining sensitive to ethical and environmental considerations.

3.4 Inclusion as a Foundation of Sustainability

An education system cannot support sustainable development if certain learners experience persistent barriers to participation. Teacher preparation must therefore equip educators to respond to differences in language, culture, socioeconomic circumstances and learning requirements. Flexible teaching strategies, accessible learning materials and gender-responsive classroom practices can help create more equitable educational environments. Student-teachers should also examine how social disadvantage influences educational opportunities. Developing these professional understandings can strengthen the relationship between sustainability, inclusion and educational justice.

3.5 Experiential Learning and Community Participation

Practical engagement allows student-teachers to examine educational and sustainability issues beyond the classroom. Teacher education institutions can collaborate with schools and community organisations to undertake projects involving local environmental concerns, literacy, waste reduction, biodiversity and educational accessibility. Such experiences encourage prospective teachers to observe community needs, work with different stakeholders and reflect on the educational value of collective action. Their effectiveness depends on meaningful participation, careful planning and reflection rather than the completion of activities merely for formal documentation.

4. Global Perspectives and Indian Educational Policy

International sustainability frameworks provide a basis for aligning teacher preparation with wider educational priorities. UNESCO's *Education for Sustainable Development: A Roadmap* identifies policy development, educator capacity, institutional transformation, youth participation and local action as important areas of intervention (UNESCO, 2020). For teacher education, these priorities suggest that sustainability should influence institutional planning, teaching practices and professional development. However, international approaches need to be interpreted in relation to local conditions. Educational institutions must consider regional environmental issues, cultural diversity, community knowledge and the resources available to them.

India's National Education Policy 2020 provides a relevant foundation through its emphasis on multidisciplinary education, experiential learning, teacher development and inclusive educational opportunities. Teacher education institutions can translate these priorities into practice through interdisciplinary lesson design, faculty development, school-based projects and community

partnerships. For example, institutions in regions experiencing water shortages may incorporate local water management into educational projects, while urban institutions may investigate waste management or unequal access to educational resources. Such locally grounded activities can connect global sustainability objectives with practical educational experiences.

5. Challenges and Recommendations

The integration of sustainability into teacher education may be affected by limited instructional time, insufficient faculty preparation, resource constraints and assessment practices that place greater emphasis on theoretical knowledge than practical competencies. Differences between policy intentions and institutional implementation may create additional difficulties.

The following measures are proposed:

1. **Curriculum development:** Incorporate sustainability-related issues into existing courses, subject pedagogy and school internship activities.
2. **Professional development:** Provide teacher educators with opportunities to develop expertise in sustainability education, inclusive teaching and responsible technology use.
3. **Institutional responsibility:** Encourage teacher education institutions to establish practical sustainability plans covering teaching, research, resource management and community engagement.
4. **Assessment reform:** Use project work, portfolios, reflective journals and performance-based tasks to evaluate the application of sustainability competencies.
5. **Collaborative initiatives:** Promote sustained partnerships among teacher education institutions, schools and local communities.
6. **Research-based improvement:** Encourage action research and institutional studies to investigate the outcomes of sustainability-oriented educational practices.

Implementation should be guided by institutional priorities, available resources and the educational needs of the communities served.

6. Conclusion

The future of sustainable development is closely connected with the quality and direction of teacher preparation. Teachers need professional knowledge and practical competencies that enable them to address environmental concerns, promote educational inclusion and respond thoughtfully to technological and social change. Emerging approaches such as interdisciplinary learning, competency-based preparation, responsible digital integration and community participation provide opportunities to strengthen teacher education. International sustainability frameworks and India's National Education Policy 2020 offer useful directions for developing these approaches within educational institutions. However, meaningful transformation requires more than including sustainability-related topics in the curriculum. It involves changes in teaching practices, professional development, assessment, institutional planning and relationships with communities. Teacher education institutions should therefore adopt approaches that combine theoretical understanding with practical experience and continuous evaluation.

Further empirical research is needed to examine how sustainability-oriented teacher preparation influences student-teachers' professional competencies and subsequent classroom practices. By preparing educators who are reflective, innovative and socially responsible, teacher education can contribute to a more equitable and sustainable future.

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Gender, Globalization and Women with Disabilities

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Abstract

Globalization has brought significant changes in the social, economic, political, and cultural conditions of women with disabilities. This study examined the impact of globalization on the socio-economic status, rights, opportunities, and social inclusion of women with disabilities from a gender and intersectional perspective. The study adopted a qualitative and descriptive research design and was based entirely on secondary data collected from scholarly books, peer-reviewed research articles, government reports, policy documents, and publications of international organizations. The analysis focused on gender discrimination, disability, intersectionality, economic opportunities, political participation, education, employment, social inclusion, and cultural attitudes. The study found that globalization has created opportunities through international human rights frameworks, advocacy networks, digital technologies, and greater recognition of the rights of women with disabilities. However, these opportunities have not been equally accessible, as women with disabilities continue to experience multiple forms of discrimination, limited educational and employment opportunities, economic insecurity, political underrepresentation, inaccessible services, and persistent cultural stereotypes. The intersection of gender and disability further intensifies their marginalization, particularly in relation to education, health, employment, decision-making, and social participation. The study concludes that inclusive and intersectional policies, accessible education and vocational training, equal employment opportunities, digital inclusion, social protection, and stronger participation of women with disabilities in decision-making are necessary to promote their empowerment, social inclusion, equality, and human rights in the context of globalization.

Keywords: Globalization; Women with Disabilities; Gender; Intersectionality; Social Inclusion; Economic Empowerment; Human Rights; Disability; Gender Discrimination.

Introduction:

Globalization is rapidly transforming the social, economic, and political life in most parts of the world, with disparities affecting people differently and frequently exacerbating inequality. Women with disabilities are one of the marginalized groups worldwide whose situations reveal the connections between gender, disability and global processes. Women and girls with disabilities face a multitude of barriers in their pursuit of gender equality and disability rights, despite international agreements aimed at promoting these goals (UN Women, n.d.). All of these challenges are complex and require an intersectional analysis of how different identities interact and affect how people can access resources and rights. New markets and ways of organizing labor have opened up as a result of economic globalization. However, in many cases women with disabilities are excluded from decent work because of discrimination and a lack of protective legal frameworks. In addition, negative perceptions of people with disabilities are widespread in many parts of the world and can create additional difficulties for women who already face numerous inequalities. Globalization, policies, and advocacy efforts interact with local cultural practices to influence, in many ways, both good and bad, for disabled women worldwide (Women Enabled International, 2016). When analyzing the impact of globalization on women's rights, one must look beyond the formal laws of a country and recognize the influence of local culture as well as globalization in everyday life. This essay explores globalization as it affects women with disabilities in several ways including political representation, the perspectives of gender and of disability and their intersection, women's economic inclusion and how women with disabilities are viewed in different cultures around the world. This investigation highlights the need to develop and implement inclusive policies across different spheres of action and contexts and to foster global collaboration between different stakeholders within and outside disability Advocacy to promote the human rights of women and girls with disabilities worldwide.

Research Objectives

To examine the impact of globalization on the socio-economic status, rights, opportunities, and social inclusion of women with disabilities from a gender and intersectional perspective.

Research Methodology

Research Design: The study adopted a qualitative and descriptive research design to examine the relationship between gender, globalization, and the socio-economic and social experiences of women with disabilities.

Secondary Data: The study was based entirely on secondary data collected from scholarly books, peer-reviewed research articles, government reports, international organizations, policy documents, and relevant publications of organizations such as the United Nations and disability-rights institutions.

Data Analysis: The collected information was analyzed using descriptive and thematic analysis, focusing on gender discrimination, disability, intersectionality, economic opportunities, social inclusion, cultural attitudes, and the impact of globalization.

Scope: The study focused on women with disabilities in the context of gender, globalization, human rights, socio-economic opportunities, political participation, education, employment, and social inclusion, with reference to both global and Indian contexts.

Limitations: The study was limited to secondary sources and therefore did not include primary data collected directly from women with disabilities. The experiences and conditions of women with disabilities may also differ across countries, cultures, socio-economic groups, and rural–urban settings; hence, the findings cannot be generalized uniformly to all women with disabilities.

Women with Disabilities: A Statistical View on the World and India

Women with disabilities form a considerable yet frequently ignored segment of the population worldwide, including in India. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that around 15% of the global population lives with some disability, and a notable number in this group are women. Disabilities affect people in all societies, but in low- and middle-income countries especially, women with disabilities are at a notable disadvantage. The last census in India (in 2011) showed that about 2.68% of the population is disabled, and of this percentage, about 56% are women (Surjan & Gautam, n.d.). This hidden figure of disability reveals a significant proportion of people who are already struggling in many ways. Among disabled persons, we see a striking pattern in more ways than one. Women are already a marginalized group in society. Adding a layer of disability makes their situation much worse. Worldwide, disabled women are more likely to live in a situation of violence, or to have been victims of violence, than other women are. Living in a world of more violence and discrimination is a common experience for women with disabilities (Meekosha et al., 2020). This is even truer for a woman who is both disabled and a member of a minority group. In India, the already intense stigma attached to disability and the strident enforcement of traditional gender roles create a kind of whammy effect; the stigma and the prioritization of male needs mean that women with disabilities are often denied their basic rights to education and to health services (Ghai, 2015).

Impact of Globalization on Women's Rights:

Globalization has had a positive and negative impact on women's rights. Women with disabilities are affected by multiple forms of marginalization. Globalization has meant the spread of international human rights standards and gender equality policies and programs that specifically recognize the rights of women with disabilities. Recent instruments such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have led to more advocacy and the development of policies that promote the political participation, education, the work opportunity, and the protection of people with disabilities against violence. Networks of global scope and transnational advocacy coalitions enable women with disabilities from around the world to express themselves and to join forces with other feminist and disability rights movements and organizations. (Women Enabled International, 2016) All of these steps demonstrate how globalization can be inclusive by shifting norms and setting up international accountability structures.

Globalization maintains and even increases inequalities and structural barriers that negatively affect women with disabilities even more. Economic liberalization can lead to labor market segmentation with women with disabilities predominantly employed in the informal economy on low wages with little or no social protection. Further to this economic marginalisation, people who are transgender and living with a disability experience persistent social stigma and discrimination, much of it based on patriarchal attitudes that already disregard people on the basis of their gender and disability. Women with disabilities therefore are largely unable to participate effectively in the political processes that shape decisions concerning their lives and are severely underrepresented in parliaments, as well as in leadership positions within organizations of people with disabilities worldwide (UN Women). Development policies inspired by globalization sometimes fail to consider the intersection of different forms of vulnerability. For example, women with disabilities may not have the same protection under law or may be the subject of violence, often without access to health and other basic services (GCAP Africa Report, 2021).

In summary, despite opportunities that exist for women's rights discourse around the world to engage with disability, processes of globalization often reinforce unequal systems of power in restructuring economies and influencing cultures. Intentional intersectional policymaking is needed to ensure formal rights translate into improved lives for women with disabilities globally. This can be achieved by ensuring global governance frameworks are informed by gender- and disability-responsive approaches.

Intersectionality: Gender and Disability Perspectives:

Intersectionality is key to understanding the combined discrimination that women with disabilities experience. Their experiences of gender discrimination and of disability-related discrimination are intertwined. Most studies on gender and/or disability differ from an intersectional perspective by analyzing each identity separately rather than how they intersect to form particular obstacles in social, economic and political life. Many women with disabilities face double marginalization: worldwide they are affected by gender related systemic inequalities; at the same time, ableism is ingrained in many structures and systems (UN Women, n.d.). The dual discrimination further marginalizes in terms of decision-making, education, health and economic opportunities.

Through the flows of capital, information and policy, globalization has brought both opportunities and vulnerabilities for women with disabilities on a global scale. However, the benefits from globalization are not distributed equally due to a variety of intersecting identities. For instance, women with disabilities are vastly underrepresented in governments and other political bodies worldwide. Women with disabilities hold a tiny percentage of seats in national legislatures, as well as a miniscule percentage of leadership positions within organizations that are for people with disabilities (Women Enabled International, 2016). Not being represented threatens to marginalize their issues from the policy agenda. Cultural norms also continue to marginalize women with disabilities by perpetuating images and stereotypes of women with disabilities who are dependent or incapable. From an intersectionality perspective, the ways in which women with disabilities experience violence are further affected by hierarchies such as caste and class and how these interact in specific contexts (Shrestha et al., 2020). Structural violence is perpetuated by insufficient legal protection and services, even though international commitments are in place (UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities / CRPD, Sustainable Development Goals / SDGs). The points of difference highlighted above need to be acknowledged in order to develop policies which recognize intersectionality and move beyond single-dimensional approaches.

Efforts to inclusion must therefore incorporate gender-sensitive and disability-sensitive strategies simultaneously in order to bring down systemic barriers effectively. This work needs to happen across sectors – of feminist movement, of disability rights, and of global development – so that programs are actually grounded and responsive to the lives of women with disabilities in diverse contexts. An integrated perspective is therefore necessary to unlock the promise of globalization for women with disabilities while tackling inequalities (UN Women, n.d.).

Economic Opportunities for Disabled Women:

Economic opportunities for disabled women are restricted by a number of interconnected barriers which are influenced by both gender and disability discrimination. These are increased by globalization. Women with disabilities have higher levels of unemployment than men with disabilities and non-disabled women. The root causes of this situation are systemic and relate to their exclusion from the formal labor market and from resources that promote economic development (UN Women, n.d.). The employment gap of women can be made worse by limitations of education, inaccessible workplaces and even by social prejudices that prevent their economic activities. Globalization and changes in labor markets that spread informalization and precarious employment create new challenges for women with disabilities. In many cases, they are pushed into underpaid, insecure and unprotected jobs.

New avenues for economic inclusion through digital technology and transnational advocacy networks have opened up despite these challenges. Access to information and communication technologies (ICTs) can enable women and girls with disabilities to work from home, start their own businesses, and develop skills to increase their income. However, the affordability of and accessibility to ICTs in many parts of the world creates digital divides (Women Enabled International, 2016). Moreover, most global frameworks and strategies for sustainable economic development focus on marginalized groups including disabled women and target inclusive growth. However, the translation of global frameworks into effective national implementation strategies is often a weakness. Much remains to be done to address important policy gaps in ensuring equal employment opportunities and in effectively enforcing anti-discrimination laws to protect female workers with disabilities in the workplace.

International donors have found that supporting the microenterprises of disabled women in some parts of the world can economically empower them and bring them into the community. More importantly, support to such initiatives and accessible training programs are needed that take into account local cultural parameters on disability and gender roles. Many disabled women live in low-income countries where they are already vulnerable due to their poverty and because of the weakness of the few social safety nets that exist in their countries. As a result of globalization, migration has become a major issue affecting the economic prospects of disabled migrant women facing additional marginalization as a result of their legal status and disability. Addressing these complex issues requires integrated solutions which first address the various barriers to accessibility in education systems, followed by training for different disabilities in vocational track, combat discrimination, and expand inclusive digital solutions. Empowering disabled women to take on greater leadership roles within advocacy organizations is crucial to their ability to influence and shape global labor market policy that is fair and equitable (Women Enabled International, 2016). Empowering women with disabilities to increase economic opportunities requires an integrated approach. Globalization and gendered ableism create obstacles to inclusion while global connectivity also presents opportunities for empowerment.

Cultural Attitudes towards Disabled Women Worldwide:

Cultural attitudes towards women with disabilities are deeply ingrained and varied and often embed stereotypic representations and discriminatory attitudes that interact with gender discrimination and ableism and vary between regions. Women with disabilities experience marginalization in many societies not only on the basis of their impairment but also because of the low cultural value placed on women and persons with disabilities in given societies (GCAP Africa Report, 2021). Disabled women in parts of Africa and South Asia are stereotyped as dependent, asexual people who are unable to fulfill gender roles of motherhood and/or economic contribution and are therefore stigmatized. Gender stereotypes constrain girls' education, health, and participation and leave them exposed to violence and neglect. Cultural narratives that portray disability as a source of shame or divine retribution are often supported by families and by the institutions of the community. While there has been gradual change towards greater inclusion of women and people with disabilities

in a few Western contexts, influenced by the disability rights movement and by feminism, ableism is deep-seated and pervasive. Women and girls with disabilities in many places are invisible within both mainstream feminist discourse and in terms of barriers to work and leadership that others experience (Women Enabled International, 2016). But in addition to ethnic disparities, experiences are also influenced by socioeconomic status and rural vs. urban environments. In this regard, for example, disabled Indigenous women or women from minorities suffer from both, cultural marginalization and system-imposed exclusion.

The cultural attitudes are ambivalently affected by globalization. On the other hand, most countries of the world are working towards a shift in norms on the basis of international human rights such as the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, enabling people with disabilities to live with dignity. However, local customs rooted in patriarchy and ableism continue to persist despite advocacy at a global level (Nepal study on violence against disabled women). Global discourses are not always easy to spread, because they clash with local convictions about disability held by families and local worldviews of religious nature.

Addressing negative cultural attitudes about women with disabilities requires strategies that are culturally sensitive and empower communities to listen to the voices of women with disabilities. Through leadership development, disabled women can be empowered to challenge common stereotypes about women with disabilities and to develop agency to pursue options beyond typical roles for women (UN Women data). The deeply rooted prejudices concerning disabilities in a culture combined with inequalities intensified by globalization will prevent full inclusion of people with disabilities for a long time to come all over the world.

Conclusion:

Women with disabilities in the 21st century face both challenges and opportunities as a result of gender, globalization and disability. While globalization has contributed to the spreading of human rights issues and brought attention to marginalized groups, it mainly maintains existing structures of power and perpetuates inequality, especially for women with disabilities. Intersectionality looks at gender and disability as overlapping and interacting factors that cannot be studied in isolation, creating new ways of experiencing discrimination that must be addressed in order to achieve inclusion and equality. Disabled women have limited potential for economic empowerment through new employment opportunities in global labor markets and through digital platforms due to a number of systematic obstacles. These women have only limited access to education and to vocational training. They are frequently discriminated against when employers are selecting workers. Moreover, there are deeply rooted cultural attitudes towards women with disabilities in many parts of the world. These views are shaped by oppression and exclusion through a gendered perspective and from within an ableist culture. The same negative cultural perceptions of women with disabilities affect how policies and social services are implemented. The challenges are many and varied, and tackling them requires a global approach that can incorporate the best from around the world with more locally focused solutions. Policies need to be accessible and deliver inclusive education, tackle discrimination, and generate economic empowerment specifically for disabled women. Advancing the rights of women with disabilities in the globalized world requires on-going commitment to overcoming multiple forms of oppression through joint efforts by governments, civil society organizations and international institutions. Until this comprehensive work is undertaken, the demographic group in question will continue to fail in its pursuit of equity and social justice.

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Linguistic Creativity and Copyright : The Frontier of Originality in the Age of Textual Innovation

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Abstract

Linguistic creativity is the human capacity to go beyond fixed rules and routine patterns of language to generate novel meanings, forms, and communicative possibilities.Below is a structured research paper outline and framework examining the core concepts, cognitive drivers, and real-world dimensions of linguistic creativity.This paper explores the theoretical and functional boundaries of linguistic creativity, distinguishing between routine rule-following (generativity or fixed-range F-creativity) and true rule-bending or pattern-breaking innovation (E-creativity). Drawing on cognitive linguistics, Construction Grammar, and discourse analysis, we examine how mechanisms like conceptual blending, analogy, and language play enable speakers to reshape everyday and literary communication.

Key words: Cognition, copyright, creativity ethics, originality , linguistics, plagiarism, & productivity etc.

Introduction

Linguistic creativity is not restricted to poets, authors, or formal rhetoric; it permeates mundane, everyday interactions ("small-c" vs. "Big-C" creativity).How do language users produce and interpret utterances that have never been said or licensed before, while remaining mutually intelligible? Linguistic creativity operates along a gradient from rule-bound productivity to emergent structural aberration, driven by domain-general cognitive processes and contextual grounding.The infinite capacity to combine existing rules and lexical items to form novel grammatical sentences (e.g., standard syntactic productivity).

Linguistic Creativity (E-creativity):

Producing novel units that carry *new meanings* or expand the structural boundaries of the language system itself.

The Typology of Creative Expression *(adapted from cognitive-discursive frameworks)*:

Creative Productivity: Pattern-following innovations via affixation, blending, or compounding (e.g., portmanteaus like *brunch*).

Creative Expansion: Pattern-reforming via novel collocations, extended metaphors, or snowclones.

Creative Deviation: Pattern-violating innovations via puns, deliberate syntactic anomalies, or language play (e.g., *N-much?* constructions).

Cognitive Mechanisms

Conceptual Blending: Speakers merge two or more mental spaces to create a emergent structure with meaning not present in the inputs (explored extensively in Thomas Hoffmann's Construction Grammar approach).

Analogy and Mapping: Extending source domains to target domains (e.g., conceptual metaphor theory).

Association and Transfer: Shifting items across functional categories or pragmatic contexts to invoke humor, irony, or heightened attention (phatic function).

Large Language Models (LLMs) generate combinatorial and exploratory creative text by predicting probabilistic token sequences, matching or exceeding human performance in localized metrics like figurative speech while presenting distinct challenges in collective diversity**.**

The mechanisms, evaluation frameworks, and limitations of computational linguistic creativity in Large Language Models (LLMs). By analyzing how transformer architectures process semantic

spaces, word-formation rules, and metaphorical expressions, we explore the boundary between statistical derivation and genuine cognitive creation. Recent comparative studies show that LLMs frequently excel in task-specific divergence and figurative language, yet risk homogenizing collective creative output across populations.

Introduction and Theoretical Foundations

Linguistic creativity—the capacity to bend lexico-grammatical, syntactic, and semantic norms to generate novel expressions—has traditionally been considered a hallmark of human cognition. With the rise of deep transformer networks and auto-regressive next-token prediction, LLMs engage in a form of artificial creativity grounded in high-dimensional vector spaces.

Margaret Boden's Framework in LLMs

Evaluating LLM creativity often relies on Margaret Boden's classic taxonomy:

Combinatorial Creativity: Recombining familiar linguistic concepts, tropes, or lexical roots into novel juxtapositions (e.g., portmanteaus, metaphors). LLMs demonstrate high competence here through statistical co-occurrence.

Exploratory Creativity: Navigating and expanding existing stylistic or genre rules (e.g., writing a sonnet or a cyberpunk vignette). LLMs perform strongly when constrained by clear structural prompts.

Transformational Creativity: Altering the underlying rules or paradigm of the system itself. LLMs struggle here because they lack intentionality, consciousness, and real-world experiential grounding.

Mechanisms of Generation: How LLMs "Create"

LLMs operate via self-supervised learning on massive text corpora, projecting words into continuous embeddings.

Probabilistic Token Matching: Rather than conceptualizing an idea and finding words to match it, an LLM calculates the conditional probability distribution \(P(w_t \vert{} w_1, ..., w_{t-1})\) and samples from it using temperature and top-p settings.

Figurative Mastery vs. Pragmatic Intent: Empirical psycholinguistic and NLP evaluations reveal that LLMs often master figurative speech, idioms, and analogical extensions more fluidly than human participants in isolated tests. However, human generation leans more toward pragmatic, context-driven **E-creativity** (extending real-world conceptual frames), whereas LLMs lean into **F-creativity** (fixed stylistic replication).

Sociolinguistic and Functional Contexts

Everyday Discourse & Play: Language play (*Sprachspiele*) allows speakers to test, make, and unmake social norms in real time.

World Englishes and Indigenization: Creative writers and local communities adapt global languages to express culture-specific values without losing international intelligibility.

Crisis and Media Drivers: Rapid lexical and metaphorical innovation spikes during sociopolitical events (e.g., pandemic discourse, political shifts.It examines the intersection of linguistic creativity and copyright law, exploring how legal frameworks protect novel forms of expression. As human communication evolves through digital slang, algorithmic text generation, and avant-garde literature, traditional legal standards of originality, fixation, and the idea-expression dichotomy face unprecedented strain. By analyzing case law and linguistic theory, this study addresses the boundary between free public discourse and protectable intellectual property.

Language is inherently dynamic. It relies on a shared, finite set of rules and symbols used to generate an infinite variety of expressions. This phenomenon, known in structural linguistics as linguistic creativity, allows humans to communicate novel thoughts, emotions, and concepts daily. However, when linguistic creativity manifests as a commercial or highly unique asset—such as a invented conlang (constructed language), a viral internet neologism, or a distinctively stylized poetic form—it enters the domain of copyright law.

Copyright law aims to balance two competing societal needs:

- Incentivizing authors by granting exclusive rights to their original expressions.

- Preserving the public domain to ensure that future creators have the raw building blocks of communication.It explores how modern copyright frameworks adapt to non-traditional linguistic innovations. It analyzes where the law draws the line between a free public alphabet and an exclusive proprietary text.

Theoretical Framework: Creativity vs. Copyrightability

To understand how copyright interacts with linguistics, one must look at the foundational pillars of copyrightability: originality, fixation, and the idea-expression dichotomy.The Threshold of Originality in legal systems worldwide, protection does not require artistic merit; it requires originality. Under US law (Feist Publications, Inc. v. Rural Telephone Service Co.), originality demands that the work owes its origin to the author and possesses at least a modicum of creativity. In European jurisprudence (Infopaq International A/S), the standard is whether the work constitutes the "author's own intellectual creation."

From a linguistic perspective, everyday speech acts rarely clear this hurdle because they rely on predictable syntactic patterns. Only when an author manipulates vocabulary, syntax, or phonology in a highly idiosyncratic way does the text become legally original.The Idea-Expression Dichotomy and Merger Doctrine.A bedrock principle of intellectual property is that copyright protects expressions, not ideas.If a linguistic innovation is the only or most practical way to express a specific concept, the idea and the expression merge. Under the Merger Doctrine, courts deny copyright protection to the expression to prevent a monopoly over the underlying concept.Linguistic creativity takes many forms. The table below outlines how different types of linguistic creations are treated under current intellectual property frameworks. One of the most frequent friction points between linguistics and law is the short phrase. Authors, marketing agencies, and social media influencers routinely invent clever combinations of words. Yet, copyright offices globally maintain a strict barrier against short phrases.The legal doctrine de minimis non curat lex dictates that the law does not concern itself with trifles. In copyright, a single sentence, title, or slogan is usually deemed too short to contain the requisite amount of creative authorial choice.If an author writes a three-word phrase, the mathematical permutations of those words are severely limited. Granting a copyright would lock up those linguistic combinations, chilling everyday speech.When linguistic creativity creates a short phrase that carries commercial value, creators must look to trademark law rather than copyright.

- Copyright protects the intrinsic creative value of an expression.
- Trademark protects a phrase only as a source identifier for goods or services (e.g., Nike’s "Just Do It").

If a phrase is not being used to sell a product, it remains free for the public to use in ordinary conversation.The creation of an entirely new language represents a monumental peak of human linguistic creativity. Authors like J.R.R. Tolkien (Sindarin, Quenya) and Marc Okrand (Klingon) engineered complete phonetic, morphological, and syntactic systems for fictional universes.The legal status of conlangs remains one of the most fascinating grey areas in copyright law. Section 102(b) of the US Copyright Act explicitly states that copyright protection does not extend to any system, method of operation, or process. The Argument Against Copyright: Language is a functional system. A grammar rule (e.g., subject-object-verb order) or a vocabulary word is a tool used to build expressions, not an expression itself. Therefore, a conlang's underlying structure cannot be copyrighted. The Argument For Copyright: A conlang is a highly imaginative, arbitrary work of art. Unlike natural languages that evolve organically through societal use, a conlang is a deliberate artistic choice by a single author.This tension came to a head in Paramount Pictures Corp. v. Axanar Productions, Inc. (2016). Paramount claimed that a fan-made film infringed on their intellectual property by using the Klingon language. The Language Creation Society filed an amicus brief arguing that Klingon had evolved into a living language spoken by real people and could not be owned.The court avoided a definitive ruling on whether a language itself can be copyrighted, settling the case on other grounds. However, the consensus among legal scholars suggests that while a vocabulary list or grammar guide book can be copyrighted as a text, speaking or writing new sentences in that language does not infringe

copyright.The emergence of Large Language Models (LLMs) has fundamentally disrupted how we define linguistic creativity. Algorithms can now generate complex poetry, legal briefs, and novels within seconds. This challenges the deeply anthropocentric foundations of copyright law.Global copyright frameworks are built on human agency. In the United States, the Copyright Office explicitly states it will register works only if they are created by a human being.When an AI model generates text, it does not engage in conscious linguistic creativity. Instead, it predicts tokens based on statistical probabilities derived from a vast corpus of human data. Consequently, purely AI-generated text falls instantly into the public domain.Another critical legal battlefront involves the datasets used to train these models. LLMs ingest billions of copyrighted books, articles, and websites to learn the nuances of human syntax. The Fair Use Defense: Tech corporations argue that text mining constitutes transformative fair use. The models do not copy the text to resell it; they analyze the structural relationships between words to learn language patterns. The Infringement Argument: Authors argue that their creative linguistic arrangements are being scraped without consent or compensation to create a commercial product that directly competes with human writers.

Conclusion

Linguistic creativity and copyright law exist in a perpetual state of dynamic tension. Language must remain free to change, mutate, and adapt to the needs of its speakers. If intellectual property law becomes too restrictive, it risks privatizing human communication and freezing cultural evolution.Conversely, without legal protection, professional writers, world-builders, and translators would have no economic incentive to enrich our cultural landscape with expansive literary works.As we look toward a future dominated by digital platforms and artificial intelligence, legal systems must refine their tools. They must continue to protect expansive, structural literary expressions while keeping individual words, functional grammar systems, and algorithmic outputs free for all humanity to share.

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Recent Advances in Metal Organic Frameworks to Catalyse Organic Transformations, Design Strategies and New Applications

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Abstract

Metal organic frameworks (MOFs) have evolved from primarily porous coordination materials to versatile platforms for heterogeneous organocatalysis. Their catalytic behavior is determined not only by the identity of the metal node but also by linker functionality, pore geometry, defect density, guest species, local coordination environment. These variables allow catalytic sites to be placed in a confined environment to influence adsorption, molecular orientation, intermediate stabilization, and product release. In recent literature, organic synthesis using MOFs has been expanded to include oxidation, hydrogenation, reduction, carbon-carbon and carbon-nitrogen couplings, C–H Functionalization, multicomponent reactions, photocatalysis, and asymmetric transformations. In this review, we critically examine how MOF architectures can be coupled to catalytic functionality. Particular attention will be paid to defect engineering, post-synthetic modification, guest encapsulation, bimetallic frameworks, pore-immobilized molecular catalysts, and MOF derived materials. A central issue is the identification of the species that actually performs the catalytic cycle. Apparent heterogeneous activity can sometimes involve framework nodes, linker sites, nanoparticles, released metal species or transformed derivatives. Therefore, control reactions, leaching measurements, hot-filtration tests and characterization before and after catalysis are essential. The review further considers the relationship between catalytic performance and sustainability. Catalyst recovery and selectivity can improve process efficiency, but the environmental burden of MOF synthesis, solvent use, metal content and regeneration must also be considered. Future progress is likely to depend on structure–activity modelling, operando characterization, stable single-site architectures, multifunctional frameworks and more standardized reporting of catalytic performance.

Keywords : Metal organic frameworks, heterogeneous catalysis, organic transformations, asymmetric catalysis, green chemistry.

Introduction

Catalysts influence organic synthesis by providing reaction pathways that are faster, more selective or less energy intensive than the corresponding uncatalysed processes. Homogeneous catalysts often provide well defined molecular environments and high activity, but catalyst separation and recovery can complicate downstream processing. Heterogeneous catalysts are easier to separate in many cases, although their surfaces may contain multiple types of sites whose local structures are difficult to define precisely. MOFs occupy an unusual position between these two approaches because they combine crystalline solid frameworks with chemically programmable metal and organic components. [8,9] A typical MOF is assembled from metal ions or metal clusters and multitopic organic linkers. Changing either component can alter connectivity, pore dimensions, chemical functionality and the accessibility of catalytic sites. The resulting structural modularity is especially valuable for organic reactions in which substrate recognition, confinement or selective activation is important. Earlier perspectives emphasized that the scientific value of MOF catalysis should not be reduced to surface area; the more distinctive opportunity is to control the environment in which a catalytic event occurs. [2,8] Recent reviews show that the field has broadened considerably. Current research covers metal centred catalysis, linker assisted reactions, molecular catalysts immobilized in pores, bimetallic systems, chiral frameworks, MOF organic metal compound hybrids and materials obtained by controlled conversion of MOFs. [3,7] The important research question is therefore shifting

from Can a MOF catalyse this reaction? toward Which structural feature of the MOF controls the observed reaction pathway, and is that feature retained during catalysis? The objective of this review is to organize these developments around catalyst design and mechanistic evidence rather than around a simple catalogue of reactions. The discussion therefore connects framework structure, active-site accessibility, mass transfer, reaction selectivity, catalyst stability and sustainability.

MOF architecture related to organic catalysts

Metal node and catalytic center

The inorganic components of MOFs can act as direct catalysts or serve as platforms for immobilizing other active species. Depending on the metal and its coordination environment, MOF sites can provide Lewis acidic, redox active, coordinative unsaturation sites, or binding sites for substrates and molecular catalysts. Metals specified in catalytic MOFs include Fe, Co, Ni, Cu, Zn, Mn, Zr, Ti, Al, Pd, Ru, among others. [5,7] Catalyst behavior is not determined solely by elemental composition. Oxidation state, coordination number, neighboring ligands, concentration defects, solvents or guest molecules can change the electronic environment of the metal site. Therefore, two scaffolds containing the same metal can have different reactivities. Experimentally establishing this dependence is more informative than the assumption that the presence of a catalytically active metal automatically determines the active site.

Organic linkers as functional components

Organic linkers largely determine structural topology and pore chemistry, but they can also contribute directly to catalysis. Amino, hydroxyl, carboxylate, sulfonic acid, pyridyl, and related functional groups can give rise to acid-base behavior, hydrogen bond interactions, metal binding sites, or photoactive units. Chiral linkers can create an asymmetric environment around traditional catalytic sites. [1,5] This dual structural and functional role makes linker design particularly important. Linkers that improve substrate binding may also slow product diffusion or block metal sites. Likewise, increasing the density of a functional group does not necessarily increase catalytic rate if diffusion or site accessibility becomes limiting. Such trade offs should be considered when interpreting structure activity relationships. MOF pores can influence catalysis through the local concentration, orientation, and residence time of reactants. Retention facilitates substrate active site encounters and stabilizes selected intermediates. You can also differentiate molecules according to size, shape, and polarity. These effects provide a conceptual link between porous catalysts and enzyme like microenvironments. [2,8] Isolation is not a universal good. Pores that are too small for the support can inhibit conversion, and strong adsorption can delay product release. For liquid phase reactions, loading the porous system with solvent can change the effective accessibility. Therefore, not only molecular size and reaction conditions, but also pore size, connectivity, and surface chemistry need to be evaluated.

Structure activity Relationships

Variable	**Catalytic role**	**Limitation**	**Evidence**
Metal identity/oxidation state	Lewis acidity, redox chemistry, substrate activation	Redox instability or leaching	XPS/XAS, ICP analysis, control reactions
Linker functionality	Acid/base sites, H-bonding, chirality	Site blocking; altered diffusion	FTIR, NMR, adsorption studies
Pore size/topology	Molecular confinement and selective transport	Diffusion resistance	Gas adsorption, microscopy, kinetic studies
Defect concentration	Additional unsaturated sites and pore accessibility	Loss of crystallinity/stability	PXRD, spectroscopy, digestion or defect analysis

Guest catalyst	Site isolation and protection of molecular catalyst	Mass transfer limitation or guest loss	TEM, spectroscopy, leaching tests
Particle morphology	External surface and diffusion distance	Aggregation or inaccessible internal volume	SEM/TEM, particle size analysis

The practical implication is that high surface area should be treated as a supporting property rather than a complete explanation of catalytic performance. A meaningful comparison should relate accessible active site density and local chemical environment to conversion, selectivity, productivity and stability. [8,9]

Organic transformation catalyzed by MOF

Oxidation Chemistry

Oxidation is one of the main applications of catalytic MOFs. Scaffolds containing Fe, Co, Mn, Cu, and other redox active metals have been studied for alcohol oxidation, alkene oxidation, epoxidation, oxidative coupling, and oxidation of sulphur containing substrates. Depending on the system, molecular oxygen or hydrogen peroxide acts as the oxidizing agent. [7,8] Although porous media can affect substrate adsorption and thus product distribution, the framework must remain stable under the chosen oxidation conditions. Additionally, oxygen transfer chemistry can promote changes in the oxidation state or coordination environment of metal assemblies, making post reaction characterization important.

Hydrogenation and Reduction

Hydrogenation and reduction reactions benefit from isolated or spatially separated metal sites, whereas aggregation otherwise reduces the number of accessible active centers. Ni, Pd, Ru, and Pt have all been studied in MOF based systems for transformations involving alkenes, alkynes, nitro groups, carbonyl compounds, and aromatic substrates. [4,7] Nickel based MOFs are of particular interest as they can support both hydrogenation and coupling chemistries while offering the opportunity to reduce dependence on specific noble metals. A 2024 review by Goyal et al. considers applications of Ni MOFs in oxidation, hydrogenation, coupling, C–H activation, and heterocycle synthesis. [4] However, quantitative comparisons of catalysts should consider metal loading, substrate concentration, temperature, pressure, and reaction time, rather than comparing only individual yields.

Carbon–Carbon Bond Formation

Pd, Ni, Cu, and related transition metal sites supported on MOFs have been studied in carbon-carbon bond formation reactions by Suzuki, Heck, Sonogashira, and Ullman et al. The framework may help isolate catalytic centres and can sometimes influence substrate approach through pore confinement. [2,7]The heterogeneous nature of the catalyst is attractive because recovery can be simpler than for a dissolved catalyst. However, cross coupling reactions require careful analysis of metal leaching. If soluble metal species are introduced into the reaction medium, the observed transformations may not result solely from the intact MOF. Therefore, hot filtration and quantitative elemental analysis are of particular importance.

Carbon–Nitrogen Bond Formation

The formation of C-N bonds is important in the fields of pharmaceuticals, agrochemicals, and materials chemistry. MOF based catalysts have been investigated for amination, N-arylation, heterocycle formation and tandem processes. [4,5] Here, pore chemistry can affect both reactant adsorption and the orientation of nucleophilic and electrophilic partners. If the metal center is involved in activation, the binding function may provide secondary interactions that alter selectivity. Such effects need to be supported by comparisons with non functionalized frameworks or frameworks with different functionalizations.

C–H Functionalization

Direct functionalization of C–H bonds is attractive because it reduces the number of preparatory steps required to set up a reaction panel. MOFs offer several features that are potentially useful for

these transformations, namely isolated metal sites, defined coordination environments, and limited reaction space. [4,5] C–H activation is also a rigorous test to understand the mechanism. The framework can simply immobilize a conventional metal catalyst or modify the reaction path through confinement or secondary interactions. Distinguishing these possibilities requires kinetic, spectroscopic and control experiments rather than relying on product formation alone.

Multicomponent Reactions

Multicomponent reactions (MCRs) combine three or more reactants in a sequence that can generate substantial molecular complexity from relatively simple starting materials. Biginelli, Hantsch, Ugi, Knoevenagel and related processes have been studied using MOF catalysts. [3] The attractiveness of MOFs in MCR is due to the possibility of combining multiple catalytic functions within one porous material. Lewis acid sites can activate carbonyl groups, and base or hydrogen bonds can facilitate subsequent fundamental steps. Retention may also increase the effective local concentration of the reagent. [3] Khurana and Awasthi's 2025 review focuses on the mechanics and design considerations of the MCR, supported by the Treasury. [3] A useful direction for future research would be to not only report the final product yield but also to determine which pore level interactions control the selectivity of the multistep sequence.

Photocatalytic Organic Conversion

MOFs can combine ordered porosity with photoactive chromophores or metal centers. Photosensitive systems may include porphyrins or conjugated linkers, photoactive metals, encapsulated sensitizers, or combinations of MOFs and semiconductors. Upon irradiation, the resulting excited states can participate in electron transfer, energy transfer, or radical pathways. [5,6] Potential applications include photochemical oxidation and reduction, C-C bond formation, and other selective transformations. Although scaffolds can influence charge separation and substrate proximity, interpretation of photocatalytic activity requires distinguishing between scaffold mediated processes and reactions initiated by free sensitizers or degraded components. The growing literature on MOF photocatalysts and related hybrid systems indicates that the coupling of molecular photochemistry to rigid porous structures is an active area of research. [5,6] Future studies should carefully report wavelength, light intensity, optical path, and catalyst charge, as these variables can have a significant impact on the apparent reaction rate.

Chiral MOFs and Asymmetric Catalysis

Chirality can be incorporated into MOFs via chiral linkers, chiral metal complexes, chiral guest molecules, or inherently chiral pore environments. Such materials have been studied for asymmetric hydrogenation, oxidation, addition, and formation of carbon-carbon or carbon-nitrogen bonds. [5] The main advantage sought in these systems is a spatially organized environment that can distinguish between competing stereochemical pathways. However, the observed enantiomeric excess should not be automatically attributed to the framework. It is necessary to determine whether the chiral component is stable during the reaction, whether the chiral guest is released, and whether the same selectivity is maintained after recycling. [5] A 2025 Coordination Chemistry Reviews article by Chauhan and coworkers summarizes recent work on both achiral and chiral MOFs and highlights photocatalytic, electrocatalytic and heterogeneous applications. [5] This area would benefit from standardized reporting of enantiomeric excess, catalyst loading, substrate scope and recyclability.

MOF Hybrids with Metal and Organic Compounds

Another design strategy is to integrate organometallic compounds (including coordination complexes, polyoxometalates, or organometallic compounds) into the MOF architecture. This structure provides a porous host and spatial organization, and guests perform specific catalytic or electronic functions. [6] Thus, the resulting hybrid can combine catalytic chemistry at the molecular level with solid state processability. Recent literature has classified the catalytic uses of these hybrids into thermal, photocatalytic, and electrocatalytic systems. [6] The key factor is the stability of the guest host association. If active molecular species diffuse during catalysis, the material may behave differently than the intended hybrid. Guest retention should therefore be monitored where possible.

MOF Derived Catalysts

MOFs can also serve as sacrificial or structured precursors for other catalytic materials. Heat treatments or controlled transformations can produce metal nanoparticles, metal oxides, porous carbons, metal carbon composites, or highly dispersed metal containing phases. [7] This strategy is useful because the structure of the precursor can influence the spatial distribution of metal species and the porosity of the carbon. However, the resulting material should not automatically be called a MOF catalyst. Transformations can destroy the original crystal structure and generate radically different active phases. When a scientific question concerns the origin of catalytic activity, studies need to compare the original MOF, the intermediate composite, and the final material to clarify the mechanism. Such a comparison helps distinguish between true structural effects and derived phase behavior.

Characterization:

Catalytic performance cannot be interpreted reliably without knowing whether the framework remains intact and whether the catalytic sites change during reaction. Characterization should therefore be designed around specific questions rather than used simply as a list of routine measurements. [8,9]

Technique	**Catalytic relevance**
PXRD	Detects phase changes, loss of crystallinity and structural transformation.
FTIR/Raman	Tracks linker coordination, adsorbed species and selected intermediates.
Gas adsorption/BET	Provides surface area, pore volume and information on accessibility.
SEM/TEM	Can reveal aggregation, nanoparticles and morphology changes.
XPS/XAS	Helps identify changes in electronic structure and possible active species.
ICP-OES/ICP-MS	Quantifies metal leaching and supports heterogeneity claims.
TGA/DSC	Defines solvent loss and decomposition behaviour.

Among these measurements, metal leaching analysis is particularly important for reactions involving transition metal nodes or supported metal complexes. Similarly, PXRD and spectroscopy after catalysis can reveal whether the material being recycled is chemically the same catalyst that was initially characterized. [2,10]

Green Chemistry and Process Sustainability

MOF catalysts can facilitate more robust synthesis if they offer lower catalyst loading, improved selectivity, reduced byproduct formation, milder conditions, or catalyst recovery. The possibility of using oxygen or hydrogen peroxide as oxidizing agents can also be of interest in certain oxidation reactions. [8,10] Nevertheless, a catalyst cannot be labelled sustainable from reaction yield alone. MOF preparation may require metal salts, organic linkers, solvents, heating and repeated washing or activation steps. The environmental assessment must therefore cover the entire sequence of activities: from material synthesis to reaction, recovery, regeneration and final disposal. Useful metrics include atom savings, catalyst loading, turnover number (TON), turnover frequency (TOF), E-factor, process mass intensity (PMI), solvent consumption, and catalyst life. TON and TOF are particularly useful when comparing catalysts because they take into account the amount of catalyst and in the case of TOF time. These measurements should be reported in conjunction with, and not in place of conversion and selectivity.

Atomic economy = (molecular weight of desired product / sum of molecular weights of stoichiometric reactants) × 100
TON = moles of product formed / moles of catalyst or active catalytic sites.
TOF = TON / reaction time

Comparative Assessment of MOF Catalytic Design

Catalyst Design	Opportunity	Risk	Evidence
Pristine MOF	Defined framework and accessible node/linker sites	Limited site density or instability	PXRD, adsorption, spectroscopy, controls
Defect engineered MOF	More exposed/unsaturated sites	Framework degradation	Defect quantification + stability testing
Post synthetically modified MOF	Tailored functionality	Loss or rearrangement of functional groups	Spectroscopy before/after reaction
Guest loaded MOF	Site isolation and protection	Guest migration/leaching	Loading and retention analysis
Bimetallic MOF	Potential cooperative catalysis	Unclear division of catalytic roles	Single metal controls + mechanistic evidence
MOF derived catalyst	High dispersion/porous derived phase	Loss of original MOF identity	Phase identification and parent material comparison

The comparison illustrates why higher surface area should not be treated as a universal design objective. The most useful catalyst is the material whose accessible active sites, transport properties and stability are appropriately matched to the reaction. [7,9]

Current Challenges

Chemical and thermal stability

Many MOFs are sensitive to water, strong acids or bases, elevated temperature, oxidants or reductants. A framework that performs well under dry laboratory conditions may therefore behave differently in a practical reaction medium. Stability should be evaluated in the actual catalyst environment rather than drawing conclusions based on a single thermal or PXRD measurement. [2,8]

Limits of mass transfer

Micropores provide useful thermal insulation but can also limit access to bulky substrates and products. Diffusion limitation can lead to incorrect kinetic interpretations, as seemingly low intrinsic activity may actually reflect slow transport. Therefore, particle size, pore connectivity, and external surface area must be considered together.

Metal leaching and catalyst identity

Leaching is particularly important for MOFs containing catalytically active transition metals. The dissolved metal can form a homogeneous path and can also change the composition of the solid during processing. Thus, quantitative analysis of solutions and control of filtration are essential to establish true heterogeneous catalysis. [2.10]

Regeneration and long term functioning

Loss of performance over repeated cycles can be the result of scaffold degradation, pore blockage, poisoning, metal loss, or structural remodeling. Simply stating that the catalyst has been reused several times is less informative than reporting activity based on the number of cycles with characterization of the recovered material.

Scaling and standardization

Scaling presents challenges that are not evident in small scale experiments, such as heat and mass transfer, solvent flow, batch-to-batch material variation, catalyst geometry, pressure drop, and

regeneration. Comparisons between studies are also difficult when catalyst loadings, substrate concentrations, solvents, temperatures, and reaction times vary. [7,9]

Future Outlook

Computer controlled catalyst design

Density functional theory, molecular modeling, and machine learning approaches help relate framework structure to adsorption energies, metal substrate interactions, and reaction barriers. The most useful results are predictive design rules that can be tested experimentally, rather than simply generating large databases of hypothesized structures.

Operando Characterization

Operando spectroscopy and diffraction allow the observation of structural and electronic changes under reaction conditions. Combining techniques such as XAS, PXRD, spectroscopy, and microscopy can help determine when a catalyst is stable, when it transforms, and which species correlate with catalyst turnover. [2]

Single site and multifunctional catalysts

Stable, isolated metal sites can provide a high degree of control over the structure of the active site, and multifunctional scaffolds can combine acid-base, redox, and photochemical functions. The challenge is to demonstrate that these sites are accessible and work together, rather than simply coexisting within the same material. [2,7]

Sustainable MOF synthesis

Future materials research should consider water-based or reduced solvent syntheses, mechanochemical approaches, low temperature processing, inexpensive binders, and earth abundant metals that maintain catalytic performance. Sustainability needs to be assessed throughout the material lifecycle, not just during the reaction phase.

Translation toward practical synthesis

For industrial relevance, conversion and yield are insufficient indicators. Catalyst productivity, selectivity, lifetime, regeneration, metal contamination, raw material cost, solvent demand, safety and scale up behaviour should be evaluated together. These criteria help distinguish between scientifically interesting catalysts and commercially available catalyst technologies.

Conclusion

MOFs are versatile catalysts because their metal nodes, organic linkers, pores, and defects can be independently designed. They enable oxidation, reduction, coupling, C–H functionalization, photocatalysis, and asymmetric synthesis. Their main advantage is that they can create a controlled catalytic microenvironment that influences adsorption, diffusion, and stabilization of intermediates. However, issues such as metal/guest leaching, framework transformation, and nanoparticle formation must be carefully evaluated using appropriate controls and extensive characterization. Future developments will focus on integrating MOF design, computation, performance, transportation analysis, and sustainability to establish a strong link between structure and activity. MOFs are promising because they enable precise design of the catalytic environment, which is often not possible with conventional catalysts.

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Women and Social Entrepreneurship in Nandurbar District, Maharashtra: Opportunities, Challenges and Empowerment

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Introduction

Women are important contributors to the development of every society. Their contribution can be seen in agriculture, household production, small businesses, community activities, education, health and local economic activities. In rural and tribal areas, women often perform multiple roles at the same time. They take care of children and elderly family members, participate in agricultural activities, collect forest products, support family businesses and contribute to household income.

Despite this contribution, women are often not recognized as economic actors. Their work is frequently considered part of household responsibility rather than productive economic activity. This situation is particularly important in rural and tribal communities where economic opportunities may be limited. Entrepreneurship can provide women with an opportunity to become economically independent. Social entrepreneurship goes one step further. It focuses not only on income and business but also on solving social problems and creating benefits for the community.

Social entrepreneurship may include activities related to education, health, environment, agriculture, handicrafts, food processing, financial inclusion and livelihood development. When women establish and manage such enterprises, they can become agents of social and economic change.

Nandurbar provides a valuable context for studying this issue. According to the Government of Maharashtra's district profile, the district had a population of 1,648,295 in Census 2011. Women represented 49.38% of the population. The overall literacy rate was 46.63%, while female literacy was 37.93%.

The Census District Handbook provides village- and town-level demographic and socio-economic information and information on infrastructure such as education, medical facilities, drinking water, communication, transport, electricity and banking. These conditions make Nandurbar an important district for understanding the opportunities and limitations experienced by women who want to develop enterprises.

Nandurbar is located in the north-western part of Maharashtra. The district has a predominantly rural character and a significant tribal population. Tribal communities have their own cultural traditions, languages, knowledge systems and livelihood practices. The district is home to communities that depend on agriculture, forest resources, wage labour, livestock and other traditional occupations. Women are closely involved in many of these activities.

The district's official profile reports that rural areas commonly use Bhili, Pawari, Kokani and Ahirani/Khandeshi languages, along with Marathi, Gujarati and Hindi in different parts of the district. The social and cultural background of Nandurbar is important when studying women's entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship cannot be separated from local culture, family structure, education, access to markets and community relationships.

Women may possess valuable traditional knowledge and skills but may not have sufficient access to finance, technology, formal markets or business training. Therefore, the development of women social entrepreneurship needs a community-based approach.

Concept of Social Entrepreneurship

Social entrepreneurship is an approach in which entrepreneurial methods are used to address social problems. Traditional entrepreneurship mainly focuses on creating products or services and generating profit. Social entrepreneurship has a broader purpose. It seeks to create social value along with economic sustainability.

A social enterprise may generate income but also work towards: employment generation, poverty reduction, women's empowerment, education, health improvement, environmental protection, livelihood development, community development, and inclusion of disadvantaged groups.

Social entrepreneurship is therefore relevant to rural and tribal development.

Haugh and Talwar studied the relationship between social entrepreneurship, empowerment and social change and found that social entrepreneurship can contribute to empowerment and social change, while social and cultural norms influence women's participation in entrepreneurial activity. This is especially relevant for tribal women because social norms, family responsibilities and limited resources can influence their ability to participate in entrepreneurship.

Women and Social Entrepreneurship

Women social entrepreneurs are women who use entrepreneurial activities to address social or community needs. Women may start enterprises because they want to: earn income, support their families, create employment for other women, solve a local problem, use local resources, preserve traditional skills, improve community conditions, or become economically independent. Women's entrepreneurship can therefore have both individual and collective effects.

For example, if ten women form a group to process agricultural products, the activity may generate income for those women. At the same time, it can create employment, increase the value of local agricultural products and provide better access to markets.

Research on Indian women social entrepreneurs has identified personal, social and environmental factors as important for the sustainable development of women-led enterprises. Entrepreneurial learning and competencies are particularly important.

Women and Self-Help Groups

Self-Help Groups (SHGs) have become an important mechanism for women's economic and social participation in rural India. An SHG generally consists of a group of people who save money collectively and use the savings and financial linkages to support members. SHGs can also become platforms for training, entrepreneurship, leadership and collective decision-making.

For women in Nandurbar, SHGs can provide an entry point into social entrepreneurship. Women can collectively undertake activities such as: food processing, agricultural processing, handicrafts, tailoring, livestock-related activities, local food production, small retail businesses, traditional products, packaging and marketing.

The collective nature of SHGs can reduce some of the risks faced by individual entrepreneurs.

Recent research in Maharashtra has found that microfinance and entrepreneurial participation among SHG members can have positive effects on women's social, economic and psychological empowerment, including financial independence, decision-making, social networks and self-confidence.

Thus, SHGs should not be viewed only as savings and credit groups. They can also become institutions for women's entrepreneurship and community development.

Tribal Women and Entrepreneurship in Nandurbar

Tribal women have traditionally contributed to household livelihoods through agriculture, forest-related activities, animal care, collection of local resources, handicrafts and other activities.

However, traditional economic activities do not automatically become entrepreneurship. To transform these activities into sustainable enterprises, women require:

1. Skill development
2. Access to finance
3. Market information
4. Packaging and branding
5. Transportation
6. Digital literacy
7. Business management
8. Institutional support

For example, if women collect or produce a local product and sell it as a raw material, they may receive limited income. If the same product is cleaned, processed, packaged, branded and sold in larger markets, its economic value can increase. Therefore, the central idea should be:

Local resource → Women's skill → Value addition → Enterprise → Market → Income → Empowerment. This approach can support both economic development and cultural preservation.

Major Areas of Social Entrepreneurship for Women

1. Agriculture-Based Enterprises

Agriculture is an important livelihood activity in rural areas. Women can establish small enterprises connected with agricultural production and processing. Possible activities include: grain processing, pulse processing, spice production, food packaging, traditional food products, vegetable processing, fruit processing, seed-related activities. Agricultural processing can help women move from being only producers to becoming value creators.

2. Food Processing

Food processing has good potential for women-led enterprises. Women can produce: pickles, papad, spices, traditional snacks, flour, processed grains, local food products, dried food products. Such enterprises can begin at a small scale and gradually expand. However, women need training in hygiene, quality control, packaging, pricing and marketing.

3. Tribal Handicrafts

Nandurbar has rich tribal cultural traditions. Women can contribute to handicraft production and traditional products. Potential activities include: traditional embroidery, decorative products, tribal clothing, jewellery, bamboo products, handmade articles, cultural products. Social entrepreneurship can help preserve traditional knowledge while creating income opportunities.

The challenge is to ensure that commercialization does not remove control from the community or reduce women to low-paid producers.

4. Forest-Based Products

Forest-based livelihoods are important in many tribal communities. Women may participate in the collection, processing or sale of forest products. Instead of selling raw products, women can be trained in: processing, grading, storage, packaging, branding, collective marketing. This can improve value addition and potentially increase local income.

5. Digital Entrepreneurship

Digital technology is changing the possibilities for rural entrepreneurs. Women can use smartphones and digital platforms for: advertising products, communicating with customers, receiving digital payments, displaying products, taking orders, maintaining customer networks.

Digital entrepreneurship can help women overcome some geographical barriers. However, digital inclusion requires training and affordable access to technology.

Role of Social Entrepreneurship in Women's Empowerment

Women's empowerment is not only about income. It also includes confidence, decision-making, leadership, social participation and control over resources.

1. Economic Empowerment

Income from an enterprise can help women contribute directly to household expenditure. Economic independence can also reduce dependence on other family members.

2. Decision-Making

Women who earn and manage money may have greater participation in decisions related to: children's education, household expenditure, health, savings, investment, business expansion.

3. Self-Confidence

Entrepreneurship requires women to communicate with customers, banks, government agencies and other entrepreneurs. These experiences can improve confidence.

4. Leadership

Group enterprises provide opportunities for women to become: Group leaders, treasurers, managers,

trainers, marketing representatives. Thus entrepreneurship can develop leadership skills.

5. Social Empowerment

Women entrepreneurs can become visible members of their communities. They may participate more actively in local institutions and community development activities. Research on women social entrepreneurship in India also identifies self-efficacy as an important factor associated with social enterprise performance.

Major Challenges

Women social entrepreneurs in Nandurbar may face several interconnected challenges.

1. Lack of Finance

Access to capital is one of the major challenges for small entrepreneurs. Women may require money for: raw materials, machines, packaging, transportation, marketing, working capital.

2. Lack of Business Skills

Traditional skills are not enough to run a successful enterprise. Women may require training in: Accounting, business planning, costing, pricing, marketing, customer relations, digital technology.

3. Market Problems

A major challenge is the gap between production and marketing. Women may produce good-quality products but receive low prices because they depend on local intermediaries.

4. Transportation

For rural and tribal women, transportation can affect the ability to take products to markets. Better transport and collective marketing can reduce this problem.

5. Family Responsibilities

Women often have responsibility for: children, cooking, elderly family members, household management. These responsibilities can reduce the time available for entrepreneurship.

6. Social Norms

Social and cultural expectations may influence women's freedom to travel, attend training programmes or make independent business decisions. Haugh and Talwar's study also emphasizes the influence of social and cultural norms on women's participation in entrepreneurship.

7. Digital Divide

Digital technology creates opportunities, but women who lack digital literacy may not benefit from these opportunities. Training should therefore be practical and delivered in locally understandable languages.

Opportunities for Women Social Entrepreneurship in Nandurbar

Nandurbar has several opportunities for women-led social enterprises.

1. Local Resources

Local agricultural and forest-based resources can support value-added enterprises.

2. Tribal Culture

Traditional knowledge and cultural products can be developed into ethical and community-owned enterprises.

3. Self-Help Groups

SHGs provide a possible institutional platform for collective entrepreneurship.

4. Government Support

Government livelihood, tribal development, women's development and entrepreneurship programmes can support training, credit and market linkages.

5. Digital Markets

Online platforms can provide access to customers outside the local area.

6. Educational Institutions

Colleges and universities can support entrepreneurship through: research, training, entrepreneurship cells, field projects, mentoring, market studies.

Role of Social Capital

Social capital is particularly important in rural and tribal communities.

Social capital includes: Relationships, trust, cooperation, community networks, group membership, social support. Women may use these networks to obtain information, customers, raw materials, finance and support.

A 2024 study of indigenous women entrepreneurs in Odisha found that social capital had a positive relationship with sustainable livelihood and that women entrepreneurship played a mediating role in this relationship. The study also recommended strengthening women's Self-Help Groups and entrepreneurial activities.

This finding is relevant to Nandurbar because community networks and collective action can be important resources for tribal women.

Conclusion

Women social entrepreneurship has significant potential to contribute to the development of Nandurbar district. Women are already involved in agriculture, household production, traditional occupations, forest-related livelihoods and community activities. The challenge is to transform these existing skills and activities into sustainable and dignified economic opportunities.

Social entrepreneurship can provide a bridge between income generation and social development. A woman who starts a small food-processing enterprise, for example, may earn income for her family while also creating employment for other women. Similarly, a group producing tribal handicrafts can preserve cultural knowledge while developing a marketable product. However, entrepreneurship should not be understood simply as providing loans. Finance is important, but women also need education, business skills, technology, market access, social support, infrastructure and confidence.

The Nandurbar context requires a development model that respects local culture and uses local resources. Tribal women should not be treated only as beneficiaries of development programmes. They should be recognized as entrepreneurs, producers, leaders and agents of social change. The evidence from the wider Indian literature supports this approach. Research has linked women's social entrepreneurship with empowerment, social change, sustainable livelihoods, social capital and enterprise performance.

Therefore, strengthening women-led social enterprises in Nandurbar can contribute to three connected goals: Women's Empowerment, Sustainable Livelihood and Community Development a long-term strategy based on these three areas can make women's entrepreneurship an important part of inclusive and sustainable development in Nandurbar district.

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Evaluating the Impact of Digital Payment Adoption on Small Businesses

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Abstract

The digital payment system has rapid growth significantly transformed the financial practices of small businesses. This research paper examines the impact of digital payment systems such as UPI, mobile wallets, online banking, and card-based transactions on financial management practices of small enterprises. The study focuses on areas including cash flow management, financial record-keeping, transparency, customer satisfaction, and financial decision-making. A descriptive research design was adopted using primary and secondary data sources. Findings indicate that digital payment systems improve transaction efficiency, financial transparency and operational effectiveness. However, challenges such as cyber security concerns, transaction charges and limited digital literacy continue to affect adoption among certain business groups. The study concludes that digital payment systems positively influence the financial management of small businesses and contribute toward long-term sustainability and financial inclusion.

Keywords: Digital Payment, Digital Transaction, Market Transformation, UPI adaptation, Small Business.

Introduction

The digital payment system is a transformative impact on small businesses, reshaping how they operate, interact with customers, and manage transactions. Digital payments, including mobile wallets, online banking, and card transactions, offer small business owners a more efficient, secure, and scalable way to handle payments. By adopting these systems, small businesses can streamline their financial operations, reduce the risk of handling cash and expand their customer base by offering more convenient payment methods. The impact of digital payments is multifaceted businesses can now enjoy faster cash flow, improved record- keeping and increased customer satisfaction due to the ease of making payments. It offers to small businesses the ability to process payments quickly, securely, and efficiently. This shift away from cash-based transactions has not only enhanced convenience for customers but also opened up new opportunity for businesses to reach a broader audience, both locally and globally. These systems enhance customer convenience and satisfaction by offering flexible payment options and faster checkout experiences. Systems also enable small businesses to track transactions in real-time, providing better financial insights and enhancing decision-making. While challenges such as transaction fees, security concerns and infrastructure requirements exist, the overall impact of digital payment systems is largely positive. By adopting these systems, small businesses can boost customer satisfaction, increase efficiency, and stay competitive in an increasingly digital world.

1. Objectives of the Study:

1. To analysis the impact of digital payment adoption on small businesses.
2. To understand customer behavior in relation to digital transaction.
3. To analysis the benefits and challenges by small businesses in adopting digital payment system.
4. To examine the influence of digital payment on customer satisfaction and business performance.

2. **Review of literature**

Roy and Sinha (2014) examined the factors influencing consumers' acceptance of digital payment systems. They created a research model that accounted for variables including customer attitude, perceived simplicity of use, usefulness, credibility, and risk

Gupta and Kumar (2017) studied that digital transactions are an excellent concept for the nation's economic growth to improve. The demonetization policy has increased the use of digital banking

services, checks, and mobile wallets. This government policy has facilitated risk-free transactions and reduced the likelihood of larceny and currency loss. The growth of the digital trading platform is accelerating daily.

Kavitha and Kumar (2018) found that to comprehend the fees associated with payment gateways, it is necessary to examine consumer preferences, associated fees, and associated risks. To evaluate and select payment gateways based on fees and risks and to make recommendations for the optimal gateway choice**.**

Krishna & Shanmugam, (2020): The researchers targeted to identify the demographic factors and their relationship with customers' adoption of "E-payment systems". The study has analyzed the importance of demographic profile on the variable's "perceived benefits, perceived speed, and facilitating conditions. MANOVA" (Multivariate analysis) of variance was used. The test results elucidated that demographic profile directly impacts the "dependent variables' perceived benefits, perceived speed, and facilitating conditions**".**

Mahesh and Bhat (2022) analyze India's evolving digital payment landscape, highlighting its transformative impact on trade and commerce. The study outlines the shift from cash-based to digital transactions, driven by innovations like UPI and mobile wallets. These advancements have redefined customer behavior, enhanced transparency, and urged small traders to adapt to a more digitized marketplace.

Pandey, S. K. (2022) attempted to analyze how different digital payment methods have developed in the past and how COVID-19 has affected Indian digital payment systems.

Husainah (2023) have observed that digital wallets have experienced rapid development to align with the demands of a contemporary society that values mobility and the expeditious execution of transactions.

Suresh Kumar and Shobana (2024) explored the interplay between digital payments, financial inclusion, and monetary policy in India. Their study emphasizes that digital financial tools enhance access to formal financial services, especially for underserved populations. The research highlights the importance of digital infrastructure in promoting inclusion and economic growth, while also noting the role of digital payments in supporting broader policy goals such as financial stability and income distribution

3. Relationship Between Digital Payments and Trader Adaptation:

The introduction of digital payment systems has significantly altered how small traders manage their business operations. Digital payments reduce the risks associated with handling cash, improve record-keeping, and open access to formal credit systems.

Small businesses are increasingly adopting digital payments, including mobile payments, digital wallets, and cryptocurrency. According to a report by the National Small Business Association, 44% of small businesses now accept digital payments. Adopting digital payments offers small businesses several potential benefits such as increasing sales by providing a convenient and secure payment option for customers and reducing the costs associated with cash handling. However, small businesses also face some challenges such as the need for additional training, the cost of implementing new technology and the need to comply with regulations

4. Types Of Digital Payment Systems:

Digital payment systems come in various forms, each designed to facilitate secure and convenient electronic transactions. The common types of digital payment systems used by small businesses include:

- **Mobile Wallets:**

Mobile wallets are apps or software that store payment information digitally and allow users to make payments using their Smartphones. Examples include Apple Pay, Google Pay, Samsung Pay, and Paytm etc. These wallets often link to a bank account or credit card and enable quick payments via QR codes or NFC technology.

- **Unified Payments Interface (UPI)**

UPI is an instant real-time payment system developed primarily in India, enabling inter-bank transactions through mobile devices. It allows users to transfer money using a virtual payment address without needing bank details, making payments fast and easy.

- **Credit and Debit Card Payments**

Payments made via credit and debit cards remain one of the most widely accepted digital payment methods. Small businesses use point-of-sale (POS) terminals to accept these cards, which may be physical or virtual.

- **Online Payment Gateways**

Online payment gateways like PayPal, Stripe, and Razorpay enable businesses to accept payments via websites or apps. These gateways facilitate secure online transactions by processing card payments, net banking, and other digital payment methods.

- **QR Code Payments**

Quick Response (QR) code payments allow customers to scan a merchant's QR code using their smartphone to instantly transfer money. This method is simple and cost-effective for small businesses to implement.

- **Contactless Payments (NFC Technology)**

Near Field Communication (NFC) technology enables contactless payments where users tap their card or smartphone near a payment terminal to complete transactions swiftly without physical contact

5. Impact Of Digital Payment System On Small Business

- **Improved Transaction Efficiency:**

Digital payment systems enable faster, more convenient transactions, reducing the time and effort required to handle cash. Businesses benefit from seamless and real-time payment processing through methods like UPI, mobile wallets and POS systems.

- **Enhanced Customer Experience:**

The convenience of multiple payment options improves customer satisfaction and fosters loyalty. Customers appreciate contactless and secure payment methods, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- **Wider Market Reach:**

Digital payments facilitate online sales, enabling small businesses to reach regional, national, and even global markets. The ability to transact digitally attracts younger, tech-savvy customers who prefer cashless methods.

- **Better Financial Management:**

Digital payment systems offer automated record- keeping, making it easier for small businesses to track income, expenses, and profits. Transparent digital transactions simplify tax filings and compliance with financial regulations.

- **Access to Credit and Financial Services:**

Digital transaction histories help small businesses build creditworthiness, making it easier to secure loans and other financial services.

- **Cost Savings on Cash Handling:**

Businesses save money on cash handling costs, such as transport, storage, and security.

- **Support for Digital Transformation:**

Adoption of digital payment systems often leads to further technological advancements, such as the use of digital inventory management and marketing tools.

6. **Benefits of Digital Payment System**

- **Increased Convenience:**

Digital payment systems allow businesses to accept payments anytime and anywhere, enabling faster and more efficient transactions. Customers can choose from multiple payment methods such as UPI, mobile wallets, net banking, or credit/debit cards.

- **Enhanced Operational Efficiency:**

Automated payment systems reduce the time and effort required to handle cash, allowing businesses to focus on core operations. Digital records streamline' bookkeeping, tax filing, and financial management.

- **Broader Customer Reach:**

By accepting digital payments, businesses can cater to tech-savvy customers and attract a wider audience, including those who prefer cashless transactions. Digital platforms enable online sales, breaking geographical barriers and increasing market access.

- **Improved Cash Flow Management:**

Instant transaction processing reduces delays in receiving payments, improving liquidity and easy flow for businesses. Small businesses can better manage. Inventory and plan operations with predictable cash inflow.

- **Enhanced Security:**

Digital payments reduce the risk of theft and counterfeit currency, which are common issues with cash transactions. Advanced encryption and authentication methods safeguard payment information.

- **Financial Inclusion:**

Small businesses gain access to formal banking and credit systems through digital payment records, making it easier to secure loans and credit facilities.

- **Cost Savings:**

While there are fees associated with digital payments, businesses can save on cash handling costs, such as transporting and storing physical money. Reducing dependency on cash lowers administrative overhead.

- **Customer Insights and Marketing Opportunities:**

Digital payments provide data on customer behavior and preferences, which can be used to improve services and target marketing campaigns. Integration with loyalty programs and discounts becomes seamless.

- **Government Support and Incentives:**

Policies promoting digital payments, such as reduced transaction fees or subsidies for digital infrastructure, benefit small businesses.

- **Environmental Sustainability:**

Reducing the reliance on cash minimizes paper usage in currency printing and receipt generation, contributing to sustainability.

7. **Challenges and Barriers:**

- **Digital Divide and Infrastructure Limitations:**

The digital divide refers to the unequal access to technology, internet connectivity, and digital literacy across different populations. In many semi-urban and rural areas, small traders lack access to stable internet, smartphones, and reliable electricity, which makes adopting digital payments impractical.

- **Awareness and Trust Issues:**

Many small traders are unfamiliar with how digital payments work or fear potential fraud, data theft, and hidden costs. A lack of awareness about the benefits and security measures available leads to resistance toward digital adoption.

- **Government and Institutional Gaps:**

Although several policies promote digitalization, the lack of localized, trader-focused implementation strategies has limited their effectiveness. Often, there is insufficient coordination between fintech providers, local authorities, and the traders themselves.

8. Conclusion

The research concludes that digital payment systems exert a highly statistically visible, positive impact on the comprehensive financial management frameworks of small businesses. They materially upgrade operational transaction velocity, institutional transparency, systematic record maintenance,

and short-term cash budgeting routines. Furthermore, by on boarding local merchant ecosystems onto digital financial rails, these frameworks fundamentally support macro-level financial inclusion goals. While distinct barriers like security risks and transaction overhead costs persist, the long-term utility matrices of embedding modern payment interfaces overwhelmingly outweigh immediate frictional limitations. Consequently, small business entities that systematically assimilate digital payment pathways into regular financial architectures secure enhanced long-term operational health, structural stability, and an enduring competitive advantage in digitalfirst landscapes.

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A Study of Racial Discrimination and Societal Barriers in Langston Hughes's "As I Grew Older"

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Abstract

Langston Hughes is one of the most influential African American poets of the twentieth century. His poetry frequently explores racial identity, discrimination, inequality, social injustice, dreams, dignity, and the struggle for freedom. "As I Grew Older" is a significant poem in which Hughes presents the psychological and social consequences of racial discrimination through the powerful image of a wall separating the speaker from his dream. The poem begins with the speaker remembering his childhood dream of standing in the sunlight. As he grows older, however, he becomes conscious of the racial barriers that prevent him from reaching that dream. The transformation from childhood innocence to adult awareness becomes a central feature of the poem. The "wall" functions as a complex symbol of racism, prejudice, social exclusion, inequality, and psychological oppression. The poem also presents the struggle to overcome these barriers. This paper examines the representation of racial discrimination and societal barriers in "As I Grew Older," with particular attention to symbolism, imagery, identity, dreams, psychological conflict, and resistance. The study argues that Hughes transforms a personal experience into a broader commentary on the condition of African Americans and marginalized communities. The poem ultimately communicates the importance of hope, self-awareness, dignity, and resistance against discriminatory social structures.

Keywords: Langston Hughes, "As I Grew Older," racial discrimination, racism, societal barriers, African American literature, identity, dream, wall, inequality, social exclusion.

1. Introduction

Literature often becomes a powerful medium through which writers express social realities and challenge injustice. Poetry, in particular, can transform individual experiences into universal reflections on human life. Langston Hughes occupies an important position in African American literature because his poetry gives voice to the experiences, aspirations, frustrations, and struggles of Black Americans.

Hughes lived and wrote during a period when racial segregation, discrimination, and unequal social opportunities deeply affected African American life in the United States. His poetry frequently addresses the conflict between the democratic ideals of freedom and equality and the lived reality of racial inequality.

"As I Grew Older" is a relatively short but deeply symbolic poem. Its simplicity of language conceals a complex psychological and social meaning. The speaker recalls a childhood dream associated with sunlight. As the speaker grows older, racial consciousness enters his understanding of the world. The dream that once appeared easily attainable becomes separated from him by an invisible yet powerful barrier.

The poem therefore presents growing up not simply as a biological or psychological process but also as an awakening to social reality. Childhood innocence gradually gives way to an awareness of racial discrimination. The poem's central image of the wall represents the social structures that obstruct the speaker's aspirations.

This paper examines how Hughes represents racial discrimination and societal barriers through the speaker's changing consciousness and through the symbolic contrast between light and darkness, dream and reality, and self and wall.

2. Objectives of the Study

To examine the representation of racial discrimination in "As I Grew Older."
To analyse the symbolism of the wall in the poem.
To study the societal barriers that restrict the speaker's aspirations.
To examine the relationship between racial identity and psychological experience.
To analyse Hughes's use of imagery and symbolism.
To understand the significance of the dream and sunlight imagery.
To explore the poem as a representation of the African American struggle for equality and dignity.
To examine the movement from innocence to racial consciousness.

3. Research Methodology

This study employs a qualitative and analytical method. The primary text for analysis is Langston Hughes's poem "As I Grew Older." The poem is examined through close textual reading, particularly focusing on symbolism, imagery, metaphor, diction, structure, and psychological representation.

The study also uses the historical and cultural context of African American literature to understand the poem's treatment of racial discrimination. Secondary critical perspectives on Hughes and African American poetry may be used to contextualize the analysis.

The research is interpretative rather than statistical. It attempts to establish how poetic images communicate social and psychological experiences.

4. Langston Hughes and African American Literature

Langston Hughes was an important figure of the Harlem Renaissance, a major African American cultural movement associated particularly with the 1920s and subsequent decades. His literary work includes poetry, fiction, essays, drama, and other forms of writing.

Hughes's poetry is notable for its accessibility and its engagement with ordinary Black life. He wrote about dreams, racial injustice, poverty, labour, identity, music, dignity and the desire for equality.

One of the recurring concerns in Hughes's writing is the conflict between the promise of American democracy and the experiences of African Americans who encountered discrimination and exclusion. His poetry often gives expression to the aspirations of people whose social circumstances prevent them from fully realizing their potential.

"As I Grew Older" belongs to this broad tradition of examining racial consciousness. The poem does not present racism through a lengthy political argument. Instead, Hughes communicates the experience through a highly concentrated symbolic structure.

5. Childhood Dream and the Idea of Freedom

The poem begins with the speaker remembering a childhood dream. The dream is connected with the image of sunlight. Sunlight traditionally symbolizes hope, freedom, happiness, knowledge, possibility and life.

The child's relationship with the sunlight is uncomplicated. At that stage, the speaker does not fully understand the racial and social structures that may restrict his future.

The childhood dream can therefore be understood as a representation of unrestricted human aspiration. The child dreams without fully recognizing the barriers that society may later impose.

As the speaker grows older, however, the dream changes. The world becomes increasingly divided by racial consciousness. What appeared naturally accessible during childhood begins to seem distant.

This transition is one of the most important aspects of the poem. Hughes suggests that discrimination is not merely an external political problem. It can become part of an individual's psychological experience.

6. The Transformation from Innocence to Awareness

The title "As I Grew Older" itself suggests a process of development. Growing older ordinarily implies gaining knowledge and maturity. In this poem, however, maturity also involves discovering an unjust social reality.

The speaker's development can be understood in three stages:

Racial Discrimination as a Societal Barrier

Racial discrimination in the poem can be understood as a system rather than merely as an individual act of prejudice.

The speaker does not identify one particular person who prevents him from reaching the sunlight. Instead, the barrier appears as a larger social force.

This is significant because racism can operate through institutions, customs, attitudes, stereotypes, and unequal opportunities.

The poem therefore moves beyond a single incident of discrimination. The wall becomes a metaphor for a society in which racial identity can determine the opportunities available to an individual.

11. The Conflict between Dream and Reality

The concept of the dream is central to Hughes's literary imagination. His poetry repeatedly considers dreams as expressions of human aspirations.

In "As I Grew Older," the dream represents an ideal future. Reality, however, introduces racial barriers.

Resistance and the Breaking of Barriers

The poem does not end simply with acceptance of discrimination. Instead, the speaker moves toward resistance.

The struggle against the wall can be interpreted as a struggle against racial prejudice, segregation, social exclusion, limited opportunities, internalized oppression, and restrictions on human aspiration.

This movement gives the poem an important sense of agency.

Hughes presents awareness as a necessary step toward resistance. Once the speaker understands the nature of the barrier, he can begin to challenge it.

The Poem and the African American Experience

"As I Grew Older" can be situated within the broader history of African American literature, which has frequently addressed the themes of freedom, identity, oppression, equality, and resistance.

African American writers have used literature to challenge racial stereotypes and to assert the humanity and dignity of Black people.

Hughes's poem participates in this tradition by presenting racism not merely as a political issue but as something that affects dreams, identity, consciousness, and everyday experience.

The poem therefore contributes to a literature of resistance while retaining an intensely personal voice.

Social Barriers Beyond Race

Although racial discrimination is central to the poem's historical context, the wall can also be interpreted more broadly as a symbol of social barriers.

Human beings may encounter barriers based on social class, poverty, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, caste, cultural background, or other forms of social exclusion.

The poem does not erase the specific African American context. Rather, its symbolic structure allows readers to understand how socially constructed barriers can limit human possibilities.

7. The Symbolism of the Wall

The most important symbol in "As I Grew Older" is the wall.

The wall can be interpreted at several levels.

7.1 The Wall as Racism: The wall represents racial discrimination. It separates the speaker from the sunlight just as racist social structures can separate marginalized people from equal opportunities. The wall is therefore not merely a physical object. It represents an artificial division created by society.

7.2 The Wall as Social Inequality: The wall may also represent unequal access to education, employment, social mobility, dignity, and participation in society. The speaker's dream represents a life of possibility, while the wall represents the social conditions that make that possibility difficult to achieve.

7.3 The Wall as Psychological Oppression: The wall eventually becomes internalized. The speaker does not simply encounter discrimination outside himself; he experiences its effects psychologically. Social discrimination can influence how individuals perceive their own possibilities.

7.4 The Wall as Segregation: The wall also recalls the historical experience of racial separation. Segregation created divisions between Black and white Americans in public and social life. Hughes transforms the historical reality of segregation into a personal poetic image.

8. Sunlight as a Symbol of Hope

The image of sunlight contrasts sharply with the wall.

Sunlight can symbolize freedom, hope, equality, knowledge, dignity, opportunity, social acceptance, and fulfillment of dreams.

The speaker desires to reach the sunlight, but the wall blocks his access to it.

The contrast between sunlight and the wall creates the central symbolic tension of the poem: Sunlight represents aspiration and freedom; the wall represents discrimination and restriction; darkness represents oppression and psychological suffering.

This symbolic structure makes the poem powerful despite its relatively simple vocabulary.

9. Darkness and Psychological Experience

Darkness is another important element in the poem. The movement from sunlight toward darkness reflects the speaker's experience of social exclusion.

Darkness may suggest loss of innocence, fear, frustration, exclusion, helplessness, uncertainty, and psychological oppression.

However, darkness does not permanently define the speaker. The poem's movement toward resistance suggests that oppression can be challenged.

Hughes therefore avoids presenting the marginalized individual merely as a passive victim. The speaker gradually develops an awareness of the barrier and searches for a way beyond it.

10. Racial Discrimination as a Societal Barrier

Racial discrimination in the poem can be understood as a system rather than merely as an individual act of prejudice.

The speaker does not identify one particular person who prevents him from reaching the sunlight. Instead, the barrier appears as a larger social force.

This is significant because racism can operate through institutions, customs, attitudes, stereotypes and unequal opportunities.

The poem therefore moves beyond a single incident of discrimination. The wall becomes a metaphor for a society in which racial identity can determine the opportunities available to an individual.

12. Identity and Racial Consciousness

The poem is also a study of identity formation.

The speaker's childhood identity is not initially dominated by racial difference. As he grows older, however, social discrimination makes racial identity increasingly significant.

This suggests that racial consciousness is partly shaped by society's treatment of racial groups.

The speaker discovers that society has constructed a wall around his identity. His struggle is therefore both external and internal: he must challenge the social barrier while also refusing to allow that barrier to define the limits of his aspirations.

13. Psychological Effects of Discrimination

One of the poem's important contributions is its presentation of the psychological consequences of discrimination.

Racial discrimination can produce feelings of exclusion, frustration, alienation, anger, loss of confidence, restricted aspiration, and emotional conflict.

Hughes communicates these effects through imagery rather than through abstract psychological explanation.

The speaker's experience demonstrates how a social injustice can become a personal emotional reality.

14. The Significance of the Speaker's Dream

The dream in the poem has both personal and collective dimensions.

At the personal level, it represents the speaker's desire for a fulfilling life.

At the collective level, it may be read as reflecting the aspirations of African Americans seeking equality and dignity.

The dream therefore becomes larger than the individual speaker. It represents the universal human desire to live without artificial barriers.

This is one reason why the poem can be read beyond its historical context. Although it emerges from the African American experience, its central concern with discrimination and blocked aspirations has broader human significance.

15. Imagery in the Poem

Hughes uses a small number of powerful images to construct the poem's meaning.

15.1 Sunlight: Sunlight suggests hope, freedom, and possibility.

15.2 Wall: The wall symbolizes racial and societal barriers.

15.3 Shadow and Darkness: These images suggest oppression, exclusion, and psychological suffering.

15.4 **Dream**: The dream represents aspiration and the possibility of a better future.

The effectiveness of the poem comes partly from the interaction of these images. Hughes does not need extensive description because the symbols communicate complex social ideas economically.

16. Language and Style

Hughes uses relatively simple language in the poem. This simplicity is an important stylistic feature.

The poem does not depend on highly complicated vocabulary. Instead, Hughes relies on repetition, visual imagery, contrast, symbolism, and emotional intensity.

The simplicity makes the poem accessible while allowing it to communicate profound ideas.

The first-person perspective also creates immediacy. Readers experience the speaker's movement from childhood innocence to adult awareness from within his consciousness.

17. Repetition and Emphasis

Repetition contributes to the emotional structure of the poem.

The repeated references to the wall reinforce the sense of obstruction. The reader repeatedly encounters the same symbolic barrier, just as the speaker repeatedly confronts social restrictions.

This repetition suggests that discrimination is not an isolated event. It can become a persistent presence in a person's life.

At the same time, the poem's movement toward action changes the meaning of the wall. The barrier is no longer simply something to observe; it becomes something to challenge.

18. The Wall as an Artificial Construction

A particularly important interpretation of the wall is that it is a constructed barrier.

Walls separate spaces. They distinguish inside from outside, one group from another, and one social position from another.

In the poem, the wall is not presented as a natural feature of the world. It is symbolic of barriers produced by social attitudes and institutions.

This interpretation allows the poem to question the legitimacy of racial divisions. The speaker's dream is associated with natural light, whereas the wall represents an imposed restriction.

19. Resistance and the Breaking of Barriers

The poem does not end simply with acceptance of discrimination. Instead, the speaker moves toward resistance.

The struggle against the wall can be interpreted as a struggle against racial prejudice, segregation, social exclusion, limited opportunities, internalized oppression, and restrictions on human aspiration.

This movement gives the poem an important sense of agency.

Hughes presents awareness as a necessary step toward resistance. Once the speaker understands the nature of the barrier, he can begin to challenge it.

20. The Poem and the African American Experience

"As I Grew Older" can be situated within the broader history of African American literature, which has frequently addressed the themes of freedom, identity, oppression, equality, and resistance.

African American writers have used literature to challenge racial stereotypes and to assert the humanity and dignity of Black people.

Hughes's poem participates in this tradition by presenting racism not merely as a political issue but as something that affects dreams, identity, consciousness, and everyday experience.

The poem therefore contributes to a literature of resistance while retaining an intensely personal voice.

21. Social Barriers Beyond Race

Although racial discrimination is central to the poem's historical context, the wall can also be interpreted more broadly as a symbol of social barriers.

Human beings may encounter barriers based on social class, poverty, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, caste, cultural background, or other forms of social exclusion.

The poem does not erase the specific African American context. Rather, its symbolic structure allows readers to understand how socially constructed barriers can limit human possibilities.

22. Contemporary Relevance

The poem remains relevant because questions of discrimination, social inclusion, equality, and access to opportunity continue to appear in contemporary societies.

The exact historical circumstances represented by Hughes should not be mechanically equated with present-day conditions. However, the poem's central concern—the experience of encountering barriers because of one's social identity—continues to provide a useful framework for thinking about exclusion.

Its contemporary relevance lies particularly in its emphasis on dignity and the human desire to overcome imposed limitations.

For students, the poem can encourage discussion about equality, prejudice, social justice, identity, and the relationship between individual dreams and social structures.

23. Educational Significance

"As I Grew Older" is valuable for teaching because it allows students to study literary techniques alongside social issues.

Through the poem, students can learn about symbolism, metaphor, imagery, racial identity, social discrimination, psychological conflict, African American literature, dreams and aspirations, social justice, and resistance and hope.

The poem demonstrates how a short literary text can contain multiple levels of meaning.

24. Major Themes

The principal themes of the poem include:

24.1 Racial Discrimination: The poem portrays the experience of encountering social barriers associated with racial identity.

24.2 Loss of Innocence: Growing older brings awareness of an unjust social reality.

24.3 Dreams and Aspirations: The dream symbolizes the speaker's desire for freedom and fulfillment.

24.4 Social Exclusion: The wall represents exclusion from opportunities and equality.

24.5 Identity: The speaker's understanding of himself changes as he becomes conscious of racial divisions.
24.6 Psychological Oppression: The social barrier becomes an internal psychological experience.
24.7 Resistance: The poem ultimately moves toward challenging the barrier rather than accepting it permanently.
24.8 Hope: The sunlight remains an important symbol of the possibility of freedom and fulfillment.

25. Critical Interpretation

From a literary perspective, "As I Grew Older" can be read as a poem about the relationship between individual consciousness and social structures.

The speaker's dream is not destroyed because of a personal weakness. It is obstructed by a social barrier.

This distinction is crucial. Hughes directs attention away from blaming the individual and toward understanding the structures that create exclusion.

The poem can therefore be read as a critique of a society in which racial identity influences access to human possibility.

At the same time, the poem does not reduce the speaker to a victim. His awareness produces a desire to overcome the wall.

The poem thus combines social criticism with personal agency.

26. Findings of the Study

"As I Grew Older" presents racial discrimination through symbolic rather than merely literal representation.

The wall is the central metaphor for social and racial barriers.

Sunlight represents freedom, hope, equality, and aspiration.

Darkness represents exclusion and psychological oppression.

The poem portrays growing older as an awakening to racial consciousness.

Hughes connects social discrimination with its psychological consequences.

The speaker's dream represents both individual and collective aspirations.

The poem demonstrates how social barriers can become internalized.

The poem ultimately emphasizes resistance rather than passive acceptance.

Its symbolic treatment of discrimination gives the poem continuing relevance.

27. Conclusion

Langston Hughes's "As I Grew Older" is a powerful poetic exploration of racial discrimination and societal barriers. Through a simple but highly effective symbolic structure, Hughes presents the movement from childhood innocence to adult awareness of racial inequality.

The poem's central wall represents the barriers created by prejudice, segregation, social exclusion, and unequal opportunities. In contrast, sunlight represents freedom, hope, equality, and the realization of human potential. The movement between light and darkness dramatizes the psychological consequences of discrimination.

The significance of the poem lies not only in its representation of racial injustice but also in its emphasis on human aspiration. The speaker's dream continues to exist despite the presence of the wall.

Awareness of oppression becomes connected with the desire to challenge it.

Thus, "As I Grew Older" can be understood as both a poem of social criticism and a poem of resistance. Hughes transforms a deeply personal experience into a broader meditation on identity, discrimination, freedom, and human dignity. The poem reminds readers that social barriers are constructed rather than natural and that the desire for equality and freedom remains an important part of the human experience.

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"Spirituality, Self-Realisation and Transformation in R. K. Narayan's The Guide"

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Abstract:
R. K. Narayan's The Guide occupies an important place in Indian writing in English because of its exploration of human consciousness, spiritual growth, ethical responsibility, and personal change. The novel narrates the experiences of Raju, whose life moves through several identities, including railway guide, lover, manager, prisoner, and eventually a figure regarded as a holy man. His journey illustrates the conflict between worldly ambition and the search for a more meaningful existence. Initially motivated by personal pleasure, social recognition, and material interests, Raju gradually encounters circumstances that challenge his established values. His relationship with Rosie, his professional ambitions, his imprisonment, and his unexpected association with a village community become important stages in his development. Narayan presents spirituality not as an inherited status or a matter of outward appearance but as a complex process involving introspection, suffering, sacrifice, and responsibility towards others. The novel's unresolved conclusion further complicates the meaning of spiritual transformation by leaving the consequences of Raju's final sacrifice uncertain. This paper examines the relationship between spirituality, self-realisation, moral awakening, and sacrifice in The Guide. It argues that Raju's transformation reflects the possibility of ethical change even in an imperfect individual and highlights the importance of selfless action in the pursuit of spiritual maturity.

Keywords: R. K. Narayan, The Guide, spirituality, self-realisation, moral awakening, transformation, sacrifice, Indian writing in English.

Introduction:

R. K. Narayan is one of the major figures in Indian writing in English. His fiction explores the everyday experiences of Indian society while examining the psychological, cultural, and moral complexities of human life. Through the fictional town of Malgudi, he creates a literary environment in which ordinary individuals encounter extraordinary situations that challenge their beliefs, ambitions, and understanding of themselves. His novels frequently investigate the relationship between personal desire, social expectations, individual freedom, and moral responsibility.

Published in 1958, The Guide is an important example of Narayan's ability to combine social realism with philosophical reflection. The novel centres on Raju, a railway guide whose life undergoes a series of unexpected changes. His involvement with Rosie, his emergence as a successful manager of her dancing career, his imprisonment, and his subsequent life as a spiritual figure form the principal stages of the narrative.

Raju's development is particularly significant because he does not initially possess the qualities associated with spiritual wisdom. His behaviour is frequently influenced by ambition, pleasure, manipulation, and the desire to maintain control over others. Nevertheless, the experiences he encounters gradually place him in situations that demand a reconsideration of his priorities.

The central concern of the novel is not simply whether Raju becomes a saint but whether an individual with a morally complicated past can develop a genuine sense of responsibility. Narayan explores this question through the contrast between Raju's public identity and his inner uncertainty. His journey suggests that spiritual growth is not necessarily the result of formal religious instruction; it may emerge through suffering, human relationships, and the difficult recognition of personal obligations.

This paper examines The Guide as a narrative of moral and spiritual development. It argues that Narayan represents self-realisation as a gradual and uncertain process through which the individual begins to move beyond selfish interests towards a greater awareness of others.

Objectives of the Study:

The major objectives of this study are:

To examine the representation of spirituality in R. K. Narayan's The Guide.

To analyse Raju's psychological development and movement towards self-realisation.

To investigate the relationship between suffering, sacrifice, and moral transformation.

To explore the influence of religious belief and community expectations on individual identity.

To interpret the significance of the novel's ambiguous conclusion.

Research Methodology:

The present study employs a qualitative and interpretative methodology based on close reading of The Guide. It analyses the protagonist's changing behaviour, personal relationships, moral conflicts, and responses to challenging circumstances. The discussion also draws upon relevant concepts from Indian philosophical traditions, particularly self-knowledge, duty, detachment, and selfless action. These concepts provide a framework for understanding the novel's spiritual dimensions without assuming that Raju's experiences constitute an uncomplicated or complete attainment of enlightenment.

Spirituality and Indian Philosophical Thought:

Spirituality occupies an important position in Indian philosophical traditions, where it is frequently associated with self-understanding, ethical conduct, control over personal desires, and responsibility towards others. It involves a movement beyond excessive attachment to material possessions, social recognition, and individual gratification. Such a perspective encourages individuals to examine their motives and consider the wider consequences of their actions.

In The Guide, Narayan explores these ideas through Raju's transition from a commercially successful guide to a person whom villagers consider spiritually significant. During his early life, Raju's identity depends largely on his ability to understand tourists, entertain them, and satisfy their expectations. His social success is based on communication, adaptability, and an ability to present himself favourably.

His later experiences challenge this familiar pattern. After leaving prison, Raju encounters a village community that gradually interprets his presence near a temple as evidence of spiritual distinction. The villagers begin to approach him for guidance, and he finds himself occupying a position that demands qualities he has not necessarily developed.

Initially, Raju accepts this identity because it provides shelter, food, and an escape from his troubled past. His outward appearance as a holy man therefore differs considerably from his inner condition. However, the responsibilities associated with this role gradually create a conflict between convenience and conscience.

Narayan uses this contradiction to question the assumption that religious appearance necessarily indicates spiritual maturity. A person may acquire social recognition without possessing the qualities associated with that recognition. In Raju's case, spirituality becomes meaningful only when his actions begin to reflect an awareness of obligations beyond his personal interests.

Raju's Early Life: Ambition and Moral Conflict:

Raju's early experiences reveal a personality shaped by ambition, adaptability, and self-interest. As a railway guide, he becomes skilled at dealing with visitors and presenting information in ways that satisfy their expectations. His intelligence and social confidence help him establish a successful occupation, but these qualities also encourage him to manipulate situations for personal advantage.

His relationship with Rosie introduces a significant conflict into his life. Rosie is deeply committed to dance, whereas her husband, Marco, devotes himself primarily to historical and archaeological research. Their differing interests contribute to the emotional distance within their marriage. Raju recognises Rosie's artistic potential and encourages her to pursue dancing as a profession.

His support initially appears to offer Rosie an opportunity to express her individuality and develop her artistic abilities. However, Raju's motives are not entirely free from personal attachment.

His emotional involvement and desire for companionship gradually become entangled with his professional ambitions. As Rosie gains recognition, Raju assumes an increasingly influential position in managing her career.

The success he experiences through Rosie's achievements strengthens his confidence but also encourages possessiveness. Instead of maintaining a healthy distinction between personal affection and professional responsibility, he allows his ambitions to influence his judgement. His eventual involvement in financial misconduct leads to legal consequences and imprisonment.

This phase of the novel exposes the limitations of success achieved without sufficient moral discipline. Raju possesses intelligence and practical ability, yet these qualities do not prevent his downfall. Narayan demonstrates that external achievements cannot provide lasting security when they are accompanied by dishonesty and irresponsible choices.

Raju's failure is therefore an important starting point for understanding his later development. His subsequent transformation becomes significant precisely because it emerges from a life marked by contradictions and moral weaknesses.

Imprisonment and the Crisis of Identity:

Imprisonment represents a major turning point in Raju's life. It separates him from his familiar social environment and deprives him of the freedom through which he previously pursued his ambitions. His professional reputation, relationship with Rosie, and ability to influence others no longer provide the same advantages.

The experience forces him to confront the consequences of his decisions. Removed from the world in which he constructed his identity through social performance, Raju must face a situation that he cannot easily control. His former confidence encounters the reality of personal failure.

Nevertheless, imprisonment does not automatically make him morally superior. Narayan avoids suggesting that suffering necessarily produces wisdom. Difficult experiences may encourage self-examination, but meaningful change depends on the individual's response to them.

Following his release, Raju encounters villagers near a temple. They gradually interpret his behaviour and circumstances through the framework of their religious beliefs and begin to regard him as a holy man. His identity changes once again, this time from a guide who helps visitors understand unfamiliar places to a spiritual figure expected to provide guidance and reassurance.

Initially, the villagers' interpretation offers Raju an opportunity to begin again without revealing the full details of his past. His acceptance of their assumptions continues his earlier tendency to benefit from the impressions others form of him.

However, this new situation gradually develops into a moral challenge. The villagers' trust creates expectations that extend beyond his personal convenience. Raju must confront the difference between maintaining an advantageous appearance and accepting the responsibilities attached to it.

Imprisonment thus contributes indirectly to his transformation by disrupting his established life and placing him in circumstances where his choices acquire a different ethical significance.

Self-Realisation and the Recognition of Duty:

Self-realisation involves a deeper awareness of one's motives, weaknesses, and responsibilities. In The Guide, Raju's movement towards self-understanding is gradual because his habitual tendency to manipulate circumstances does not disappear immediately.

At first, his position as a spiritual guide appears to be another opportunity for personal security. The villagers offer him food, shelter, and respect, while his earlier life remains largely unknown to them. He initially responds to the situation according to familiar patterns of convenience and self-preservation.

Over time, however, the villagers' dependence upon him changes the nature of his position. Their faith is no longer expressed merely through respect or curiosity. During a period of drought, they seek his intervention and believe that his religious observance may help relieve their suffering.

This development creates a conflict between the identity Raju has acquired and the responsibility he must now confront. He cannot fully control the villagers' expectations, yet his decisions have consequences for people who genuinely trust him.

His emerging self-awareness is reflected in his gradual willingness to act for others rather than merely protect himself. The important change is not that he suddenly becomes free from all weaknesses, but that the welfare of the community begins to influence his choices.

Narayan presents self-realisation as a movement from external identity towards ethical awareness. Raju's public image may initially be founded on misunderstanding, but his eventual response to the villagers' suffering introduces a new dimension into his character.

The novel therefore suggests that self-knowledge becomes significant when it affects conduct. Understanding oneself is not simply an intellectual achievement; it also requires a willingness to recognise obligations and respond to the needs of others.

Fasting, Sacrifice, and Moral Transformation:

The drought provides the decisive test of Raju's developing sense of responsibility. The villagers believe that his fasting may bring rain and restore agricultural prosperity. Their belief places him in an increasingly difficult position because the outcome remains uncertain and his physical condition gradually deteriorates.

Raju's decision to continue the fast becomes the most important moment in his transformation. Earlier, he frequently acted to preserve his comfort, achieve recognition, or advance his interests. Now he accepts physical hardship in response to the suffering of others.

This contrast gives the episode its ethical significance. His sacrifice does not erase the mistakes of his earlier life, nor does it prove that every aspect of his character has undergone complete purification. Nevertheless, his willingness to endure suffering indicates a meaningful change in the priorities guiding his behaviour.

Fasting also carries associations with Indian religious practices in which bodily discipline may express devotion, restraint, or moral commitment. The novel, however, presents this practice through a complex interaction between personal choice and collective expectation. Raju's action is influenced by the villagers' faith, but it also becomes an opportunity for him to respond differently from the way he has responded to earlier challenges.

The episode raises an important question about the nature of sacrifice. Does an action become spiritually meaningful because it produces a miraculous result, or can its value be found in the intention and responsibility behind it? Narayan does not provide a simple answer. Instead, he places Raju's physical suffering alongside the villagers' hopes and leaves the ultimate outcome uncertain.

The fast is therefore best understood as an expression of moral development rather than conclusive evidence of supernatural power. Raju's willingness to place the community's welfare above his immediate comfort marks a significant departure from his earlier self-centred behaviour.

Through this episode, Narayan suggests that transformation is demonstrated most convincingly through action. Religious language and public recognition may create the appearance of spirituality, but sacrifice gives ethical substance to the individual's changing relationship with the world.

The Village Community: Faith and Collective Responsibility:

The village community plays an essential role in shaping Raju's later experiences. The villagers approach him with expectations rooted in their religious traditions and their desire to overcome the hardship caused by drought. Their belief gives him a social identity that he did not deliberately seek or initially deserve.

This relationship illustrates the interaction between individual identity and collective consciousness. Raju's role as a holy man develops partly because the villagers interpret his presence through their own cultural assumptions. Their faith shapes their understanding of him, while his responses gradually influence their expectations.

The villagers' belief creates both pressure and opportunity. On one hand, they expect Raju to fulfil a spiritual function for which he has no formal preparation. Their dependence places him in a

difficult position. On the other hand, their trust provides the circumstances in which he begins to move beyond his usual concern for personal advantage.

Narayan does not portray the villagers merely as irrational believers. Their suffering is genuine, and their search for hope reflects the human desire to find meaning during periods of crisis. Religious faith provides a framework through which they attempt to understand circumstances that appear beyond their control.

At the same time, the novel encourages readers to consider the dangers of unquestioning belief and the burden that collective expectations may place upon an individual. The villagers' interpretation of Raju is not entirely based on knowledge of his character, yet their faith eventually becomes connected with his willingness to accept responsibility.

The community therefore functions as more than a background to Raju's transformation. It becomes an active force in the narrative, revealing how social relationships can expose personal weaknesses while also creating opportunities for ethical growth.

The Ambiguous Ending and the Meaning of Spiritual Growth:

The conclusion of The Guide is significant because it leaves the outcome of Raju's fast unresolved. As his physical strength declines, he continues to participate in the ritual intended to bring rain. Near the end, he reports a sensation suggesting that rain is falling in the distant hills. The narrative closes without definitively confirming whether the drought has ended or whether his sacrifice has produced the result expected by the villagers.

This uncertainty allows different interpretations. From a religious perspective, the ending may be understood as a possible fulfilment of faith or an indication of divine intervention. From a psychological perspective, Raju's final perception may be interpreted in relation to his weakened physical condition and the uncertainty surrounding his experience.

Another interpretation places less emphasis on the literal arrival of rain and more on the moral significance of Raju's conduct. His transformation may be understood through his willingness to endure suffering for the welfare of others, irrespective of whether the anticipated result occurs.

The ending does not establish conclusively that Raju has attained complete spiritual enlightenment. Nor does it prove that the villagers' religious expectations are fulfilled. Instead, Narayan invites readers to evaluate transformation through the protagonist's choices rather than through a clearly demonstrated miracle.

This ambiguity is consistent with the novel's larger concern with the difference between appearance and reality. Raju begins his life as a guide who constructs an identity through his ability to influence others. He later becomes a spiritual figure because others project their expectations onto him. By the conclusion, however, his willingness to suffer for the community introduces a more substantial ethical dimension into his identity.

The unresolved ending preserves the complexity of his development. It allows readers to recognise the possibility of genuine change without overlooking the contradictions that continue to surround his character.

Conclusion:

R. K. Narayan's The Guide offers a thoughtful exploration of spirituality, self-realisation, and moral transformation. Through Raju's changing identities, the novel examines the consequences of selfish ambition, the limitations of outward success, and the possibility of ethical renewal.

Raju's movement from railway guide to spiritual figure is neither straightforward nor free from contradiction. His early experiences reveal his dependence on manipulation and personal advantage, while his imprisonment exposes the consequences of his choices. His subsequent involvement with the village community gradually confronts him with responsibilities that cannot be reduced to individual gain.

The climactic fast represents the most important stage of this development. Raju becomes willing to endure physical suffering for the benefit of others, demonstrating a significant change in his

moral priorities. Although the outcome of his sacrifice remains uncertain, his willingness to accept responsibility gives his final actions ethical significance.

Narayan consequently presents spirituality as an evolving process rather than a permanent status acquired through religious appearance or social recognition. Self-realisation emerges through the confrontation of personal weaknesses, the recognition of human obligations, and the willingness to act beyond selfish interests.

The novel's ambiguous ending reinforces this interpretation by refusing to measure spiritual growth solely through visible success or supernatural confirmation. Instead, it directs attention towards the relationship between intention, action, sacrifice, and responsibility.

Ultimately, The Guide remains an important contribution to Indian writing in English because it examines how an imperfect individual may begin to move towards a more responsible existence. Through Raju's journey, Narayan suggests that the search for spiritual meaning becomes significant when personal awareness develops into concern for the suffering and welfare of others.

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"Woman Empowerment and Sustainable Development in Indian Writing in English"

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Abstract:

Women's empowerment is essential for achieving sustainable development and establishing an equitable, inclusive, and progressive society. Indian writing in English explores women's struggles for equality, education, economic independence, dignity, and personal freedom within patriarchal social structures. The novels of Kamala Markandaya, Shashi Deshpande, Arundhati Roy, Manju Kapur, and Anita Desai offer valuable insights into gender discrimination, social inequality, identity, and women's aspirations. This paper examines Nectar in a Sieve, That Long Silence, The God of Small Things, Difficult Daughters, and Cry, the Peacock to understand the relationship between women's empowerment and sustainable development. It argues that genuine development must extend beyond economic growth to include gender equality, quality education, decent employment, social justice, psychological well-being, and environmental protection. The paper also explores literature's role in challenging patriarchal attitudes and promoting social awareness. It concludes that empowering women is indispensable to creating a sustainable society based on equality, human dignity, and collective welfare.

Keywords: Women's empowerment, sustainable development, Indian writing in English, gender equality, feminism, education, social justice, environmental sustainability.

Introduction:

Women's empowerment is a fundamental requirement for social progress and sustainable development. It enables women to exercise their rights, access education, pursue employment, make independent decisions, and participate equally in social, economic, and political activities. Empowerment also involves challenging discriminatory traditions and institutions that restrict women's freedom and opportunities.

According to Our Common Future (1987), sustainable development means meeting present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It requires a balance between economic development, social justice, and environmental protection. Women must have equal opportunities to participate in this process because development cannot be inclusive when half of society faces discrimination or exclusion.

In India, women's lives continue to be influenced by patriarchal traditions, economic dependency, unequal educational opportunities, caste discrimination, and gender-based violence. Although education, legislation, and social reform have improved women's status, many challenges remain, particularly in rural and economically disadvantaged communities.

Indian writing in English provides a meaningful platform for examining these issues. Literary narratives portray women's experiences within families, communities, and institutions while questioning conventional gender roles. This paper analyses selected novels to demonstrate how women's empowerment contributes to sustainable development and how literature encourages critical reflection on social inequality.

Objectives and Research Methodology:

The primary objectives are to examine women's representation in selected Indian novels, investigate the relationship between gender equality and sustainable development, explore the importance of education and economic independence, and analyse literature's contribution to social transformation.

The study adopts a qualitative, descriptive, and interpretative methodology. It examines characterisation, themes, narrative perspectives, and social contexts through a feminist literary framework. The discussion also draws upon the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals,

particularly Goals 4, 5, 8, 10, and 13, concerning education, gender equality, decent work, reduced inequalities, and climate action.

Women's Empowerment in Indian Writing in English

Kamala Markandaya:

Economic Insecurity and Rural Women

Kamala Markandaya's Nectar in a Sieve (1954) portrays rural poverty, agricultural insecurity, and the hardships experienced by economically vulnerable women. Rukmani, the protagonist, lives in a community where survival depends heavily on agricultural production and natural resources.

The novel illustrates how poverty, changing economic conditions, and agricultural difficulties threaten family security. Women carry substantial domestic responsibilities while confronting food shortages and limited opportunities for employment. Rukmani's determination demonstrates resilience, but her experiences also reveal the limitations of individual strength when adequate economic and social support is unavailable.

Markandaya connects women's welfare with rural development and livelihood security. Access to land, healthcare, education, and productive resources is essential for improving women's lives. The novel therefore suggests that sustainable development must protect vulnerable communities, reduce poverty, and recognise women's contributions to household survival.

Shashi Deshpande:

Identity and Self-Realisation

In That Long Silence (1988), Shashi Deshpande examines women's suppressed identities within marriage and family relationships. Jaya, the protagonist, struggles to reconcile her individuality with conventional expectations of wifehood and motherhood.

The silence in the title symbolises the suppression of women's thoughts, ambitions, and emotional needs. Jaya's experiences reveal how social conditioning encourages women to sacrifice personal aspirations to maintain domestic harmony. Deshpande questions the belief that women's worth should be determined exclusively by their family responsibilities.

The novel emphasises self-expression, independent judgement, and personal fulfilment. Its relevance to sustainable development lies in its recognition that progress involves psychological well-being and personal autonomy alongside material prosperity. Women must possess the freedom to express their views and participate meaningfully in decisions affecting their lives.

Arundhati Roy: Gender, Caste, and Social Justice

Arundhati Roy's The God of Small Things (1997) explores the relationship between gender discrimination, caste hierarchy, and social authority. Through the experiences of Ammu and Velutha, Roy demonstrates how established social conventions restrict individual freedom.

Ammu's relationship with Velutha challenges caste boundaries and exposes the unequal standards applied to women's choices. Her experiences reveal the consequences of resisting social expectations within a deeply hierarchical community.

Roy's novel demonstrates that gender inequality cannot be separated from caste and class discrimination. These interconnected structures create additional obstacles for disadvantaged women and restrict their access to dignity and justice.

From a sustainable development perspective, the novel questions the value of progress when social exclusion continues. Economic growth alone cannot create a just society. Equal rights, social inclusion, and respect for individual freedom are equally necessary.

Manju Kapur: Education and Independence

Manju Kapur's Difficult Daughters (1998) examines women's aspirations against the background of India's freedom movement. Virmati, the protagonist, seeks education and personal independence despite restrictive family expectations.

Her educational ambitions represent a desire to participate in intellectual and social life beyond conventional domestic roles. However, the novel demonstrates that education does not automatically

eliminate patriarchal control. Women's independence also requires social acceptance, freedom of choice and opportunities to exercise their abilities.

Education strengthens women's confidence, knowledge, and employment prospects. Educated women can contribute to professional institutions, family welfare, and community development. Kapur's narrative therefore highlights the importance of accessible education and gender-sensitive social institutions in achieving sustainable development.

Anita Desai: Psychological Well-Being

Anita Desai's Cry, the Peacock (1963) explores Maya's emotional isolation and psychological distress within marriage. The novel draws attention to the inner experiences of a woman whose emotional needs remain inadequately understood.

Desai challenges the assumption that conformity to conventional social roles necessarily produces happiness. Maya's experiences demonstrate the importance of emotional recognition, communication, and individual identity.

The novel broadens the meaning of empowerment by highlighting psychological well-being as an essential dimension of human development. Women's welfare requires more than education, employment, and legal protection; it also involves emotional dignity and opportunities for personal fulfilment.

Women's Empowerment and Environmental:
Sustainability

Women's empowerment and environmental sustainability are connected through livelihoods, resource management, and community participation. In many rural communities, women contribute to agriculture, household resource management, and the collection of water and fuel. Environmental degradation can increase their workloads and threaten family livelihoods.

However, women should not automatically be considered responsible for environmental protection. Their experiences differ according to caste, class, occupation, and access to resources. Effective participation requires equal rights, education, financial support, and representation in decision-making.

Nectar in a Sieve illustrates the vulnerability of rural families whose survival depends on agricultural conditions. The novel encourages readers to consider how environmental and economic insecurity affect disadvantaged communities.

Sustainable development must therefore protect natural resources, strengthen rural livelihoods, and ensure women's participation in decisions concerning land, water, and forests. Such participation should be supported by institutions rather than treated as an additional unpaid responsibility.

Women's Empowerment and the Sustainable Development Goals:

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals provide a useful framework for understanding women's empowerment.

SDG 4: Quality Education. Education expands women's knowledge and opportunities. Virmati's aspirations in Difficult Daughters demonstrate its potential to challenge traditional gender expectations.

SDG 5: Gender Equality. Jaya's experiences in That Long Silence and Ammu's struggles in The God of Small Things expose the effects of patriarchal authority and gender discrimination.

SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth. Nectar in a Sieve demonstrates how poverty and insecure livelihoods undermine women's economic independence. Fair employment and access to productive resources are essential for empowerment.

SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities. Roy's novel illustrates the interaction of caste, class, and gender inequalities. Inclusive development must address these interconnected forms of exclusion.

SDG 13: Climate Action. Environmental insecurity threatens rural livelihoods and may intensify existing inequalities. Sustainable policies must protect vulnerable communities and support their resilience.

These connections establish that women's empowerment is not an isolated objective. It is integral to education, economic security, social justice, and environmental sustainability.

Literature as an Instrument of Social Transformation:

Literature contributes to social transformation by presenting experiences that challenge established beliefs and reveal hidden inequalities. Through characterisation, symbolism, and narrative perspective, writers encourage readers to reconsider conventional attitudes towards women.

The novels discussed here portray women as individuals possessing ambitions, emotional needs, intellectual abilities, and the capacity to question restrictive social arrangements. They also demonstrate that women's experiences vary according to economic circumstances, caste, family relationships, and access to education.

Teaching these works in educational institutions can promote gender sensitivity, critical thinking and awareness of social justice. Students can examine how discrimination operates within families and institutions and consider alternative approaches to equality.

Nevertheless, literature alone cannot eliminate structural inequality. Its contribution must be supported by effective legislation, educational opportunities, employment, institutional reform, and changing social attitudes. Literature functions as a valuable cultural resource that encourages wider social change.

Major Challenges to Women's Empowerment:

Several barriers continue to restrict women's opportunities. Patriarchal attitudes influence decisions about education, marriage, employment, and personal freedom. Economic dependency and unequal access to property and financial resources further limit independence.

Unpaid domestic responsibilities can reduce women's opportunities for professional advancement. Gender-based violence and harassment threaten personal security and participation in public life. Caste discrimination, rural poverty, inadequate infrastructure, and limited digital access create additional disadvantages.

Environmental insecurity may intensify these problems when women lack alternative livelihoods and access to essential services.

Addressing these barriers requires coordinated efforts. Gender-sensitive education, equal employment opportunities, accessible healthcare, legal protection, recognition of unpaid care work, and women's representation in decision-making are essential. Sustainable development must enable women to participate as equal citizens rather than merely adapt to existing inequalities. Findings and

Discussion:

The analysis reveals several important findings. First, empowerment requires both economic security and personal autonomy. Financial independence is important, but freedom of expression and independent decision-making are equally necessary.

Second, education challenges restrictive gender expectations, although its benefits depend on equal employment opportunities and social recognition. Third, gender inequality intersects with caste, class, poverty and environmental vulnerability. Development policies must address these interconnected disadvantages.

Fourth, environmental sustainability requires women's meaningful participation in resource management and community decisions. Finally, literature provides valuable insights into the cultural, social and psychological dimensions of inequality.

The selected novels collectively demonstrate that gender justice requires more than formal equality. It demands changes in social attitudes, institutional practices, family relationships, and access to resources.

Conclusion:

Women's empowerment and sustainable development are mutually reinforcing processes essential to building an equitable and inclusive society. Genuine progress requires equal access to education, employment, personal freedom, social justice, and decision-making. Development must

therefore be measured not only through economic growth but also through human dignity, social welfare, and environmental responsibility.

Indian writing in English offers important perspectives on these concerns. Markandaya examines rural poverty and livelihood insecurity; Deshpande explores women's suppressed identities; Roy exposes caste and gender discrimination; Kapur highlights education and independence; and Desai emphasises psychological well-being.

Although these writers approach women's experiences differently, their works collectively challenge social structures that restrict women's freedom. They demonstrate that sustainable development must recognise women as active participants in shaping society rather than passive recipients of social change.

Ultimately, empowering women is an investment in India's social, economic, cultural, and environmental future. When women receive equal rights, resources, education, and opportunities, they can contribute more effectively to inclusive development. A sustainable society becomes possible when gender equality, human dignity, social justice, and environmental protection are treated as interconnected priorities.

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National Education Policy 2020 and the Future of Commerce Education in India

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Abstract:-

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 aims to make education more practical, flexible, and skill-based. Commerce education helps students develop knowledge of accounting, finance, business, and entrepreneurship. Today, students also need digital skills, communication skills, and practical business knowledge to succeed in their careers.

This research paper studies the impact of NEP 2020 on the future of commerce education in India. It focuses on curriculum changes, skill development, multidisciplinary learning, technology, and employment opportunities. It also highlights challenges such as a lack of infrastructure, trained teachers, and practical industry exposure. The study is based on secondary data from policy documents, research papers, and other relevant sources. It concludes that NEP 2020 can improve commerce education and prepare students for future career opportunities if implemented effectively.

Keywords:- NEP 2020, Commerce Education, Skill Development, Higher Education, Employability,

Introduction :-

Education plays an important role in the development of individuals, society, and the country. It helps students gain knowledge, develop skills, and prepare for future career opportunities. In today's competitive world, education should not only provide theoretical knowledge but also help students apply that knowledge in practical situations. For this reason, the Indian education system needs to keep changing according to the needs of society, industry, and the job market.

Commerce education is an important part of higher education in India. It helps students understand different business activities and develops their knowledge of accounting, finance, taxation, banking, business management, economics, and entrepreneurship. Commerce graduates can work in banks, financial institutions, private companies, government organisations, and other business sectors. They can also start their own businesses or pursue professional courses in fields such as accounting, finance, and management. Therefore, commerce education plays an important role in preparing skilled individuals for the business world.

NEP 2020 offers several opportunities for the development of commerce education. One important aspect is multidisciplinary learning, which encourages students to study subjects from different fields. For example, commerce students may benefit from learning about information technology, data analysis, communication, and entrepreneurship along with their core commerce subjects. Such a combination can help students understand business problems from different perspectives and improve their professional abilities.

Another important focus of NEP 2020 is skill development and vocational education. Commerce students need practical knowledge to understand how accounting, taxation, banking, financial management, and business operations work in real situations. Activities such as internships, projects, case studies, presentations, and industry interactions can help students connect classroom learning with practical experience. If these activities are implemented effectively, they may improve students' confidence and prepare them for employment and self-employment opportunities. Technology is also becoming increasingly important in commerce education. Digital accounting software, online banking, electronic payment systems, and data analysis tools are widely used in modern business. NEP 2020 encourages the use of technology to support teaching and learning. The effective use of digital resources can help students develop relevant skills and understand modern business practices. However, students and teachers need proper training and access to suitable digital infrastructure to gain the full benefits of technology-based education. Despite these opportunities, the implementation

of NEP 2020 may create certain challenges for colleges and universities. Some institutions may face difficulties related to infrastructure, financial resources, faculty training, curriculum development, and industry collaboration. Teachers may also need to adopt new teaching methods and assessment practices. In addition, the availability of internships, practical training, and digital learning facilities may differ from one institution to another. These issues need attention to ensure that the benefits of educational reforms reach students effectively.

The future of commerce education in India will depend not only on the objectives of NEP 2020 but also on how effectively its relevant provisions are implemented. Colleges, universities, teachers, policymakers, and industry representatives all have an important role to play in this process. The curriculum should be regularly reviewed, practical learning should receive adequate attention, and students should be given opportunities to develop skills that are useful in the modern workplace. the present research paper examines the role of the National Education Policy 2020 in shaping the future of commerce education in India. It discusses the major changes encouraged by the policy, including multidisciplinary learning, skill development, practical education, technology-based learning, and improved employability. It also considers the possible challenges faced by educational institutions during implementation. The main purpose of the study is to understand how NEP 2020 can contribute to making commerce education more relevant, practical, and suitable for the changing needs of business and society. NEP 2020 provides an opportunity to rethink the way commerce education is delivered in India. Its effective implementation may help students gain not only academic knowledge but also the practical skills required for employment, entrepreneurship, and professional growth. At the same time, the success of these changes will depend on proper planning, adequate resources, faculty development, and continuous evaluation.

Research Methodology: -

Research is essentially a systematic inquiry, seeking facts through objective verifiable methods in order to discover the relationship among them and to deduce from them broad principles or laws. It is really a method of critical thinking. It comprises defining and re-defining problems, formulating hypotheses or suggested solutions, collecting, organizing and evaluating data, making deductions and making conclusions, and at last, carefully testing the conclusions to determine whether they fit the formulated hypothesis. Thus, the term 'Research experimentation or examination' has as its aim the revision of accepted conclusions, in the light of newly discovered facts.

Definition of Research

In Webster's Twentieth Century Dictionary, research is defined as "a careful patient, systematic, diligent inquiry or examination in some field of knowledge undertaken to establish facts or principles". In the Random House Dictionary of the English Language, research is defined as "a diligent and systematic inquiry or investigation into a subject in order to discover or revise facts, theories, applications, etc.

This research paper is based on secondary data from books, journals, newspapers, websites, and information available on the internet.

Objectives: -

1. To study how NEP 2020 may bring changes in commerce subjects, teaching methods, and learning activities.
2. To understand how the policy can help commerce students develop practical knowledge and useful skills.
3. To understand how NEP 2020 can help commerce students prepare for jobs, business, and future career opportunities.
4. To suggest ways to make commerce education more practical, skill-based, and useful for students.

What is New Education Policy (NEP 2020)

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is an important step towards changing the education system in India. It was approved by the Government of India on 29 July 2020 and replaced

the National Policy on Education introduced in 1986. The main aim of NEP 2020 is to improve the quality of education and make learning more flexible, inclusive, and suitable for the changing needs of society.

The policy gives importance to basic learning skills, critical thinking, creativity, problem-solving, practical learning, and skill development. It also brings several changes to school and higher education by encouraging students to choose subjects according to their interests, learn from different fields, and use technology in the learning process. These changes aim to make education more meaningful and connected to real-life situations.

NEP 2020 also focuses on providing equal educational opportunities and making quality education accessible to more students. It aims to prepare learners for future career opportunities and the challenges of a changing economy. In the long run, the policy seeks to support the personal development of students and contribute to India's social and economic progress.



Why Was a New Education Policy Needed in India?

India needed a new education policy because the education system introduced under the National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986, which was modified in 1992, needed to be updated to meet the changing needs of students and society. With the growth of technology and changes in the job market, students needed more than textbook knowledge. They also needed practical skills, creativity, and the ability to solve real-life problems. To address these needs, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 was introduced to make education more flexible, practical, and useful for students.

The main reasons for introducing a new education policy are explained below:

1. Lack of Practical Skills: Many students had theoretical knowledge but limited experience in applying it to real-life situations. They needed more opportunities to develop technical skills, communication skills, and problem-solving abilities to improve their employment opportunities.

2. Need to Compete Globally: Education systems around the world were giving more importance to innovation, critical thinking, and learning from different subjects. India also needed to improve its education system to prepare students for international opportunities and new career options.

3. Improving Learning Outcomes: Basic reading, writing, and mathematical skills are essential for further learning. Concerns about students' learning levels, including those discussed in reports such as the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER), showed the importance of improving the quality of education and focusing on students' actual learning.

4. Changes in Job Market Requirements: New technologies, artificial intelligence, digital services, and modern industries have changed the skills employers expect from graduates. Students now need

to develop analytical thinking, creativity, adaptability, and communication skills along with their academic knowledge.

Overall, NEP 2020 was introduced to make education more relevant to present-day needs. It aims to connect classroom learning with practical experience and prepare students for employment, entrepreneurship, and lifelong learning.

Key Features of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 aims to improve the way students learn in India. It gives importance not only to textbook knowledge but also to practical learning, creativity, critical thinking, and skill development. The policy encourages students to learn at their own pace, explore different subjects, and use technology in education. The major features of NEP 2020 are explained below.

1. Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE): NEP 2020 gives importance to education during a child's early years. It encourages learning through games, activities, stories and practical experiences. This helps children develop basic knowledge, communication, and social skills.

2. Multilingual Education: The policy encourages the use of the mother tongue or regional language as the medium of instruction, especially in the early years of education, wherever possible. Learning in a familiar language can help children understand concepts more easily. It also supports the preservation of India's different languages and cultures.

3. Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN): NEP 2020 focuses on helping children develop basic reading, writing, and mathematical skills. These skills are important because students need them to understand other subjects and continue learning successfully. The policy aims to ensure that children achieve basic literacy and numeracy by Grade 3.

4. Universal Access to Education: The policy aims to provide educational opportunities to all children, regardless of their social or economic background. It focuses on increasing school enrolment, reducing dropouts and helping more students complete their education from the preschool level to secondary school.

5. 5+3+3+4 Curriculum Structure: NEP 2020 replaces the traditional 10+2 school structure with a new 5+3+3+4 structure. This system covers different stages of learning according to children's age and development. It also encourages teaching methods that are suitable for students at each stage.

6. Higher Education Reforms: The policy aims to make colleges and universities more flexible and multidisciplinary. Students are encouraged to study subjects from different fields instead of limiting themselves to only one area. It also supports flexible learning options, multiple entry and exit opportunities, and improvements in the quality of higher education.

What Changes in Commerce Education under NEP 2020?

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 aims to make commerce education more practical, flexible, and useful for students. It encourages colleges to connect classroom learning with real business situations and help students develop skills needed for their future careers. The major changes are explained below.

1. Changes in Commerce Subjects: - Students may get opportunities to learn subjects such as data analysis, information technology, entrepreneurship and communication along with traditional commerce subjects like accounting, finance, and economics.

2. Practical Learning: - Students can gain practical knowledge through business projects, case studies, preparing financial statements, and studying real business situations. These activities can help them understand how commerce concepts are used in everyday business.

3. Improved Teaching Methods: - Teachers can use group discussions, presentations, projects, and classroom activities instead of depending only on lectures and textbook learning. These methods can make learning more interesting and improve students' understanding.

4. Use of Technology:- Digital tools, spreadsheets, accounting software and online learning platforms can help students understand modern business practices and develop the digital skills needed in today's workplace.

5. Development of Skills: - NEP 2020 encourages learning activities that improve communication, teamwork, critical thinking, decision-making and problem-solving skills. These abilities are important for students entering the business and financial sectors.

6. Entrepreneurship and Career Development: - Students can learn how to prepare business plans, estimate costs, calculate profits, and understand market needs. This knowledge may help them prepare for employment, self-employment and starting their own businesses.

How NEP 2020 Can Help Commerce Students Develop Practical Knowledge and Skills

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 aims to make commerce education more practical and useful for students. It focuses on helping students understand real business situations and develop skills that will be useful in their future careers.

1. Learning Through Practical Activities

NEP 2020 encourages students to learn through projects and real-life examples. Commerce students can practise preparing accounts, making budgets, calculating taxes and understanding financial activities. This helps them connect classroom learning with actual business situations.

2. Improving Digital Skills

Today, technology is widely used in business and finance. Students can learn to use accounting software, spreadsheets, online banking and digital payment systems. These skills can help them work more confidently in modern business environments.

3. Developing Communication and Problem-Solving Skills

Activities such as group discussions, presentations, and case studies can help students improve their communication and teamwork. They can also learn to analyse business problems, think clearly and make better decisions.

4. Encouraging Entrepreneurship

NEP 2020 promotes creativity, innovation and skill development. Students can learn how to prepare business plans, calculate costs and profits and understand customer needs. This knowledge can encourage them to start their own businesses in the future.

5. Preparing Students for Jobs

Practical training, internships and industry visits can help students understand how organisations work. Knowledge of accounting, finance, and business management can prepare them for careers in banking, taxation, accounting and other business fields.

How NEP 2020 Can Help Commerce Students Prepare for Jobs, Business, and Future Careers

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 aims to make education more practical and connected to the needs of the modern world. It encourages students to develop skills along with subject knowledge. For commerce students, this can create better opportunities to prepare for jobs, start their own businesses and build successful careers.

1. Better Job Opportunities

NEP 2020 encourages practical learning and skill development. Commerce students can improve their knowledge of accounting, finance, taxation, banking and business management. Through practical assignments and real-life examples, they can understand how these subjects are used in the workplace. This knowledge can help them prepare for jobs in banks, companies, accounting firms, and financial institutions.

2. Development of Digital Skills

Technology has become an important part of almost every business. Students need to understand how digital tools are used in daily business activities. Learning accounting software, spreadsheets, online banking, and digital payment systems can help commerce students perform work more effectively. These skills can also prepare them for jobs that require basic computer knowledge and financial data handling.

3. Encouragement to Start a Business

NEP 2020 gives importance to creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship. Students can learn how to identify business opportunities, prepare business plans, calculate costs and profits and

understand customer needs. For example, they can prepare a plan for a small shop, an online business, or a service-based business. This knowledge can encourage students to become entrepreneurs and create employment opportunities for themselves and others.

4. Practical Experience Through Projects and Internships

Projects, internships, field visits, and industry interactions can help students understand how businesses work in real life. For example, visiting a bank or accounting firm can help students learn about financial transactions, record keeping and customer services. Such experiences can improve their confidence, communication, teamwork and understanding of workplace responsibilities.

5. Preparation for Future Career Opportunities

Business and technology are changing rapidly, creating new career possibilities for commerce students. Along with traditional careers in accounting, banking, finance and taxation, students can explore areas such as digital marketing, e-commerce, financial analysis and business analytics. Developing communication, problem-solving, critical-thinking, and technology skills can help them adjust to changing job requirements and continue learning throughout their careers.

Ways to Make Commerce Education More Practical, Skill-Based, and Useful for Students

Commerce education should not be limited to textbooks and examinations. Students also need practical knowledge and useful skills that can help them in jobs, business and everyday life. The following are some ways to make commerce education more effective and career-oriented.

1. Use Real-Life Examples

Teachers can explain accounting, banking, taxation, and finance by using examples from daily life. For example, students can prepare a monthly budget or calculate the profit and loss of a small business. This helps them understand how classroom concepts are used in real situations.

2. Include Practical Computer Training

Students should learn to use spreadsheets, accounting software and digital banking tools. These skills can help them perform common financial tasks and prepare for jobs in companies, banks and accounting firms.

3. Encourage Projects and Case Studies

Students can work on projects related to local businesses, customer behaviour, market surveys and financial planning. Case studies can help them understand business problems and think about possible solutions.

4. Provide Internships and Industry Visits

Colleges can arrange visits to banks, industries, accounting firms and other business organisations. Internships can give students a chance to observe workplace activities and gain practical experience before completing their education.

5. Develop Communication and Teamwork

Group discussions, presentations, seminars, and group projects can help students improve their speaking skills, confidence, leadership and ability to work with others. These skills are useful in almost every profession.

6. Promote Entrepreneurship

Students can be encouraged to prepare business plans, estimate costs, calculate profits and identify business opportunities. Business competitions and entrepreneurship workshops can help them understand how to start and manage a small business.

7. Connect Learning with Career Opportunities

Colleges can organise career guidance sessions and workshops on accounting, taxation, banking, digital marketing and financial services. These activities can help students understand different career options and the skills needed to pursue them.

Conclusion

In this research paper, we study how the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 can improve commerce education in India. The policy aims to make education more practical, flexible, and useful for students. It encourages students to learn not only from textbooks but also through real-life

examples and business activities. This can help them understand subjects such as accounting, finance, taxation, banking, and business management more easily.

This research Paper also explains how practical projects, case studies, internships, digital learning, and entrepreneurship can help students develop important skills such as communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and decision-making. These skills can help students prepare for careers in accounting, banking, finance, e-commerce, and digital marketing. However, the successful implementation of NEP 2020 requires proper facilities, trained teachers, updated syllabi, and support from industries. Colleges should provide more practical training and opportunities for students to understand how businesses work. This can help students gain confidence and prepare for their future careers. Overall, this research paper highlights that NEP 2020 can make commerce education more practical and career-focused. However, its success depends on how effectively it is implemented by colleges and teachers. Since this study is based on secondary data, further research involving students, teachers, and employers can help us understand the actual impact of NEP 2020 on commerce education in India.

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Recent Advances In Organic Chemistry And Their Applications

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Abstract

Organic chemistry is one of the most important branches of chemical science because it deals with the structure, properties, composition, reactions, and synthesis of carbon-containing compounds. Organic compounds are essential components of living organisms and are widely used in pharmaceuticals, agriculture, polymers, textiles, cosmetics, food industries, energy production, and advanced materials. Continuous developments in scientific research and technology have significantly transformed the field of organic chemistry. Modern organic chemistry has moved beyond conventional reaction methods towards more selective, efficient, sustainable and technologically advanced synthetic approaches. Recent advances in organic chemistry include green organic synthesis, photoredox catalysis, transition-metal-catalyzed reactions, C–H bond functionalization, click chemistry, biocatalysis, microwave-assisted synthesis, flow chemistry and artificial intelligence-assisted molecular design. These developments have created new opportunities for the preparation of complex organic molecules under comparatively mild and efficient reaction conditions. They have also improved the synthesis of pharmaceutical compounds, biologically active molecules, functional polymers, and advanced organic materials. The present review paper focuses on important developments in modern organic chemistry and their applications in various scientific and industrial fields. Particular attention is given to innovative synthetic methodologies, catalytic transformations, environmentally responsible chemical processes and modern analytical and computational techniques. The paper also discusses the importance of stereoselective synthesis, medicinal chemistry, organic materials, and interdisciplinary research. Furthermore, the review examines the challenges associated with modern organic synthesis, including reaction selectivity, catalyst recovery, cost, scalability, environmental concerns, and reproducibility. It highlights the importance of combining traditional organic chemistry knowledge with modern technologies to develop more efficient and sustainable chemical processes.

The continuous advancement of organic chemistry has considerable potential to contribute to pharmaceutical innovation, sustainable industrial development, environmental protection, and the discovery of new functional materials. Modern organic chemistry therefore remains an essential foundation for future scientific research and technological progress.

Keywords: Organic Chemistry, Recent Advances, Organic Synthesis, Photoredox Catalysis, Green Chemistry, C–H Functionalization, Click Chemistry, Biocatalysis, Medicinal Chemistry, Nanotechnology, Artificial Intelligence.

Introduction

Organic chemistry is a fundamental branch of chemistry that deals with the study of carbon-containing compounds, their molecular structures, physical and chemical properties, reactions, and methods of synthesis. Carbon possesses a unique ability to form stable covalent bonds with itself and other elements, including hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen, sulfur, phosphorus, and halogens. This property allows carbon to form a wide variety of molecular structures, including straight chains, branched chains, cyclic compounds, aromatic systems, and complex three-dimensional molecules. Organic chemistry plays an important role in everyday human life. Carbohydrates, proteins, lipids, nucleic acids, vitamins, hormones, and enzymes are organic substances essential for biological systems. Medicines, fuels, plastics, dyes, detergents, pesticides, cosmetics, and synthetic fibres are also largely associated with organic compounds. Traditionally, organic chemistry focused on the identification, preparation, purification, and structural characterization of organic substances. Classical reactions

such as substitution, addition, elimination, oxidation, reduction, condensation, and rearrangement formed the foundation of organic synthesis.

However, increasing scientific requirements have encouraged researchers to develop more advanced synthetic methods. The preparation of complex molecules with high selectivity, improved yield, reduced reaction time, and minimum environmental impact has become an important objective of modern organic chemistry.During recent decades, significant developments have occurred in catalytic chemistry, photochemistry, electrochemistry, medicinal chemistry, polymer science, and computational chemistry. These developments have expanded the possibilities of organic synthesis and have made it possible to prepare molecules that were previously difficult to obtain. One important advancement is photoredox catalysis, in which light energy is used to initiate chemical transformations through electron-transfer processes. Another important development is C–H functionalization, which enables the direct modification of carbon–hydrogen bonds without always requiring pre-functionalized starting materials. Click chemistry has introduced efficient and selective reactions for connecting molecular units. Similarly, biocatalysis uses enzymes to perform chemical transformations with high selectivity under suitable conditions.

The integration of organic chemistry with artificial intelligence, machine learning, nanotechnology, and advanced analytical instruments has further improved the understanding and development of chemical reactions. Modern organic chemistry is therefore not limited to conventional laboratory synthesis. It has become an interdisciplinary scientific field that connects chemistry with biology, medicine, materials science, environmental science, and computational technology.

2. Objectives of the Study

The major objectives of the present review paper are:

1. To study the recent developments and emerging trends in organic chemistry.
2. To understand modern methods used in organic synthesis.
3. To examine the role of photoredox catalysis and transition-metal catalysis in chemical transformations.
4. To explore the applications of C–H functionalization and click chemistry.
5. To study the importance of green chemistry and environmentally responsible organic synthesis.
6. To understand the role of biocatalysis and enzyme-mediated reactions.
7. To examine the applications of organic chemistry in pharmaceutical and medicinal research.
8. To understand the importance of organic polymers and advanced functional materials.
9. To explore the contribution of artificial intelligence and computational chemistry to modern organic research.
10. To identify the challenges, limitations, and future possibilities of organic chemistry.

3. Research Methodology

The present study follows a descriptive and literature-based review method.Relevant information has been considered from scientific research articles, review publications, chemistry textbooks, academic journals, and established scientific resources related to organic chemistry.The literature review focuses on recent developments in synthetic methodologies, catalytic reactions, sustainable chemical processes, medicinal chemistry, organic materials, and computational approaches.The collected information has been organized into major research areas to understand the scientific principles, applications, advantages, and limitations of modern organic chemistry.The paper is based on secondary scientific literature. No original laboratory experiments, experimental measurements, or primary survey results are claimed.

4. Historical Development and Evolution of Organic Chemistry

The development of organic chemistry represents an important transformation in modern scientific knowledge. In its early stages, organic chemistry was primarily concerned with substances obtained from plants and animals. Scientists initially believed that organic compounds could only be produced by living organisms through a special force known as vital force. This belief was challenged

in 1828 when Friedrich Wöhler prepared urea, an organic compound, from ammonium cyanate, an inorganic substance.

This experiment became an important milestone in the development of organic chemistry because it demonstrated that an organic compound could be synthesized from inorganic starting materials.Later developments in structural theory, stereochemistry, reaction mechanisms, spectroscopy, and molecular orbital theory provided a deeper understanding of organic compounds.The introduction of modern analytical techniques such as nuclear magnetic resonance spectroscopy, infrared spectroscopy, mass spectrometry, and X-ray crystallography significantly improved molecular identification and structural determination.During the twentieth century, organic synthesis developed rapidly through the discovery of new reactions, reagents, and catalytic systems.In recent years, organic chemistry has increasingly focused on sustainable synthesis, selective molecular transformations, advanced catalysis, and computational methods.This evolution demonstrates the transition of organic chemistry from conventional compound preparation towards the rational design of complex molecules and functional chemical systems.

5. Recent Advances in Organic Chemistry

5.1 Green Organic Synthesis

Green organic synthesis is one of the most important developments in modern organic chemistry. Traditional organic reactions often require toxic solvents, hazardous reagents, high temperatures, and multiple purification steps. These methods may generate considerable quantities of chemical waste. Green organic synthesis aims to reduce the environmental impact of chemical reactions through the development of safer and more efficient synthetic methods.

Important approaches include:

- Use of environmentally safer solvents.
- Solvent-free organic reactions.
- Catalytic reaction methods.
- Reduction of hazardous reagents.
- Use of renewable starting materials.
- Improvement of atom economy.
- Reduction of unnecessary reaction steps.
- Development of biodegradable chemical products.

For example, certain organic reactions can be carried out in water instead of conventional organic solvents. Water-based reaction systems, particularly micellar catalysis, have attracted interest because suitable surfactants can help organic reactants react efficiently in aqueous environments. Similarly, ethanol and selected bio-based solvents may replace certain conventional solvents in proper applications. Green synthesis is particularly useful in pharmaceutical manufacturing, fine chemical production, and academic research laboratories. Its major advantage is that it combines chemical efficiency with environmental responsibility. However, the complete environmental performance of a reaction must be evaluated rather than assuming that every alternative solvent or reagent is automatically safer.

5.2 Photoredox Catalysis

Photoredox catalysis is an advanced synthetic method in which light energy is used to start chemical reactions through electron-transfer processes. A photocatalyst absorbs light and enters an electronically excited state. This excited state can take part in single-electron transfer with suitable reactants, generating reactive radical intermediates. These intermediates can undergo further transformations to form new carbon–carbon or carbon–heteroatom bonds. Common photocatalyst systems include certain iridium and ruthenium complexes, organic dyes, and semiconductor-based materials.

Basic mechanism:

1. The photocatalyst absorbs light.
2. The catalyst enters an excited electronic state.

3. Electron transfer occurs between the excited catalyst and a substrate.
4. Reactive intermediates such as radicals are generated.
5. These intermediates undergo chemical transformation.
6. The catalytic cycle is completed through electron transfer or another regeneration process.

Photoredox catalysis has expanded the possibilities of organic synthesis by enabling transformations under comparatively mild conditions.

Applications:

- Carbon–carbon bond formation.
- Functionalization of aromatic compounds.
- Synthesis of pharmaceutical intermediates.
- Radical-mediated organic transformations.
- Preparation of complex molecular structures.
- Development of selected polymerization processes.

Recent research has also focused on low-energy light-absorbing photocatalysts and improved scalability of photochemical reactions. The combination of photoredox catalysis with transition-metal catalysis has created additional opportunities for selective molecular transformations.

5.3 Transition-Metal-Catalyzed Organic Reactions

Transition-metal catalysis is an essential part of modern organic synthesis. Transition metals can facilitate chemical reactions by providing alternative reaction pathways with lower activation barriers. Common metals used in organic catalysis include palladium, nickel, copper, iron, cobalt, rhodium, ruthenium, and platinum. Palladium-catalysed coupling reactions are particularly important because they allow the formation of carbon–carbon and carbon–heteroatom bonds.

Important examples include:

Suzuki–Miyaura Coupling: This reaction involves the coupling of an organoboron compound with an organic halide or related electrophile, generally in the presence of a palladium catalyst and a suitable base.It is widely used for the synthesis of biaryl compounds and complex organic molecules.Heck Reaction: This reaction involves the coupling of an aryl or vinyl halide with an alkene in the presence of a palladium catalyst.It is useful in the preparation of substituted alkenes and pharmaceutical intermediates.Sonogashira Coupling: This reaction involves the coupling of a terminal alkyne with an aryl or vinyl halide, commonly using palladium and copper catalytic systems.It is important in the synthesis of alkynyl compounds and conjugated molecular structures.

Buchwald–Hartwig Amination: This reaction enables the formation of carbon–nitrogen bonds through palladium-catalysed coupling of aryl halides with amines. It has important applications in medicinal and pharmaceutical chemistry. Transition-metal catalysis has improved the efficiency and selectivity of numerous synthetic reactions. However, the cost, toxicity, and possible residual contamination associated with certain metals remain important considerations. Therefore, research into catalyst recovery, metal recycling, and more abundant first-row transition metals continues to be important.

5.4 C–H Bond Functionalization

C–H functionalization is a rapidly developing area of modern organic chemistry. A carbon–hydrogen bond is generally considered relatively unreactive compared with many other chemical bonds. Traditionally, organic synthesis often requires the conversion of a C–H bond into a more reactive functional group before carrying out further chemical transformations.C–H functionalization allows direct modification of selected carbon–hydrogen bonds to introduce new functional groups.This approach can reduce the number of synthetic steps and improve the efficiency of molecular construction.

Different methods are used for C–H functionalization, including:

- Transition-metal-catalyzed C–H activation.
- Photoredox-mediated C–H functionalization.
- Radical-mediated reactions.

- Electrocatalytic transformations.
- Directing-group-assisted functionalization.

For example, certain palladium-catalyzed reactions allow selective functionalization of aromatic C–H bonds. Similarly, visible-light-induced methods can generate carbon-centred radicals from selected substrates and enable further bond-forming reactions.

Applications:

1. Synthesis of pharmaceutical intermediates.
2. Modification of aromatic compounds.
3. Preparation of functional organic materials.
4. Development of complex molecular structures.
5. Reduction of unnecessary pre-functionalization steps.

A major challenge is controlling the selectivity of the reaction because many organic molecules contain several chemically similar C–H bonds.

5.5 Click Chemistry

Click chemistry is an important concept in modern synthetic chemistry. Barry Sharpless and co-workers introduced the term to describe a group of reactions that efficiently connect molecular components through reliable and selective chemical transformations.Click reactions are generally characterized by high efficiency, broad functional-group tolerance, and relatively simple reaction conditions.One of the most widely used examples is the copper(I)-catalyzed azide–alkyne cycloaddition, commonly known as CuAAC.This reaction involves an organic azide and a terminal alkyne to produce a substituted 1,2,3-triazole.The reaction is particularly valuable because it provides a reliable method for connecting different molecular units.Another important development is strain-promoted azide–alkyne cycloaddition, which does not require a copper catalyst and is particularly useful in biological systems.

Applications of click chemistry:

- Drug discovery.
- Biomolecular labeling.
- Polymer modification.
- Surface functionalization.
- Development of diagnostic materials.
- Preparation of functional organic compounds.
- Bioconjugation and chemical biology.

Click chemistry has also been extended to light-controlled reactions, known as photoclick chemistry, which provides additional control over molecular transformations.

5.6 Biocatalysis and Enzyme-Mediated Organic Synthesis

Biocatalysis involves the use of biological catalysts, particularly enzymes, to carry out chemical reactions. Enzymes are highly specialized biological molecules that accelerate chemical transformations under suitable conditions. They often exhibit excellent selectivity and can distinguish between different substrates or stereochemical forms.

Important enzyme classes used in organic synthesis include:

- Lipases.
- Proteases.
- Oxidoreductases.
- Transaminases.
- Hydrolases.
- Dehydrogenases.

Lipases are commonly used for esterification, transesterification and hydrolysis reactions. Transaminases are useful in the synthesis of chiral amines, which are important building blocks for pharmaceutical compounds. Oxidoreductases facilitate oxidation and reduction reactions and can be used in the preparation of valuable organic intermediates.

Advantages of biocatalysis:

1. High reaction selectivity.
2. Potential reduction in hazardous chemical use.
3. Reactions under comparatively mild conditions.
4. Application in asymmetric synthesis.
5. Use in pharmaceutical manufacturing.
6. Possibility of integrating enzymes with other catalytic systems.

However, enzyme stability, substrate compatibility, reaction conditions, and enzyme recovery can create practical limitations.

5.7 Microwave-Assisted Organic Synthesis

Microwave-assisted organic synthesis is a modern technique in which microwave energy is used to heat reaction mixtures. Conventional heating generally transfers heat from the external heating source to the reaction vessel and then into the reaction mixture. Microwave heating can provide rapid heating through dielectric interactions involving suitable molecules and ions. This method can reduce reaction times in selected chemical transformations and may improve reaction efficiency.

Applications:

- Heterocyclic compound synthesis.
- Condensation reactions.
- Cyclization reactions.
- Preparation of pharmaceutical intermediates.
- Organic material synthesis.
- Selected solvent-free reactions.

The major advantages include rapid heating, convenient reaction control, and potential reduction in reaction time. However, microwave-assisted synthesis requires suitable equipment and careful control of temperature and pressure. It is also important to note that microwave irradiation does not automatically improve every chemical reaction. Its effectiveness depends on the properties of the reaction mixture and the particular transformation.

5.8 Ultrasound-Assisted Organic Synthesis

Ultrasound-assisted synthesis uses high-frequency sound waves to influence chemical reactions. One important phenomenon associated with this technique is acoustic cavitation. Cavitation involves the formation, growth, and collapse of small bubbles in a liquid medium. Their collapse can create localized high-energy conditions that influence mixing, mass transfer and reaction rates. Ultrasound-assisted methods have been investigated in several areas of organic synthesis.

Applications include:

- Condensation reactions.
- Heterocyclic synthesis.
- Organic oxidation and reduction.
- Nanomaterial preparation.
- Extraction of natural products.
- Selected catalytic transformations.

This technique can improve reaction performance in appropriate systems, although the effects depend on the solvent, frequency, power, temperature and reaction conditions.

5.9 Electrochemical Organic Synthesis

Electrochemical organic synthesis uses electrical energy to drive oxidation and reduction reactions. In conventional organic chemistry, chemical oxidizing and reducing agents are frequently used to bring about electron-transfer reactions. Electrosynthesis can sometimes replace these chemical reagents by transferring electrons directly through an electrode. The process generally involves an electrochemical cell containing electrodes and a suitable electrolyte. Oxidation occurs at the anode, while reduction occurs at the cathode. Organic molecules can undergo different transformations depending on the electrode material, applied potential, solvent and electrolyte.

Applications:

- Organic oxidation.
- Organic reduction.
- Carbon–carbon bond formation.
- Functionalization of organic molecules.
- Synthesis of pharmaceutical intermediates.
- Preparation of selected heterocyclic compounds.

Electrochemical synthesis is particularly interesting because electrical energy can be obtained from renewable sources. A developing area is electrophotocatalysis, which combines light energy and electrochemical potential to enable selected single-electron-transfer transformations. However, electrode selection, electrolyte recovery, reaction scale-up, and electrical energy requirements must be carefully considered.

5.10 Flow Chemistry and Continuous-Flow Synthesis

Flow chemistry is an advanced method in which chemical reactions are carried out in a continuously flowing reaction system rather than only in conventional batch vessels. In a typical continuous-flow system, reactants are introduced through pumps and passed through a reactor under controlled conditions. The reaction mixture is continuously processed and the product is collected at the outlet.

Flow chemistry offers several advantages:

- Improved temperature control.
- Efficient mixing.
- Better heat transfer.
- Controlled reaction times.
- Potential improvement in safety.
- Possibility of process automation.
- Easier integration of multiple reaction steps.

It is particularly useful for reactions involving unstable intermediates, hazardous reagents, or rapid reaction kinetics. Flow photochemistry is another important application in which light is supplied to a continuously flowing reaction mixture. However, reactor design, clogging, pressure control, and process optimization are important technical considerations.

6. Recent Advances in Medicinal and Pharmaceutical Chemistry

Medicinal chemistry is closely connected with organic chemistry because the discovery and development of many therapeutic agents depend on the design and synthesis of organic molecules. Modern pharmaceutical research focuses on developing compounds with improved biological activity, selectivity, safety, and pharmacokinetic properties.

6.1 Rational Drug Design

Rational drug design involves the development of potential therapeutic molecules using knowledge of biological targets and molecular interactions. Researchers study the structure of enzymes, receptors, proteins, and other biological molecules to identify compounds that may interact with specific targets. Organic chemistry plays an important role in preparing and modifying these compounds.

6.2 Structure–Activity Relationship

Structure–activity relationship studies examine how changes in molecular structure influence biological activity. By introducing different functional groups or modifying molecular arrangements, researchers can investigate changes in potency, selectivity, solubility, and stability. This approach is important in the development of improved drug candidates.

6.3 Chiral Drug Synthesis

Many organic molecules exist as stereoisomers. Enantiomers may show different biological activities because biological systems are highly sensitive to molecular three-dimensional structures.

Asymmetric synthesis and biocatalysis are therefore important methods for preparing optically enriched pharmaceutical compounds.

6.4 Heterocyclic Compounds in Drug Discovery

Heterocyclic compounds contain one or more heteroatoms such as nitrogen, oxygen, or sulfur within a ring structure. Examples include pyridine, pyrrole, furan, thiophene, imidazole, and indole. Heterocyclic structures are widely present in pharmaceutical molecules because they can influence molecular shape, electronic properties, solubility, and interactions with biological targets.

6.5 Targeted Drug Delivery

Organic chemistry contributes to the development of polymers, linkers, and molecular carriers used in drug delivery systems. Modern research includes biodegradable polymer carriers, lipid-based delivery systems, and chemically modified biomolecules. These technologies aim to improve the delivery of therapeutic compounds to specific tissues or biological targets.

7. Organic Chemistry and Nanotechnology

Nanotechnology has created new opportunities for the design and development of advanced organic and hybrid materials. Organic molecules can be used to modify nanoparticle surfaces, improve stability, control chemical functionality, and develop specialized materials. Organic ligands and functional groups can influence the properties of nanoparticles by controlling their surface interactions.

7.1 Organic Functionalization of Nanomaterials

Functionalization involves introducing selected chemical groups onto the surface of a material. Organic functionalization can improve compatibility, stability, dispersibility, and interactions with biological systems.

7.2 Organic Nanomaterials in Drug Delivery

Certain organic and polymeric nanoparticles can be investigated as carriers for pharmaceutical substances. Their properties can be modified by changing molecular weight, surface chemistry, size, and functional groups.

7.3 Organic Electronic Materials

Conjugated organic molecules and polymers contain systems of delocalized electrons. These materials are useful in organic electronic applications such as organic light-emitting diodes, organic solar cells, and organic field-effect transistors. The development of organic electronic materials represents an important connection between organic chemistry, physics, and materials science.

8. Organic Polymers And Advanced Materials

Polymers are large molecules composed of repeating structural units known as monomers. Organic chemistry plays a central role in polymer synthesis and the modification of polymer properties. Common synthetic polymers include polyethylene, polypropylene, polystyrene, polyvinyl chloride and polyethylene terephthalate. Modern research focuses on developing polymers with improved strength, flexibility, thermal stability, electrical properties and environmental performance.

8.1 Biodegradable Polymers

Biodegradable polymers are materials that can undergo biological degradation under suitable environmental conditions. Examples include polylactic acid (PLA) and polyhydroxyalkanoates (PHAs). PLA can be produced from renewable carbohydrate-based resources, while PHAs are produced by certain microorganisms. These polymers have potential applications in packaging, agriculture, biomedical materials, and selected consumer products.

8.2 Conducting Organic Polymers

Conducting polymers possess electrical properties that distinguish them from conventional insulating polymers. Examples include polyaniline, polypyrrole, and polythiophene.These materials are studied for applications in sensors, electronic devices, energy storage, and protective coatings.

8.3 Polymer Modification

Organic reactions can be used to modify polymer structures and introduce functional groups. Click chemistry and other selective coupling reactions have become useful tools for polymer

functionalization.Such modifications can influence the physical, chemical, and biological properties of materials.

9. Role of Artificial Intelligence and Computational Chemistry

Artificial intelligence and computational chemistry are becoming increasingly important in modern organic research.

Traditional organic synthesis often requires repeated laboratory experiments to identify suitable reaction conditions, catalysts, solvents, and temperatures.

Computational approaches can help reduce the number of experiments by predicting molecular properties and possible reaction outcomes.

9.1 Computer-Assisted Retrosynthesis

Retrosynthesis is a method of planning a chemical synthesis by working backward from the desired target molecule.

Computational tools can suggest possible disconnections and starting materials for preparing complex organic compounds.

This approach can assist researchers in selecting practical synthetic routes.

9.2 Reaction Prediction

Machine-learning models can analyze existing reaction data and identify patterns associated with chemical transformations.

These systems can be used to predict potential products, reaction classes, and suitable reaction conditions.

However, computational predictions require experimental validation because actual reaction outcomes depend on many factors that may not be fully represented in available datasets.

9.3 Molecular Modelling

Computational molecular modelling helps researchers understand molecular structures, electronic properties, conformations, and interactions.

Quantum chemical calculations can provide information about reaction mechanisms, energy changes, and transition states.

Density Functional Theory (DFT) is widely used to investigate the electronic structures and reaction pathways of organic molecules.

9.4 Artificial Intelligence in Drug Discovery

AI-based tools can assist in identifying potential drug candidates, predicting molecular properties, and prioritizing compounds for further investigation. They can also support molecular design and the analysis of chemical and biological datasets. Nevertheless, AI cannot replace chemical reasoning, laboratory experiments, and expert validation.

10. Advanced Analytical Techniques in Organic Chemistry

Modern analytical techniques are essential for identifying organic compounds, confirming molecular structures, and understanding reaction mechanisms.

10.1 Nuclear Magnetic Resonance Spectroscopy

Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR) spectroscopy is an important analytical technique used to study the chemical environment of atomic nuclei. Proton NMR and carbon-13 NMR provide valuable information about the structure of organic molecules.NMR spectroscopy is widely used for structural determination, reaction monitoring, and purity assessment.

10.2 Infrared Spectroscopy

Infrared spectroscopy is used to identify functional groups through their characteristic vibrational absorption frequencies. It is particularly useful for identifying groups such as hydroxyl, carbonyl, amino, and other characteristic chemical functionalities.

10.3 Mass Spectrometry

Mass spectrometry provides information about the molecular mass and fragmentation patterns of organic compounds. It is useful in compound identification, molecular characterization, and the analysis of complex mixtures.

10.4 Chromatographic Techniques

Chromatography is widely used for separation, purification, and analysis of organic compounds.

Important techniques include:

- Thin Layer Chromatography (TLC).
- Gas Chromatography (GC).
- High-Performance Liquid Chromatography (HPLC).
- Gas Chromatography–Mass Spectrometry (GC-MS).
- Liquid Chromatography–Mass Spectrometry (LC-MS).

These methods are essential in pharmaceutical quality control, reaction monitoring, and chemical research.

11. Applications of Modern Organic Chemistry

Modern organic chemistry has applications across several important scientific and industrial fields.

11.1 Pharmaceutical Industry

Organic synthesis is essential for preparing medicines, active pharmaceutical ingredients, and pharmaceutical intermediates. Modern catalytic methods, asymmetric synthesis, and biocatalysis help improve the efficiency of drug manufacturing.

11.2 Agricultural Chemistry

Organic compounds are widely used in pesticides, herbicides, plant-growth regulators, and agricultural formulations. Modern research focuses on developing selective and environmentally responsible agrochemicals.

11.3 Food Industry

Organic chemistry contributes to food preservation, flavour development, food additives, vitamins, antioxidants, and packaging materials. It also supports the identification and analysis of chemical components in food products.

11.4 Textile Industry

Organic dyes, pigments, synthetic fibres and finishing agents are important components of textile manufacturing. Modern organic chemistry contributes to the development of improved dyes, functional fabrics, and advanced textile materials.

11.5 Cosmetics and Personal Care

Organic compounds are used in perfumes, creams, lotions, shampoos, sunscreens, and other personal-care products. Research in this area focuses on improving product stability, safety, performance, and formulation.

11.6 Energy and Fuel Technology

Organic chemistry is important in the development of fuels, biofuels, organic solar materials, battery components, and other energy-related technologies. Organic molecules are also being studied for applications in hydrogen storage and advanced energy materials.

11.7 Environmental Applications

Organic chemistry contributes to the development of chemical sensors, adsorption materials, biodegradable polymers, and selected technologies for environmental remediation. It also supports the identification and analysis of organic pollutants in air, water and soil.

12. Green and Sustainable Approaches in Modern Organic Chemistry

Sustainability has become an important consideration in modern chemical research. The development of new organic reactions should not focus only on product yield. It should also consider waste generation, energy requirements, reagent toxicity, solvent selection, catalyst recovery and overall environmental impact.

Important sustainable approaches include:

1. Use of catalytic instead of stoichiometric reagents where appropriate.
2. Development of solvent-free reactions.
3. Use of water and suitable alternative solvents.

4. Application of renewable raw materials.
5. Improvement of reaction selectivity.
6. Reduction of purification requirements.
7. Use of recyclable catalysts.
8. Development of continuous-flow manufacturing.

The E-factor and process mass intensity are useful indicators for evaluating material efficiency. The E-factor measures the mass of waste generated per unit mass of product, while process mass intensity measures the total mass of materials used per mass of product. These indicators can help researchers compare different synthetic routes and identify opportunities for improvement. However, sustainability assessment should also consider energy use, toxicity, water consumption, and the complete life cycle of chemical materials.

13. Challenges And Limitations In Modern Organic Chemistry

Despite significant developments, modern organic chemistry faces several scientific and practical challenges.

13.1 Reaction Selectivity

Many organic molecules contain multiple reactive functional groups and chemically similar bonds. Achieving high regioselectivity, chemoselectivity, and stereoselectivity remains a major challenge in complex organic synthesis.

13.2 Catalyst Cost and Recovery

Certain catalytic methods depend on expensive transition metals and specialized ligands. The recovery and reuse of catalysts can be difficult, particularly in large-scale manufacturing.

13.3 Environmental Impact

Although modern synthetic methods may be more efficient, certain reactions still require hazardous solvents, reagents, or energy-intensive conditions. A complete environmental assessment is necessary before describing a process as sustainable.

13.4 Industrial Scale-Up

A reaction that works effectively in a small laboratory may not perform similarly on an industrial scale. Heat transfer, mixing, pressure, safety, and process stability can create additional challenges.

13.5 Cost of Advanced Equipment

Techniques such as NMR spectroscopy, mass spectrometry, microwave synthesis, and continuous-flow processing may require specialized instruments and trained personnel. This can limit their availability in smaller research institutions.

13.6 Data Quality in Computational Chemistry

AI and machine-learning approaches depend on the quality and diversity of available chemical data. Incomplete datasets, inconsistent experimental conditions and limited representation of unsuccessful reactions can affect prediction accuracy.

13.7 Reproducibility

Scientific results should be reproducible under clearly documented experimental conditions. Differences in solvents, temperature, catalysts, purity and reaction procedures may influence outcomes. Therefore, proper experimental documentation and validation are essential.

14. Future Scope Of Organic Chemistry

The future of organic chemistry is expected to involve increasing integration with biotechnology, computational science, environmental chemistry and materials engineering. Several research areas offer considerable opportunities.

14.1 Development of New Catalytic Systems

Research into more selective, efficient, and recyclable catalysts may improve the preparation of complex organic molecules. Catalysts based on abundant metals and metal-free catalytic systems are important areas of investigation.

14.2 Sustainable Organic Synthesis

Future research will increasingly focus on renewable feedstocks, safer solvents, energy-efficient reactions and reduced waste generation. The development of practical sustainable methods will be important for industrial applications.

14.3 Artificial Intelligence-Based Chemical Research

AI-assisted reaction prediction, retrosynthetic analysis, and molecular design may improve the speed and efficiency of chemical research. Integration with automated laboratory systems could further improve experimental planning and reaction optimization.

14.4 Advanced Medicinal Chemistry

The development of selective drugs, new therapeutic molecules, and improved drug-delivery systems will continue to depend on advances in organic synthesis. Asymmetric synthesis and molecular design will remain important research areas.

14.5 Organic Electronic Materials

Organic semiconductors, conducting polymers, and functional organic materials may contribute to future developments in flexible electronics, sensors, displays, and energy technologies.

14.6 Biocatalysis and Enzyme Engineering

Improving enzyme stability, activity, and substrate compatibility may expand the use of biocatalysis in industrial organic synthesis. Combining enzyme-based methods with chemical catalysis may create new synthetic possibilities.

14.7 Integration of Organic Chemistry with Nanotechnology

Functional organic molecules and advanced nanomaterials may contribute to developments in drug delivery, sensing, electronics, and biomedical research.

14.8 Advanced Photochemical and Electrochemical Methods

The combination of light, electricity, and catalysis may enable new transformations that are difficult to achieve using conventional synthetic approaches. These methods may also support more sustainable routes to valuable organic compounds.

15.Conclusion

Organic chemistry continues to be one of the most dynamic and influential branches of chemical science. Its applications extend across pharmaceuticals, agriculture, food processing, textiles, cosmetics, polymers, energy systems, and advanced materials. Recent advances in organic chemistry have introduced innovative approaches to molecular synthesis and chemical transformation. Green organic synthesis, photoredox catalysis, transition-metal catalysis, C–H functionalization, click chemistry, biocatalysis, electrochemical synthesis, and flow chemistry have expanded the possibilities of modern organic research.

The integration of artificial intelligence, computational chemistry, and advanced analytical techniques has further improved the ability of scientists to understand, design, and synthesize complex organic molecules.These developments have considerable significance for pharmaceutical innovation, sustainable industrial manufacturing, environmental protection, and materials science.At the same time, challenges such as reaction selectivity, catalyst cost, environmental safety, industrial scale-up, and experimental reproducibility require continued scientific investigation.It is important for researchers and students to understand both the fundamental principles of organic chemistry and the modern technologies transforming the field.In conclusion, recent advances in organic chemistry represent a major step towards more efficient, selective, innovative and sustainable chemical science. Continued research and interdisciplinary collaboration will play an essential role in shaping the future of organic chemistry and its applications in human welfare and technological development.

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Indian Research Methodologies in English Studies

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Abstract:

This essay explores how India's rich historical, cultural and academic traditions have influenced the country's research methods and its unique characteristics. It charts the evolution of research methodologies from prehistoric knowledge systems to contemporary multidisciplinary strategies. The study addresses the impact of indigenous viewpoints while highlighting important methodology, such as mixed, qualitative, and quantitative methods. It also looks at modern issues including globalization, ethical issues, and resource limitations. By examining these aspects, the study highlights the need for creative, context-sensitive methods to improve research results in the Indian academic environment and provides insights into the dynamic character of Indian research practices.

Key words: Methodology, Knowledge, Qualitative, Quantitative, Creative, Cultural

Introduction:

Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) research methodology integrates traditional Indian wisdom—such as *Dṛṣṭiḥ* (perspective), *Parampar*ā (tradition), and *Laukikaprayojanam* (practical utility)—with modern interdisciplinary approaches. The Indian education system has prioritized moral, material, spiritual, and intellectual values over its history, tracing back to the ancient Rigvedic period. Besides literary knowledge, the importance of physical work is highlighted in the Indian Knowledge System. Throughout history, India has continuously imparted the world with knowledge of spiritual brotherhood, Yoga, and Ayurveda, which the international community continues to embrace today.

Indian Research Methodology (IRM) is a holistic approach rooted in ancient Indian knowledge systems, emphasizing ethical, systematic, and context-sensitive inquiry. Its relevance lies in blending traditional wisdom with modern practices, offering innovative pathways for scholarly exploration.

Incorporating Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) into English Literature research involves analysing literary texts through the lens of indigenous philosophies, epistemologies, and cultural wisdom, moving away from purely Eurocentric frameworks. This approach aims to bridge traditional wisdom with modern critical theories.

Definition:

It is necessary for a beginner in the field of research in literature and language to understand the basic terms like search, research, thesis, criticism, scholarship, research degrees like M.Phil, and Ph.D., literature, philosophy and philosophy of literature, etc.

The term ‘search’ means to find out, to know, to learn, to explore or to investigate. Research is basically an academic activity that involves certain techniques. Research consists in defining and redefining problems, formulating hypothesis or possible solutions to the research problem, collecting information (‘data’), organizing and evaluating it, reaching to some findings (conclusions) on the basis of the organization, analysis and interpretation of the information collected. It also includes testing the findings with reference to the hypothesis. Research is, thus, a close, careful and systematic study of a subject.

The Random House Dictionary defines the term ‘research’ as a “Diligent and systematic inquiry or investigation into a subject in order to discover or revise facts, theories applications...etc.”

According to Webster’s New International Dictionary, research is “simply a systematic and refined technique of thinking.”

For Oxford English Dictionary, “Research is a search or investigation directed to the discovery of some fact by careful consideration or study of a subject, a course of critical or scientific inquiry...”

For Rusk, research is "a point of view, an attitude of enquiry or a frame of mind. It asks questions which have hitherto not been asked and it seeks to answer them by following a fairly definite procedure.

For Francis Becon, research is a scientific planning. He says, "Research is a power of suspending judgment with patience, of meditating with pleasures, of asserting with caution, of correcting with readiness and of arranging thought with scrupulous plan."

We can see certain basic characteristics of research in the definitions of the term 'research' given above.

Historical Context:

With origins in Vedic and classical Indian learning, the evolution of research technique in India times back thousands of years. Logic and philosophical discussion were among the rigorous methods of investigation used by early Indian academics, especially those from the Vedic school. The development of research methodology has been greatly impacted by important historical eras and personalities from ancient times to the colonial era to the present.

Ancient and Medieval Periods

Early research methods were based on Indian intellectual traditions, such as those contained in the Vedas, Upanishads, and classical works like Arthashastra and Manusmriti. The focus was on empirical observation, logical reasoning, and philosophical discourse. The empirical and methodical approaches that were common in ancient India are exemplified by the contributions of intellectuals such as Sushruta in medicine and Aryabhata in mathematics.

Colonial Methodologies in Indian Research

Research methods in India saw a dramatic change during the British Colonial Period. Quantitative and empirical approaches were used as a result of the entrance of Western scientific methods and academic frameworks. The academic environment was influenced by colonial scholars like Alexander Cunningham and William Jones who translated and interpreted Indian texts. But there were also difficulties throughout this time, such as the imposition of Eurocentric viewpoints and approaches that occasionally disregarded indigenous knowledge systems.

Post-Independence Era

Post-independence India saw a resurgence of interest in integrating traditional knowledge with modern research methodologies. While adopting Global research procedures, Indian scholars started to create their own methods. Research procedures in a variety of fields were significantly influenced by the founding of organizations like the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) and the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).

Methodologies in Indian Research

The different academic and cultural environments of India are reflected in the variety of approaches used in research methodologies. The main approaches used in Indian research are mixed, qualitative, and quantitative approaches.

Qualitative Research

Qualitative research in India is concerned with qualitative phenomenon, i.e., phenomena relating to or involving quality or kind. Key qualitative methodologies include:

- **Case Studies:** In-depth exploration of specific instances to understand complex phenomena. Indian researchers use case studies to examine diverse subjects, from rural development projects to social issues.
- **Ethnography:** Immersive research focusing on the study of cultures and communities. Ethnographic studies are prominent in fields such as anthropology and sociology, where researchers engage with local communities to gain insights into their practices and beliefs.
- **Interviews and Focus Groups:** Methods that involve direct interaction with participants to gather detailed information. Interviews and focus groups are widely used in social sciences and humanities to explore individual experiences and perceptions.

Quantitative Research

Quantitative research is based on the measurement of quantity or amount. It is applicable to phenomena that can be expressed in terms of quantity. Common quantitative methods include:

- **Surveys and Questionnaires:** Tools for collecting data from large populations. Indian researchers frequently use surveys to gather data on various topics, from public health to consumer behavior.
- **Experimental Research:** Involves altering factors and abstain observe the outcomes. Experimental research is commonly used in fields such as psychology and medical research to establish causal relationships.
- **Statistical Analysis:** Techniques for analyzing numerical data and drawing conclusions. Statistical methods are widely used in economics, education, and other fields to interpret data and inform decision-making.

Technology in Research:

Technology in research improves productivity, accuracy, and teamwork, by facilitating quick data collection, sophisticated analysis, and international dissemination of results. AI for data analysis, online databases, digital simulations, and collaborative software are important tools. It revolutionizes research through lowering manual labor, enhancing data visualization, and facilitating real-time collaboration.

Conclusion:

Research is as old as human civilization. The progress from the 'Stone Age' to the present concept of 'Global Village' is a result of one or the other kind of research people have conducted. Research is, thus, a very powerful instrument of knowledge and development. It is a movement —a movement from known to the unknown. In fact, the instinct for research is already present in human nature. The inquisitiveness within us is stimulated when the unknown confronts us. Research is, an attempt to make the 'unknown that is invisible, visible. Thus, the method we employ for obtaining the knowledge of the 'unknown' is research.

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Women and Cyber Crime: Emerging Threats, Legal Safeguards and Challenges in India

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Abstract

Cyber crime against women is the fastest growing form of gender-based violence in India. This paper analyses the evolving types, trends, and socio-psychological impact of cyber crimes targeting women, with a special focus on the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data, the Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000, the newly enacted criminal codes, and the lived experiences of women in educational institutions.

Introduction

The internet was long envisioned as an inherently democratic, gender-neutral space; however, empirical data increasingly proves otherwise. According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), cyber crimes targeting women escalated by 65.6% between 2020 and 2023.[1] Statistics indicate that approximately every third cyber crime complaint formally registered by a woman in India stems from online harassment, digital blackmail, or non-consensual intimate image abuse.[2] Within regional landscapes like Punjab — particularly among college-going young adult women — the proliferation of malicious activities such as the creation of fake Instagram profiles and image morphing has altered the everyday digital experience.

Typology of Cyber Crimes Targeting Women

2.1 Cyber Stalking

Cyber stalking involves repeatedly following, tracking, or communicating with a woman online via direct messages, comment threads, or emails despite her clear and explicit indications of disinterest or objection. In the updated Indian legal framework, these acts are strictly penalised.[3]

2.2 Morphing and Non-Consensual Intimate Image Abuse (NCIIA)

This targeted offense occurs when a perpetrator downloads standard public photographs from social platforms like Facebook or Instagram and modifies them into explicit or obscene images using generative artificial intelligence tools.

2.3 Cyber Bullying and Digital Trolling

Character assassination, defamatory remarks regarding physical appearance, and targeted digital harassment often manifest in high-frequency hubs, such as college-level student WhatsApp groups.

2.4 Phishing and Matrimonial Frauds

Perpetrators construct fraudulent identities, such as fake Non-Resident Indian (NRI) accounts, on commercial matchmaking platforms like http://Shaadi.com to build trust under false pretenses and subsequently extort money from users.

2.5 Sextortion

This involves coercively demanding financial payments or non-consensual sexual favours from a victim after compromising their private chat logs, personal photographs, or credentials via unauthorized device access.

Causes and Vulnerability Factors

Low Digital Literacy: In a comprehensive user survey conducted by the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI), 78% of surveyed female internet users noted they lacked functional knowledge regarding how to officially block or formally report digital abuse.[4]

Digital Over-sharing: Users frequently broadcast precise location data, institutional affiliations, and granular daily routines publicly across open profiles.

Patriarchal Victim-Blaming Mindsets: Societal reactions frequently deflect accountability from the offender to the victim. This dynamic deters victims from pursuing formal institutional remedies.

Democratisation of Generative AI Tools: The widespread accessibility of advanced, consumer-grade image manipulation software allows untrained actors to synthesize deepfakes or altered imagery within seconds.

Legal and Regulatory Framework in India

4.1 Statutory Provisions

Information Technology Act, 2000: Provisions include Section 66C (punishment for identity theft), Section 66E (punishment for violation of privacy) and Section 67 (punishment for publishing or transmitting obscene material in electronic form).[5]

Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023: Modernizes the penal framework, where Section 75 explicitly penalises forms of sexual harassment and Section 78 criminalises physical and digital stalking.[6]

Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023: Enshrines statutory data rights, granting individuals the right to request the erasure of their personal data from internet repositories.[7]

4.2 Reporting and Enforcement Mechanisms

Victims can access the unified National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal or dial the dedicated national Women Helpline (1930). At the state level, the Punjab Police has established functional, specialized Cyber Crime Police Stations across all administrative districts.

Empirical Case Studies and Survey Findings

Case Study 1 (2023): An undergraduate student at a college in Ludhiana discovered her standard Instagram photographs had been morphed and uploaded to an explicit adult website. Subsequent investigation revealed the perpetrator was a direct classmate.

Case Study 2 (GNDU Affiliated Colleges Survey, 2024): A primary survey conducted across higher education institutions affiliated with Guru Nanak Dev University (GNDU) in the Kapurthala district revealed that while 42% of female respondents experienced instances of online harassment, only 12% submitted a formal institutional complaint.[8]

Key Research Findings:

Perpetrator Proximity: The vast majority of digital offenses are perpetrated by individuals known to the victim.

Platform Concentration: Digital harassment incidents occur most frequently within Instagram and WhatsApp.

Socio-Cultural Barriers: The fear of domestic repercussions and public social stigma remains a significantly larger deterrent to seeking justice than a lack of confidence in law enforcement.

Institutional Recommendations

Mandatory Digital Literacy: Introduce credit-bearing cyber awareness coursework.

Digital Self-Defence Protocols: Educate students on profile locking, two-step verification, and proper digital evidence preservation.

Campus Redressal Mechanisms: Mandate that Higher Education Institutions build a dedicated Women Cyber Cell under their Internal Complaints Committee (ICC).

Parental Sensitization Initiatives: Develop counseling modules designed to educate families on supporting victims.

Conclusion

Cyberspace functions as an immediate, borderless extension of physical society. Securing physical safety across college campuses necessitates ensuring an equally secure online environment. Empowering women with overlapping legal literacy and technological agency is a necessary precondition to fulfilling the foundational promises of Gender Justice under Articles 15 and 21 of the Constitution of India.

FOOTNOTES - ਹੁਣ ਇਹ ਪੇਜ ਦੇ ਥੱਲੇ ਲੱਗਣਗੇ

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2. Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In), Annual Report 2023-24, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India, p. 112.
3. Formerly Section 354D of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), now codified under Section 78 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023.
4. Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) & Kantar, Internet in India Report 2023.
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Social Commentary and Existential Freedom in Anuja Chauhan's Fiction: Negotiating Individual Identity and the Socio-Cultural World

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Abstract

Literature can be viewed as a mirror of the interconnection between an individual and his/her social surroundings. Cultural customs, social organizations, gender stereotypes and beliefs of groups affect the development of personality and determine the chances of individual freedom. The works of Anuja Chauhan provide an illustrative example of the interconnection through humor, romance, political satire, family issues and pop culture. The current study focuses on the interconnection between the analysis of social issues and existentialism in the following novels by Anuja Chauhan: The Zoya Factor (2008), Battle for Bittora (2010), Those Pricey Thakur Girls (2013), The House That BJ Built (2015), and The Fast and the Dead (2023). The research is based on the existential feminism approach by Simone de Beauvoir that includes such notions as situated freedom, Otherness, ambiguity and responsibility. Critiques of the books, interviews with the authors, and earlier research papers will help incorporate some other perspectives about the social context of the novels. It is demonstrated in the paper that in the writings of Chauhan, individual freedom is portrayed as negotiable and inseparable from the society. The struggles between the individual and the community are depicted in terms of family, politics, professional life, pop culture, and interactions with the community people.

Keywords*: Anuja Chauhan; existentialism; existential feminism; social commentary; Simone de Beauvoir; situated freedom; female identity; individual agency; Indian popular fiction.*

1. Introduction

It is through literature that we gain an understanding of the relationship between the individual and the society in which he finds himself. His identity does not develop independently of his social surroundings, but through the interaction with his family, culture, economic status, gender role and ideology of society. It is in this way that much of what pertains to the development of identity and what people think of the individual is decided. This is especially important in the context of existential and feminist criticism.

The Indian English Literature in modern times has been studying the complexities of city life, problems of gender, ambition, family relationships, and popular culture. Of the many modern authors contributing to the literature of Indian English Literature, there is a special position held by Anuja Chauhan. Chauhan is famous for her funny and romantic novels with a satirical portrayal of contemporary Indian society via characters whom she brings to life using situations that are humorous and realistic. Chauhan's experience in the field of advertising shapes her literary style, which uses common expressions and her social awareness of Indians.

Though the novels penned by Chauhan can be classified as novels written as popular fiction and romantic comedy, the structure of these novels enables one to look beyond the immediate issue at hand and address issues pertaining to society as well. The characters in her novels live in an environment where there are certain traditions prevailing within their families, politics, occupation, and society.

In this study, the selected novels will be five in number: "The Zoya Factor," "Battle for Bittora," "Those Pricey Thakur Girls," "The House That BJ Built," and "The Fast and the Dead." These novels discuss varied issues of Indian society, which include cricket and advertising industry, political system, family systems, and inheritance system.

The choice of the theory of Simone de Beauvoir as the major theoretical framework of the study is due to the importance of her notion of freedom because, according to her, freedom is a notion existing in some particular socio-historic circumstances. Man does not exercise his freedom in a vacuum but within the conditions of his life. The social institutions may restrict the opportunities for an individual, but the individual himself has the potential to influence his environment by making choices and doing something.

The main thesis statement of the current paper is the following: In the short stories by Chauhan, social criticism goes hand in hand with existentialism in terms of identity construction in the sphere of personal ambitions and social expectations.

2. Theoretical Framework: Simone de Beauvoir and Existential Feminism

The existentialism of Simone de Beauvoir acts as the basis for the analysis of the connection between the individual identity and the role of society and freedom. One of the greatest works of the philosopher is The Second Sex and its theme lies in the historical and cultural establishment of the image of the Other as compared to men. De Beauvoir does not think that femininity exists as a prearranged category; however, she discusses the construction of gender roles in her writing.

The theme of the Other plays a great role in the description of women who get their identity through external factors. Women are often viewed as Other and evaluated according to their relationships, looks, marriage, family responsibilities, and their place in society.

Situated freedom is another big idea in the philosophy of Beauvoir. Being human, one is able to make his/her own decisions according to the social-historical setting. Despite the fact that human beings experience a certain effect of the situations they are in, there are no barriers to their actions caused by that. This implies that freedom is connected with understanding of the person's own situation and his/her ability to make meaningful decisions within it.

In this connection, ambiguity in the philosophy of Beauvoir helps us to understand better the paradoxes of human existence. People have to face contradictions related to their independence and belonging to something greater at the same time. There are contradictions between the personal ambitions of a person and societal requirements.

Furthermore, freedom and the link between freedom and the responsibility to other individuals with regards to ethics are addressed in The Ethics of Ambiguity. One cannot discuss freedom as something strictly personal since the nature of humanity implies relations. Any choice made by an individual will affect other people, and freedom of others must be taken into account from an ethical perspective.

Such ideas can help analyze the works of Chauhan. This paper does not suggest that the heroes created by Chauhan deliberately represent the philosophy of Beauvoir. Instead, the existential feminist approach will be applied.

3. Social Commentary in Anuja Chauhan's Fiction

3.1 The Zoya Factor: Popular Culture, Public Identity and Individual Agency

Zoya Factor (2008) incorporates advertising, cricket, romance and belief in one storyline. In doing so, this book provides readers with great chances to understand the influence that public perception can have on individual identity. This book has been arranged in such a way that it establishes connection between Zoya Singh Solanki, Indian cricket team and luck. Consequently, Zoya ends up having an identity that depends on the wider public perception.

The connection between individual identity and wider public perception is one of the major themes of this book. Individual identity of Zoya depends on her own ambitions and profession, and the fact that she is a lucky charm. To be seen as a lucky charm poses very important question of whether individuals can be defined by society with meanings that may not be right about them.

In this case, it can be examined in the context of Beauvoir's idea of Otherness. If the identity of an individual is determined by the role he/she plays in the society, then it is possible that the personal identity would get subordinated to the social definitions. Thus, the case of Zoya can be examined in relation to the problem of social recognition against individual self.

In addition, the novel portrays the influence of popular culture on contemporary India. Cricket is more than just a sport; it is the spirit of the country and people's enthusiasm. In this sense, advertisements also connect individuals with commercial world and cultural dreams. With this combination of elements, Chauhan brings out the correlation between public portrayal and individuality.

Existential approach helps us examine the link between the public and the individual. Is it possible for one to retain his/her individuality being defined by the collective?

3.2 Battle for Bittora: Electoral Politics, Social Expectations and Individual Choice

The novel Battle for Bittora (2010) introduces the political environment in relation to elections as a relevant setting through which issues such as individual freedom and social responsibilities can be explored. In the novel, the main character in question is Sarojini Pande, popularly known as Jinni, and whose career takes a turn following advice from her grandmother to contest for a parliamentary seat in Bittora.

The shift from the setting of her professional life to that of electoral politics brings about the dilemma between the choice of the individual and those of the family. Such a process is influenced by Jinni's grandmother, political culture, and the responsibilities of Jinni's family in the political sphere.

Political setting also helps Chauhan to investigate problems connected with functioning of election-related systems, political aspirations and representation. Through active participation in elections, Jinni becomes part of such a system where personal choice is tied up with political party, people's opinion and overall welfare.

The political setting of the novel is significant from the existential perspective because existence presupposes having the ability to choose while being aware of wider consequences of that choice. Active participation of Jinni in public life raises the issues of personal responsibility, political affiliations and role of family expectations.

The connection between political satire and existential freedom is particularly relevant in this case because through irony author draws attention to contradictions in political affairs, while the main character faces the problem of individual ambition and social obligation.

3.3 Those Pricey Thakur Girls: Family, Gender Roles and Social Identity

The Plot of Those Expensive Thakur Girls (2013) revolves around the dynamics and socio-cultural environment in which the family of the Thakurs and their daughters are situated. This is the story of the Thakurs, specifically of their daughters who live through a set of experiences within an environment wherein the family itself and its traditions, social pressure and cultural change become involved.

Family is one of the principal organizations that serve as conduits for social norms. It provides membership and intimacy, while setting up certain norms concerning relationship, reputation and behavior. These norms, pertaining to women, include notions of femininity, marriage and acceptability.

Family setting in the novel allows one to consider the relationship between personal identity and social role. It is possible to interpret the role of Thakur sisters in the light of issues of women's self-assertion and formation of personal identity.

Historical setting in the novel adds to the social aspect of it. Family relations, social setting of Delhi, and media setting provide the context in which one can observe the relationship between private events and public events.

One can also interpret the novel as the embodiment of Beauvoir's idea of social construction of gender identity. In other words, the novel tells about the struggle of an individual against the will of his or her family. Individuals have to make their decisions according to the tradition of the society in which they live.

3.4 The House That BJ Built: Inheritance, Property and Family Responsibility

The House That BJ Built (2015) is the next part of the story about Thakur family when the problems of property, inheritance, and family relations play an important role in the social context of

the novel. For the house on Hailey Road it means not only an investment but also the place of belonging and relation between several generations of this family.

The problem of inheritance raises the question of conflict between personal interests and those of the family. The questions concerning the house generate certain expectations among different persons which show that the family property can be a reason of conflict even in friendly relations.

Moreover, the picture of Bonu Singh and the whole Thakur family gives an opportunity to discuss the issues of women's independence and economic agency in comparison with the social expectations.

From the existential perspective, there are some problems concerning the link between the inherited problems and free will that arise in the novel. Individuals have no choice about the family they belong to but they have to make decisions regarding the manner in which they should deal with their inherited obligations. Therefore, the house can serve as an example for the analysis of the link between freedom and family relations.

It is important to discuss the concept of ambiguity suggested by Beauvoir because it is applicable to the problem since the family relations are not only based on emotional ties but they may be related to contradictions.

3.5 The Fast and the Dead: Community, Religious Identity and Collective Responsibility

"The Fast and the Dead" (2023) brings in social commentary into the setting of the diverse neighborhood in Shivajinagar. The plot tells the story of a society in which people belonging to different languages, religions, and cultures coexist. In the social setting presented in the story, community relations, public opinion and repercussions of prejudices become possible to examine.

The social element of the main mystery in the novel involves family relationships, community relationships, and public reaction to the incident. The description of community life allows for examining the effects that social perception and collective ideology can have on an individual identity.

The social significance of the novel is in the connection that exists between the identity of an individual and collective perception. The acts of individuals are often seen and examined based on whether the person belongs to some religion, culture or society.

The existential ethics of Beauvoir can be useful in the analysis of this situation. Beauvoir believes that freedom is the process of recognizing the freedom of others and fulfilling one's responsibilities to other people. When people are treated as elements of some social groups, then their individuality is ignored. It means that the social context shown in the book can help us to discuss the ethical questions regarding social stereotypes and prejudices.

The mysticism and social aspect of the book The Fast and the Dead encourage us to examine how simple relationships between the neighbors reflect conflicts in the society. In this way, the book will broaden the discussion of the idea of existential freedom.

4. Comparative Analysis: Individual Freedom within Social Structures

Every novel among these five contains some aspect of Indian social world; nevertheless, a common theme of all these books is that of the relation between one's personal identity and social expectations.

Personal identity in The Zoya Factor depends on perception and culture. Personal choice, politics and family expectations are the themes of Battle for Bittora. In Those Pricey Thakur Girls the influence of family and conventions on personal identity, particularly in case of women, is discussed. In The House That BJ Built inheritance and property are the sources of conflicts between personal ambitions and family duties. Communal identity and social discrimination are the themes of The Fast and the Dead.

From the above it can be seen that the social criticism by Chauhan does not confine itself only to the political problems; even the daily experiences can be analyzed from the social point of view. Some of the social factors affecting personal identity and choices are family, work place, popular culture, property and communal relations.

The comparative study also illustrates the importance of the situated freedom theory of Beauvoir. Individual actions and decisions take place within contexts that are not chosen by the individual themselves. The individual is affected by his/her family, gender, social institutions, and community contexts. Yet, the individual can act in response to such contexts.

What makes the difference in this perspective is the distinction between freedom and independence. According to the existentialist definition of freedom, it does not imply cutting off all social ties that the individual had. It means appreciating the context and making decisions. The stories of Chauhan provide the grounds for examining the contexts of the individuals who have to make decisions which lie somewhere in-between their aspirations and social contexts. It becomes evident through the selected novels that individual freedom is accompanied by responsibility. Individual decisions taken within the family, political and community spheres affect other people's lives. Therefore, individual agency is inseparable from social relations. This approach to freedom is in agreement with Beauvoir's philosophical view of freedom.

5. Humour and Satire as Instruments of Social Criticism

The use of humor and satire is another major feature of literary devices employed by Chauhan. The usage of humor and irony, combined with the popular culture elements in the narration of her stories helps in presenting the conflicts experienced by Indians.

It is Chauhan's professional experience in the sphere of advertising that helped her to be aware of the modern language of the contemporary society. From the interviews of Chauhan, one may get to know about the link between her professional life and her curiosity in uncovering the weird aspects of urban India.

Humor in the novels written by Chauhan is present in various social environments. Cricket and advertising, political campaigning, family relationships, property disputes and neighborhood transactions provide Chauhan with the opportunity of expressing social conventions through humor.

Satire is particularly significant as it reveals the paradoxes present in the existing social norms. Aspirations, family pressure, social status and respectability can be shown through irony and exaggeration, making the reader reconsider the existing social norms that he/she takes for granted.

Humor and satire, from an existential feminist point of view, can be viewed as ways of undermining social norms. Through the ridicule of certain social expectations, humor can be seen as the way of exposing their artificiality. However, humor per se is not the sign of resistance. It is the significance of its use that matters since it depends upon its use in the text and its effect on the already existing social norms.

Therefore, Chauhan's writing technique creates a link between entertainment and social criticism. Through her novels, she reveals social paradoxes through familiar situations and humorous relations.

6. Critical Reception and Existing Scholarship

Critique of Chauhan's fictive writing will assist in appreciating the work's social and cultural elements. Scholars have noted certain recurrent themes such as gender, popular culture, politics, family bonds, inheritance, and community identity.

Critical Appreciation of the Zoya Factor has revealed the representation of advertisements, cricket, and popular culture. The work of Charmaine Carvalho is useful in analyzing the representation of romance, gender, nationalism, and Indian popular fiction.

As far as Battle for Bittora is concerned, scholars have highlighted its political setting and its satirical representation of elections. Criticisms from Indian newspapers offer useful information about the political aspects of the novel as well as its representation of modern India.

The criticisms of Those Pricey Thakur Girls has focused on the representation of Delhi society and family bonds. Reviewer's criticisms have offered useful insights into the social observations which are at the background of the humor in the novel. Scholars have criticized the work based on its link with gender, class, and popular culture. In relation to The House That BJ Built, the book reviews that have been published relate to the issue of inheritance and the distribution of property among the family

members. Interviews given by the author explaining the genesis of the novel provide additional details as regards the novel's concerns about an old family house and inheritance.

Last but not least, book reviews of The Fast and the Dead focus on religious diversity, relations among neighbors, interreligious marriages, and social discrimination illustrated in the novel.

The above background provides a foundation for the current research. What distinguishes the current research from previous book reviews that have been published is its main focus: the relationship between the social criticism and existential freedom in the selected five books will be studied based on the philosophy of Beauvoir. Book reviews are secondary sources of information.

7. The Intersection of Social Commentary and Existentialism

It is very clear that there exists a link between social commentaries and existentialism in the works of Chauhan due to the depiction of characters that seek their niche in the existing social setting.

The five selected novels are an indication of how social structure operates in diverse areas of life. Popular culture dictates one's public identity, politics determine the role and responsibility of the individual in the society, family determines the expectations of the society, inheritance links the individual to his past and community influence affects social belonging.

However, it should be remembered that these social settings are not merely backdrops for individual existence.

This choice dictates to the characters what will be at their disposal and how they will be recognized. In other words, the lives of characters become tools for the analysis of the connection between individual freedom and social reality.

In this way, the idea of situated freedom suggested by Beauvoir becomes more relevant to the understanding of the novels. The freedom exists within the social and historical context of lives of people. People become free if they can make choices within this particular social and historical situation. People can face the challenges caused by social norms and standards but their ability to react to these challenges becomes an essential part of being human.

Responsibility is the key that shows the connection mentioned above. People's choices affect other people, especially when it comes to the family, political and social life of the community. In other words, freedom of a person is also the freedom of other people.

Selected novels show that there is no division between social criticism and existential philosophy. Social reality described by Chauhan becomes the basis for creating an individual identity while existential approach makes it possible to realize the importance of people's choices and responsibilities.

8. Conclusion

This research has studied the connection between social critique and existentialism in the following five books of Anuja Chauhan: "The Zoya Factor," "Battle for Bittora," "Those Pricey Thakur Girls," "The House That BJ Built," and "The Fast and the Dead." The books of the author have been investigated from the point of view of the discussion of different issues of Indian society, such as popular culture, politics, family, gender conflicts, inheritance, and other matters.

The existential feminist theory by Simone de Beauvoir has proved to be a proper background for the analysis of the above-listed social representations. Such notions as situated freedom, Otherness, ambiguity, and responsibility have been used to describe the way a person forms his/her identity in the context of society. The analysis has shown that the freedom in the discussed novels by Chauhan does not imply separation from society.

It is also important to underline how this research shows the role of humor and satire in the writing style of Chauhan. Using comedy and common expressions, as well as social observations, she manages to criticize traditional rules of life in her stories, yet remaining close to the ordinary readers. That is why the stories of Chauhan prove that entertainment literature does not lack sociological and philosophical messages.

In conclusion, the relationship between social criticism and existentialism in the works of Chauhan lies in the depiction of characters whose identity is formed by society but is not

predetermined. The characters live in the society, which is shaped by family, politics, culture, but still possess an ability to make their own choices.

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History, Memory and the Making of the Nation: A Postcolonial Study of Identity and Cultural Hybridity in Midnight's Children

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Abstract

This paper examines Salman Rushdie's Midnight's Children through the theoretical framework of postcolonialism, focusing on the interrelated concepts of history, memory, nationhood, identity, and cultural hybridity. Set against the backdrop of India's independence and subsequent political transformations, the novel presents the life of Saleem Sinai as inseparable from the history of the nation, suggesting that personal identity and national identity are mutually constitutive. Rushdie challenges the notion of history as a fixed and objective record by presenting it as fragmented, subjective, and shaped by memory, imagination, and political ideology. Through the innovative use of magical realism, nonlinear narration, and multiple narrative voices, the novel reconstructs historical events from the perspective of those who have often been excluded from official historiography.

The study draws upon the theoretical perspectives of Edward Said, Homi K. Bhabha, Benedict Anderson, Stuart Hall, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak to analyze how Midnight's Children interrogates colonial discourse and reimagines the idea of the nation. Bhabha's concept of cultural hybridity and the "Third Space" provides a framework for understanding the fluid and evolving identities represented in the novel, while Anderson's theory of the nation as an "imagined community" highlights the constructed nature of national identity. Stuart Hall's notion of identity as a continuous process of becoming and Said's critique of colonial representation further illuminate the complex relationship between history, culture, and power. Spivak's insights into marginalized voices also help explain Rushdie's attempt to recover alternative histories that challenge dominant narratives.

Adopting a qualitative textual and interpretative methodology, this paper explores the symbolic, historical, and political dimensions of the novel. It argues that memory functions not merely as a recollection of the past but as a powerful act of resistance that questions official histories and restores suppressed cultural experiences. The paper further demonstrates that Rushdie portrays postcolonial identity as hybrid, plural, and constantly negotiated rather than fixed or homogeneous. Ultimately, Midnight's Children emerges as a significant postcolonial text that redefines nationhood through the interplay of history and memory while exposing the enduring impact of colonialism on identity formation. The study contributes to postcolonial literary criticism by emphasizing the importance of memory, hybridity, and narrative reconstruction in understanding the complexities of nation-building and cultural identity in postcolonial societies.

Keywords: Postcolonialism, History, Memory, Nationhood, Identity, Cultural Hybridity…

Introduction

The twentieth century witnessed the emergence of postcolonial literature as a powerful intellectual and literary response to the political, cultural, and psychological consequences of colonialism. As former colonies gained independence, writers began to question the authority of colonial histories and sought to recover indigenous voices, identities, and cultural memories that had long been marginalized by imperial discourse. Postcolonial literature, therefore, is not merely concerned with the end of colonial rule but with the continuing effects of colonial power on history, culture, language, and identity. It challenges the dominant narratives produced by colonial institutions and offers alternative ways of understanding the past through the perspectives of the colonized. Within this literary tradition, Salman Rushdie occupies a significant position for his innovative reimagining of history and nationhood through fiction.

Published in 1981, Midnight's Children is widely regarded as one of the most influential postcolonial novels in English literature. Set against the historical backdrop of India's independence and the Partition of 1947, the novel intertwines the life of its protagonist, Saleem Sinai, with the political and cultural history of the Indian nation. Born at the exact moment of independence, Saleem becomes both a witness to and a participant in the making of modern India. Rushdie deliberately blurs the boundaries between history and fiction, demonstrating that historical narratives are never entirely objective but are shaped by memory, interpretation, ideology, and power. Through the use of magical realism, fragmented narration, and multiple perspectives, the novel questions official versions of history while foregrounding the experiences of individuals and communities often excluded from national historiography.

The concepts of history, memory, and nation occupy a central place in postcolonial discourse because the writing of history has traditionally been a means of exercising political authority and cultural domination. Colonial regimes frequently represented colonized societies as culturally inferior, ahistorical, and incapable of self-governance. In response, postcolonial writers reconstruct history by recovering suppressed memories and marginalized voices, thereby challenging imperial narratives and reclaiming cultural agency. In Midnight's Children, memory functions not simply as a recollection of personal experiences but as a political and cultural act that reshapes the understanding of national history. The novel suggests that the nation is not a fixed or homogeneous entity but a dynamic space continuously reconstructed through diverse memories, identities, and narratives.

This study is informed by the theoretical perspectives of Edward Said, Homi K. Bhabha, Benedict Anderson, Stuart Hall, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. Said's concept of Orientalism exposes the ways colonial discourse constructs and legitimizes imperial power, while Bhabha's ideas of hybridity, mimicry, and the "Third Space" explain the emergence of new cultural identities through colonial encounters. Anderson's theory of the nation as an "imagined community" provides a framework for understanding how national identity is narratively constructed, whereas Hall emphasizes identity as a fluid process of becoming rather than a fixed essence. Spivak's interrogation of subaltern representation further highlights the importance of recovering voices silenced by colonial and nationalist histories. Together, these theoretical approaches offer a comprehensive framework for examining the relationship between history, memory, identity, and cultural hybridity in Rushdie's novel.

Against this theoretical background, the present paper investigates how Midnight's Children reconstructs the idea of the nation by transforming history into a contested narrative shaped by memory, imagination, and lived experience. It argues that Rushdie portrays identity as plural, hybrid, and continuously evolving rather than singular or essential. By examining the interplay between personal memory and collective history, the study demonstrates how the novel resists colonial epistemologies and redefines nationhood as an inclusive and multicultural process. Ultimately, this paper seeks to show that Midnight's Children remains one of the most significant postcolonial texts for understanding the complex relationship between history, memory, identity, and cultural hybridity in the making of modern nations.

Literature Review

Salman Rushdie's Midnight's Children has generated extensive scholarly attention because of its innovative representation of history, nationhood, memory, and postcolonial identity. Existing criticism primarily examines the novel through postcolonial theory, cultural hybridity, magical realism, and historiographic metafiction. However, comparatively fewer studies integrate history, memory, nationhood, identity, and cultural hybridity into a single analytical framework.*Prof. Vinay Kumar Chaudhary (2024),* in "Postcolonial Identity in Salman Rushdie's Midnight's Children", argues that Rushdie presents postcolonial identity as fragmented, hybrid, and continuously reconstructed through memory and history. The study emphasizes the relationship between personal trauma, Partition, and national consciousness, highlighting magical realism as a narrative strategy that

challenges colonial historiography. While the article offers a valuable discussion of identity formation, it pays comparatively less attention to the broader relationship between memory and nation-building.

Kashmala Aziz, Shah Nawaz Khan, and Kashan Ahmad (2026), in "Postcolonial Identity and Cultural Hybridity in Midnight's Children", employ Homi K. Bhabha's concepts of hybridity and the Third Space to demonstrate how Rushdie reconstructs postcolonial identity through cultural negotiation. The authors conclude that hybridity becomes a productive space where colonial binaries are destabilized. Their study contributes significantly to understanding hybrid identities but gives limited attention to the political role of memory and historical narration in constructing the nation.

Dilip Barad (2024), in his ResearchGate paper "Postcolonial Voices: Analyzing Midnight's Children Through Theoretical Lenses," offers a comparative analysis using the theories of Edward Said, Homi K. Bhabha, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Frantz Fanon, and Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o. He argues that Rushdie's novel functions as a site where colonial discourse, hybridity, subalternity, and decolonization intersect. The study broadens the theoretical understanding of the novel but does not specifically examine how memory reconstructs national identity.

Weiran Chen (2026), in "Negotiating Identity in the Third Space: A Postcolonial Reading of Salman Rushdie's Midnight's Children", explores the novel through Bhabha's concept of the Third Space. Chen demonstrates that Saleem Sinai embodies a liminal identity shaped by linguistic hybridity, historical discontinuity, and cultural negotiation. The article highlights identity as an ongoing process rather than a fixed category, reinforcing the significance of hybridity in postcolonial nationhood.

Neil ten Kortenaar's influential critical book, Self, Nation, Text in Salman Rushdie's Midnight's Children (2004), remains one of the foundational studies on the novel. Kortenaar interprets Midnight's Children as an allegory of nation-building, emphasizing the relationship between selfhood, national consciousness, and postcolonial identity. He argues that Rushdie's representation of the nation is inherently hybrid and challenges essentialist conceptions of identity. This work provides an important theoretical foundation for understanding how literature participates in constructing national imagination.Although these studies have substantially advanced scholarship on Midnight's Children, there remains scope for a comprehensive analysis that simultaneously examines history, memory, nationhood, identity, and cultural hybridity. The present study addresses this gap by investigating how Rushdie reconstructs the Indian nation through the interaction of fragmented memory, historical narration, and hybrid identity, demonstrating that nationhood is an evolving cultural process rather than a fixed political reality.

I. Postcolonialism and the Construction of Nationhood:Postcolonialism emerged as one of the most influential critical approaches in the latter half of the twentieth century to examine the political, cultural, and psychological consequences of colonial rule. It extends beyond the historical event of political independence and investigates how colonial ideologies continue to shape societies, identities, languages, and systems of knowledge. Postcolonial literature challenges the authority of imperial narratives by recovering the histories and voices of communities that were marginalized under colonial domination. Rather than accepting colonial history as an objective account, postcolonial writers expose its ideological foundations and reconstruct alternative histories rooted in indigenous experiences and collective memory.

The concept of nationhood occupies a central position within postcolonial studies because many newly independent countries inherited political boundaries, institutions, and historical narratives established during colonial rule. Consequently, the formation of the nation became a complex process of negotiating diverse cultures, religions, languages, and ethnic identities. *Benedict Anderson's* concept of the nation as an "imagined community" explains that nations are not natural entities but are socially and culturally constructed through shared memories, narratives, and collective imagination. In postcolonial societies, this imagination is continuously contested as different communities struggle to define their place within the national story.Salman Rushdie's Midnight's Children presents nationhood not as a fixed political reality but as an evolving cultural phenomenon

shaped by historical events and individual experiences. By linking the birth of Saleem Sinai with the birth of independent India, Rushdie symbolically demonstrates that the destiny of the individual cannot be separated from the destiny of the nation. The protagonist's fragmented identity reflects the fragmented history of postcolonial India, marked by Partition, political violence, linguistic diversity, and ideological conflict. Through this symbolic relationship, Rushdie questions the possibility of a single, unified national identity and instead celebrates plurality and cultural diversity.

Edward Said's theory of Orientalism provides an important framework for understanding how colonial discourse represented colonized societies as inferior and incapable of self-representation. Such representations justified imperial domination while silencing indigenous voices. Rushdie challenges these colonial assumptions by rewriting history from the perspective of the colonized and by demonstrating that historical truth is always shaped by power and interpretation. His narrative rejects linear historical progress and instead presents history as fragmented, contested, and open to multiple interpretations.*Homi K. Bhabha's* concept of cultural hybridity further enriches the understanding of nationhood in the novel. According to Bhabha, colonial encounters produce hybrid identities that transcend rigid distinctions between colonizer and colonized. The "Third Space" becomes a site where new cultural meanings emerge through negotiation rather than opposition. In Midnight's Children, characters embody multiple cultural, religious, and linguistic identities, illustrating that postcolonial nations are founded upon diversity rather than cultural purity. This hybridity becomes both a source of creativity and a challenge to nationalist ideologies that seek uniformity.Thus, postcolonialism provides an essential framework for understanding Midnight's Children as a narrative of nation-making. Rushdie demonstrates that history, identity, and nationhood are not fixed realities but dynamic processes shaped by memory, cultural interaction, and political struggle. By reconstructing the nation through fragmented narratives and hybrid identities, the novel challenges colonial historiography and redefines nationhood as an inclusive, evolving, and multicultural project. This theoretical foundation forms the basis for examining the role of history and memory in the subsequent chapters of this study.

II. History as Narrative and Memory as Resistance:History occupies a central position in Salman Rushdie's Midnight's Children, yet it is never presented as an objective or unquestionable record of the past. Instead, Rushdie reconstructs history through the fragmented memories of Saleem Sinai, whose life unfolds alongside the political history of modern India. By intertwining personal experiences with national events, the novel challenges conventional historiography and demonstrates that history is shaped by memory, interpretation, and power. This narrative strategy enables Rushdie to question official versions of the past and to recover voices that have often been ignored or marginalized in colonial and nationalist discourses.One of the defining features of postcolonial literature is its attempt to rewrite history from the perspective of the colonized. Colonial historiography frequently represented colonized societies through Eurocentric assumptions, portraying them as passive recipients of civilization while suppressing indigenous knowledge and cultural memory. In response, postcolonial writers reclaim history by foregrounding local experiences and alternative narratives. Rushdie adopts this approach by refusing to separate historical events from individual lives. Saleem's birth at the exact moment of India's independence symbolizes the inseparable relationship between personal identity and national history. His body, memories, and experiences become metaphors for the hopes, conflicts, and transformations of the newly independent nation.

Memory plays a crucial role in this reconstruction of history. Unlike official historical records, memory is selective, fragmented, emotional, and often contradictory. Rushdie embraces these characteristics to demonstrate that historical truth cannot be reduced to a single, authoritative narrative. Saleem repeatedly acknowledges the limitations of his memory, admitting that recollection is imperfect and susceptible to imagination. Rather than weakening the narrative, these imperfections emphasize the subjective nature of historical knowledge. Memory becomes a creative process through which forgotten experiences, silenced voices, and hidden histories are brought back into public

consciousness.The novel's use of magical realism further strengthens this alternative understanding of history. Extraordinary events coexist with historical realities, blurring the boundaries between fact and fiction. This narrative technique enables Rushdie to represent emotional and cultural truths that conventional historical writing often overlooks. Magical realism challenges the dominance of rational and linear historical narratives inherited from colonial traditions and instead reflects the complexity and plurality of postcolonial experience. Through this technique, Rushdie demonstrates that literature can reveal dimensions of historical reality inaccessible to official documents.

Rushdie also illustrates how political power influences the writing of history. Events such as Partition, linguistic conflicts, wars, and the Emergency reveal that governments often construct historical narratives to legitimize authority while marginalizing dissenting voices. By presenting these events through Saleem's personal memories, the novel exposes the instability of official history and encourages readers to question dominant political narratives. Memory therefore becomes an act of resistance against ideological control and historical erasure.The relationship between history and memory in Midnight's Children is closely connected to the formation of national identity. The novel suggests that a nation is not built solely through political institutions or territorial boundaries but through the shared memories of its people. These memories are diverse, contested, and constantly evolving, reflecting the multicultural nature of postcolonial India. Consequently, national identity emerges as a collective process shaped by multiple histories rather than a single homogeneous narrative.Midnight's Children redefines history as a dynamic and contested narrative constructed through memory rather than an objective chronicle of facts. Rushdie transforms memory into a powerful literary and political instrument that resists colonial historiography, restores marginalized voices and reimagines the making of the Indian nation. Through the interplay of personal recollection and collective history, the novel demonstrates that understanding the past requires acknowledging its plurality, contradictions, and ongoing reinterpretation. This reconstruction of history through memory provides the foundation for examining the formation of postcolonial identity and cultural hybridity in the following chapters.

III. Identity Formation and the Crisis of Self:Identity is one of the most significant concerns in postcolonial literature, as the experience of colonialism profoundly reshapes an individual's sense of self, belonging, and cultural consciousness. In Midnight's Children, Salman Rushdie presents identity not as a fixed or inherited essence but as a dynamic process continuously influenced by history, memory, politics, and culture. The novel demonstrates that the identity of postcolonial subjects is fragmented, negotiated, and reconstructed within the complex realities of a newly independent nation. Through the life of Saleem Sinai, Rushdie explores how personal identity becomes inseparable from the historical and political transformations of India, revealing the intricate relationship between the individual and the nation.*Stuart Hall's* theory of cultural identity provides a valuable framework for understanding this process. Hall argues that identity is never complete or stable; rather, it is constantly "in the making," shaped by historical experiences and cultural interactions. This perspective is reflected in Saleem's character, whose identity undergoes continuous transformation throughout the novel. From the moment of his birth at midnight on 15 August 1947, Saleem is symbolically linked to India's independence. His life mirrors the nation's triumphs, conflicts, divisions, and uncertainties, suggesting that personal identity cannot be understood apart from collective history.

Rushdie further complicates the notion of identity through the revelation that Saleem was switched at birth. This unexpected event challenges traditional assumptions regarding family, lineage, religion, and social class. Saleem's biological origin differs from the family that raises him, making his identity a product of circumstance rather than bloodline. Through this narrative device, Rushdie questions essentialist notions of identity and emphasizes that identity is socially and culturally constructed. The novel therefore rejects rigid definitions based on race, ethnicity, or ancestry and instead celebrates the fluidity of human identity.The crisis of identity experienced by Saleem also reflects the broader condition of postcolonial societies emerging from colonial domination. Colonial rule imposed foreign systems of governance, language, education, and cultural values, leaving newly

independent nations to negotiate between indigenous traditions and colonial legacies. This tension is explained by *Homi K. Bhabha's* concept of hybridity, which describes identity as emerging within a "Third Space" where different cultures interact, overlap, and transform one another. Saleem embodies this hybrid existence, negotiating multiple religious, linguistic, and cultural influences throughout his life. His fragmented self symbolizes the diverse and multicultural character of postcolonial India.Frantz Fanon's analysis of colonial psychology further illuminates the identity crisis depicted in the novel. Fanon argues that colonialism creates psychological alienation by encouraging the colonized to internalize the values and assumptions of the colonizer while distancing themselves from their own cultural heritage. Although Midnight's Children is set after political independence, the novel reveals that colonial influence continues to shape social institutions, cultural attitudes, and individual consciousness. The struggle to define identity therefore extends beyond the end of colonial rule and becomes an ongoing process of self-discovery and cultural negotiation.Rushdie also demonstrates that memory plays a crucial role in the formation of identity. Saleem reconstructs his past through fragmented recollections, acknowledging that memory is selective, subjective, and sometimes unreliable.

Yet these imperfections do not weaken his identity; instead, they reveal that identity itself is constructed through stories, memories, and lived experiences. Personal memory becomes a means of preserving cultural heritage while resisting the erasure of marginalized histories. In this way, remembering becomes an act of self-affirmation and resistance against dominant political and historical narratives.Ultimately, Midnight's Children presents identity as plural, evolving, and deeply interconnected with the history of the nation. Rushdie rejects the idea of a singular or pure identity, arguing instead that postcolonial existence is characterized by diversity, hybridity, and continuous transformation. Saleem Sinai's journey illustrates that identity is shaped not by fixed origins but by historical experience, cultural interaction, and individual memory. By portraying identity as an ongoing process of negotiation rather than a predetermined reality, Rushdie offers a powerful critique of essentialist ideologies and celebrates the multicultural foundations of postcolonial India. This understanding of identity naturally leads to the next chapter, which examines the role of cultural hybridity and Homi K. Bhabha's concept of the "Third Space" in shaping postcolonial nationhood.

IV. Cultural Hybridity and the Third Space:Cultural hybridity is one of the defining characteristics of postcolonial societies, where the encounter between indigenous traditions and colonial influences produces new forms of identity, language, and culture. In Midnight's Children, Salman Rushdie portrays postcolonial India as a nation characterized not by cultural purity but by diversity, plurality, and constant transformation. Through its multilingual narrative, diverse characters, and innovative storytelling techniques, the novel illustrates that identity and culture are continuously negotiated rather than inherited. Rushdie rejects the binary opposition between the colonizer and the colonized, demonstrating instead that colonial encounters generate hybrid identities that reshape both individuals and nations.Homi K. Bhabha's concept of cultural hybridity provides the central theoretical framework for understanding this aspect of the novel. According to Bhabha, hybridity emerges through the interaction of different cultures during and after colonialism, creating what he describes as the "*Third Space*." This Third Space is neither entirely colonial nor entirely indigenous; rather, it is an in-between cultural space where new identities, meanings, and social relationships are constantly produced. Instead of viewing hybridity as a sign of cultural loss or impurity, Bhabha interprets it as a creative force that challenges colonial authority and destabilizes fixed notions of identity.

Saleem Sinai is the most significant embodiment of this hybrid existence. His life is marked by multiple identities that cannot be confined within rigid categories of religion, ethnicity, language, or social class. His birth coincides with India's independence, making him a symbolic representation of a nation struggling to define itself amidst immense cultural diversity. The revelation that he was switched at birth further destabilizes conventional ideas of origin and belonging. Saleem's identity is therefore shaped not by biological inheritance but by historical circumstances, cultural experiences, and personal memory. His fragmented self reflects the hybrid nature of postcolonial India, where

diverse traditions coexist, interact, and transform one another.Rushdie's narrative style itself reflects hybridity. The novel combines history with fiction, myth with reality, and oral storytelling with modern narrative techniques. Magical realism becomes an important literary strategy through which Rushdie represents the complexity of postcolonial experience. Rather than following a linear historical structure, the narrative moves across different temporal and cultural spaces, emphasizing the coexistence of multiple truths. This stylistic hybridity challenges Western literary conventions and creates a uniquely postcolonial form of storytelling that reflects India's multicultural reality.

Language also functions as a significant marker of cultural hybridity in Midnight's Children. Rushdie incorporates Hindi, Urdu, and other Indian linguistic expressions into English, transforming the language of the former colonizer into a medium capable of expressing indigenous experiences. This linguistic innovation challenges the cultural authority traditionally associated with English and demonstrates how language itself can become a site of resistance and creativity. By reshaping English according to Indian cultural contexts, Rushdie illustrates that postcolonial literature does not merely imitate colonial forms but actively reconstructs them to articulate new cultural identities.The novel further portrays India as a nation composed of multiple religions, ethnic communities, regional traditions and political ideologies. Instead of presenting this diversity as a source of weakness, Rushdie celebrates it as the nation's greatest strength. The coexistence of Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Christian, and other communities reflects the hybrid foundation upon which modern India is built. However, the novel also acknowledges that such diversity often produces tensions, conflicts, and political struggles, particularly during events such as Partition and the Emergency. These historical moments reveal that nationhood is not a stable achievement but an ongoing process of negotiation among competing identities and memories.

Cultural hybridity in Midnight's Children also functions as a form of resistance against colonial discourse. Colonial ideology often relied upon rigid binaries such as East and West, civilized and uncivilized, or colonizer and colonized. Rushdie dismantles these oppositions by presenting identities that constantly cross cultural, linguistic, and historical boundaries. His characters refuse to fit into predetermined categories, demonstrating that postcolonial existence is inherently fluid and transformative. In doing so, the novel exposes the limitations of colonial classifications and proposes a more inclusive understanding of culture and identity.Midnight's Children presents cultural hybridity as the foundation of postcolonial identity and nationhood. Through the experiences of Saleem Sinai, the novel illustrates that identity is shaped through negotiation, memory, and cultural interaction rather than through fixed origins or essentialist definitions. By employing Bhabha's concept of the Third Space, Rushdie reimagines India as a pluralistic nation where diversity becomes the basis of collective identity. The novel ultimately argues that the strength of the postcolonial nation lies not in cultural uniformity but in its capacity to embrace multiplicity, transformation, and coexistence. This understanding of hybridity prepares the way for the next chapter, which examines Saleem Sinai as an allegorical representation of the Indian nation and its historical journey.

V. Saleem Sinai as the Allegory of the Nation:One of the most remarkable features of Salman Rushdie's Midnight's Children is its use of Saleem Sinai as an allegorical representation of postcolonial India. Rather than functioning merely as an individual protagonist, Saleem embodies the historical, political, and cultural journey of the Indian nation. His birth at the precise moment of India's independence on 15 August 1947 establishes an inseparable connection between his personal life and the destiny of the nation. Through this symbolic relationship, Rushdie transforms Saleem into a national metaphor, demonstrating that the making of the nation is deeply intertwined with the making of individual identity. The novel therefore suggests that the history of modern India cannot be understood solely through political events but must also be interpreted through the experiences, memories, and struggles of its people.*Benedict Anderson's* concept of the nation as an "imagined community" provides an important framework for understanding Saleem's symbolic role. Anderson argues that a nation is not merely a geographical or political entity but a community imagined through shared histories, memories, and cultural narratives. Rushdie develops this idea by making Saleem's

body and consciousness a microcosm of India's social and political realities. His physical and emotional transformations parallel the nation's triumphs and crises, illustrating that national identity is constructed through collective experience rather than fixed territorial or ethnic boundaries.

Saleem's telepathic connection with the other children born at the moment of India's independence is one of the novel's most powerful symbols. These children, each possessing extraordinary abilities, represent the immense cultural, linguistic, religious, and regional diversity of India. Their meetings symbolize the possibility of a democratic and pluralistic nation in which differences coexist within a shared national framework. However, ideological conflicts, political divisions, and personal rivalries gradually weaken this unity, reflecting the challenges faced by postcolonial India in maintaining national cohesion. Rushdie thereby illustrates that nation-building is an ongoing and often fragile process shaped by negotiation rather than consensus.The fragmentation of Saleem's body also functions as a metaphor for the fragmentation of the nation. Throughout the novel, he experiences physical injuries, emotional trauma, displacement, and memory loss, each corresponding to major historical events such as Partition, the Indo-Pak wars, and the Emergency. His suffering symbolizes the violence and instability that accompanied India's transition from colonial rule to independent nationhood. Rather than presenting the nation as a unified and harmonious entity, Rushdie reveals its internal contradictions, political conflicts, and social inequalities. Saleem's personal disintegration mirrors the nation's struggle to reconcile its diverse identities within a single political framework.

Memory plays a crucial role in Saleem's function as a national allegory. As the narrator, he reconstructs both his personal history and the history of India through fragmented recollections. Although he frequently admits the limitations and inconsistencies of his memory, these imperfections reinforce one of the novel's central arguments: history is not an objective record but a narrative shaped by remembrance, interpretation, and imagination. By combining private memories with public events, Saleem transforms autobiography into national history, suggesting that the nation itself is continuously recreated through storytelling. His narrative challenges official historical accounts by recovering overlooked experiences and emphasizing the plurality of historical truth.Rushdie also uses Saleem to critique political authority and authoritarian nationalism. During the period of the Emergency, Saleem and the other midnight's children become victims of state repression, symbolizing the suppression of democratic ideals and individual freedoms. The destruction of their extraordinary abilities reflects the state's attempt to impose a singular national identity by silencing diversity and dissent. Through this episode, Rushdie argues that genuine nationhood cannot be sustained through coercion or ideological uniformity but must be grounded in democratic pluralism and respect for cultural difference.

Furthermore, Saleem's hybrid identity reinforces the novel's rejection of essentialist notions of nationhood. His uncertain parentage, multicultural upbringing, and shifting social positions illustrate that identity is produced through historical experience rather than biological origin. This aligns with Homi K. Bhabha's theory of hybridity, which views cultural identity as a dynamic process of negotiation. Saleem therefore becomes a symbol of postcolonial India itself—a nation formed through the interaction of multiple cultures, religions, languages, and histories. His life demonstrates that the strength of the nation lies in its diversity rather than in the pursuit of cultural purity.Saleem Sinai serves as the central allegorical figure through whom Rushdie narrates the making of modern India. His life reflects the nation's aspirations, achievements, conflicts, and contradictions, transforming individual experience into a broader commentary on postcolonial nationhood. Through Saleem's fragmented identity, unreliable memory, and hybrid existence, Midnight's Children redefines the nation as a living, evolving, and contested cultural construct. Rushdie ultimately suggests that nationhood is sustained not by political power alone but by the collective memories, diverse identities, and shared narratives of its people. Saleem's story thus becomes the story of India itself, revealing the complex relationship between selfhood, history, and the continuous making of the nation.

Conclusion

This study has explored Salman Rushdie's Midnight's Children through a postcolonial perspective, focusing on the interconnected themes of history, memory, nationhood, identity, and cultural hybridity. It has demonstrated that Rushdie challenges conventional historical narratives by presenting history as a dynamic construct shaped by memory, imagination, and lived experience. Through the symbolic life of Saleem Sinai, the novel reveals that personal identity and national identity evolve together, reflecting the complexities of post-independence India.The study further establishes that memory serves as a powerful means of resisting colonial historiography and recovering marginalized voices. Drawing upon the theories of Edward Said, Homi K. Bhabha, Benedict Anderson, Stuart Hall, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, the paper argues that identity is fluid, hybrid, and continuously reconstructed through historical and cultural interactions. Rushdie's use of magical realism and fragmented narration reinforces the idea that nationhood is not a fixed political reality but an evolving cultural process.In conclusion, Midnight's Children redefines the making of the nation by celebrating diversity, cultural hybridity, and multiple histories. The novel challenges colonial ideologies while emphasizing that the strength of a postcolonial nation lies in its plurality rather than cultural uniformity. Thus, Rushdie's work remains a significant contribution to postcolonial literature and to the understanding of identity, memory, and nation-building in the modern world.

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Socio-Cultural and Administrative Structure of Punjab duringMaharaja Ranjit Singh as Depicted by Shahamat Ali

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Shahamat Ali, a well-known figure of the early nineteenth century, visited the court of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and provided a significant account of its functioning. His renowned works, *The History of Bahawalpur with Notices of the Adjacent Countries of Sind, Afghanistan, Multan, and the West of India* and *The Sikhs and Afghans*, offer detailed narratives of the socio-cultural and administrative structure of Punjab. In his account, the socio-cultural and administrative structure of Punjab under Maharaja Ranjit Singh appears as a composite, hierarchical, and pragmatically organized system, shaped less by rigid institutions and more by personal authority, military needs, and courtly culture.[1] It emerges as a dynamic, patronage-based, and highly personalized order in which authority is defined by loyalty, service, and proximity to power rather than by fixed institutional hierarchies.[2]

Shahamat Ali portrays Punjab at the socio-cultural level as a plural and stratified society in which Sikhs, Hindus, and Muslims coexist within a shared political framework.[3] He presents this pluralism as embedded in both state policy and everyday governance, where measures such as the prohibition of cow slaughter during the passage of British troops reflect sensitivity to Hindu sentiment, while the inclusion of Muslim elites and Afghan chiefs like Sultan Muhammad Khan demonstrates a deliberate inclusiveness based on political loyalty rather than religious identity.[4] Authority, therefore, rests on a pragmatic balance between accommodation and control.

Shahamat Ali portrays the cultural life of Punjab as marked by refinement and ceremonial richness centered on the court, where spaces such as *Shalimar* Gardens[5], along with the grandeur of Lahore and Amritsar, function as arenas for the expression of political authority through spectacle, hospitality, and display.[6] He presents religious sites like Harmandir Sahib as simultaneously sacred and political institutions that reinforce the symbolic legitimacy of the state before both subjects and foreign observers, while the *darbar* emerges in his account as the central axis of social hierarchy, where rank and influence are determined by proximity to the ruler.[7]

Shahamat Ali portrays the social and political structure of Punjab as hierarchical and feudal in character, with power distributed among *Sardars, Rajas,* and *jagirdars* who command territories and maintain their own military contingents. He presents figures such as Raja Gulab Singh and Raja Hira Singh[8] as exemplifying a system in which semi-autonomous chiefs remain tied to Maharaja Ranjit Singh through bonds of allegiance and service, while governance operates through patronage, personal loyalty, and negotiated authority rather than through an impersonal bureaucratic chain.[9]

Shahamat Ali presents the administrative system as a combination of centralization and flexibility, centered on a highly personalized monarchy that he characterizes as a form of "pure

[1] Shahamat Ali, *The Sikhs and Afghans in Connexion with India and Persia*, Punjab Languages Department, Patiala, 1970, p. 9

[2] Mohan Lal, *Travels in the Punjab, Afghanistan and Turkistan to Balkh, Bokhara and Herat, and a Visit to Great Britain and Germany*, London, 1846, p. 107

[3] Sir Charles Gough and Arthur Donald Innes, *The Sikhs and the Sikh Wars: The Rise, Conquest, and Annexation of the Punjab State*, London, 1897, pp. 3-4.

[4] Shahamat Ali, *The Sikhs and Afghans in Connexion with India and Persia*, pp. 282-285.

[5] Ashok Baliyan, *The History of Islamic Rule and Forced Conversion in India*, New Delhi, 2026, p. 71.

[6] David Ross, *The Land of the Five Rivers and Sindh: Sketches Historical and Descriptive*, London, 1883, p. 192

[7] Shahamat Ali, *The Sikhs and Afghans in Connexion with India and Persia*, pp. 18-19.

[8] *The Indian Antiquary: A Journal of Oriental Research in Archaeology, History, Literature, Languages, Folklore, etc.*, Education Society's Press, Bombay, 1891, pp. 71-72

[9] C. Grey and Herbert Leonard Offley Garrett, *European Adventurers of Northern India, 1785 to 1849,* Lahore, 1929, pp. 360-362

despotism," where ultimate authority over civil, military, fiscal, and diplomatic affairs rests with Maharaja Ranjit Singh. He emphasizes that decision-making is direct and interventionist, often oral and personally supervised, yet moderated by consultation, customary practices, and the moral authority of the Guru Granth Sahib.[10]

Shahamat Ali further portrays the emergence of a semi-formal administrative structure, highlighting officials such as Diwan Dina Nath, who introduce record-keeping, financial management, and departmental organization, marking an early movement toward proto-bureaucratic governance. He presents provincial administration as being carried out by governors or *kardars*[11], who exercise broad authority over revenue, justice, and local affairs while remaining accountable to the center through royal orders and intelligence networks.[12]

Shahamat Ali portrays the administrative elite as sustaining this system through specialized and personalized roles, with Raja Dhian[13] Singh acting as the chief intermediary managing petitions and policy execution, Faqir Azizuddin[14] overseeing diplomacy, and Misr Beli Ram controlling the treasury on the basis of personal trust rather than formal audit.[15] He also presents religious figures such as Bhai Ram Singh as reinforcing the sacred dimension of authority, though their political role remains secondary within this personalized administrative order.

The observations of Shahamat Ali regarding the socio-cultural and administrative structure of Punjab also find important corroboration in indigenous near-contemporary sources. Sohan Lal Suri, in his monumental chronicle *Umdat-ut-Tawarikh*, presents a detailed account of the Sikh court and administration that reinforces the centrality of personal authority and the functioning of governance through patronage and proximity to the ruler. His narrative emphasizes the role of the darbar as the axis of political power, where sardars, jagirdars, and officials derived status and influence from their closeness to Maharaja Ranjit Singh, thereby supporting Shahamat Ali's depiction of a highly personalized political order.[16]

Similarly, Mohan Lal Kashmiri, in his work *Travels in the Panjab, Afghanistan and Turkistan*, provides valuable insights into the plural and pragmatic character of governance. He highlights the inclusion of diverse elites, the coexistence of religious communities, and the flexible administrative practices adopted by the state, all of which align with Shahamat Ali's portrayal of Punjab as a composite and accommodative polity.[17] Mohan Lal further underscores the importance of military organization and the role of chiefs in maintaining regional authority, thereby corroborating the hierarchical and semi-feudal dimensions identified in Shahamat Ali's account.[18] Together, these indigenous and experiential narratives not only validate the empirical basis of Shahamat Ali's observations but also demonstrate that his characterization of the Sikh state as a negotiated, patronage-based, and pluralistic system was widely reflected in contemporary understandings of governance in early nineteenth-century Punjab.

Near-contemporary observers largely corroborate Shahamat Ali's depiction of a personalized and military-oriented political order. Joseph Davey Cunningham, writing in his *History of the Sikhs*, emphasizes the centrality of the Maharaja's personal authority and the absence of rigid institutional constraints, noting that the entire system of governance depended upon the will and capacity of the ruler.[19] Similarly, Henry Thoby Prinsep underscores the flexibility and pragmatism of the Sikh polity,

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[10] Shahamat Ali, *The Sikhs and Afghans in Connexion with India and Persia*, p. 15.

[11] G. S. Chhabra, *Advanced Study in the History of Modern India*, vol. 2, New Delhi, 2005, p. 131.

[12] Shahamat Ali, *The Sikhs and Afghans in Connexion with India and Persia*, pp. 16-17.

[13] *Ibid*, pp. 26-27.

[14] Lepel Henry Griffin, *Ranjit Singh and the Sikh Barrier Between Our Growing Empire and Central Asia*, London, 1892, pp. 119-120. Also see Narendra Krishna Sinha, *Ranjit Singh*, Calcutta, 1945, p.147.

[15] Shahamat Ali, *The Sikhs and Afghans in Connexion with India and Persia*, pp. 32-35.

[16] Sohan Lal Suri, *Umdat-UT-Tawarikh,* Daftar III, Vol. I-V, trans. V. S. Suri, Lahore, 1885, pp. 26-26, 42-43.

[17] Mohan Lal Kashmiri, *Travels in the Panjab, Afghanistan and Turkistan,* Vol. I, pp. 369-370.

[18] Ibid, pp. 34-37.

[19] Joseph Davey Cunningham, *A History of the Sikhs*, London, 1849, pp. 150-153.

describing it as a system in which administrative arrangements were shaped by expediency rather than formalized rules.[20] These accounts align closely with Shahamat Ali's characterization of a state in which authority was negotiated and relational, grounded in personal allegiance and reinforced by military organization.

Colonial and early nationalist historians further reinforced many elements of this interpretation, though often within the conceptual frameworks of their own time. Lepel Griffin, for instance, highlights the importance of patronage networks and the role of chiefs and jagirdars, portraying the Sikh polity as a hierarchical order sustained through personal ties and obligations.[21] In a similar vein, Syed Muhammad Latif emphasizes the coexistence of diverse religious communities and the pragmatic inclusiveness of governance, noting that administrative and political participation was not confined to a single religious group.[22] He points to the participation of Hindu financiers, Muslim diplomats, and Sikh military elites in the administration, thereby reinforcing Shahamat Ali's argument that political inclusion was based primarily on loyalty and utility rather than religious identity. At the same time, he presents this inclusiveness in a more harmonious light, often downplaying tensions and conflicts that were inherent in such a diverse polity, particularly in frontier regions and among competing elite factions.

Modern historiography has both refined and substantiated these earlier observations, placing Shahamat Ali's account within a more nuanced analytical framework. J.S. Grewal argues that the state under Maharaja Ranjit Singh cannot be adequately described as either feudal or bureaucratic; rather, it functioned as a hybrid system characterized by negotiation, pragmatism, and the centrality of personal authority.[23] Economic historians such as Indu Banga further corroborate Shahamat Ali's observations regarding administrative development, pointing to the emergence of record-keeping practices, fiscal management, and departmental organization under officials like Diwan Dina Nath as indicative of proto-bureaucratic tendencies.[24]

Taken together, these historiographical perspectives demonstrate that Shahamat Ali's portrayal of Punjab as a plural, hierarchical, and pragmatically governed polity is neither isolated nor anomalous. While shaped by the conditions of his time, his account has been broadly validated by contemporary observers, colonial historians, and modern scholars alike. The convergence of these interpretations suggests that the Sikh state under Maharaja Ranjit Singh was characterized by a distinctive blend of personal authority, political inclusivity, and administrative adaptability, confirming the enduring relevance of Shahamat Ali's narrative as a foundational source for understanding the socio-cultural and administrative structure of early nineteenth-century Punjab.

Shahamat Ali portrays the economic structure of Punjab as diversified and closely tied to military needs, with revenue derived from Khalsa lands[25], jagirs, tribute, and transit duties.[26] He presents commercial practices such as the use of hundis, often routed through Amritsar, as evidence of a developed financial network, while frontier regions like Peshawar reveal the fiscal limits of expansion and the high costs of maintaining imperial control. He also presents the military as the backbone of the entire system, describing a composite force of regular infantry, cavalry, artillery, irregular troops, and feudal contingents.[27] He emphasizes its organization and modernization under

[20] H. T. Prinsep, *Origin of the Sikh Power in the Punjab and Political Life of Maharaja Ranjit Singh,* Calcutta, 1834, pp. 51-55.

[21] Lepel Henry Griffin, *The Rajas of the Punjab*, London, 1870, pp. 34-38.

[22] Syad Muhammad Latif, *History of the Panjab from the Remotest Antiquity to the Present Time*, Calcutta, 1891, pp. 300-305.

[23] J. S. Grewal, *The Sikhs of the Punjab*, Cambridge, 1990, pp. 98-105.

[24] Indu Banga, *The Agrarian System of the Sikhs: Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Century*, New Delhi, 1978, pp. 70–75.

[25] Gottlieb William Leitner, *History of Indigenous Education in the Panjab since Annexation and in 1882* Lahore, 1883, p. 187.

[26] Shahamat Ali, *The Sikhs and Afghans in Connexion with India and Persia*, p. 86.

[27] *Ibid,* pp. 22-25.

European officers such as Jean-Baptiste Ventura[28], and presents governance, revenue extraction, and territorial control as deeply intertwined with this military apparatus, effectively characterizing the state as a military-fiscal order.[29]

Shahamat Ali nevertheless indicates structural limitations within this system, emphasizing its dependence on the personal authority of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. He highlights weak institutional continuity, persistent factional rivalries, particularly among elite groups such as the Dogras, and a political balance maintained through shifting alliances rather than stable administrative frameworks, thereby underscoring the contested and fragile nature of power.[30] In this way, he ultimately portrays Punjab under Maharaja Ranjit Singh as a culturally vibrant, religiously plural, and administratively adaptive polity that combines centralized authority with delegated governance and military strength with patronage networks, yet remains fundamentally dependent on the ruler's personal capacity, making it both effective and vulnerable in the absence of durable institutional foundations.[31]

Shahamat Ali further presents, in his broader narrative, the socio-cultural structure of Punjab as plural and stratified, composed of Sikhs, Hindus, Muslims, Khatris, Afghans, Gujjars, and Kashmiris integrated into a shared political framework. He emphasizes that this diversity is actively accommodated through state practices and reflected in syncretic traditions such as shrine veneration and temple worship, while urban centres like Gujranwala, Wazirabad, and Jhelum emerge as vibrant nodes of trade, craft production, and migration, even as social life remains shaped by hierarchy, honour, and a pronounced martial ethos.[32] He also highlights the permeability of this hierarchy by pointing to instances of social mobility, particularly through patronage and service. He presents the career of Khoshal Singh as illustrative of how individuals could rise from modest origins to elite status through royal favour and military service, while simultaneously emphasizing the role of kinship networks in consolidating authority through the distribution of offices, commands, and jagirs among relatives.[33]

Shahamat Ali presents the administrative structure of Punjab under Maharaja Ranjit Singh as a centralized yet delegated system, in which ultimate authority rests firmly with the Maharaja, whose rule is highly personal and interventionist. He portrays this authority as exercised through a wide network of governors, *jagirdars, diwans*, and military officers who manage territories, collect revenue, maintain order, and oversee local affairs, with districts and towns assigned as jagirs or administrative charges that link fiscal authority with political and military responsibility.[34] He also presents the *jagirdari* framework as the backbone of governance, where land grants are distributed in return for service, particularly military obligations, creating a military-fiscal system in which revenue extraction, territorial control, and armed power are closely interconnected.[35] He emphasizes that provincial officials exercise considerable autonomy, yet their authority remains contingent on royal favour and can be altered or withdrawn at any time, reinforcing dependence on the center.

At the same time, Shahamat Ali points to the emergence of a limited administrative organization, including record-keeping, revenue accounts, and departmental functions under officials such as Diwan Dina Nath.[36] Nevertheless, these developments do not amount to a fully institutionalized bureaucracy. Offices remain tied to individuals rather than stable structures, and informal access to power, such as

[28] Khushwant Singh, *Ranjit Singh: Maharaja of the Punjab*, London, 1962, pp. 141-142.
[29] Shahamat Ali, *The Sikhs and Afghans in Connexion with India and Persia*, p. 307.
[30] P. D. Bonarjee, *A Handbook of the Fighting Races of India*, Calcutta, 1899, p. 121.
[31] Shahamat Ali, *The Sikhs and Afghans in Connexion with India and Persia*, pp. 68-70.
[32] *Ibid*, pp. 108-110.
[33] *Ibid*, pp. 38-40.
[34] Hari Ram Gupta, *History of the Sikhs, Vol. 5: The Sikh Lion of Lahore, Maharaja Ranjit Singh*, New Delhi, 1978, p. 386.
[35] Shahamat Ali, *The Sikhs and Afghans in Connexion with India and Persia*, p. 14
[36] Lepel Henry Griffin, *The Punjab Chiefs: Historical and Biographical Notices of the Principal Families in the Lahore and Rawalpindi Divisions of the Punjab*, Lahore, 1865, pp. 135-137.

control over the royal court *(Deodhee),* carries immense influence.[37] Court politics, intrigue, and negotiation play a decisive role in shaping authority.[38]

Shahamat Ali portrays the military dimension as inseparable from administration, describing a system sustained through constant troop movement, strategic coordination, and the integration of diverse forces, including Sikh, Afghan, and European-trained contingents.[39] He emphasizes that local officials are responsible for logistics and supplies, reinforcing the fusion of civil and military functions, while also noting inefficiencies, conflicts among soldiers, and reliance on personal supervision as signs of weak institutional discipline. He also presents law and order as similarly personalized, where justice appears severe and deterrent-based but unevenly enforced, with accountability often dependent on royal favour. He highlights incidents of disorder as evidence that regulation is frequently ad hoc rather than systematic.

Shahamat Ali portrays the economic structure as diversified and regionally grounded, with revenue derived from land, trade duties, and resource extraction, while commercial instruments such as *hundis* indicate a developed financial network. He also points to infrastructure such as *serais, baolis,* forts, and *bazaars,* as reflecting continuity with older traditions, though their uneven condition reveals variable administrative attention.[40] He also presents the spatial organization of authority as both fragmented and unified, with elite officials and chiefs maintaining semi-autonomous spheres, residences, bazaars, and cantonments, while remaining bound by allegiance to Maharaja Ranjit Singh, whose authority provides the principal source of cohesion. Thus, he portrays Punjab as a fluid and adaptive polity sustained by patronage, kinship, and military power, characterized by administrative pragmatism and social diversity but lacking firm institutional foundations.

Shahamat Ali's portrayal of the economic, socio-cultural, and administrative structure of Punjab under Maharaja Ranjit Singh, as a diversified, military-fiscal, and patronage-based polity, has received substantial support across historiographical traditions, though not without important qualifications and critiques. His depiction of a fiscal system rooted in Khalsa lands, jagirs, tribute, and transit duties, alongside the circulation of hundis through Amritsar, is broadly corroborated by both contemporary observers and modern historians. Mohan Lal Kashmiri, for instance, confirms the vitality of commercial networks and the integration of Punjab into wider circuits of trade, while also acknowledging their vulnerability to political instability and military disruption.[41] Modern economic historians such as Indu Banga further support Shahamat Ali's characterization of a diversified yet uneven fiscal system, emphasizing that agrarian revenue was supplemented by commercial taxation but varied significantly across regions.[42]

The interpretation of the Sikh state as a military-fiscal order, in which governance, revenue extraction, and territorial control were closely tied to the army, has also been widely endorsed. Shahamat Ali's emphasis on the organization and modernization of the army under European officers such as Jean-Baptiste Ventura finds strong support in the work of Hari Ram Gupta, who highlights the central role of the army in sustaining political authority and territorial expansion.[43] Shahamat Ali's depiction of Punjab as a plural and stratified society, composed of diverse religious and ethnic groups integrated within a shared political framework, has also been widely supported. Historians such as Khushwant Singh emphasize the inclusive character of governance, noting the participation

[37] Shahamat Ali, *The Sikhs and Afghans in Connexion with India and Persia*, p. 28.
[38] *Ibid*, pp. 40-42.
[39] *Ibid*, pp. 56-57.
[40] Mohan Lal, *Travels in the Punjab, Afghanistan and Turkistan to Balkh, Bokhara and Herat, and a Visit to Great Britain and Germany*, p. 15.
[41] Mohan Lal Kashmiri, *Travels in the Panjab, Afghanistan, and Turkistan*, Vol. I, pp. 255-257.
[42] Indu Banga, *Agrarian System of the Sikhs: Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Century*, pp. 70-75.
[43] Hari Ram Gupta, *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. IV, New Delhi, 1978, pp. 321-322.

of Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs in administrative and military roles, while also highlighting the prevalence of syncretic cultural practices.[44]

However, not all historians fully endorse Shahamat Ali's framework, and several important critiques have emerged. Colonial historians such as Lepel Griffin accept the hierarchical and patronage-based nature of the system but tend to interpret it through reductive categories such as "feudalism," thereby oversimplifying its complexity and ignoring its adaptive features.[45] At the same time, early nationalist historians like Syed Muhammad Latif emphasize pluralism and inclusiveness but often present a more harmonious picture that downplays underlying tensions, particularly in frontier regions.[46] Furthermore, modern economic historians caution that Shahamat Ali's emphasis on state control may understate the autonomy of local economies and the resilience of agrarian and commercial systems beyond direct administrative oversight.[47]

Thus, while Shahamat Ali's account is strongly supported in its broad characterization of Punjab as a military-fiscal, patronage-based, and plural polity, historiography also reveals important divergences. Contemporary observers and several modern historians largely validate his empirical observations, particularly regarding military organization, fiscal structure, and political dependence on personal authority. However, colonial interpretations tend to oversimplify his insights, and modern scholarship refines them by emphasizing complexity, negotiation, and institutional variation. Consequently, Shahamat Ali's narrative remains foundational but not definitive, requiring critical engagement within a wider historiographical framework to fully understand the nature of the Sikh state.

Shahamat Ali further extends this analysis to the north-western frontier, from Rohtas Fort[48] to Attock and onward to Peshawar[49] and the Khyber Pass, where he portrays the system as more complex and tension-filled.[50] In these regions, he presents Punjab as a heterogeneous and stratified society in which political authority does not correspond directly to demographic strength, and where tribal groups such as the Ghakkars, Khataks, and Momands maintain strong autonomy, organized along kinship lines and marked by a pronounced martial ethos.[51] He also portrays religious life in Punjab as deeply embedded in everyday existence, marked by widespread belief in saints, pirs, and faqirs, and sustained through shrines, tombs, and pilgrimage networks that often cut across formal religious boundaries. He emphasizes the circulation of miraculous narratives and shared devotional practices as evidence of a syncretic cultural environment, while festivals such as *Holi, Eid,* and *Baisakhi* function not only as religious observances but also as moments of social cohesion and political display.[52] At the same time, he indicates underlying tensions, particularly between Muslim populations and the Sikh ruling elite, which become more visible in politically sensitive regions such as Peshawar.[53]

Shahamat Ali presents the frontier economy as primarily agrarian yet supplemented by trade and localized resource systems.[54] He highlights the importance of irrigation networks, including those linked to the Bara River, alongside trade routes connecting Punjab with Central Asia.[55] Commercial

[44] Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, Vol. I, Princeton, 1963, pp. 290-295.
[45] Lepel Griffin, *The Rajas of the Punjab*, London, 1870, pp. 45-50.
[46] Syed Muhammad Latif, *History of the Panjab*, pp. 298-305.
[47] Indu Banga, *Agrarian System of the Sikhs: Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Century*, pp. 80-85.
[48] Shahamat Ali, *The Sikhs and Afghans in Connexion with India and Persia*, pp. 116-117.
[49] Mohan Lal, *Travels in the Punjab, Afghanistan and Turkistan to Balkh, Bokhara and Herat, and a Visit to Great Britain and Germany*, p. 26.
[50] Shahamat Ali, *The Sikhs and Afghans in Connexion with India and Persia*, pp. 260-262.
[51] *Ibid*, pp. 267-270.
[52] Khushwant Singh, *Ranjit Singh: Maharaja of the Punjab*, p. 132.
[53] Shahamat Ali, *The Sikhs and Afghans in Connexion with India and Persia*, p. 11.
[54] Mohan Lal, *Travels in the Punjab, Afghanistan and Turkistan to Balkh, Bokhara and Herat, and a Visit to Great Britain and Germany*, pp. 61-62.
[55] Shahamat Ali, *The Sikhs and Afghans in Connexion with India and Persia*, p. 112.

centres such as Akora and Machni emerge in his account as nodes of exchange where merchants from Kabul and Punjab interact, generating revenue through transit duties.[56] However, he underscores the vulnerability of this economy to environmental stress, warfare, and administrative extraction, with droughts, troop movements, and fiscal pressures frequently disrupting agrarian stability.

Shahamat Ali portrays frontier administration as operating through a system of negotiated sovereignty, in which tribal groups retain internal autonomy while offering tribute or cooperation to the state. He emphasizes that governance in these regions balances coercion with accommodation, with military considerations dominating through the control of forts, passes, and supply lines. He nevertheless highlights the limitations of this system, pointing to harsh revenue practices, inconsistent coordination, and uncertain loyalty among both tribal allies and officials, which together reveal a fragmented structure of authority beneath the appearance of centralized control.[57]

Shahamat Ali ultimately emphasizes the transformation that follows the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, noting the weakening of central authority and the intensification of factional struggles.[58] He presents figures such as Kharak Singh[59] and Nau Nihal Singh was overshadowed by powerful courtiers like Raja Dhian Singh, leading to a decline in administrative cohesion, weakening of military discipline, and the growth of political instability within the state.[60] In this way, he presents Punjab as a dynamic but transitional polity.[61] Its socio-cultural fabric is rich and diverse, while its administrative system is flexible, militarized, and dependent on intermediaries. Under strong leadership, it achieves stability and expansion; in its absence, the same features, personalized authority, negotiated governance, and factional competition, lead to fragmentation and political instability.

The socio-cultural and administrative structure of Punjab, as portrayed by Shahamat Ali, cannot be understood solely through the lens of political authority; rather, it emerges as a deeply interconnected system shaped by social diversity, cultural practices, economic activity, and regional dynamics, alongside governance. Under Maharaja Ranjit Singh, Punjab functioned as a composite society in which Sikhs, Hindus, Muslims, and various ethnic and occupational groups were integrated into a shared yet stratified order.[62] This pluralism was not merely a political strategy but was embedded in everyday life through shared spaces, syncretic religious practices, festivals, and networks of trade and mobility.[63] Culturally, the region reflected a synthesis of courtly refinement and popular traditions, where institutions such as shrines, temples, and urban centres acted as both social and economic hubs. Administratively, this socio-cultural fabric was mirrored in a system that was flexible, negotiated, and locally grounded. The state thus functioned not as an impersonal bureaucracy but as a layered system of relationships, in which governance was mediated through social institutions and cultural legitimacy as much as through formal authority.

At the same time, this integration of social, cultural and administrative elements created both resilience and limitations.[64] As a result, the structure of Punjab appears as a holistic and dynamic order, one in which political power was inseparable from socio-cultural realities and economic life, yet which remained vulnerable due to its limited institutional consolidation. Thus, Shahamat Ali's account ultimately presents Punjab not merely as a political entity but as a complex and evolving

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[56] *Ibid*, pp. 187-190.

[57] Mohan Lal, *Travels in the Punjab, Afghanistan and Turkistan to Balkh, Bokhara and Herat, and a Visit to Great Britain and Germany*, p. 108.

[58] Shahamat Ali, *The Sikhs and Afghans in Connexion with India and Persia*, p. 546.

[59] Syad Muhammad Latif, *History of the Panjáb from the Remotest Antiquity to the Present Time*, pp. 497-499.

[60] Shahamat Ali, *The Sikhs and Afghans in Connexion with India and Persia*, pp. 42-43.

[61] *Ibid*. 526.

[62] Mohan Lal, *Travels in the Punjab, Afghanistan and Turkistan to Balkh, Bokhara and Herat, and a Visit to Great Britain and Germany*, pp. iv-v.

[63] Shahamat Ali, *The Sikhs and Afghans in Connexion with India and Persia*, pp. 26-27.

[64] Mohan Lal, *Travels in the Punjab, Afghanistan and Turkistan to Balkh, Bokhara and Herat, and a Visit to Great Britain and Germany*, p. 4.

society, where governance, culture, economy and social organisation were deeply intertwined, collectively shaping both the strength and fragility of the state.[65]

Shahamat Ali's extension of his analysis to the north-western frontier, from Rohtas Fort to Attock and onward to Peshawar and the Khyber Pass, presents a more complex and tension-filled picture of the Sikh polity under Maharaja Ranjit Singh. In these regions, he describes a heterogeneous and stratified society in which political authority did not correspond directly to demographic strength, and where tribal groups such as the Ghakkars, Khataks, and Momands retained strong autonomy, organized along kinship lines and marked by a pronounced martial ethos. Sohan Lal Suri supports the view that frontier administration was contingent and variable, though his account places greater emphasis on the integrative capacity of the *darbar* and thus presents a somewhat more cohesive image than Shahamat Ali's tension-filled portrayal.[66]

Shahamat Ali's depiction of religious life as deeply embedded in everyday practices, marked by belief in saints, pirs, and faqirs, and sustained through shrines and shared devotional spaces, has been widely supported in later historiography. Festivals such as *Holi, Eid,* and *Baisakhi* are presented not merely as ritual events but as moments of social cohesion and political display. This interpretation is reinforced by historians such as J.S. Grewal, who emphasises the syncretic and plural character of Punjabi society under Sikh rule.[67] Observations regarding irrigation systems, trade routes linking Punjab with Central Asia, and commercial centres such as Akora and Machni align with the descriptions provided by Mohan Lal Kashmiri, who highlights the vibrancy of cross-regional trade networks.[68] At the same time, Shahamat Ali's emphasis on economic vulnerability, caused by warfare, environmental stress, and fiscal extraction, is echoed by modern economic historians such as Indu Banga, who note the uneven integration of frontier regions into the broader fiscal system.[69]

In administrative terms, Shahamat Ali's portrayal of frontier governance as a system of negotiated sovereignty, balancing coercion with accommodation, has been broadly accepted, particularly in modern historiography. Hari Ram Gupta supports the view that control over forts, passes, and supply lines was central to maintaining authority in these regions, while also acknowledging the limits of direct administration[70] However, some historians have challenged the extent to which this system can be seen as coherent or stable. Joseph Davey Cunningham, while recognizing the effectiveness of Ranjit Singh's leadership, points to the fragility of such arrangements and the dependence on continuous military oversight, thereby reinforcing Shahamat Ali's own observations of administrative inconsistency and uncertain loyalty.[71]

Shahamat Ali's account of the post-Ranjit Singh period, marked by the weakening of central authority and intensification of factional struggles under figures such as Kharak Singh and Nau Nihal Singh, finds substantial support in both contemporary chronicles and later historiography. Sohan Lal Suri vividly documents the growing dominance of courtiers such as Raja Dhian Singh and the resulting political instability, confirming Shahamat Ali's emphasis on factionalism and administrative decline.[72] Modern historians, including J.S. Grewal, further interpret this phase as evidence of the structural weakness of a polity heavily dependent on personal authority rather than institutional continuity.[73]

In conclusion, the socio-cultural and administrative structure of Punjab, as portrayed by Shahamat Ali, has received substantial support across different historiographical traditions, though

[65] Shahamat Ali, *The Sikhs and Afghans in Connexion with India and Persia*, p. 171.
[66] Sohan Lal Suri, *Umdat-UT-Tawarikh,* Daftar III, Vol. I-V, trans. V. S. Suri, pp. 605-615.
[67] J. S. Grewal, *The Sikhs of the Punjab,* p. 115-120.
[68] Mohan Lal, *Travels in the Panjab, Afghanistan and Turkistan,* Vol. I, pp. 24-25, 219.
[69] Indu Banga, *Agrarian System of the Sikhs: Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Century*, pp. 80-85.
[70] Hari Ram Gupta, *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. I-V, New Delhi, 1978, pp. 467-472.
[71] Joseph Davey Cunningham, *A History of the Sikhs,* London, 1853, p. 120-125, 196.
[72] Sohan Lal Suri, *Umdat-UT-Tawarikh,* Daftar III, Vol. I-V, trans. V. S. Suri, pp. 698-699.
[73] J.S. Grewal, *The Sikhs of the Punjab*, pp. 119-121.

with important qualifications. Near-contemporary observers corroborate his emphasis on negotiated authority and frontier complexity; colonial and early nationalist historians reinforce his depiction of hierarchy and pluralism, albeit within limited analytical frameworks; and modern historians both validate and refine his insights by situating them within broader social, economic, and institutional contexts. At the same time, critical scholarship highlights the limitations of his perspective, its elite focus, descriptive orientation, and reliance on generalized categories, underscoring the need to read his work alongside other sources. Thus, Shahamat Ali's account remains foundational yet incomplete, offering a compelling but partial vision of Punjab as a dynamic, plural, and militarized polity whose strengths and vulnerabilities were deeply intertwined.

English Literature Under NEP 2020: Critical Thinking, Creativity and Communication Skills

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Abstract

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 introduces a new vision for Indian education by emphasizing holistic development, critical thinking, creativity, communication, and practical learning. In this context, English literature plays an important role in developing students' intellectual, emotional, and linguistic abilities. The study of poetry, drama, novels, and short stories encourages learners to analyse ideas, understand different perspectives, imagine new possibilities and express themselves effectively. Literature also helps students develop empathy, cultural awareness, and independent thinking. This research paper examines how English literature supports the objectives of NEP 2020, particularly in developing critical thinking, creativity, and communication skills. It also discusses challenges in teaching literature and suggests methods to make literary education more interactive and meaningful.

Keywords: NEP 2020, English Literature, Critical Thinking, Creativity, Communication Skills, Holistic Education.

1. Introduction

Education is not limited to acquiring knowledge from textbooks. It also involves developing the ability to think independently, solve problems, communicate effectively, and understand the world. The National Education Policy 2020 seeks to transform the Indian education system by encouraging learner-centred teaching, experiential learning, and the development of essential life skills.English literature plays a significant role in achieving these educational objectives. It introduces students to different cultures, human experiences, social issues, and moral questions. Through poetry, drama, fiction, and other literary forms, students learn to examine situations from different perspectives and form their own opinions.Traditionally, literature teaching has often focused on memorising summaries, author biographies, and examination answers. However, this approach may limit students' opportunities to think creatively and engage deeply with texts. NEP 2020 encourages a shift towards understanding, discussion, analysis, and practical application of knowledge.

Therefore, English literature should be taught not merely as an academic subject but also as a means of developing critical thinking, creativity, and communication skills. These abilities are important for students' academic growth, professional development, and participation in society.

2. Literature Review

Lazar (1993), in *Literature and Language Teaching: A Guide for Teachers and Trainers*, explains how literary texts can support language learning by encouraging students to interpret meanings, discuss ideas, and respond personally to what they read. This approach indicates that literature can develop linguistic competence as well as analytical ability. Students learn to understand different meanings, examine literary techniques, and express their interpretations.

Collie and Slater (1987), in *Literature in the Language Classroom: A Resource Book of Ideas and Activities*, discuss the educational value of literature and suggest practical activities for engaging students with literary texts. Their work supports the use of classroom discussions, imaginative responses, and interactive activities to make literary learning more meaningful. Such methods can encourage students to participate actively rather than depend entirely on memorisation.

3. Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the role of English literature in the educational framework of NEP 2020.
2. To understand how literary studies develop critical thinking among students.
3. To explore the contribution of literature to imagination and creativity.
4. To analyse how English literature improves communication skills.
5. To identify challenges in teaching literature and suggest suitable teaching methods.

4. Research Methodology

This paper follows a descriptive and analytical approach. It is based on a conceptual study of the National Education Policy 2020 and selected scholarly works on literature and language teaching. It examines how reading, interpretation, discussion and creative activities can support the development of students' thinking, imagination, and communication abilities. The paper is theoretical in nature and does not claim to present findings from a field survey or experimental study.

5. English Literature and NEP 2020

NEP 2020 emphasizes holistic education, conceptual understanding, flexibility, multilingualism, and the development of higher-order thinking skills. It encourages students to move beyond rote learning and develop the ability to apply knowledge in different situations.English literature supports these aims in several ways. Literary texts encourage students to explore ideas rather than simply memorise information. A poem may express different meanings to different readers, while a novel may present complex social and psychological situations. Students must examine language, context, characters, and themes to understand these works. Thus, English literature can contribute to the learner-centred and skill-oriented vision of NEP 2020 when teachers encourage active participation and independent interpretation.

6. Development of Critical Thinking through English Literature

Critical thinking is the ability to examine information carefully, identify assumptions, compare viewpoints, and reach reasoned conclusions. It is an essential skill in higher education and everyday life. English literature provides many opportunities to develop this ability. Literary texts often present conflicts, complex characters, moral dilemmas, and social problems. Students must consider these elements carefully instead of accepting every idea without examination. For example, while studying a novel, students may discuss whether a character's decision was justified or whether social conditions influenced that decision. In drama, they may examine the motives of different characters and evaluate their actions. Critical thinking through literature is particularly relevant in the modern world, where students regularly encounter large amounts of information through digital media. The ability to question claims, identify bias and consider alternative perspectives is increasingly important. Therefore, literature teaching under NEP 2020 should give importance to discussion, interpretation, comparison and evidence-based answers rather than depending entirely on memorisation.

7. Development of Creativity through English Literature

Creativity is the ability to produce new ideas, explore possibilities, and express thoughts in original ways. It is an important part of holistic education because it enables students to approach challenges with imagination and flexibility. English literature naturally encourages creativity. Poems use rhythm, imagery, and figurative language to communicate emotions and ideas. Stories create imaginary worlds and introduce readers to unfamiliar situations. Plays allow students to experience characters through dialogue and performance. Teachers can develop creativity by asking students to write an alternative ending to a story, compose a poem, create a dialogue between characters, or rewrite a scene from another character's perspective. Students may also prepare short plays, conduct storytelling sessions, or design visual representations of literary themes.

For example, after reading a short story about a social problem, students can write their own story showing how the problem might be solved. This activity allows them to connect literary understanding with original thought. Creative activities also build confidence. Students learn that their ideas are valuable and that there is not always a single correct way to express an interpretation. They become more willing to experiment with language and develop their individual voices. NEP 2020 encourages experiential and flexible learning, making these approaches particularly useful in literature classrooms. In this way, English literature becomes a platform for imagination, self-expression and innovation.

8. Development of Communication Skills through English Literature

Communication is the ability to share ideas, information, and feelings clearly and appropriately. It includes reading, writing, speaking, listening, and interpreting the messages of others. English

literature contributes to communication development through regular exposure to different styles of language. Reading literary texts introduces students to new vocabulary, sentence patterns, expressions, and rhetorical techniques. It also helps them understand how language changes according to context, purpose, and audience.Writing about literature develops the ability to organise ideas and present arguments coherently. Therefore, literary education can strengthen reading, writing, speaking, and listening while encouraging effective and empathetic communication.

9. Role of Teachers in Literature Education under NEP 2020

Teachers play an important role in making literature meaningful and engaging. Their responsibility is not simply to explain a text but to guide students towards independent understanding. A teacher can begin a lesson by connecting the literary theme with students' experiences. During reading, the teacher can ask open-ended questions and encourage students to support their answers with examples. Respectful disagreement can help learners understand that critical discussion is a valuable part of learning. Assessment methods should reflect these objectives. In addition to written examinations, teachers can evaluate presentations, reading responses, creative assignments, participation, and analytical writing. Technology can also support literary education through digital libraries, recorded performances, and online discussions.

10. Challenges in Teaching English Literature: Despite its educational value, several challenges affect the teaching of English literature. One major challenge is the continued dependence on rote learning. When students are expected to memorise summaries and prepared answers, they may have fewer opportunities to develop their own interpretations. Another challenge is language difficulty. Students from different educational and linguistic backgrounds may struggle with unfamiliar vocabulary, complex sentence structures, and cultural references. Furthermore, assessment systems that mainly reward memorised answers may discourage experimentation and original thinking. These challenges can be addressed through practical measures.

11. Suggestions for Improving Literature Teaching

The following measures can make English literature teaching more effective:

1. **Encourage active reading:** Students should identify themes, ask questions, and share their interpretations instead of depending only on prepared notes.
2. **Use interactive methods:** Debates, role-play, storytelling, and group discussions can make lessons more engaging.
3. **Promote creative writing:** Poetry, short stories, dialogues, and alternative endings can help students develop imagination.
4. **Connect literature with real life:** Teachers should relate literary themes to social issues, personal experiences, and contemporary situations.
5. **Use technology thoughtfully:** Digital texts, audio recordings, and performances can support students who learn in different ways.

12. Conclusion: English literature has an important role in fulfilling the educational vision of NEP 2020. It offers opportunities to develop critical thinking, creativity, and communication skills while encouraging emotional awareness and cultural understanding. Through the study of poetry, drama, novels, and short stories, students learn to question ideas, interpret experiences, imagine alternatives, and express their thoughts clearly. However, these benefits cannot be achieved fully if literature teaching is limited to memorisation and examination preparation. Teachers need to encourage active reading, open discussion, creative activities, and independent interpretation. Assessment should also recognise students' ability to analyse, create, and communicate.

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The Bantva Memon Merchants of Gujarat: History, Culture, Economy, Politics and Prospects

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Abstract

The Muslim trading community associated with the town of Bantva in Saurashtra, Gujarat, usually known as the Bantva Memons, offers a compact case study in how a small mercantile group can move across oceans, regimes and borders while preserving a strong corporate identity. Originating in Sindh, settled in the Kathiawar peninsula, and dispersed to Bombay, Calcutta, Karachi, Rangoon, Colombo and East and South Africa, the community built wealth on commodity trade, shipping agency, textiles, jute and banking. This paper traces the community's history, examines its cultural and religious institutions, analyses the economic logic of its business model, and considers the political shocks of Partition, the post-1947 Indian state and contemporary Gujarat. It closes with an assessment of prospects. The argument is that the community's historic strength, dense kinship-based networks and portable capital, is also the source of its present vulnerability, and that its future depends on moving from a closed trust economy to institutionalised, professionalised and more outward-facing enterprise. Where the literature is thin or figures are contested, the paper says so; it should be read as an analytical synthesis rather than a statistical study.

1. Introduction

Gujarat's mercantile tradition is usually narrated through Jain, Vaishnava Bania and Parsi families, yet Muslim trading groups were equally central to the western Indian Ocean economy. Among them the Memons, along with the Bohras and Khojas, form the best-known Gujarati Muslim business castes. The Bantva Memons take their name from Bantva, a small town in the Junagadh region of Saurashtra that was the seat of a petty princely state, Bantva-Manavadar, ruled by a Muslim dynasty of the Babi family. The town is small, but the diaspora that carries its name was historically large relative to its size and out of all proportion to its population in influence.

Three questions guide this paper. How did a group of converted Sindhi traders become a transregional merchant community? What were the cultural and institutional mechanisms that made its commerce durable? And how have politics, above all Partition and the shifting position of Muslims in Gujarat, reshaped its opportunities? The paper uses a thematic rather than strictly chronological structure, and concludes with forward-looking analysis.

2. Historical Background

2.1 Origins in Sindh

The standard tradition holds that the Memons descend from Lohana trading families of Sindh, who converted to Islam in the early fifteenth century under the influence of a Qadiri saint, Pir Syed Yusuf-ud-din. The name Memon is generally derived from the Arabic *mu'min* (believer). Whatever the precise date, the conversion narrative is important for two reasons. First, it explains the community's continuity with pre-Islamic mercantile skills, accounting practice and caste-like endogamy. Second, it established a model in which religious identity and trading identity reinforced each other: to be Memon was, in effect, to belong to a business fraternity.

2.2 Movement into Kutch and Kathiawar

From Sindh, Memon families moved into Kutch and Kathiawar, partly for trade and partly under political and ecological pressure. In Kathiawar the group that settled around Bantva, Manavadar, Junagadh, Porbandar, Jetpur and neighbouring towns came to be called Bantva (or Halai and Kutchi, in the case of other branches) Memons. These coastal and semi-coastal towns were well placed. Saurashtra's ports, such as Porbandar, Veraval and Mandvi in neighbouring Kutch, linked the hinterland to the Arabian Sea trade with the Persian Gulf, East Africa and the Malabar coast.

The princely-state setting mattered. Small Kathiawar states were fiscally weak, administratively fragmented and often dependent on merchant loans and customs revenue. Merchants could bargain

for protection, trading privileges and a measure of autonomy. Bantva-Manavadar's Muslim ruling house provided a congenial environment for Muslim traders, although the relationship between rulers and merchants should not be romanticised; it was above all transactional.

2.3 The colonial period and the global dispersal

The nineteenth century transformed the community. Bombay's rise as the great port of western India, the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, the expansion of British steamship networks, and the growth of cotton, jute and grain exports created openings for agile commercial families. Bantva Memons moved to Bombay and Calcutta, and onward to Rangoon, Colombo, Zanzibar, Mombasa and the Cape and Natal. Burma rice, East African ivory, cloves and cotton goods, and Bengal jute were among the commodities traded. By the early twentieth century, houses associated with the Memon trading tradition were prominent in jute and cloth, in shipping agency and in the nascent banking and insurance sectors. Historians of Indian business have noted that such merchant groups acted as intermediaries between the colonial export economy and local producers, extending credit through informal instruments such as the *hundi*.

3. Cultural and Social Foundations

3.1 The jamaat as an economic institution

The central institution of Memon life is the *jamaat*, a community council that administers charity, adjudicates disputes, maintains records and sets norms of conduct. In commercial terms the jamaat functioned as a combination of chamber of commerce, credit rating agency and arbitration court. A merchant's reputation travelled faster than his paperwork. Default or fraud risked exclusion from marriage networks, philanthropy and credit. This reputational enforcement lowered transaction costs in environments where formal courts were slow, expensive or hostile to Indian traders.

3.2 Endogamy, kinship and trust

Marriage within the community, often between business families, cemented partnerships and spread risk. Agents posted in Rangoon or Mombasa were frequently kin or kin-of-kin. Such networks were not unique to the Memons, and the same logic appears in studies of Marwari, Chettiar, Sindhi and Gujarati Bania merchants, but it was especially developed among Gujarati Muslim trading castes, whose religious and linguistic distinctiveness bounded the network clearly.

3.3 Religion, charity and philanthropy

Memons are predominantly Sunni and have historically followed the Hanafi school, with a strong Sufi and Qadiri devotional inheritance and, in the twentieth century, varying degrees of reformist influence. Zakat and community charity were institutionalised: hospitals, schools, orphanages, dispensaries, mosques and relief funds were established by merchant families in Bombay, Karachi and Gujarat. Philanthropy served both religious obligation and social capital: public giving signalled creditworthiness and sustained the moral authority of the leading families.

3.4 Language and food

The community's everyday language is a Gujarati-Kutchi-Sindhi blend commonly called Memoni, with Gujarati and Urdu used in print, education and religion. The cuisine, including its rich meat and rice dishes and its festive specialities, remains a visible marker of identity, and one that has crossed over to the wider Gujarati food culture.

4. Economic Analysis

4.1 The business model

The traditional Bantva Memon enterprise had five characteristics. It was commodity-centred: grain, cotton, jute, rice, spices and later textiles. It was credit-based, relying on trade finance, informal remittance and personal guarantees. It was network-based, with branches managed by trusted relatives in different ports. It was family-owned, reinvesting profits rather than distributing dividends. And it was opportunistic in its diversification, moving from trade into shipping agency, jute and cotton mills, banking and insurance as opportunities arose.

4.2 Strengths: low transaction costs and portability

Economists would describe this model as a response to institutional voids. Where formal contract enforcement is weak, dense social networks substitute for the state. Information, finance and enforcement moved along family lines, giving small firms an advantage in volatile long-distance trade. Because the capital was largely commercial, rather than tied to land, it was highly portable, a fact whose importance became obvious in 1947.

4.3 Weaknesses: scale, governance and succession

The same features limit growth. Family control complicates professional management; kin-based hiring can cap talent; succession disputes can fragment large groups. Dependence on a few commodities exposes firms to price cycles. Informal finance is vulnerable to regulatory tightening, especially around money-transfer systems. Historians of Pakistan's early industrial elite, notably Hanna Papanek, observed that several Memon business houses became industrial pioneers precisely because they had commercial capital available at the moment the new state needed investors, but many also remained dependent on state licences and protection, which carries its own risks.

4.4 Present-day economy in Gujarat

In contemporary Gujarat, Muslims make up roughly nine to ten per cent of the population according to the 2011 census, and their economic profile is heterogeneous. Trading communities such as the Memons, Bohras and Khojas are relatively prosperous compared with the Muslim average, while artisanal and labouring groups face high informality and low access to credit. Many Memon families remain in textiles, agri-commodities, shipping and logistics, real estate, pharmaceuticals distribution, hospitality and the service sector, while younger members increasingly enter the professions, finance, information technology and the Gulf employment market. Precise, community-specific figures are scarce, since the Indian census does not enumerate sub-communities within religion, which is a real limit on empirical work.

5. Political Dimensions

5.1 Princely politics and 1947

The political context of Bantva is inseparable from the integration of Kathiawar. In 1947 the Nawab of Junagadh acceded to Pakistan, and the Babi ruler of Bantva-Manavadar also declared accession to Pakistan, even though the territory was geographically surrounded by India. India rejected the accession, and the states were absorbed into the Indian Union in the aftermath of the Junagadh crisis, culminating in a plebiscite in Junagadh in February 1948. For merchants, this period meant profound uncertainty about citizenship, property and the viability of cross-border commerce.

5.2 Partition and the split of the diaspora

Partition divided the community. A significant number of Memon business families relocated to Karachi, where they became prominent in the new state's trade and industry, while others remained in Bombay, Gujarat and elsewhere in India. Family firms often placed members on both sides of the new border, a hedging strategy that kept networks alive but later became politically suspect on both sides. Migration also drained Gujarat and Bombay of some capital and entrepreneurial talent, and left those who stayed to rebuild within a different political and regulatory environment, including the licence-permit economy.

5.3 Post-independence India

Under India's mixed economy, dependence on trade rather than heavy industry left many Muslim merchant families less well placed to capture the benefits of state-led industrialisation. Over decades, communal tensions in Gujarat, including episodes of violence in 1969, 1985 and above all 2002, produced insecurity, residential segregation and damage to Muslim-owned property and enterprise. The Disturbed Areas Act, which regulates property transfers in some urban areas, has been criticised by Muslim representatives and civil society groups as reinforcing ghettoisation, while the state government has defended it as a measure to prevent distress sales. Opposing readings of these policies exist, and scholars such as Christophe Jaffrelot, Ghanshyam Shah and Howard Spodek offer differing emphases on the causes and consequences of Gujarat's communal politics. At the same time, Gujarat's business-friendly reputation and large-scale industrial and port investment have created real

opportunities that many Muslim entrepreneurs have used, although often by relying on a low political profile and strong personal networks.

5.4 Political representation

Muslims in Gujarat are numerically too small and too dispersed to dominate electoral outcomes, and the community's political voice has historically been exercised through philanthropy, associations and lobbying rather than party politics. Trading communities have tended to prefer accommodation with whichever party holds power, a pragmatic strategy characteristic of merchant groups everywhere but one that limits their ability to shape policy.

6. Prospects

6.1 Opportunities

First, Gujarat's infrastructure boom, including ports, logistics, special economic zones and the Gujarat International Finance Tec-City project, favours exactly the sort of trade-and-service competence in which the community has long specialised. Second, the Gulf and East African connections remain valuable as India deepens commercial ties with West Asia and Africa. Third, rising education levels, including among women, are expanding the pool of professionals who can bring formal management and technology skills into family firms. Fourth, the community's long tradition of charitable trusts can be repurposed toward scholarships, microfinance and incubators.

6.2 Risks

The principal risks are structural and political. Family-firm governance problems and succession conflict remain widespread. Traditional commodity trade is being squeezed by corporate consolidation and digital platforms. Informal finance faces tighter compliance regimes. Social polarisation, residential segregation and reputational stereotyping can restrict access to premises, bank credit and public contracts. A demographic drift of younger members into salaried and overseas careers may weaken the jamaat's authority and the continuity of family enterprise.

6.3 Strategic directions

The analysis suggests four directions. The first is institutionalisation: converting family houses into professionally governed companies with independent boards, transparent accounts and clear succession plans. The second is diversification into higher-value sectors such as logistics technology, food processing, pharmaceuticals, renewable energy and financial services. The third is the reinvention of the jamaat as a support structure for entrepreneurship, with mentoring, shared legal and compliance help and venture-style funds, rather than as a purely charitable body. The fourth is broader engagement, building multi-community business partnerships and chambers of commerce, so that the community's prosperity is anchored in a shared regional economy rather than in enclosed networks, which tends to be more resilient in periods of political tension.

7. Conclusion

The Bantva Memons illustrate how religion, kinship and commerce can combine into a durable economic institution. Their history from Sindh to Saurashtra, and from Bombay to Karachi and Africa, shows adaptability across empires and nation-states. Their culture supplied trust, their networks supplied capital and information, and their mobility allowed them to survive political ruptures, but the same traits create dependence on a narrow social base. In contemporary Gujarat the community stands at a juncture: its inherited commercial capital remains considerable, yet it must translate it into modern corporate form and negotiate a political environment that is, at best, uneven. The prospects are moderately favourable for those who professionalise, diversify and build inclusive alliances, and less so for those who rely on the old model alone.

Notes on Sources and Limitations

This paper is a synthesis from general knowledge of the secondary literature and has not been checked against archival material. Specific claims about dates, population shares and individual business houses should be verified before formal submission. Useful starting points include the Gujarat district gazetteers (Junagadh); Dwijendra Tripathi, *The Oxford History of Indian Business*; Claude Markovits, *The Global World of Indian Merchants, 1750-1947*; Hanna Papanek, "Pakistan's

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Green Chemistry: A Sustainable Approach Towards Environmental Protection

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Abstract

Environmental degradation has become one of the most significant global challenges of the twenty-first century. Rapid industrialization, urbanization, population growth, excessive consumption of natural resources, and the uncontrolled release of hazardous chemicals have contributed to air pollution, water contamination, soil degradation, climate change, and biodiversity loss. Conventional chemical manufacturing and processing methods often depend on toxic reagents, hazardous solvents, non-renewable raw materials, and energy-intensive operations. These practices can create substantial environmental and health-related problems.Green chemistry has emerged as an important scientific approach to address these challenges by designing chemical products and processes that reduce or eliminate the use and generation of hazardous substances. Rather than focusing only on the treatment of pollution after it occurs, green chemistry emphasizes pollution prevention at its source. It promotes waste minimization, atom economy, safer chemical synthesis, renewable feedstocks, energy efficiency, catalysis, and environmentally responsible product design.

The present review paper examines the fundamental concepts and twelve principles of green chemistry and discusses their importance in environmental protection. It highlights applications in organic synthesis, pharmaceutical manufacturing, agriculture, polymer science, water treatment, and industrial production. The paper also discusses the potential of renewable resources, biodegradable materials, alternative solvents, and modern catalytic technologies in promoting sustainable chemical practices.Furthermore, the review identifies major challenges associated with the implementation of green chemistry, including economic limitations, technological barriers, lack of awareness, and the need for effective environmental assessment. It emphasizes that the successful adoption of green chemistry requires cooperation among researchers, industries, educational institutions, policymakers, and society.Green chemistry is not merely an alternative approach to conventional chemistry; it represents a fundamental transformation in the way chemical products and processes are designed. Its appropriate implementation can contribute significantly to environmental sustainability, human health protection, resource conservation, and sustainable industrial development.

Keywords: Green Chemistry, Environmental Protection, Sustainable Development, Pollution Prevention, Renewable Resources, Atom Economy, Biodegradable Materials, Green Solvents, Waste Minimization.

1.**Introduction**

Chemistry plays a fundamental role in modern human civilization. It contributes to the development of medicines, agricultural chemicals, food products, polymers, textiles, cosmetics, construction materials, fuels, and numerous industrial products. Almost every aspect of daily life is influenced by chemical substances and processes. However, the rapid expansion of chemical industries and the increasing demand for manufactured products have also created serious environmental concerns.Traditional chemical manufacturing processes frequently involve hazardous raw materials, toxic solvents, excessive energy consumption, and the generation of unwanted by-products. Improper disposal of industrial effluents and chemical waste can contaminate rivers, lakes, groundwater, and agricultural soil. Similarly, the uncontrolled emission of gases and volatile organic compounds contributes to air pollution and climate-related problems.Historically, environmental management has often focused on treating pollution after it has been generated. Although wastewater treatment plants, emission-control systems, and waste-management technologies are important, they may require considerable energy, financial resources and additional chemicals. Therefore, preventing pollution before it is produced is a more desirable strategy.

Green chemistry provides a scientific framework for achieving this objective. It is defined as the design, development and application of chemical products and processes that reduce or eliminate the use and generation of hazardous substances. The concept encourages chemists to consider environmental and health impacts during the initial stages of chemical research, product development and industrial manufacturing.The development of green chemistry is closely associated with the work of Paul T. Anastas and John C. Warner, who introduced the twelve principles of green chemistry in their book *Green Chemistry: Theory and Practice* (1998). These principles provide a systematic foundation for developing safer, more efficient and environmentally responsible chemical technologies.

Unlike conventional approaches that may concentrate on controlling pollution at the end of a production process, green chemistry aims to prevent the formation of hazardous waste from the beginning. It encourages the use of renewable raw materials, safer solvents, catalytic reactions, efficient energy systems, and products designed for degradation after use.Green chemistry is therefore closely connected with sustainable development. It seeks to balance industrial progress with environmental responsibility and human well-being. In developing countries such as India, where industrial growth and environmental protection must progress together, the adoption of green chemistry has considerable importance.

2. Objectives of the Study

The major objectives of the present review paper are:

1. To explain the concept, significance, and development of green chemistry.
2. To study the twelve fundamental principles of green chemistry.
3. To examine the role of green chemistry in preventing environmental pollution.
4. To understand the importance of renewable feedstocks and biodegradable materials.
5. To explore the applications of green chemistry in various industrial and scientific fields.
6. To discuss the advantages and limitations of adopting green chemical technologies.
7. To identify future opportunities for sustainable chemical research and development.
8. To highlight the importance of green chemistry in achieving environmental protection and sustainable development.

3. Research Methodology

The present study is based on a descriptive and analytical review of existing scientific literature related to green chemistry and environmental sustainability.Information has been considered from established scientific publications, academic review articles, international scientific organizations, government resources, and educational materials related to green chemistry.The review focuses on the twelve principles of green chemistry, environmentally safer chemical processes, renewable resources, waste reduction, sustainable industrial practices, and applications in different scientific fields.The collected literature has been examined to identify major developments, practical applications, environmental benefits, and implementation challenges. No original laboratory experiments or primary survey data have been claimed in this study.

4. Concept and Development of Green Chemistry

Green chemistry is a preventive approach to chemical design that aims to minimize environmental and human-health hazards throughout the life cycle of chemical products and processes.The concept gained importance during the late twentieth century as scientists and policymakers recognized that conventional pollution-control strategies alone were insufficient to address the environmental consequences of industrial chemical production.The United States Pollution Prevention Act of 1990 helped strengthen the emphasis on pollution prevention rather than depending exclusively on waste treatment and disposal. Subsequently, the principles developed by Anastas and Warner provided a structured scientific foundation for green chemistry.

Green chemistry considers several important factors, including:

- Selection of less hazardous starting materials.
- Reduction of unnecessary chemical reactions.

- Efficient utilization of raw materials.
- Minimization of waste generation.
- Use of renewable energy and feedstocks.
- Reduction of toxic solvents.
- Development of safer chemical products.
- Improvement in the biodegradability of materials.

An important characteristic of green chemistry is that environmental protection is considered during the design of chemical processes rather than being treated as a separate activity after production.

5. **The Twelve Principles Of Green Chemistry**

The twelve principles of green chemistry provide a scientific framework for improving the environmental performance of chemical reactions, products, and industrial processes.

5.1 Prevention of Waste

The first principle emphasizes the prevention of waste rather than its treatment or disposal after generation.Traditional chemical processes may generate large quantities of unwanted by-products, contaminated solvents, and chemical residues. Green chemistry encourages scientists to design reactions that produce the desired product with minimum waste.Waste prevention reduces environmental contamination and lowers the cost associated with waste treatment and disposal.

5.2 Atom Economy

Atom economy refers to the efficient utilization of atoms from reactants in the formation of the desired final product.A reaction with high atom economy incorporates a greater proportion of the starting materials into the final product and generates fewer unwanted by-products.The concept is particularly important in organic synthesis and pharmaceutical manufacturing, where multiple reaction steps may otherwise generate considerable chemical waste.Atom economy can be calculated using the following expression:

Atom Economy (%) = (Molecular mass of desired product / Total molecular mass of reactants) × 100

Improving atom economy contributes to efficient resource utilization and sustainable chemical production.

5.3 Less Hazardous Chemical Syntheses

This principle encourages the development of synthetic methods that use and generate substances with reduced toxicity to humans and the environment.The selection of safer reagents and reaction pathways can reduce occupational exposure, accidental chemical releases, and environmental contamination.Researchers are encouraged to replace highly hazardous substances with alternatives that provide similar chemical performance with lower environmental risks.

5.4 Designing Safer Chemicals

Chemical products should be designed to perform their intended functions while minimizing toxicity.This principle is relevant to pesticides, detergents, pharmaceuticals, industrial chemicals, and consumer products.For example, the development of effective but less toxic agricultural chemicals can help reduce adverse effects on non-target organisms and ecosystems.

5.5 Safer Solvents and Auxiliaries

Solvents are widely used in chemical synthesis, extraction, purification, and manufacturing. However, certain conventional solvents may be toxic, volatile, flammable, or environmentally persistent.Green chemistry promotes the reduction of unnecessary solvent use and the selection of safer alternatives wherever technically appropriate.Water, ethanol, and selected bio-based solvents may provide useful alternatives in particular applications. Nevertheless, the environmental suitability of a solvent must be evaluated according to its toxicity, production method, recovery, and complete life cycle.

5.6 Energy Efficiency

Chemical reactions often require heating, cooling, pressure, and other energy-intensive operations.The sixth principle recommends reducing energy requirements wherever possible. Reactions conducted under moderate temperatures and pressures may help decrease energy consumption.Microwave-assisted synthesis, ultrasound-assisted reactions, and selected catalytic processes can improve reaction efficiency in appropriate applications.Energy-efficient chemical manufacturing can also reduce greenhouse-gas emissions when it lowers the consumption of fossil-fuel-based energy.

5.7 Use of Renewable Feedstocks

Renewable feedstocks are raw materials obtained from resources that can be replenished naturally within reasonable time periods.Agricultural residues, plant-based oils, starch, cellulose, and certain biological materials can serve as renewable resources for chemical production.Their use can reduce dependence on non-renewable fossil-based resources. However, responsible sourcing is essential because excessive use of agricultural land, water, and biomass may create additional environmental pressures.

5.8 Reduction of Chemical Derivatives

Some chemical reactions require protecting groups, blocking groups, or temporary chemical modifications.These additional steps often consume more reagents and solvents and generate unwanted waste.Green chemistry recommends avoiding unnecessary derivatization wherever possible by designing more direct and efficient synthetic pathways.

5.9 Catalysis

Catalysts increase the rate of chemical reactions without being consumed in the overall reaction in the same stoichiometric proportion as reactants.Catalytic processes can improve selectivity, reduce reaction temperatures, minimize unwanted by-products, and improve the efficiency of industrial production.Examples include enzyme catalysis, heterogeneous catalysis, and selected homogeneous catalytic systems.The appropriate selection and recovery of catalysts are important for reducing environmental impacts.

5.10 Design for Degradation

Chemical products should ideally be designed to break down into harmless substances after performing their intended functions.This principle is especially important in the development of biodegradable polymers, detergents, agricultural chemicals, and other products that may enter natural ecosystems.Designing for degradation can reduce the long-term accumulation of persistent chemical substances in the environment.

5.11 Real-Time Analysis for Pollution Prevention

Modern analytical techniques can monitor chemical reactions and manufacturing processes during operation.Real-time monitoring helps identify unwanted by-products, incomplete reactions, and process deviations before they result in excessive waste.Techniques such as spectroscopy, chromatography, and process analytical technology can support improved process control.

5.12 Inherently Safer Chemistry for Accident Prevention

Chemical processes should be designed to minimize the possibility of fires, explosions, chemical leaks and accidental releases.The use of less hazardous materials, safer operating conditions, appropriate equipment, and effective process monitoring can improve industrial safety.This principle demonstrates that green chemistry contributes not only to environmental protection but also to worker safety and public health.

6. Role of Green Chemistry in Environmental Protection

Green chemistry contributes to environmental protection through several interconnected mechanisms.

6.1 Reduction of Air Pollution

Industrial chemical processes can release harmful gases, particulate matter, and volatile organic compounds into the atmosphere.Green chemistry encourages the use of cleaner production methods,

less volatile materials, improved catalysts, and energy-efficient technologies.Reducing unnecessary solvent evaporation and improving process efficiency can help minimize certain air emissions.

6.2 Protection of Water Resources

Water contamination is a serious environmental problem caused by untreated industrial wastewater, agricultural chemicals, dyes, heavy metals, and other pollutants.Green chemistry can contribute to water protection by reducing hazardous chemical inputs and minimizing wastewater generation at the source.The development of biodegradable chemicals, safer cleaning agents, and more efficient manufacturing processes can reduce the chemical burden on water-treatment systems.

6.3 Prevention of Soil Pollution

Improper disposal of industrial waste, excessive use of certain agricultural chemicals, and leakage of hazardous substances can degrade soil quality.Green chemistry supports the development of safer agrochemicals, biodegradable materials and more responsible chemical production methods.Reducing persistent and hazardous chemical residues can help protect soil organisms and agricultural ecosystems.

6.4 Conservation of Natural Resources

Many conventional chemical industries depend heavily on petroleum, natural gas, minerals, and other non-renewable resources.The use of renewable feedstocks and efficient synthetic processes can reduce unnecessary resource consumption.Improved atom economy and recycling of suitable process materials also contribute to resource conservation.

6.5 Reduction of Chemical Waste

Waste prevention is one of the most important contributions of green chemistry.By improving reaction selectivity, reducing unnecessary reaction steps, and adopting catalytic methods, industries can reduce the quantity of waste requiring treatment and disposal.This approach may also improve production efficiency and reduce operating costs.

7. Applications of Green Chemistry

7.1 Green Chemistry in Organic Synthesis

Organic chemistry is an important field for applying green chemistry because conventional organic synthesis may involve hazardous reagents, large quantities of solvents, and multiple purification steps.

Green organic synthesis promotes:

- Solvent-free reactions where appropriate.
- Water-based reaction systems.
- Catalytic transformations.
- Microwave-assisted synthesis.
- Enzyme-mediated reactions.
- Improved atom economy.
- Reduction of unnecessary reaction steps.

For example, selected organic transformations can be carried out using recyclable catalysts and safer reaction media, reducing the generation of unwanted chemical waste.Green synthetic methods are increasingly relevant to academic laboratories and industrial chemical production.

7.2 Applications in Pharmaceutical Industries

The pharmaceutical industry uses complex chemical reactions to manufacture medicines and active pharmaceutical ingredients.Traditional pharmaceutical synthesis may require multiple reaction steps, solvents, purification operations, and chemical reagents.

Green chemistry can improve pharmaceutical manufacturing through:

1. Reduction of solvent consumption.
2. Development of catalytic synthetic routes.
3. Improvement in reaction selectivity.
4. Reduction of hazardous reagents.
5. Recovery and reuse of suitable solvents.

6. Improvement in process efficiency.

The concept of process mass intensity is also used to evaluate the amount of material required to manufacture a particular quantity of pharmaceutical product.These approaches can support safer and more resource-efficient pharmaceutical production.

7.3 Green Chemistry in Agriculture

Agriculture depends on fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, and other chemical inputs.Although these substances can improve agricultural productivity, their inappropriate use may create environmental problems.Green chemistry encourages the development of safer agrochemicals, biodegradable formulations, controlled-release systems and alternative methods of pest management.Bio-based agricultural inputs and improved chemical formulations may reduce certain environmental impacts when appropriately evaluated.

7.4 Green Chemistry in Polymer Science

Conventional plastics are largely manufactured from fossil-based raw materials and may persist in the environment for long periods.Green chemistry promotes the development of biodegradable polymers and polymers produced from renewable resources.Examples include polylactic acid (PLA), which can be produced from renewable carbohydrate-based feedstocks and polyhydroxyalkanoates (PHAs), which are produced biologically by microorganisms.These materials have potential applications in packaging, agriculture, biomedical products and selected consumer applications.However, biodegradability depends on material composition and environmental conditions. Not every biodegradable polymer decomposes rapidly in ordinary soil or marine environments.

7.5 Green Chemistry in Water Treatment

Green chemical approaches are useful in developing improved water-treatment materials and processes.Examples include the development of bio-based adsorbents, selected photocatalytic materials, membrane technologies, and environmentally safer treatment chemicals.Certain agricultural wastes and natural materials can be investigated as low-cost adsorbents for removing selected pollutants from water.The effectiveness and environmental safety of these materials must be assessed before large-scale application.

7.6 Green Chemistry in the Textile Industry

Textile manufacturing involves dyes, bleaching agents, detergents and finishing chemicals.Conventional textile processes may generate coloured wastewater and chemical residues.Green chemistry encourages the use of safer dyes, improved dyeing techniques, efficient water utilization, and reduced chemical consumption.Enzyme-based processing and suitable water-recycling technologies may also contribute to cleaner textile manufacturing.

7.7 Green Chemistry in Cosmetics and Household Products

Cosmetics, personal-care products and household cleaning agents contain several chemical ingredients.Green chemistry supports the development of formulations using safer ingredients, renewable materials and suitable biodegradable components.The selection of such ingredients should consider their toxicity, stability, performance, and environmental fate.

8. Green Solvents and Their Environmental Significance

Solvents are essential in many chemical and industrial operations. However, some traditional organic solvents have adverse environmental and health effects.The development of safer solvent systems is therefore an important area of green chemistry.

8.1 Water as a Solvent

Water is widely available, non-flammable under ordinary conditions, and comparatively safer than many conventional organic solvents.It can be used in various chemical reactions, extraction procedures, and industrial processes.However, its use requires consideration of solubility, wastewater treatment, and energy requirements for heating and separation.

8.2 Ethanol as an Alternative Solvent

Ethanol can be produced through fermentation of renewable biomass and is used in extraction, pharmaceutical processing, and selected organic reactions.Its environmental advantages depend on its source, manufacturing process, recovery and energy requirements.

8.3 Bio-Based Solvents

Bio-based solvents are obtained from renewable biological resources.They may offer alternatives to certain petroleum-derived solvents. Their suitability must be evaluated by considering toxicity, biodegradability, production impacts, and practical performance.

8.4 Supercritical Carbon Dioxide

Supercritical carbon dioxide has properties that differ from ordinary liquid and gaseous carbon dioxide.It is used in selected extraction and separation applications, including the extraction of certain natural products.Its use can reduce the need for certain conventional organic solvents. However, the overall environmental performance depends on the source of carbon dioxide, energy consumption, and process design.

9. Renewable Resources and Sustainable Materials

The utilization of renewable resources is an important strategy for sustainable chemical development.Petroleum-based raw materials are finite and their extraction and processing may contribute to environmental pollution and greenhouse-gas emissions.Renewable feedstocks offer opportunities to develop alternative chemical products and industrial materials.

Important renewable resources include:

- Cellulose obtained from plant biomass.
- Starch from agricultural crops.
- Vegetable oils.
- Agricultural residues.
- Natural sugars.
- Biological materials produced through microbial processes.

Cellulose is particularly important because it is abundant in plant biomass and can be used in the production of various value-added materials.Similarly, starch-based materials and plant-derived oils can be investigated for the development of biodegradable materials, bio-based polymers, and selected industrial chemicals.However, renewable does not automatically mean sustainable. The complete life cycle of a feedstock must be evaluated, including land use, water consumption, transportation, processing, and disposal.

10. Importance of Green Chemistry in India

India is experiencing rapid industrial growth and increasing demand for energy, chemicals, medicines, fertilizers, plastics, and consumer products.This growth creates opportunities for scientific development but also increases the importance of responsible environmental management.Green chemistry can contribute to India's environmental and industrial goals in several ways.First, it can encourage chemical industries to adopt cleaner manufacturing technologies and reduce hazardous waste generation.Second, it can promote research into renewable agricultural resources and the conversion of biomass into useful chemical products.Third, it can support the pharmaceutical sector in developing more efficient synthetic pathways and reducing solvent consumption.Fourth, green chemistry education can create awareness among students and researchers about sustainable scientific practices.The Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals, Government of India, recognizes green chemistry as an important approach for reducing hazardous chemical use and generation.Indian universities, research institutions and industries can strengthen their contribution by promoting green chemistry research, laboratory practices, industrial collaboration, and technology development.

11. Advantages of Green Chemistry

Green chemistry provides several environmental, economic and social advantages.

Environmental advantages:

- Reduction in hazardous waste generation.

- Prevention of pollution at its source.
- Conservation of water and natural resources.
- Reduction in the use of certain toxic substances.
- Development of biodegradable materials.
- Improvement in industrial resource efficiency.

Economic advantages:

- Reduced expenditure on waste treatment.
- Better utilization of raw materials.
- Potential reduction in energy consumption.
- Improved production efficiency.
- Reduced costs associated with hazardous material handling.

Health and safety advantages:

- Reduced exposure to certain hazardous chemicals.
- Improved occupational safety.
- Lower potential for chemical accidents.
- Development of safer consumer and industrial products.

These benefits depend on the actual design and performance of the chemical process and should be evaluated using appropriate environmental and economic indicators.

12. Challenges and Limitations of Green Chemistry

Despite its potential, the implementation of green chemistry faces several challenges.

12.1 High Initial Investment

The adoption of new technologies, specialized equipment and alternative production methods may require considerable initial investment.Small-scale industries may face difficulties in adopting these technologies because of financial limitations.

12.2 Technological Limitations

Not every chemical reaction has an established environmentally safer alternative that provides equivalent yield, selectivity, stability and commercial performance.Further research and technological development are necessary to overcome these limitations.

12.3 Lack of Awareness

Limited awareness among students, researchers, industrial workers and manufacturers may slow the adoption of green chemistry practices.Educational programmes and industrial training can help address this issue.

12.4 Availability of Renewable Raw Materials

The availability, quality and cost of renewable feedstocks may vary depending on geographical and seasonal conditions.The large-scale utilization of agricultural biomass must also avoid competition with food production and ecological requirements.

12.5 Evaluation of Environmental Impact

A chemical process should not be considered green merely because it uses a renewable raw material or produces a biodegradable product.Its complete life cycle, including raw material production, energy requirements, transportation, manufacturing, use and disposal, must be considered.

12.6 Industrial Adaptation

Established industrial processes may be difficult to modify because of existing infrastructure, production requirements, safety standards, and economic considerations.Collaboration between academic researchers and industrial organizations is necessary to encourage practical implementation.

13. Future Scope of Green Chemistry

The future of green chemistry is closely connected with scientific innovation, technological development, and global sustainability goals.Several research areas have considerable potential.

13.1 Artificial Intelligence in Green Chemical Research

Artificial intelligence and computational chemistry can support the prediction of reaction outcomes, identification of suitable catalysts, and selection of potentially safer chemical alternatives. These technologies may improve research efficiency and reduce unnecessary experimental trials.

13.2 Development of Advanced Catalysts

Research into recyclable catalysts, biocatalysts, and more selective catalytic systems may help improve chemical efficiency and reduce waste generation.

13.3 Renewable Energy-Based Chemical Processes

The integration of solar energy and other renewable energy sources into chemical manufacturing may reduce dependence on fossil-fuel-based energy.

13.4 Biodegradable and Bio-Based Materials

The development of materials from renewable resources may provide alternatives to selected conventional products.Further research is needed to improve their performance, affordability, and end-of-life management.

13.5 Sustainable Pharmaceutical Manufacturing

The pharmaceutical industry has opportunities to improve reaction efficiency, reduce solvent use, and develop more resource-efficient manufacturing pathways.

13.6 Green Chemistry Education

Introducing green chemistry concepts into school, college and university curricula can encourage environmentally responsible scientific thinking among future generations.Practical laboratory activities based on waste minimization, safer reagents, and efficient resource utilization can make chemistry education more sustainable.

14. **Discussion**

The literature reviewed in this paper indicates that green chemistry offers an important preventive framework for addressing environmental problems associated with chemical production and consumption.Its significance lies in integrating environmental considerations into the molecular and process-level design of chemical products. This approach moves beyond the traditional idea that pollution should primarily be managed through treatment technologies after waste has been generated.The twelve principles provide a broad framework that can be adapted to different chemical and industrial applications. Waste prevention and atom economy emphasize material efficiency, while safer synthesis and solvent selection address chemical hazards. Renewable feedstocks and energy efficiency support resource conservation, and design for degradation addresses the environmental fate of products after use.The applications discussed in organic synthesis, pharmaceuticals, agriculture, polymer science, textiles and water treatment demonstrate the interdisciplinary nature of green chemistry.

However, the implementation of green chemistry requires scientific evidence and careful assessment. A process that reduces one environmental impact may increase another if energy consumption, water requirements, toxicity, or waste generated during raw material production are ignored.Therefore, the evaluation of green chemical technologies should include suitable metrics such as atom economy, reaction mass efficiency, E-factor, process mass intensity, energy consumption, and life-cycle assessment.The overall success of green chemistry depends on the integration of scientific research, industrial innovation, environmental policies, and public awareness.

15. **Conclusion**

Green chemistry represents an important scientific approach for achieving environmental protection through the design of safer and more sustainable chemical products and processes. It emphasizes pollution prevention, waste minimization, efficient resource utilization, safer chemical synthesis, renewable feedstocks, and energy conservation.The twelve principles of green chemistry provide a valuable foundation for transforming conventional chemical practices into environmentally responsible alternatives. Their applications in organic synthesis, pharmaceutical manufacturing agriculture, polymer science, textile processing, and water treatment demonstrate their importance across different sectors.Although challenges such as high initial investment, technological limitations,

availability of renewable materials, and lack of awareness remain, continued scientific research and industrial collaboration can support the wider implementation of green chemistry.In countries such as India, green chemistry has considerable potential to promote sustainable industrial growth while protecting natural resources and public health.It is essential to recognize that environmental protection should not be considered separate from scientific progress. Instead, environmental responsibility must become an integral part of chemical research, education, and industrial development.Ultimately, green chemistry provides an opportunity to transform chemistry from a source of environmental challenges into an important contributor to sustainable development. Its wider adoption can help create a cleaner environment, safer industrial systems, and a more sustainable future for coming generations.

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Declaration: This manuscript is prepared as a literature-based review of green chemistry. The author should verify all references, ensure appropriate attribution, and revise the manuscript according to the journal's submission and formatting requirements before submission.

"खाद्य सुरक्षा से पोषण सुरक्षा की ओर भारत एवं मध्यप्रदेश के विषेष संदर्भ में"

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सारांश :–

स्वतंत्रता की प्राप्ती के पश्चात भारत ने खाद्यान्न उत्पादन में आत्मनिर्भता प्राप्त करने के लिए योजना आयोग एवं सरकारी कार्यक्रमों के माध्यम से विभिन्न प्रयास किये। इन सभी प्रयासों के सम्मिलित प्रभाव से खाद्यान्न उत्पादन, सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली तथा खाद्य सुरक्षा अधिनियम 2013 ने खाद्य सुरक्षा को अधिकार के रूप में विषेष स्थान प्रदान किया। शहरी एवं ग्रामीण दोनों स्तर पर लोगों को शहरी आबादी के 75% एवं ग्रामीण आबादी के 50% जनसंख्या को लक्षित सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली PDS के अंतर्गत खाद्यान्न उपलब्ध कराने का प्रावधान किया। वर्तमान में यह लगभग देश की आबादी का 80% है। इसके बावजूद भी मात्र खाद्यान्न की उपलब्धता, पोषण सुरक्षा सुनिश्चित नहीं करती बल्कि पोषक तत्वों की विविधता, उपलब्ध खाद्य पदार्थो की गुणवत्ता, स्वस्थ भोजन की वहनीयता, स्वच्छता, स्वास्थ्य सेवाओं की सुलभता और साथ ही मातृ–शिशु की देख भाल भी पोषण परिणामों को प्रभावित करते है।

NFHS-5 के अनुसार भारत में आज भी 5 वर्ष आयु के नीचे 35.5% Stunted, 19.3% Wasted, 32.1% Underweight है मध्यप्रदेश में यह अनुपात 35.7%] 19.00% और 33% है।

यह आंकड़े पोषण सुरक्षा पर विषेष ध्यान केन्द्रित करने की आवश्यकता को स्पष्ट करते है। द्वितीयक समंको पर आधारित विश्लेषण के अनुसार खाद्य सुरक्षा की उपलब्धियों को पोषण सुरक्षा में परिवर्तीत करने के लिए खाद्यान्न केन्द्रित नीति के साथ दाल, दूध, अण्डे, फल, सब्जियाँ, मोटे अनाज, सूक्ष्म पोषक तत्वों तथा विविध आहार पहुँचाना, बढाना आवश्यक है।

मुख्य शब्दः कुपोषण, सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली, खाद्य सुरक्षा, पोषण कैलोरी, खाद्यान्न उत्पादन

खाद्य सुरक्षा किसी भी देश राज्य के सामाजिक एवं आर्थिक प्रगति के प्रमुख सूचकों में से एक है। यदि पर्याप्त खाद्यान्न (पोषक तत्वो सहित) देश की आबादी को उपलब्ध नहीं होता है तो मानव विकास प्रभावित होता है। अर्थात जीवन की गुणवत्ता, शिक्षा तथा स्वास्थ प्रत्यक्ष रूप से प्रभावित होते है। आजादी के बाद खाद्यान्न की कमी प्रमुख समस्या के रूप में सामने खड़ी थी। हरित क्रांती, सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली, न्यूनतम समर्थन मूल्य तथा सरकारी खरीद व्यवस्था ने देश को खाद्यान्न पूर्ति के क्षेत्र में अधिक आत्मनिर्भर बनाने में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाई। वर्तमान में हम खाद्यान्न पूर्ति के क्षेत्र में आत्मनिर्भर है। आज यह प्रश्न है कि पर्याप्त कैलोरी उपलब्धता में पोषक तत्वों की उपलब्धता कितनी है ?

शहरी एवं ग्रामीण दोनो क्षेत्रों में कैलोरी की आवश्यकता कार्य करने के आधार पर भिन्न–भिन्न है शहारी क्षेत्र योजना आयोग के अनुसार 2100 कैलोरी तथा ग्रामीण क्षेत्र में 2700 कैलोरी की उपलब्धता को आवश्यक पैमाना माना है। इस आधार पर प्रश्न उठता है कि ये मानवीय पूँजी विकास वास्तव में धरातल स्तर पर दिखाई दे रहा है अथवा नहीं ?

NFSA के अंतर्गत ग्रामीण जनसंख्या के लगभग 75% तथा शहरी जनसंख्या के 50% तक को खाद्यान्न सुरक्षा देने का प्रावधान है। अत्यंत गरीब परिवारो को 5 किलो प्रति व्यक्ति तथा अंत्येदय परिवारों को 35 किलो प्रति परिवार का प्रावधान किया गया है। यह सब संस्थागत व्यवस्था विकसीत किये जाने के बावजूद भी आंकडे बता रहे है कि अभी भी भोजन–पोषण उपलब्धता और पोषण परिणामों के बीच एक बड़ा अंतर मौजुद है।

खाद्य सुरक्षा और पोषण में अंतर

1. खाद्य सुरक्षा परिवार/व्यक्ति को पर्याप्त भोजन उपलब्ध कराना	पोषण सुरक्षा परिवार/व्यक्ति को पौष्टिक आहार सुनिश्चित करना
2. प्रमुख सुंचको में खाद्यान्न उपलब्धता एवं पहुँच है।	प्रमुख सूंचको में कुपोषण, ैजनदजपदए ॅजपदहए ।दंमउपंए ॅमपहीपदह इत्यादि है।
3. खाद्य सुरक्षा अधिनियम खाद्य उत्पादन को महत्व देता है।	पोषण सुरक्षा, भोजन की विविधता, पोषण–संवदेनशील कृषि पर जोर देता है।

इस प्रकार पोषण सुरक्षा खाद्यान्नों की उपलब्धता के साथ–साथ पोषण, स्वास्थ्य एवं स्वस्थ मानव पूँजी के निर्माण पर बल देता है।

भारतीय संदर्भ में खाद्य सुरक्षा की स्थिति :–

भारत में खाद्य सुरक्षा व्यवस्था का प्रमुख आधार स्तंम्भ सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली है। NFSA के अंतर्गत निम्नलिखित खाद्य सुरक्षा व्यवस्था में प्रमुख कार्यक्रम महत्वपूर्ण है।

1. राष्ट्रीय खाद्य सुरक्षा अधिनियम
2. सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली
3. अंत्योदय अन्न योजना
4. एकीकृत बाल विकास सेवाएँ
5. मिशन सक्षम आँगनवाड़ी एवं POSHAN 2.0
6. PM पोषण
7. मातृत्व एवं महिला पोषण कार्यक्रम
8. खाद्य सुदृढ़ीकरण कार्यक्रम

नीती आयोग के एस डी जी गोल–2 में भी NFSA कवरेज और खाद्य पोषण संबंधी कार्यक्रमों की भूमिका को दृष्टिगत रखा गया है।

भारत में पोषण की वर्तमान स्थिति

राष्ट्रीय परिवार स्वास्थ्य सर्वेक्षण NFHS-6 के अनुसार भारत के स्वास्थ्य जनसंख्या और सामाजिक, आर्थिक संकेतकों के प्रमुख आँकड़ों के अनुसार कुपोषण और एनीमीया :–

- बौनापन Stunting 38% से घटकर 36% हुआ है।
- कमजोरी Wasting : 21% से घटकर 19% हो गई है।
- कम वजन Underweight : 36% से घटकर 32% हुआ है।
- देश में एनीमीया के मामलों में वृद्धि हुई है। 67.1% बच्चे, 57% महिलाएँ एवं 25% पुरूष एनीमिया से पीड़ित पाये गये हैं।

मध्यप्रदेश में पोषण की वर्तमान स्थिति :–

राष्ट्रीय परिवार स्वास्थ्य सर्वेक्षण NFHS-6 की नवीनतम रिपोर्ट के अनुसार मध्यप्रदेश में बाल पोषण और खाद्य सुरक्षा की स्थिति बहुत अच्छी नहीं है। कुपोषण के मामलों में गिरावट के बजाय वृद्धि दर्ज की गई है। बच्चों में कमजारी Child Wasting 23.8% की दर के साथ राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर सबसे खराब स्थिति प्रथम स्थान पर है। यह तीव्र कुपोषण को दर्शाता है।

Underweight – उम्र के अनुसार कम वजन के आँकड़ें बताते हैं कि म.प्र. में 39.7% बच्चे कम वजन के हैं जो पिछले वर्षो की तुलना में 4% अधिक है। यहाँ म0प्र0 दुसरे स्थान पर है।

स्टेटिंग उम्र के अनुसार कम लंबाई – 5 वर्ष से कम उम्र के लगभग 31.4% बच्चों में क्रोनिक कुपोषण दिखाई दिया है इसका अर्थ है कि राज्य का हर तीसरा बच्चा स्टेटींग से पीड़ित है।

राज्य में महिलाओं में मोटापा 22.2% और मधुमेह खतरा तेजी से बढ़ रहा है जो खराब पोषण गुणवत्ता को दर्शाता है।

पोषण सुरक्षा का एक महत्वपूर्ण आर्थिक पक्ष स्वस्थ्य भोजन की कीमत है FAO के 2025 SOFI के अनुसार 2024 में लगभग 2.6 अरब लोग विश्व स्तर पर स्वस्थ्य आहार वहन करने में सक्षम नहीं थे। रिर्पोट में खाद्यान्न कीमत और थोकमूल्य सूचकांक (मुद्रास्फीति) तथा स्वस्थ्य आहार की वहनीयता को खाद्य एवं पोषण सुरक्षा से जोड़कर देखा गया है। अतः यह समस्या कृषि, रोजगार, आय, मूल्य, सार्वजनिक वितरण, महिला सशक्तिकरण और सामाजिक सुरक्षा से जुड़ी हुई आर्थिक समस्या है।

भारत सरकार ने कुपोषण की समस्या से निपटने के लिए POSHAN 2.0 जैसी व्यवस्थाएँ विकसित की है। POSHAN ट्रेकर कार्यक्रम को 2021 में प्रारंभ किया गया इसका उपयोग बच्चों में Stunting, Wasting और Underweight की पहचान तथा पोषण सेवाओं की अंतिम स्तर तक निगरानी के लिए किया जा रहा है। स्कूली बच्चों के पोषण में PM POSHAN योजना महत्वपूर्ण है सरकारी मानको के अनुसार प्राथमिक स्तर पर 450 कैलोरी जिसमें 12 ग्राम प्रोटीन उपलब्धता उच्च प्राथमिक स्तर पर 700 कैलोरी तथा 20 ग्राम प्रोटीन उपलब्धता आवश्यक है

पोषण संवेदनशील कृषि की ओर जाने के लिए कृषि नीति में बदलाव करके केवल गेहूँ/चावल के साथ ही दालें, हरी, सब्जियाँ, फल, दूध, अण्डा, मोटे अनाज इत्यादि को भी बढ़ावा देने की आवश्यकता है।

शोध अध्ययन के उद्देश्य :–

- भारत में खाद्य सुरक्षा की वर्तमान स्थिति का अध्ययन करना।
- खाद्य सुरक्षा और पोषण सुरक्षा के बीच अंतर स्पष्ट करना।
- भारत में कुपोषण की स्थिति का विश्लेषण करना।
- म.प्र. की पोषण स्थिति का अध्ययन करना।
- खाद्य सुरक्षा को पोषण सुरक्षा में परिवर्तित करने के लिए नीतिगत सुझाव देना।

खाद्य सुरक्षा एवं पोषण की स्थिति का विश्लेषण करने से ज्ञात होता है कि अभी भी बहु आयामी Multi Dimentional दृष्टिकोण अपनाने की आवश्यकता है जैसे :–

PDS प्रणाली में परिवर्तन जैसे सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली PDS में केवल गेहूँ/चावल देने के बजाय दाले और फोर्टिफाइड तेल अनिवार्य रूप से शमिल करना चाहिए।

पोषण वाटिका – म.प्र. के ग्रामीण स्तर पर आंगनवाडियों में स्थानिय स्तर पर हरी सब्जियाँ, फल इत्यादि को उगाने के लिए छोटी–छोटी वाटिकाओं का निर्माण किया जाए। मीड डे मील में स्कूल बच्चों को अंडे, दूध या मोटे अनाजों को भी अनिवार्यतः शामिल करना चाहिए।

अति पिछड़ी जन जातियों में पोषण आहार से संबंधित जानकारी प्रदान करने के लिए विशेष कार्यक्रमों एवं प्रयासों की आवश्यकता है। बैगा, भारिया, सहरिया जैसी अत्यंत पिछड़ी जनजातियों हेतु अधिक पारदर्शी वितरण के साथ ही विशेष पोषण भत्ते (आहार अनुदान) दिया जाना चाहिए।

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आत्मकथा 'जूठन' में दलित की जीवन दशा

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सारांश :

भारतीय समाज के चातुर्वर्ण्य व्यवस्था में सबसे नीचे पायदान में स्थापित जाति 'दलित' हजारों वर्षों से दुर्भावनावश बेतहाशा शोषण और यातना का शिकार होता आया है। समाज में जातिगत विषमता के फलस्वरुप ऊंची जाति अपने से हर नीची जाति का न सिर्फ शोषण करता है, बल्कि इसे अपना जन्मसिद्ध अधिकार भी समझता है। समाज के निम्न जाति चमार, चूहड़ा ,भंगी, झीवर, जाति की जीवन दशा का यथार्थ चित्रण 'जूठन' आत्मकथा में हुआ है। यह आत्मकथा भारतीय समाज के नग्न यथार्थ को बयां करती है। हिंदूधर्म की कट्टरता और संकीर्ण जाति व्यवस्था में दलितों का जीवन समाज में पशुओं से बद्तर है । वे एक अमानवीय जीवन के अधिकारी माने गए हैं। यह आत्मकथा 'जूठन' लेखक के केवल व्यक्तिगत जीवनवृत्त को चरितार्थ नहीं करता अपितु यह समूचे अछूत अस्पृश्य शूद्र संज्ञाओं से संज्ञान होने वाली जातियों का नग्न यथार्थ को उघार कर भारतीय समाज के आदर्श एवं उनके गरिमामय सामाजिक व्यवस्था पर करारा प्रहार करता है।

मूल शब्द: दलित, जीवन दशा,अस्पृश्य, जूठन, नग्न यथार्थ ।

प्रस्तावना :

हिंदी साहित्य की विविध विधाओं में दलित आत्मकथा का एक विशिष्ट स्थान है। आजादी के पश्चात दलित स्वर और भी प्रबल रूप से उभरे है। लगभग सत्तर के दशक में दलित आत्मकथा का आरंभ मराठी भाषा से हुआ। डॉ.बाबा साहेब की आत्मकथा 'मी कसा डालो' से प्रेरित होकर मराठी व हिंदी लेखकों ने आत्मकथा विधा में लेखन कार्य शुरू किया। हिंदी में दलित आत्मकथा मोहनदास नैमिशराय की आत्मकथा 'अपने-अपने पिंजरे' सन् 1995 में प्रकाशित हुई। इसी क्रम में ओम प्रकाश वाल्मीकि की आत्मकथा 'जूठन' पहला खंड सन् 1997 और 'जूठन' दूसरा खंड सन् 2015 में प्रकाशित होकर खूब चर्चा में रहा। दलित आत्मकथा लेखकों में कौशल्या बैसंत्री की 'दोहरा अभिशाप', श्योराज सिंह की 'मेरा बचपन मेरे कंधों पर', माता प्रसाद की 'झोपड़ी से राजभवन', रूपनारायण सोनकर की 'नागफनी' , डॉ. धर्मवीर भारती की 'मेरी पत्नी और भेड़िया' , तुलसीराम की 'मुर्दहिया' और 'मणिकर्णिका', सुशीला टाक भौरे की 'शिकंजे का दर्द' आदि दलितआत्म कथाएं हैं,जो क्रूर और आदिम सभ्यता में पले बढ़े दलितों की पीड़ा के दंश को बेबाक ढंग से अभिव्यंजित करते हैं।

ओमप्रकाश वाल्मीकि की आत्मकथा दलित विमर्श में मील का पत्थर मानी जाने वाली कृति है। इसमें लेखक ने अपने बचपन के दिनों के घोर गरीबी भरे जीवन, शिक्षा के लिए कड़े संघर्ष और जातिगत भेदभाव से आहत होने का वर्णन 'जूठन' के पहले खंड में किया है तथा जीवन के उत्तरार्ध में आधुनिकता का मुखौटा ओढ़े सफेदपोश समाज के दोहरे चरित्र को बेनकाब करते हुए उनके शोषण के नये-नये पैतरे व हथकंडे से उपजी पीड़ा को यथार्थता के साथ प्रामाणिक रूप से जूठन के दूसरे खंड में अभिव्यक्त किया गया है।

ओम प्रकाश वाल्मीकि का जन्म 30 जून सन् 1950 को उत्तर प्रदेश के मुजफ्फर नगर के बरला गांव में एक दलित चूहड़े परिवार में हुआ था। उन्होंने प्राथमिक शिक्षा बरला में तथा गढ़वाल विश्वविद्यालय श्रीनगर से (एम.ए.हिंदी) पूर्ण की। जीवन के प्रारंभिक दिनों में काफी संघर्षों और अड़चनों का सामना करते हुए तकनीकी ज्ञान जबलपुर और मुंबई से प्राप्त कर ऑर्डिनेंस फैक्ट्री में एक सरकारी अधिकारी के रूप में कार्य कर सेवानिवृत्ति हुए। देहरादून में एक लाइलाज गंभीर बीमारी से लड़ते हुए सन् 2013 में आपका निधन हो गया। उनके 'सदियों का संताप',

'बस्स! बहुत हो चुका', 'अब और नहीं', 'शब्द झूठ नहीं बोलते' कविता संग्रह तथा 'सलाम', 'घुसपैठिए', 'छतरी' आदि कहानी संग्रह है। 'दलित साहित्य का सौंदर्य शास्त्र', 'मुख्य धारा और दलित साहित्य', 'दलित साहित्यअनुभव', 'संघर्ष और यथार्थ', 'सफाई देवता'आदि उनकी उल्लेखनीय आलोचनात्मक रचनाएं है।

आत्मकथा 'जूठन' दलित जीवन का जीवंत दस्तावेज हैं। यह भारतीय समाज के उन तमाम दबे कुचले वर्ग के जीवन की व्यथा पीड़ा को उजागर करती है। समाज में सदियों से दलितों को हाशिये का जीवन जीना पड़ता है। इन्हें अस्पृश्य या अछूत बताकर समाज से बाहर रख दिया जाता है। प्रस्तुत आत्मकथा में लेखक की जन्मस्थली गांव बरला का ही चित्रण है। यहां तगा,त्यागी जैसी ऊंची जातियों (अभिजात्य वर्ग) की बहुलता थी। इन ऊंची जातियों की बस्ती से अलग-थलग दलित समुदाय की बस्ती थी। लेखक का घर और त्यागियों के घरों के घेर के बीच में एक जोहड़ी है। जोहड़ी वह गड्ढानुमा खुला (शौचालय) स्थल है,जहां गांव की तमाम सारी औरतें शौच से निवृत्ति पाती थी। इस स्थल से मल पैखाना के उड़ते सड़ांध दुर्गंध से सांस लेना अत्यंत कष्टप्रद होता था। लेखक अपने इस गंदे परिवेश के संबंध में लिखते हैं "चारों तरफ गंदगी भरी होती थी। ऐसी दुर्गंध की मिनट भर में सांस घुट जाए। तंग गलियों में घूमते सूअर नंग-धड़ंग बच्चे, कुत्ते, रोजमर्रा के झगड़े बस यह था। वह वातावरण जिसमें बचपन बीता। इस माहौल में यदि वर्ण व्यवस्था को आदर्श व्यवस्था कहने वालों को दो-चार दिन रहना पड़ जाए तो उनकी राय बदल जाएगी।"(1) इनके मकान अधिकतर मिट्टी के बने टूटे-फूटे होते थे। बारिश के दिनों में कच्चे मकानों में मिट्टी धसकने,ढहने का डर बना रहता है और छप्पर से पानी टपकने से रात जाग-जाग कर काटना पड़ता है। बरसात के दिनों में जीवन अत्यधिक कष्टप्रद बन जाता है। घर के बाहर गलियों में कीचड़ भर जाते थे। इन कीचड़ों में सूअर की गंदगी भरने से और गंधियाने लगते थे। गंदगी भरे कीचड़ों में कीड़े मकोड़े मच्छर पनपते थे। और तो और कुएं के पानी में भी लंबे-लंबे कीड़े दिख पड़ते थे। लेकिन प्यास बुझाने को इसी पानी को पीने के लिए मजबूर होते हैं। ऐसे नारकीय वातावरण में लेखक का बचपन बीता है।

भारतीय समाज में दलितों की जीवन दशा बद् से बद्तर है। इन्हें कभी भी इंसानी दर्जा नहीं दिया गया। इन्हें एक जरूरत की वस्तु के रूप में देखा गया है। दलितों को अक्सर बेगारी भी करनी पड़ती है, लेकिन शोषण और अपमान के खिलाफ आवाज उठाने की हिम्मत किसी में नहीं थी। इसके विपरीत बेगारी की मार के दंश के साथ इन चूहड़ों को गालियां और प्रताड़ना सहनी पड़ती है। ऊंची जाति के लोग लेखक के परिवार एवं उनकी जाति के अन्य लोगों को उनके नामों से संबोधन न कर उन्हें जातिवाचक नाम से पुकारते थे। यहीं उनकी पहचान बन गयी थी।उम्र से बड़ा होने पर उन्हें "ओ चूहड़े"और छोटा होने पर "अबे चूहड़े के" कह कर पुकारते थे। उक्त समाज में छुआछूत का ऐसा माहौल था कि ऊंची जाति के लोग कुत्ते-बिल्ली, गाय-भैंस का स्पर्श हो जाए तो बुरा नहीं मानते, परंतु अगर किसी चूहड़े का स्पर्श हो जाए तो पाप मानते हैं।जाति के आधार पर दलितों के प्रति दुर्भावनापूर्ण, अपमानजनक व्यवहार एक कट्टरवादी हिंदू एवं संकीर्ण मानसिकता का परिचय देता है।

दलितों का शोषण, उपेक्षा और यातना का एक कारण उनकी शिक्षा एवं निर्धनता भी है। शिक्षा के लिए इन दलितों को बड़ा संघर्ष करना पड़ा है। ओमप्रकाश वाल्मीकि भी इसी संघर्ष से गुजरे हैं। लेखक के माता-पिता बेटे को पढ़ा- लिखा कर एक बड़ा आदमी बना कर अपनी जाति को सुधारने की बातें करते थे।वाल्मीकि जब शिक्षा प्राप्त करने के लिए स्कूल जाते हैं तो वहां जातिगत भेदभाव का शिकार होना पड़ता है। स्कूल में जाति के कारण सवर्ण अध्यापक व छात्र अपमानित करते है। उनके कक्षा में बैठने के लिए चटाई की लंबाई कम पड़ जाती तो कभी उसे किसी कोने में बैठा दिया जाता। प्यास लगने पर हैंडपंप से पानी निकालकर पीने की अनुमति नहीं थी। भूलवश हैंडपंप छू लेने पर छात्र और अध्यापक से पिटाई तय थी। ओमप्रकाश वाल्मीकि के शब्दों में "हैंडपंप छूने पर बावेला हो जाता था। लड़के तो पीटते थे। मास्टर लोग भी हैंडपंप छूने पर सजा देते थे। तरह-तरह के हथकंडे अपनाए जाते थे, ताकि मैं स्कूल छोड़कर भाग जाऊं, जिनके लिए मेरा जन्म हुआ था। उनके अनुसार स्कूल आना मेरी अनिधिकार चेष्टा थी।"(2)

ओमप्रकाश वाल्मीकि ने स्कूली दिनों में भयानक शारीरिक और मानसिक प्रताड़ना को सहा है। अध्यापक उसे पढ़ाई कराने के बजाय निजी एवं अन्य जातिगत कार्यों में उलझाए रखने के नापाक मंसूबे अपनाते थे। अध्यापक

कलीराम ने उससे गाली गलौज कर, तीन दिनों तक झाड़ू लगवा कर उसे दलित होने का एहसास दिलाया। स्कूली दिनों की यातना को लेखक व्यक्त करते हैं "हेड मास्टर ने लपक कर मेरी गर्दन दबोच ली थी। उनकी उंगलियों का दबाव मेरी गर्दन पर बढ़ रहा था। जैसे कोई भेड़िया बकरी के बच्चे को दबोच कर उठा लेता है। कक्षा के बाहर खींचकर उसने मुझे बरामदे में ला पटका। चीख कर बोले "जा लगा पूरे मैदान में झाड़ु... नहीं तो गांड में मिर्ची डाल के स्कूल के बाहर काढ़ (निकाल) दूंगा।"(3) "अबे ओ चूहड़े के,मादरचोद कहां घुस गया,,,अपनी मां.."(4) हेडमास्टर कलीराम, मास्टर हरफूल जैसे सब तमाम सवर्ण अध्यापक नहीं चाहते थे कि दलित पढ़ लिखकर परंपरागत कार्य से मुक्त हो। क्योंकि उसे व समाज को सेवादार की कहीं कमी न हो जाए।

'जूठन' आत्मकथा में वाल्मीकि का परिवार दिन रात कठिन श्रम करने के बावजूद गरीबी और तंगहाली का सामना करता है। समाज में जातिगत कार्यों के विभाजन से उनके काम बहुत श्रमसाध्य और घृणित किस्म के होते हैं, जिससे आमदनी बहुत कम होती है। ऊंची जातियों के खेतों में मजदूरी करने पर कम पारश्रमिक मिलने एवं आए दिन के बेगारी करने से घर में तंगहाली एवं भुखमरी के हालात निर्मित होते थे।

लेखक की मां व उनके परिवार के सभी सदस्य मेहनत मजदूरी करते थे। साथ ही ऊंची जाति तगाओं के घरों एवं घेर में साफ सफाई का काम भी किया करते थे। इन सब कामों के एवज में उन्हें बहुत कम मात्रा में अनाज मिलता था। साथ ही कभी-कभी बची-खुची बासी रोटी इन दलितों को दे दी जाती थी।कठिन श्रम करने के बावजूद लेखक के घर में गरीबी पसरा हुआ था। खाने को भर पेट भोजन नहीं मिलता था। उन्हें अच्छे खाने के लिए जूठन की लालसा रहती थी। जूठन खाने की विवशता पर वाल्मीकि लिखते हैं "दिन-रात मर खप कर भी हमारे पसीने की कीमत मात्र 'जूठन' फिर भी किसी को कोई शिकायत नहीं। कोई शर्मिंदगी नहीं, कोई पश्चाताप नहीं।"(5)

'जूठन' आत्मकथा में दलितों का अपमान एवं उपेक्षा करने वाली सामाजिक प्रथा परंपराओं का मर्मस्पर्शी चित्रण हुआ है। दलित समुदाय में जूठन प्रथा प्रचलित थी। यह एक अपमानजनक प्रथा थी। जूठन प्रथा के उल्लेख में लेखक ने विशेष रूप से प्रभावशाली व्यक्ति सुखदेव सिंह त्यागी की बेटी की शादी का उल्लेख किया है। इनके घर शादी या उत्सव के अवसर पर लेखक का परिवार परिश्रम करते हैं। यह किसी मजदूरी के लिए नहीं वरन जूठन की आशा में किया जाता है। सुखदेव सिंह त्यागी के घर की शादी में 10-12 दिन पूर्व से ही उनकी मां एवं पिताजी घर बाहर के अनेक कामों में मदद करते हैं। उनके पिताजी बारातियों के बैठने की व्यवस्था के लिए गाँव भर से चारपाई को ढो-ढो कर जनवासे तक लाये। माँ भी घर की साफ-सफाई के कामों में लगी थी। शादी के दिन सारे बारातियों एवं घरातियों के खाने के बाद उसकी जूठी पत्तल का जूठन इन दलितों के बड़े-बड़े टोकरों में डाल दिया जाता था। जूठन लेने के लिए बूढ़ी माँ का चित्रण लेखक करते हैं “बारात खाना खा रही थी। माँ टोकरा लिए दरवाजे के बाहर बैठी थी। मैं और मेरी छोटी बहन माँ से लिपटे बैठे थे। इस उम्मीद में कि भीतर से जो मिठाई और पकवानों की महक आ रही थी,वह हमें भी खाने को मिलेगी।”(6) “जब सब लोग खाना खाकर चले गये तो मेरी माँ ने सुखदेव सिंह त्यागी को ढ़ालान से बाहर आते देख कर कहा,चौधरी जी ईब तो सब खाणा खा के चले गये... म्हारे जाकतों कों कू भी एक पत्तल पर धर के कुछ दे दो। वो भी तो इस दिन का इंतजार कर रे ते।" “सुखदेव सिंह ने जूठी पत्तलों से भरा टोकरे की तरफ इशारा करते कहा "टोकरा भर तो जूठन ले के जा रही है... ऊपर से जातकों के लिए खाणा माँग री है। अपनी औकात में रह चूहड़ी। उठा टोकरा दरवाजे से और चलती बन।”(7)

वस्तुतः भारतीय समाज में दलितों को इतना निम्न समझा गया है कि उन्हें दूसरों की बची हुई जूठन को खाने के लिए विवश कर दिया जाता है। यह जूठन प्रथा उनकी आर्थिक हीनता को नहीं बल्कि सभ्य समाज की कुत्सित भावना को दर्शाता है। लेखक ने अपनी आत्मकथा में कहा हैं ,जूठन बची खुची चीज नहीं बल्कि वह अपमान है जिसे हम सदियों से झेलते आये हैं।

दलित समुदाय में जूठन प्रथा की तरह सलाम प्रथा भी मौजूद थी। जो उसके आत्म सम्मान को ठेस पहुँचाकर सामाजिक स्तर पर हीनता का बोध करा कर उसका दमन करती थी। सलाम प्रथा में लड़की को ब्याहने आया दूल्हा और उसके साथ घर के सदस्य ऊंची जाति वालों के घर-घर जाकर सलाम करने की पीड़ा को लेखक ने वर्णन किया है।

घर घर जाकर सलाम कर दुल्हन की मां बड़ी बेबसी से शादी में बेटी को शगुन देने के लिए सहयोग मांगती । "चौधराइन, मेरी कोई दो-चार लौंडी तो नहीं है नी जो मेरे और जमाई थारे दरवज्जे पर आवेंगे। इज्जत से लड़की को भेज सकूं, ऐसा तो कुछ दो...' 'लेकिन इस गिड़गिड़ाहट का कोई असर दिखाई नहीं पड़ रहा था। कोई- कोई तो अजीब मुद्रा में मुंह बनाकर कहते "इन चूहड़ों का तो कभी पेट ही ना भरता।"(8) इसमें उसे सहयोग तो कम मिलता था,यहां भी अपमान ही मिलता था। बचपन से संवेदनशील रहे लेखक ने तथाकथित प्रथा का विरोध प्रकट कर अपने बड़े भाई जनेसर एवं माया की शादी के समय उनके पिताजी और परिवार ने इस कुप्रथा को खत्म कर दिया।

इस प्रकार लेखक का परिवार कुत्सित प्रथाओं जूठन और सलाम प्रथा से मुक्त हो जाते हैं परंतु जातिगत भेदभाव से कभी मुक्त नहीं हो पाते। । इस आत्मकथा में ऐसे अनेक प्रसंग एवं घटनाएं मिलती हैं, जिसमें जाति के कारण वाल्मीकि जी आहत हुए। बंबई में ऑर्डिनेंस फैक्टरी में ट्रेनिंग के दौरान कुलकर्णी (ब्राह्मण) परिवार की एक युवती सविता लेखक को ऊंची जाति का युवक समझ प्रेम कर बैठती है। लेकिन जैसे ही वाल्मीकि अपनी जाति को दलित बताते हैं,तो वह तुरंत उनसे प्रेम संबंध तोड़ लेती है। सविता कहती है "तुम एस सी कैसे हो सकते हो?"..."तुम तो ब्राह्मण हो".... लेकिन उनकी जाति चूहड़ा है यह जान लेने पर सविता के आंखों में आंसू भर आते हैं और अश्रु धारा बहने लगती है। इस मार्मिक पल पर वाल्मीकि जी लिखते हैं "सविता गंभीर हो गई थी। उनकी आंखें छलछला आई। वह रोने लगी। मेरा एस.सी. होना जैसे कोई अपराध था। वह काफी देर तक सुबकती रही। हमारे बीच अचानक फासला बढ़ गया था। हजारों साल की नफरत हमारे दिलों में भर गई थी। एक झूठ को हमने संस्कृति मान लिया।"(9) जातिगत पूर्वाग्रह से आधुनिक विचार और रहन-सहन को अपनाने वाले भी भेद-भाव, ऊंच-नीच की भावना को भुला देना उनका इस प्रसंग से असंभव लगता है।

ओमप्रकाश वाल्मीकि ने अपने पूरे जीवन भर अनेक अवसरों पर अपमान,उपेक्षा, तिरस्कार का सामना किया है। कभी कार्यालय में, कभी समारोहों में, कभी यात्राओं के दौरान। लोगों की संकीर्ण मानसिकता ने उन्हें असहाय और छोटा महसूस कराया। प्रस्तुत आत्मकथा में एक यात्रा का पीड़ादायक अनुभव साझा हुआ है। लेखक का जयपुर से चंद्रपुर लौटते समय ट्रेन में मंत्रालय के अधिकारी के परिवार से उनका आत्मीय परिचय हो गया था। दोनों परिवारों के बीच बातचीत बड़ी सहज और सम्मानपूर्वक वातावरण में चल रही थी। इसी बातचीत के तारतम्य में जैसे ही जाति का भंगी होना ज्ञात होता है। उसके परिवार का व्यवहार अचानक बदलने में समय नहीं लगा। दोनों परिवारों के बीच का आत्मीयता और अपनापन एक पल में समाप्त हो गया तथा उनके परिवार से दूरी एवं असहजता स्पष्ट दिखाई देने लगी। लेखक के शब्दों में "सारा माहौल बिगड़ गया था। जैसे अचानक स्वादिष्ट व्यंजन में मक्खी गिर गई।.... भंगी शब्द सुनते ही सन्नाटा छा गया। रास्ते पर दोनों परिवारों में कोई संवाद नहीं हुआ। ऐसी दीवार बीच में खड़ी हो गई थी जैसे हमने किसी चोर दरवाजे से घुसकर उनकी हंसी खुशी में खलल डाल दी हो। माहौल बोझिल हो गया था। बहुत तकलीफ देह हो गई थी यात्रा।"(10)

समाज में जातिवादी मानसिकता इतनी गहरी है कि व्यक्ति का आकलन उसकी योग्यता, प्रसिद्धि, उपलब्धि के आधार पर न कर उसकी जाति के आधार पर किया जाता है। यह जातिगत मानसिकता (पूर्वाग्रह)ग्रामीण या अनपढ़ों तक सीमित नहीं है,शहरों में उच्च पदों पर शिक्षित और आधुनिक दिखने वाले भी भीतर से इसी मानसिकता से ग्रसित हैं। लेखक ने अपने नौकरी (सेवाकाल) के दिनों की घटना में कुरैशी का उल्लेख किया है। जो महाराष्ट्र के पुलिस में एक सबइंस्पेक्टर थे। एक दिन कुरैशी डी. एम. सी. के नए कमांडेंट से मिलवाने लेखक को ले गये। कमांडेंट और लेखक दोनों एक ही जिले के रहने वाले थे। स्थानीयता के कारण कमांडेंट साहब ने बड़े आत्मीयता और उत्साहपूर्ण ढंग से स्वागत किया। बरला का निवासी ज्ञात होने पर प्रसन्नता जाहिर की। परन्तु जाति की असलियत खुलते ही माहौल बदलने में समय नहीं लगा। लेखक ने इस पीड़ा का चित्रण कुछ इस प्रकार किया है "अभी ठीक से बैठे भी नहीं थे कि उन्होंने कहना शुरू किया, "बरला तो त्यागियों का गाँव है। आप किस जाति से हैं?" मैंने कुरैशी की ओर देखा। उनके चेहरे का रंग बदल गया था। प्रश्न स्वाभाविक तौर पर पूछा गया था। कमांडेंट के चेहरे पर उस समय सहजता थी। मैंने

जैसे ही अपनी जाति 'चूहड़ा' बताई, वे असहज हो गए थे। साथ ही बातचीत का सिलसिला भी थम गया था जैसे बात करने लायक कुछ बचा ही नहीं था"।(11)

इससे स्पष्ट होता है कि समाज में व्यक्ति की पहचान उसकी जाति से ही होती है और उसकी नियति भी तय करती है। वाल्मीकि एक कवि, लेखक एवं वक्ता के रूप में प्रतिष्ठित हो जाने के बाद भी उनकी पहचान उसकी जाति से ही लगाते है। एक सांस्कृतिक कार्यक्रम में उन्हें बौद्ध दर्शन और साहित्य पर व्याख्यान देने के लिए आमंत्रित किया गया था। व्याख्यान देने के लिए जैसे ही मंच पर खड़े हुए। नीचे बैठे एक श्रोता ने टोकते हुए कहा "वाल्मीकि बौध्द दर्शन और साहित्य पर बोलेगा। हमें नही सुनना।" विडम्बना है भारतीय समाज की व्यक्ति की प्रसिद्धि ,उपलब्धि या उनकी अन्य योग्यताएँ आदि को उनकी जाति के कारण कर गौण कर दिया जाता है।

निष्कर्ष :--

इस प्रकार ओमप्रकाश वाल्मीकि की आत्मकथा में चूहड़ा जाति के सामाजिक,आर्थिक, सांस्कृतिक पक्षों का यथार्थ चित्रण हुआ है। समाज में व्याप्त जाति विषमता, धर्म की कट्टरता, प्रथा परंपरा और आर्थिक हीनता ने कारण दलितों को अनेक कष्ट और यातनाएं सहनी पहती है जिसकी अभिव्यक्ति सहज एवं तीव्र रुप से हुई है। लेखक की संवेदनशीलता के कारण जूठन में विरोध एवं प्रतिरोध के स्वर भी उभरते है। यह दलित समुदाय में आत्मसम्मान और चेतना जागृत कर उन्हें अधिकार के प्रति सजग एवं जागरूक बनाती है तथा समाज के अन्य वर्गों को भी सामाजिक व्यवस्था पर विचार करने को बाध्य करती है। यह रचना दलित अस्मिता की खोज की एक सशक्त गाथा है जो आने वाली पीढ़ियों के लिए मानवीय गरिमा के संघर्ष का मार्ग प्रशस्त करती है।

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हरियाणा : एक ऐतिहासिक सिंहावलोकन

डॉ. राकेश मितल

सह प्राध्यापक

इतिहास विभाग

आर॰ के॰ एस॰ डी॰ कॉलेज, कैथल 136027

हरियाणा भारत का एक लघु किन्तु समृद्ध प्रदेश है। हरियाणा ही वह प्रांगणहै जिसमें आर्य जीवन तथा साहित्य जीवन का विकास हुआ, इसलिए हरियाणा का भारत की प्राचीन सभ्यता की जन्म स्थली कहा जाता है। इस प्रदेश का अस्तित्व कोई भी न मिटा सका, जिसका प्रमाण अभी तक प्राचीन उपनिषदों तथा पुराणों में सुरक्षित रूप में उपलब्ध है। हरियाणा एक प्राचीन एवं ऐतिहासिक नाम है जिसको *आर्यावर्त, बांगर* और *ब्राह्य प्रदेश* आदि नामों से पुकारा जाता था। मनु महाराज की प्रसिद्ध पुस्तक में इस क्षेत्र को *'ब्रह्मावर्त'* के नाम से भी जाना जाता रहा है।1 हरियाणा शब्द सर्वप्रथम दिल्ली संग्रहालय के शिलालेख में 328 ई॰ में मिलता है। इस क्षेत्र को पृथ्वी पर स्वर्ग के रूप में उल्लेखित किया गया हैं इस क्षेत्र में दिल्ली (ढिल्लिका) भी शामिल हैं।2 वैदिक काल में यह क्षेत्र *'अभीआरण्यक'* के नाम से भी जाना गया है।3 ऐसा भी वर्णन मिलता है कि महाभारत में हरियाणा को *'बहुधान्यक'* संज्ञा से अभिहीत किया गया।4

विभिन्न ग्रन्थकारों के अनुसार *'हरयाणा'* शब्द का प्रयोग विश्व के प्राचीनतम ग्रन्थ ऋग्वेद के 8वें मण्डल के 25वें सूक्त के 22वें मंत्र में *'रज हरयाणें'* के रूप में हुआ।5 एच. आर. गुप्ता के अनुसार हरियाणा शब्द *'आर्यन'* आर्यो का भ्रष्ट रूप है जैसे कि राजपूतों के रहने के स्थान को राजपूताना, भट्टियों के निवास स्थान को भटियाना और लोधियों के निवास स्थान को लुधियाना कहते हैं। एच. आर. गुप्ता के अनुसार यह दृष्टिकोण अधिक युक्ति संगत दिखाई देता है।6 इस दृष्टिकोण के अनुसार *'हरियाणा'* शब्द हरियाली से व्युत्पन्न है जिससे यह संकेत मिलता है कि यह भूमि कभी प्राकृतिक संसाधनों से भरपूर तथा उपजाऊ थी।7 यह क्षेत्र कभी हरयाल वन (घने जंगल) से आच्छादित था। सत्यपाल गुप्त के विचारानुसार वह यही प्रदेश था जहाँ द्रविड़ और आर्य सभ्यताओं का संगम हुआ। यहाँ पर ही पवित्र नदी के तट पर बैठकर वैदिक काल में ऋषि–मुनियों ने एक नये इतिहास का निर्माण किया। इस प्रदेश में पानीपत,तरावड़ी, अग्रोध, कुरुक्षेत्र, पेहोवा, हांसी आदि ऐतिहासिक महत्व के नगर हैं जहाँ असंख्य युद्ध हुए, तथा देश के भाग्य का निर्माण हुआ।8

हरियाणा भूमि वैदिक काल में *'सप्तसिंधु प्रदेश'* की पूर्वी सीमा पर *'सारस्वत प्रदेश'* के रूप में जानी जाती थी। यह नाम उस क्षेत्र की प्रमुख नदी *'सरस्वती'* के कारण पड़ा। ऋग्वेद में सिन्धु नदी के पश्चात् सरस्वती नदी का स्तुतिगान किया जाता है।9 यह वह देवभूमि है जहाँ धर्म की जय और अधर्म की पराजय को सिद्ध किया था इस भूमि के महान लोकनायक श्रीकृष्ण भगवान ने महाभारत के युद्ध द्वारा अत्याचारियों का दमन कर इस भूमि के *'धर्मक्षेत्र'* नाम को सार्थक किया था।10 हरियाणा प्रांत के वर्तमान क्षेत्र के अतिरिक्त उत्तर प्रदेश के मेरठ और आगरा क्षेत्र, राजस्थान के अलवर, भरतपुर और गंगानगर जिले, पंजाब की फाजिल्का और खरड़ तहसीलें तथा हिमाचल प्रदेश का शिमला और सिरमौर का भू–भाग भी सम्मिलित था। केन्द्र शासित चण्डीगढ़ और दिल्ली भी हरियाणा के अंग थे।11 आज इसका जो स्वरूप है उसके अनुसार हरियाणा के उत्तर में शिवालिक पर्वतमाला, पूर्व में यमुना नदी तथा दक्षिण में अरावली पर्वतमाला और थार मरूस्थल का भाग तथा पश्चिम में सतलुज नदी है। एक लोकगीत में हरियाणा की सीमाएं इस प्रकार निर्धारित की गई है–

"गंगा जी के प्यार मैं, सरस्वती कंठार में
जमना धाधर धार मैं, म्हारा बसै देश हरियाणा सै"।12

शंकरलाल यादव का विचार है कि हरियाणा की पूर्वी सीमा झज्जर, पालम, बहादुरगढ़ और दिल्ली को छूती है फिर यह रेखा दुजाना को छूती हुई दादरी पहुँचती है वहाँ से सीधी भिवानी, हांसी, हिसार, होकर तथा सिरसा की ओर बढ़कर अग्रोहा होती हुई टोहाना पहुँच जाती है वहाँ से कैथल, करनाल,

पानीपत होकर दिल्ली आ मिलती है। इस विशाल हरियाणा का कुल क्षेत्र 44212 वर्ग किलोमीटर है जिसमें भाषायी तथा सांस्कृतिक समरूपता आज भी विद्यमान है।13

हरियाणा प्रदेश की ऐतिहासिक पृष्ठभूमि :

हरियाणा में अनेक स्थलों पर स्थित दुर्गा के भग्नावशेष एवं टीले इस प्रदेश के गौरवपूर्ण इतिहास के साक्षी हैं। आज लगभग सभी इतिहासकार इस तथ्य को स्वीकार करते हैं कि हरियाणा *'वैदिक सभ्यता का पालना'* है। इसी प्रदेश की सरस्वती और दृषद्वती नदियों के किनारों पर इस संस्कृति के प्रथम अंकुर प्रस्फुटित हुये।14 तथा कालान्तर में यहीं के प्रतापी राजाओं ने इसे पोषित करके दूर–दूर तक फैलाया। इन प्रतापी जनों में सर्वप्रथम भरतों का उल्लेख हुआ है। कालांतर में भरतों का स्थान पुरूओं ने लिया किन्तु ऐसा प्रतीत होता है कि पुरू अधिक दिन तक यहाँ नहीं टिक सके। पांचालों ने आक्रमण करके उनको परास्त कर दिया किन्तु पुरू आराम से न बैठे और अपने अपमान का बदला लेने के लिए कुरूओं से मिल गए। पुरू तथा कुरूजनों की सम्मिलित सेनाओं ने शीघ्र ही पांचालों को खदेड़ हरियाणा से बाहर कर दिया। इन जनों का नेता कुरू एक महान व्यक्ति था। इसकी विजयवाहिनी सेनाओं ने यमुना पार करके गंगा के विस्तृत मैदानों पर अपनी पताका फहरा दी थी। कुरू के नाम पर ही इस क्षेत्र का नाम *'कुरूक्षेत्र'* पड़ा। इसी की पावन धरती पर विश्व–विख्यात महाभारत का युद्ध हुआ।15 कुरूक्षेत्र के अतिरिक्त हरियाणा के कुछ अन्य नगर भी अपने आप में एक बहुत लंबा और प्रामाणिक इतिहास गर्भ में लिए हुए हैं। जिनका विवरण धर्मग्रन्थों तथा प्राचीन साहित्य में मिलता है– रोहतकम् (रोहतक) अग्रोदक (अग्रोहा) शैरिशक (सिरसा) असिन्धवत (असंध) जयन्ती (जींद) युगान्धरा (जगाधरी) कपिस्थल (कैथल) पृथुंदक (पहेवा), कर्दनाल (करनाल) कुरुक्षेत्र, महित्थम (महम) पाणीप्रस्थ (पानीपत) सरस्वती नगर (फतेहाबाद) रोनी (रोड़ी, हिसार) सुहन (सुध) कालकूट (कालका) गौडपुर, गौड़ग्राम (गुडगाँव) आदि। इन सभी नगरों का इतिहास इनके आसपास किये गए उत्खनन कार्य से प्राप्त मुद्राओं, मूर्तियों तथा शिलालेखों में सुरक्षित है।16

महाभारत काल को हरियाणा के इतिहास का अविस्मरणीय तथा प्रामाणिक अध्याय माना गया है। महाभारत काल में इस प्रान्त का बहुत महत्व है क्योंकि इसी की पवित्र एवं पावन भूमि पर कई महान यौधेयों का इतिहास रचा गया यौधयों का द्वितीय शदी ई० पू० से चतुर्थ शदी ई० पू० के मध्य तक शासन रहा तथा सम्भवतः खोकराकोट (रोहतक) इनकी राजधानी थी। हरियाणा की वीर भूमि में यौधेयों का राज्य सैंकड़ों वर्षो तक रहा। इसी कारण हरियाणा को *'यौधेय भूमि'* भी कहा जाता है।17 ईसा पूर्व चौथी शताब्दी (323 ई० पू०) में चन्द्रगुप्त मौर्य ने समस्त् क्षेत्र को अपने राज्य में मिला लिया। उसके पश्चात् उसके पुत्र बिन्दुसार तथा पौत्र अशोक ने चौथी शताब्दी ई० पू० में यहाँ राज्य किया। किंतु अशोक के बाद उसके अयोग्य उत्तराधिकारियों के हाथों से यह प्रदेश निकल गया और यहाँ के यौधेय अर्जुनायन, अग्रोदक, कुणिन्द आदि जनों ने अपनी स्वतंत्र सत्ता स्थापित कर ली। इसी काल में अनेक विदेशी आक्रमणकारियों जैसे ग्रीक, बैक्टेरियन, पार्थियन, सीथियन तथा कुषाणों आदि विदेशी आक्रमणकारियों का हरियाणा की जनता ने डटकर मुकाबला किया और अंत में रोहतक के यौधेयों के नेतृत्व में ये लोग विजयी हुए। चौथी शताब्दी के तृतीय चरण में मगध के गुप्त राजवंश के प्रतापी शासक समुद्रगुप्त ने हरियाणा को 350 से 375 ई0 के बीच गुप्त राज्य का अंग बना दिया। मोटे रूप से हरियाणा लगभग छठी शदीके प्रथम चरण तक गुप्तों के अधिकार में रहा उन्हीं दिनों यहाँ के पुष्पभूति नामक एक सरदार ने स्थानेश्वर के आसपास के विस्तृत भू–भाग पर अपनी पताका फहरा कर पुष्पभूति वंश की नींव रखीं जिनमें प्रभाकरवर्धन सबसे पराक्रमी राजा था। प्रभाकरवर्धन के घर 590 ई० में हर्षवर्धन का जन्म हुआ। जिसने सिहांसनरोहरण के तुरन्त बाद विजयों का सिलसिला शुरू किया तथा 606 ई० तक उसकी दिग्विजय चलती रही और हर्ष एक विशाल साम्राज्य का स्वामी बना।18 हरियाणा भी उसके विशाल साम्राज्य का एक अंग था। 647 ई० में हर्ष की मृत्यु के पश्चात् हरियाणा प्रदेश कन्नौज के राजा यशोवर्मन के नियन्त्रण में आ गया पर कुछ समय पश्चात् कश्मीर के राजा ललितादिव्य मुक्तापीड़ ने यशोवर्मन को हराकर अन्य जनपदों के साथ हरियाणा को अपने नियन्त्रण में ले लिया। ललितादित्य बहुत थोड़े समय के लिए यहाँ टिक पाया। लेकिन इन्हीं दिनों यहाँ की प्रान्तीय सेना के अधिकारी तोमर बने जिन्होंने 736 ई० में दिल्ली को अपनी राजधानी बनाया। पेहोवा के एक शिलालेख के अनुसार 882 ई० में यह क्षेत्र गुर्जर वंशज सम्राट भोज के साम्राज्य का अंग बन गया।19 प्रतिहार साम्राज्य के बाद में तोमर तथा चौहान शासक आए जिनमें से एक अनंगपाल

ने दिल्ली शहर की नींव रखी, हरियाणा उसके साम्राज्य का एक भाग था। धीरे–धीरे चौहान शासकों ने तोमरों को धूल चटाई और उनके क्षेत्र पर भी अधिकार कर लिया।20 और अंत में ये लोग कभी सामन्त रूप में और कभी स्वतन्त्र रूप से दिल्ली पर सुल्तानी राज्य स्थापित होनेतक राज्य करते रहे।

महमूद गजनवी हरियाणा पर आक्रमण करने वाला पहला तुर्क आक्रमणकारी था। वह पंजाब पर अधिकार करके, 1006 ई० में एक बलशाली सेना लेकर हरियाणा पर चढ़ आया। सन् 1014 ई० में महमूद ने एक भारी सेना के साथ हरियाणा पर फिर से आक्रमण किया। यह उसका हरियाणा पर दूसरा और भारत पर सातवां आक्रमण था।21 हरियाणवासी अकेले ही शत्रुओं से लड़ते रहें, परन्तु विशाल सेना होने के कारण विजय महमूद की हुई।एक बार फिर इस प्रदेश को विदेशी आक्रमणकारी मुहम्मद गौरी से संघर्ष करना पड़ा। दिल्ली के शासक पृथ्वीराज चौहान ने उसे तरावड़ी के मैदान में 1191 ई॰ में हरा दिया। परंतु अगले साल फिर गौरी ने आक्रमण कर दिया और इस बार भाग्य ने उसका साथ दिया और मुहम्मद गौरी विजयी रहा। तरावड़ी की दूसरी लड़ाई भारतीय इतिहास में निर्णायक थी, दिल्ली और हरियाणा सदियों के लिए तुर्क शासन के अधीन हो गये, गौरी की मृत्यु के पश्चात् सन् 1206 ई० में अफगानों का शासन प्रारम्भ हुआ जिसमें गुलाम वंश, खिलजी वंश तथा तुगलक वंश के शासकों ने राज्य किया। खिलजी वंश के शासकों ने हरियाणा का बहुत शोषण किया किन्तु तुगलकों के समय में स्थिति बदल गई। हरियाणा की जनता ने जगह–जगह विद्रोह की पताका फहरा दी फलतः तुगलकों का साम्राज्य सिमटकर दिल्ली के आसपास कुछ मीलों तक ही रह गया। इसी समय समरकन्द का शासक तैमूर 1398 ई० में पंजाब को रौंदता हुआ हरियाणा में प्रविष्टि हुआ। तैमूर हरियाणा में लगभग एक महीने तक रहा। सन् 1451 ई० के बाद इस प्रदेश पर लोदियों का पूर्ण अधिकार हो गया था। मुगल आक्रमणकारी बाबर ने उनका अन्त कर दिया और अब हरियाणा मुगल अधिकार में था।1526 ई॰ में भारत में मुगल राज्य स्थापित होने के बाद यह क्षेत्र मुगल राज्य का हिस्सा बन गया। 22 मुगलों के आगमन के साथ ही हरियाणा की स्थिति में परिवर्तन हो गया। प्रशासन को सुचारू रूप से चलाने के लिए बाबर ने हरियाणा को चार सरकारों में बांट दिया। सन् 1530ई॰ में बाबर की मृत्यु के बाद हुमायूं गद्दी पर बैठा। 1540 में शेरशाह सूरी ने यह प्रदेश हुमायूं से छीन लिया। शेरशाह सूरी ने हरियाणा के शासन में विशेष रूचि दिखाई, क्योंकि शेरशाह का जन्म नारनौल में हुआ था। हुमायूं की मृत्यु के पश्चात 1556 ई॰ में अकबर गद्दीनशी हुआ।23 अकबर के शासनकाल में इस प्रदेश ने समृद्धि और उन्नति प्राप्त की किन्तु जहांगीर तथा शाहजहाँ का काल आया तो स्थिति में परिवर्तन हुआ। यह काल हरियाणा के पूर्व काल की अपेक्षा शांतिपूर्ण था। औरंगजेब के आक्रमण से परिस्थिति पूर्णतयाः परिवर्तित हुई तथा उसकी असहिष्णुता से मुगल साम्राज्य सिमटकर एक छोटी सी रियासत बनकर रह गया।

इसी दौरान दक्षिण भारत की एक अन्य शक्ति मराठे मंच पर आ गई। सन् 1756–57 ई० तक मराठेहरियाणा पर पूर्णतया छा गये। मराठों ने मुगलों पर फिर से आक्रमण कर दिया परन्तु थोड़े समय के बाद ही वीर मराठों ने समस्त हरियाणा पर अपना अधिकार कर लिया। सन् 1764 ई० तक यह व्यवस्था बहुत अच्छे ढंग से चली, परन्तु इसी वर्ष महादजी सिधिंया का देहान्त हो गया। उसके उत्तराधिकारी स्थिति को संभालने में असमर्थ रहें इसका लाभ ब्रिटिश ईस्ट इण्डिया कम्पनी ने उठाया। ब्रिटिश ईस्ट इण्डिया कम्पनी ने 30 दिसम्बर, 1803 ई० को सर्जी अर्जन गाँव की सन्धि के अनुसार दौलतराव सिंधिया से उसके अधिकृत अन्य इलाकों के साथ–साथ हरियाणा प्रदेश भी प्राप्त कर लिया।24 अंग्रेजी राज्य के अधिकार क्षेत्र में आने के बाद सन् 1803 ई॰ से ही यहां पर व्यापक असंतोष फैला हुआ था। 1857 के विद्रोह से पहले जितने भी विद्रोह हुए उनको ब्रिटिश साम्राज्य ने कठोरतापूर्वक दबा लिया। किंतु यहां की जनता में लगातार असंतोष बढ़ता ही जा रहा था। जो 1857 ई॰ के विद्रोह के रूप में फूटा।1857 ई० की क्रान्ति में हांसी के जाटों ने सबसे पहले ब्रिटिश राज्य का मुकाबला किया। इस क्रान्ति में हरियाणा के जाट, अहीर और पठानों ने अंग्रेजों के खिलाफ कड़ी बहादुरी से मुकाबला किया। हांसी, हिसार, रोहतक, बल्लभगढ़, झज्जर, रेवाड़ी, अंबाला आदि अनेक स्थानों पर अंग्रेजों के विरूद्ध विद्रोह हुआ। 1857 ई० के विद्रोह को कुचलने के बाद जब ब्रिटिश प्रशासन फिर से स्थापित हुआ तो झज्जर और बहादुरगढ़ के नवाबों, बल्लभगढ़ के राजा तथा रेवाड़ी के राव तुलाराम की सत्ता छीन ली गई। उनके क्षेत्र या तो ब्रिटिश क्षेत्रों में मिला लिए गए या पटियाला नाभा और जींद शासकों को सौंप दिए गए 1857 ई॰ की क्राति की विफलता के

बाद हरियाणा से विद्रोह कादमन–चक्र तेज कर दिया और दण्डस्वरूप फरवरी 1858 ई॰ में हरियाणा को उत्तर पश्चिमी प्रांत (आधुनिक उत्तर प्रदेश) से अलग करके पंजाब से मिला दिया।25 सन् 1912 ई० में दिल्ली क्षेत्र को हरियाणा से अलग कर दिया गया और इस प्रकार अंग्रेजों ने हरियाणा का अस्तित्व मिटा दिया और पंजाब प्रांत से जोड़ दिया। 26 हरियाणा क्षेत्र को 1858 में पंजाब के साथ इस क्षेत्रों के लोगों के लिए "राजनीतिक सजा" के लिए जोड़ दिया गया, हालांकि यह उनका राजनीतिक अलगाव था लेकिन वे अभी भी दिल्ली और पश्चिमी यूपी के लोगों के लिए सामाजिक और सांस्कृतिक रूप से अधिक जुड़े हुए थे। उन्होंने अपनी राजनीतिक सीमाओं को तो खो दिया था लेकिन उन्होंने "रोटी और बेटी" के साथ को बनाए रखा।

सन् 1955 ई० में भारत सरकार द्वारा राज्य पुनर्गठन आयोग की स्थापना हुई क्योंकि देश के विभिन्न भागों में यह माँग थी कि भाषायी आधार पर प्रान्तों का पुनः बंटवारा किया जाये, भारत सरकार ने पूर्व पंजाब के विभाजन को रोकने के लिए बहुत प्रयास किया। 1960 ई० में क्षेत्रीय नियम लागू किया गया। दोनों राज्यों ने अपनी भाषाओं को जिला स्तर पर सरकारी भाषा का स्थान दिया। इस प्रकार अन्ततः 01 नवम्बर, 1966 ई० को पंजाब का बंटवारा हुआ।27 हरियाणा पंजाब से अलग हुआ तथा अलग राज्य बना। भगवतदयाल शर्मा को हरियाणा प्रदेश का प्रथम मुख्यमंत्री तथा धर्मवीर सिंह को प्रदेश का राज्यपाल बनाया गया। 28 अलग राज्य बनने पर हरियाणावासियों ने राहत की सांस ली और शोषण बंद हुआ। परिणामतः जीवन के हर क्षेत्र में प्रगति हुई। अब कल का पिछड़ा हुआ हरियाणा एक समृद्ध प्रदेश है।उपरोक्त विवेचन के आधार पर कहा जा सकता हैं कि प्राचीन काल से लेकर आधुनिक काल तक हरियाणा का विशेष महत्त्व रहा है। यहां की सांस्कृतिक व भौगोलिक स्थिति के कारण यह हमेशा एक अलग क्षेत्र के तौर पर रहा। प्राचीन काल में भी हरियाणा बहुधान्य के रूप में प्रसिद्ध था। कुरुक्षेत्र की धरती पर ही महाभारत जैसा युद्ध लड़ा गया और जितने भी बाहरी आक्रमण हुए मध्यकाल में भी यह दक्षिण–पूर्वी पंजाब के रूप में अपनी अलग विशेषता `रखता था।

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सारांश

स्वतंत्र भारत की, राजनिति यथार्थ चित्रण ' पॉव तले की दुब ' उपन्यास में बडा ही सटिक अंकण किया गया हैं । राजनेताओं के लिए नैतिक मुल्य , तख्त - व- ताज से मतलब हैं । वह उसी के साथ चिपके रहना चाहते हैं । इसी प्रवृत्ती ने देश की जनता को छोटे-छोटे टुकडों में बाटकर एक दूसरे के विरुध्द खडा कर दिया हैं। ' पॉव तले की दुब ' यह उपन्यास इसका एक आयीना हैं ।

हमारा देश कृषि प्रधान हैं। और इस देश की संस्कृति बहुआयामी हैं। यहाँ की सामाजिक रचना भी बड़ी अजीबों गरीब हैं। जिससे आर्थिक व्यवस्था भी काफी प्रभावित हैं। यहाँ की आर्थिक व्यवस्था पर चंद लोगों का अधिकार हैं। इसी कारण आर्थिक विषमता ने अपने पैर बहुत फैलाये हैं। सता और संपत्ती पर जहरीले सांप डेरा डालकर बैठे हैं। सारी व्यवस्था भी उन्हीं का साथ देती है। इसलिए आम आदमी का जीवन नर्कसमान बन गया है। हिंदी जन धर्म कथा-साहित्य ने इसकी बड़े मात्रा में जाँच-पड़ताल की है और इस परंपरा को नया आयाम देने में भरक प्रयास किया है। खासकर हिंदी कथा-साहित्य में ग्रामीण आंचलिक प्रवृत्ति ने जनधर्मी चेतना को न केवल विकसित किया बल्की उसे नई गरिमा दी। 'पॉव तले की दुब ' उपन्यास में यह सभी विद्यमान हैं । और इसी वजहसें उपन्यासकार संजीव का नाम प्रमुख रूप से लिया जाता है। अत: पाँव तले से दूब में: व्यक्त आदिवासीयों की सामाजिक चेतना और संघर्ष का आलोचनात्मक अध्ययन प्रस्तुत आलेख में करने का प्रयास किया गया है।

आधुनिक विधाओं में उपन्यास यथार्थवादी एवं जीवन का सटीक चित्र प्रस्तुत करनेवाली विधा हैं। मानव के वास्तविक जीवन में घटीत घटनाओं, भाव-भावनाओं एवं सम सामायिक समस्याओं का यथार्थ अंकन जितना उपन्यास में होता हैं, उतना किसी भी अन्य विद्याओं में नहीं है.। 'पॉव तले की दुब ' सुप्रसिद्ध कथाकार संजीव व्दारा एक चर्चित हिंदी उपन्यास हैं। जो झारखंड के आदिवासी समुदाय के जीवन और सामाजिक चेतना, संघर्ष का सटीक अंकन करता हैं।

यह उपन्यास आदिवासीयों के शोषण, उनकी संस्कृती पर व्याप्त रुढीयों को उजागर करते हुए प्रतिरोध की कहानी बयाण करता हैं। हिंदी कथा साहित्य में ग्रामीण आंचलिक प्रवृत्ती ने जनधर्मी चेतना को न केवल विकसीत किया बल्दी उसे नई अपेक्षा भी देने का काम किया है। अत: परंपरा को नया आयाम देने में संजीव के उपन्यासों की भूमिका महत्वपूर्ण रही हैं। इसलिये हिंदी उपन्यासकारों में उनका ना प्रमुख रूप से लिया जाता है। आज ऐसे उपन्यासकारों की समाज को प्रमुख रूप से बहुत जरूरत हैं।

पंच पहाड़ का क्षेत्र इस उपन्यास की कथा केंद्र हैं। जहाँ से झारखंड आंदोलन की शुरुवात हुई थी। डोकरी ताप विद्युत संस्था के मंच पर इसकी कथा-घटीत होती हैं। 'पॉव तले की दुब ' यह संजीव रचित लघु उपन्यास हैं। लेखक इस कथा के व्दारा यही कहना चाहता है कि, किस तरह से औद्योगिकीकरण ने आदिवासीयों तथा गाँवो की सामाजिक चेतना, अस्मिता और संघर्ष को प्रकट करने के लिए मजबुर किया है। उपन्यास का प्रधान पात्र सुदीप्त परिस्थितीओं को बदलना चाहता है और एक अच्छी सृष्टि का निर्माण करना चाहता है। उसके लिए बहुत मेहनत और परिश्रम भी

करता है। पर सहनशाक्ती के अभाव दबाव के कारण व आत्महत्या कर लेता है। यह उपन्याय तमाम संदर्भ को समेटता तो हैं पर इस की कोई दिशा निश्चीत नहीं है। इन सारी परिस्थितीओं और स्थितीओं का यथार्थ चित्रण करता हैं।

सुदीप्त पढाई करते समय ही उसके मन में दलित मुक्ती आंदोलन का बीज अंकुरित हुआ। और उसने पढाई की अपेक्षा इस आंदोलन को महत्व दिया नौकरी को गौण माना और आदिवासीयों का उद्धार प्रमुख बन गया। भारत देश यह गणतंत्र देश होने के कारण यहाँ आम जनता को आंदोलन करणे का पूरा हक्क हैं । और यही उपन्यासकार संजीव बताना चाहते हैं । जो सुदीप्त के माध्यम से बतानेका प्रयास किया गया हैं ।

अतः सूदीप्त, में चारित्रिक गुणों के साथ-साथ एक कमजोरी भी हैं और यह कमजोरी है कि किसी एक लक्ष्य को प्राप्त करने का दृढता का अभाव प्रकट करती है। इसी कमजोरी के कारण उसे नौकरी से त्यागपत्र देकर, पंच पहाड पर जाकर एकांतवास स्वीकारना पड़ा। इन सब कारणों से वह आत्महत्या कर लेता है और उसी लाश कंकाल हो जाती हैं। सूदीप्त दुविधा के कारण खुद आदिवासी होकर भी इस बात को चिपाता है वह आदिवासीयों का समर्थक बनता हैं। पर उनके साथ नहीं रहता, उसे राजनीति में रुची हैं। सुदीप्त उसमें भाग भी लेता पर, उसे पूरा नहीं करता और उसे छोडकर साहित्यकार बनना चाहता है। वह कहानी नाटक, उपन्यास, कविता लिखता पर वह पूरा नहीं कर सका। वह अपनी पत्नी को तो मुक्त कर देता है किन्तु नर्स शीला केरकटटा उसे अच्छी लगती है। पर उसे वह स्वीकार नहीं करता। वह अपनी डायरी में लिकता हैं "आज मुझे कनफेस करने दें कि शीला पर में तनीक हुई ग्रीव ,मधहोश आँखों को तनिक उलटाकर कभी इघर तो कभी उधर तिरछे फेरते द्वार आसमान की 'ओ' मूह उठाकर ' कहना, फिर हल्की जुम्बिश के साथ एक गहरी साँस लेना पूरे वजूद का खिचे हुए सितार - सा झनझना उठाना । सोचता रहा, वह औरत गईं कहाँ। मुझे लगता था, मैं देश-परदेश के इटो के भट्टे का दलाल हूँ। मैंने ही चूरा लिया है उसे और मैं ही उसका विरही प्रेमी भी।" 1. इतना सब कुछ सोचने पर भी वह अपने प्यार का इजहार शीला के सामने नहीं करता शीला के अंदर किसी भी प्रकार की कमी थी वह हर तरफ से पर ठिकठाक थी। अपने आत्मविश्वास और अभाव के कारण सुदिप्त उसे भी स्वीकार नही कर सका।

सुदीप्त की जिंदगी संभावणापूर्ण थी। वह कभी भी संपूर्ण आदमी नहीं बन सका। अपने जीवन की मजबूरी और त्रासदी ने उसे खलनायक बना दिया है। उसने कई आदिवासी युवकों को खड़ा करना चाहा, परंतु वह लोगों के साथ जुडकर भी असफल रह जाता है। ऐसा इसलिए हुआ कि, उसके अंदर की चारित्रीक कमजोरियाँ जिस से उसके असफल जिन्दगी की ही कहानी बन सकती हैं। इस कहानी के माध्यम से संजीव ने कई बातों को उजागर किया है।

संजीव जब इस उपन्यास को लिख रहे थे, तब झारखंड में आंदोलन चल रहा था। जिस में झारखंड के स्वतंत्र राज्य की मांग थी। लेखक ने सुदिप्त को नायक बताकर उसे उपन्याय में मुल से कुछ उदगार व्यक्त कराए हैं। झारखंड आदिवासीयों के लिए बनाया गया। पर इसमें क्या आदिवासीयों का भला होगा ? इसी विचार से सुदीप्त एक सपना देखता है और उपन्यास के दुसरे पात्र गोपाल को संबोधित कर कहता है "मुझे खुशी है कि, तुम आंदोलन में शरीफ हो गये हो, लेकिन अगर कल को अलग झारखंड बन भी जाता है, और उस पर डेनियल और सुक्खू सिंह जैसे लोग काबिज करते है तो कोई फर्क नहीं रह जाता। हंद-से-हद अरक्षण की तरही नया अभिजात वर्ग खड़ा हो जाएगा । तुम्हें तथ ऐसे तत्वों के खिलाप फिर से लढाई लड़नी पड़ेगी। अपने देश के स्वाधिनता संग्राम का इतिहास तुम्हारे पास हैं। उसमें और इसमें फर्क सिर्फ गुण और मात्रा का हैं। बाकी प्रवृत्तियाँ तक समरूप ... " 2 लेखक का मूल उद्देश्य ही यही था इस उपन्यास के माध्यम से कि स्वतंत्र झारखंड राज्य के आंदोलन को उद्घाटीन करना जब हम स्वतंत्र भारत की व्यावहारिक राजनीति और अल्प समय में झारखंड का निर्माण तथा उसी कार्यप्रणाली को देखते है तो उससे सहमत

हो जाते हैं। लेखक का कथन भी संयुक्ति लगता है- " 3. इतने बड़े आंदोलन का हम क्षेत्रीय अस्मिता में सिकुड गया हैं । ठीक अपने देश नि आजादी की तरह सारी चीजें बोनी होती जा रही है। इन्ही पर क्या इल्जाम दें। जबकि मार्क्सवाद और जनवाद के नाम पर सत्ता सुख भोगनेवाले भी स्वार्थी, संकीर्ण और गद्दी पर काबिज रहने की राजनीति तक महदूद हो गाए है। सर्वत्र तख्त तक पहुंचने की धक्कमपेल है। " 4. इस कथन में स्वतंत्र भारत की राजनीती या यथार्थ चित्रण है। राजनेताओं के लिए नैतिक मूल्य, आदर्श आदि का महत्व गौण हैं। उन्हें तो सिर्फ अपने तख्त-व-ताज से मतलब हैं। वह उसी के साथ चिपके रहना चाहते हैं। इसी प्रवृत्ति ने देश की जनता को छोटे-छोटे टुकडों में बाँटकर एक दूसरे के विरुद्ध खडा कर दिया है।

'पॉव तले की दुब' मैं उपन्यास में आदिवासी दिकुओं का कर बहुत मात्रा में विरोध करते है, घृणा करते हैं क्योंकि उन्होंने उन का शोषण किया हैं। शोषण अनेक प्रकार से और उनके स्तर पर किया जाता है। एक शोषण के प्रति आदिवासिनों का जो आक्रोश है, वह स्वाभाविक हैं। परन्तु विभिन्न क्षेत्रो और भागों तथा वर्गो को परस्पर एक दूसरे के विरुद्ध खड़ा करना ठीक लगता है ? उपन्या में इस प्रश्न का उत्तर नकारात्मक ही दिया गया है। उपन्यास में नायक सूदीप्त के विरोध में आदिवासीयों को खड़ा करने में के विभिन्न शक्तियाँ सफल हुई। उपन्यास के अंत में जब मेझिया लोगों ने सुदीप्त के महत्व को जाना तब तक इस संसार से चल बसा था। तात्पर्य यह है कि, आदिवासीया से हो या दिक्कू, बहुत देर के सात पश्चात ही अपने हितैषी को पहचानते हैं। यही हमारे देश और व्यक्ती की विडम्बना है, त्रासदी है। कहा जा सकता है कि संजीव का यह उपन्यास विचार प्रधान है। इसलिए इसमें घटनात्मक रोचकता नहीं आ पाई है।

उपन्यासकार संजीव 'पॉव तले की दुब' केकिसी भी पात्र को पुरा न्याय नही दे सका और नहीं उनमे प्रभावशाली व्यक्तित्व खड़ा कर पाया। वैसे तो लेखक सूदीप्त और समीर के माध्यम से बहुत कुछ कहने का प्रयास किया परंतु उसके पात्र नाही कुठ बोलयाचे और नाही कुछ घटनाको कुछ कह पाएँ। यह उपन्यास लघु उपन्यास है और पात्रों की भीड बहुत है।

'पॉव तले की दुब' उपन्यास में कुछ वर्णन ऐसे है, जो हमे प्रभावित करते हैं। जैसे "फिलीप की अस्फूट सी चीखे उछली और देखते-देखते बजरी सडक के उस किनारे पर भी उस सिरे से इस सिरे तक आग की लहर दौड गई। अब उसके दोनों किनारों पर आग धधक रही। जिनके बीच देव पुरुष चला आ रहा था वह, मानो भीतर की आग के ही बाहर दो किनारे गाए ये दोस्तों के दुश्मनो के मृत्यू का भी कैसा सम्मोहन होता है, आतंक का ऐसा उन्माद - यह मैंने उसी दिन जाना। इस दहन उत्सव में पेड मूँग - मोतियों से लदे दिय रहे थे। आग के सहस्त्र झरने वह निकले थे। आकाश मैं रंगों की भरमार हो रही थी और बेशुमार फुलिझडीया और फहराती वैजयंतीके बीच पत्ते सोने के परिंदों से उड़ रहे थे। कुछ देर तक फिलिप अकेला शाल के भरे - पुरे पेड सा चरचरा कर जलता रहा। फिर दोनों जलते किनारों में एकमेक हो गया । "5.

'पॉव तले की दुब'उपन्याय की कथावस्तु तथा शिल्प को देखते हुए हम कह सकते है कि, उपन्यास कार संजीव उपन्यास - शिल्प के प्रति सजग कलाकार हैं। इस उपन्यास में प्रमुख कथा के भीतर एक कथा है। एक कथा प्रत्यस्त से रूप से आयी है, वह भी समीर का सुदीप्त परिचय और घनिष्ठता की। दूसरी कथा का मूल भाग सूदीप्त के अधूरे उपन्याय के रूप में प्रस्तूत किया गया है।

इस अधुरे उपन्यास की अधुरी पांडुलिपी समीर को उस गुफा में मिलती है, जहाँ सब कुछ त्यागकर सूदीप्त रहने लगता हैं। इस सबके बावजूद इस उपन्याय की कथा के लिए डायरी, पत्र, उद्दरण, स्वप्न आदि का उपयोग किया

गया है। निःसंदेह यह उपन्याय संजीव की रचना - यात्रा का एक महत्वपूर्ण मानदंड हैं। हिंदी उपन्याय में यह एक मौलिक उपलब्धी हैं।

संदर्भ :-

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पूजा भालचंद्र गांवकर

मराठी, सहायक प्राध्यापक

श्री मल्लिकार्जुन आणि श्री चेतन मंजू देसाई महाविद्यालय, काणकोण-गोवा, ४०३७०२

प्रस्तावना

वाङ्मयकृतीचा अन्वयार्थ म्हणजे एखाद्या साहित्यकृतीतील शब्दशः अर्थ समजून घेणे नव्हे, तर त्यामागील सूक्ष्म वा गूढ आशयाचा शोध घेणे. लेखक किंवा लेखिका कोणत्या उद्देशाने साहित्यनिर्मिती करतात, तसेच कथानकातील विविध घटना, प्रसंग आणि पात्रांचे परस्पर संबंध लक्षात घेऊन अर्थनिर्णयन करणे, ही अन्वयार्थ शोधण्याची प्रक्रिया मानली जाते. म्हणजे साहित्यकृतीत जे मांडण्यात आले आहे, त्याचा तार्कीकदृष्ट्या विचार करून घडणाऱ्या गोष्टीचा अनुमान लावणे होय. मानसशास्त्रज्ञ ह्यूम यांनी आपल्या अभ्यासात 'अनुमान' अधिक प्रभावशाली असल्याचे सांगितले. त्यांच्यामते अनुमानांच्या आधारे भविष्यात घडून येणाऱ्या घटनेवर आपण नियंत्रण आणू शकतो. म्हणजे अनुमानांच्या आधारे मानव येणाऱ्या संकटावर, अडचणीवर मात करू शकतो.

लेखिका विजया राजाध्यक्ष यांच्या कथां स्त्री जीवनावर आधारित अनेक प्रसंग निर्माण करतात. त्यांच्या वाट्याला येणाऱ्या दुःखामागची अनेक कारणेही उलगडून समोर ठेवतात आणि काही कथांच्या शेवटी त्यातून बाहेर पडण्याचा मार्ग सुचवितात. सुरुवातीला घेतलेल्या निर्णयांचा अंत कसा होऊ शकतो, यांचीही अनेक उदाहरणे या कथांत सापडतात. त्यामुळे त्यांच्या साहित्यकृतीच्या आशयामागील मानसिक घटकांचा शोध घेणे हा या अभ्यासाचा मुख्य उद्देश आहे.

भारतीय संस्कृती आणि मानसशास्त्र

विजया राजाध्यक्ष यांनी मानवी मनाचा वेध घेताना प्राचीन भारतीय सांस्कृतिक आणि वाङ्मयीन संदर्भांचा आधार घेतला आहे. मानसशास्त्राचा उगम आणि त्याचे अस्तित्व हजारो वर्षापूर्वीच्या प्राचीन भारतीय संस्कृतीत दृढ होते, ही वस्तुस्थिती त्या 'जेहत्ते काळाचे ठायी...' या कथेच्या माध्यमातून अधोरेखित करतात. महायुद्धाच्या ऐन प्रसंगी अर्जुनाचे आपल्याच आप्तांविरुद्ध युद्ध करण्याच्या विचाराने मन विचलित झाले, अशा मानसिक द्वंद्वाच्या वेळी श्रीकृष्णांनी अर्जुनाला 'कर्मयोग' सांगून त्याचे प्रबोधन केले. आधुनिक मानसशास्त्रीय भाषेत सांगायचे तर अर्जुनाची ती मनःस्थिती म्हणजे 'नर्व्हस' होणे, तर श्रीकृष्णांनी त्याची मनःस्थिती ओळखून केलेले उद्बोधन म्हणजे आजच्या काळातील 'काऊन्सिलिंग' म्हणजेच 'समुपदेशन' होय.

आशा परुळेकर यांच्या मतानुसार "कुरुक्षेत्रावर युद्धाच्या वेळी अर्जुनाला आपले आप्त व स्नेही यांची हत्या करावी लागणार ही पडलेली समस्या नैतिक नसून मानसिक होती आणि श्रीकृष्णाने केलेला उपदेश ही 'सहमंत्रणा' होती"[१].

पुढे लेखिका मानवी जीवनातील 'निर्वाण' म्हणजेच 'मोक्ष' किंवा संसारिक जबाबदारीतून मुक्त होण्याच्या संकल्पनेला केंद्रस्थानी ठेवतात. भारतात परंपरेच्या चौकटीत असलेली ज्येष्ठ व्यक्ती आयुष्याच्या एका टप्प्यावर घरातील कौटुंबिक जबाबदाऱ्यांतून मुक्त होण्याचा विचार करू लागते. या विषयाचे उत्तम उदाहरण प्रस्तुत कथेत 'तात्या' या पात्राच्या माध्यमातून दिसून येते. तात्या आपल्यावर असलेल्या कौटुंबिक जाबाबदाऱ्या मुलांवर, विशेषतः आयुष्यात स्थिरावलेल्या 'विश्वनाथ'वर सोपवितात. ही कृती केवळ भौतिक जबाबदारीपुरती मर्यादित नसून, तात्यांची मानसिकरीत्या जबाबदारीतून मुक्त होण्याची इच्छा दर्शवते. यातून लेखिकेने मानवी जीवनाच्या उत्तरार्धातील मानसिक अवस्थेचे चित्रण केले आहे.

तसेच मानवाला आयुष्यात अनेक परीक्षांना सामोरे जावे लागते. काहीवेळा तो या परीक्षांमध्ये यशस्वी होतो, तर अपयश आल्यास निराश होतो. परंतु हेच मानवी जीवनाचे चक्र असल्याचे लेखिका 'आणखी एक परीक्षा' या

कथेच्या माध्यमातून स्पष्ट करतात. कथेत 'विभावरी' हे मुख्य पात्र असून, ती परप्रांतीय असणाऱ्या 'जॉन'शी विवाह करते. मात्र वैवाहिक जीवनाच्या ऐन मध्यान्हावर 'जॉन'चे अन्य स्त्रीशी विवाहबाह्य संबंध असल्याचे समोर येते.

अशावेळी विभावरीची झालेली मानसिक कोंडी आणि भावनिक संघर्ष यात प्रकर्षाने मांडण्यात आला आहे. या संघर्षामागे विभावरी व जॉन यांच्यातील सांस्कृतिक भिन्नता हे मुख्य कारण असल्याचे दिसून येते. मानसशासस्त्रज्ञ बी. एफ. स्कीनर यांनी मानवी समस्या सोडविण्यासाठी सामुहिक प्रयोगांपेक्षा मानवाच्या वैयक्तिक पातळीला महत्त्व दिले. त्यांनी मूळ संस्कृती तसेच नाते संबंधाला महत्त्व देऊन, व्यक्ती हा अमुक संस्कृतीत घडत असतो. त्यावेळी त्या वातावरणाचा त्याच्यावर परिणाम होत असतो आणि त्यानुसार त्याचे वर्तन बदलत असते.

अखेर या कथेतून हाच निष्कर्ष निघतो की, मानवाला खरी मानसिक स्थिरता ही त्याच्या मूळ संस्कृतीशी जोडून राहाण्यातच मिळते. हाच विचार लेखिका विजया राजाध्यक्ष यांच्या कथांमधून सातत्याने अधोरेखित होतो.

स्त्रीदेह आणि मानसशास्त्र

डेन्मार्क यांच्या मतानुसार लहानपणापासून स्त्रियांच्या जीवनात होणारे बदल, नात्यातून येणारे विविध अनुभव, कौटुंबिक जीवनातील प्रत्येक परिस्थितीचा परिणाम तिच्या वैयक्तिक जीवनावर होत असतो.

'विदेही' या कथेच्या माध्यमातून गर्भधारणेच्या अवस्थेत स्त्रीच्या होणाऱ्या शारीरिक, मानसिक तसेच भावनिक स्थित्यंतराचे प्रकटीकरण लेखिकेने केले आहे. दुसऱ्यांदा गर्भधारण झाल्यानंतर नायिकेच्या वर्तनात झालेले बदल अनेक मानसशास्त्रीय प्रश्न उपस्थित करतात. या अवस्थेत ती नवऱ्यापासून अंतर का राखते, तिच्या मौन अवस्थेमागचे कारण काय, स्वतःच्या भावनांना अभिव्यक्त न करता येण्यामागची कोणती मानसिक कारणे आहेत, अशा भावनिक विवंचनांचे आणि स्त्री मनाच्या गुंतागुंतीचे अनेक पदर उलघडत जातात.

देहाचे एकच स्वरूप नसून वेळेनुसार आणि मानसिक अवस्थानुसार त्यात स्थित्यंतरे घडून येतात. वास्तविकतः मातृत्त्व हे पूर्णपणे देहाशी, अस्तित्वाशी, रक्ताच्या आणि प्रेमाच्या बंधाशी जोडलेले आहे. मात्र कथेतील 'विदेही' या संकल्पनेचा अर्थ लेखिकेने आपल्यातील गर्भाला स्वतंत्र करून वेगळे करण्याच्या प्रक्रियेशी जोडला आहे. जसे कथेच्या शेवटी लेखिका नमूद करतात 'तो तृप्तपणे तिच्यापासून दूर झाला. तिच्यातच राहून'[२] म्हणजे तो अर्भक जरी मातेच्या देहात वाढत असला, तरीही अखेर त्याचे अस्तित्त्व वेगळे व स्वतंत्र असते.

विविध परीस्थितींनुसार बदलणारे तिचे रूप या कथांमधून अधोरेखित होते. याच संदर्भातील, स्त्री देहावर भाष्य करणारी 'कमळ' ही या संग्रहातील आणखीन एक कथा. यात दोन अपत्ये विवेक व अनिता झाल्यानंतर ३२ ते ३५ या वयोगटातील स्त्रीचे स्वतःच्या अस्तित्वाकडे वा देहाकडे होणारे दुर्लक्ष, तसेच तिच्यातील सुप्त कामवासना विझत जाणे, यांमागील मानसशास्त्रीय पैलू व प्रश्न ही कथा उपस्थित करते. लेखिकेच्या 'विदेही' व 'कमळ' या दोन्ही कथां समान संकल्पनेवर आधारित असल्याचे दिसून येते.

पती-पत्नीमधील संबंध आणि मानसशास्त्र

लेखिका विजया राजाध्यक्ष यांचे कथांविश्व हे प्रामुख्याने कौटुंबिक परिस्थितीमधील स्त्रियांच्या जगण्याचे चित्रण करणारे आहे. त्यांच्या 'विसर्जन' या कथेचा सखोल अभ्यास केल्यास, लेखिकेने 'सीमा' व 'मालू' या दोन पात्रांच्या माध्यमातून विधवा स्त्रियांच्या वाट्याला येणाऱ्या मानसिक समस्यां मांडल्या आहेत. काळाच्या ओघात जोडीदाराला गमावल्यानंतर येणारा आयुष्याचा अंत लेखिकेने सूक्ष्मपणे टिपला आहे. ॲटली स्टूप यांनी सुरक्षितता हा एक विवाह करण्यामागचा हेतू सांगितला आहे. तर मानसशास्त्रज्ञ बर्जेस यांनी सुखी दांपत्यांची काही वैशिष्ट्ये सांगितली. त्यापैकी दुसऱ्याच्या सहवासासाठी उत्सुक असणे हे दांपत्य सुखाचे आणखी एक कारण सांगितले. मात्र 'श्रीरंग' व 'गोविंद' यांसारख्या आधारभूत व्यक्तींच्या निधनानंतर सीमा आणि मालू यांच्या आयुष्यात निर्माण झालेली पोकळी आणि एकाकीपणाची जाणीव यात दिसून येते.

नात्यातील बदलते स्वरूप आणि मानसशास्त्र

'जानकी देसाईचे प्रश्न' ही कथा आधुनिक काळात बदलत जाणाऱ्या नातेसंबंधाचे स्वरूप नेमकेपणाने टिपते. आजचा आधुनिक मानवी समाज नातेसंबंधाच्या चौकटीत बांधून राहू इच्छित नाही; तर तो वैयक्तिक स्वातंत्र्य आणि

स्वतंत्र जीवनपद्धतीला विशेष महत्व देतो. कालानुरूप नातेसंबंधांमधील किंवा व्यक्ती-व्यक्तींमधील आपुलकी, आकर्षकता व रस कमी होत जातात, त्यामुळे आजची पिढी केवळ औपचारिकतेसाठी नात्यात स्वतःला गुंतवून ठेवणे कटाक्षाने टाळते.

स्मृती आणि मानसशास्त्र

मानवी जीवनाचे अंतिम आणि अटल सत्य म्हणजे 'मृत्यू' आहे. मृत्यूनंतर भौतिक शरीर नष्ट पावत असले, तरी स्मृती जिवंत राहतात. या तत्त्वाचा जाणीवपूर्वक वेध लेखिका घेतात. मानवी मन संवेदनशील असल्याने जवळच्या व्यक्तींशी भावनिक बंधांनी जोडलेले असते. त्यामुळे, जेव्हा एखाद्या व्यक्तीचा अकाली मृत्यू होतो, तेव्हा मागे राहिलेल्या संबंधित व्यक्तींचे जीवन विस्कळीत होतेच तर मानसिकरित्या असहाय्य होते आणि काहीवेळा जीवन जगण्याचा अर्थच हरवून जातो.

'मोरपीस' या कथेत हाच भावनिक संदर्भ मांडलेला आहे. बाळाला जन्म देताना बाळासोबातच आईचा म्हणजेच 'सुमाचा' मृत्यू होतो. या घटनेमुळे सुमाच्या पतीच्या वाट्याला आलेले दुःख, मानसिक वेदना आणि मनातील विचारांचे काहूर हे मानसशास्त्रातील 'विलोपन दुःख' स्पष्ट करते.

माणूस हा 'मोरा'सारखा असतो त्याचे भौतिक अस्तित्व काही काळासाठी समोर असते. मात्र त्याच्या निधनानंतर मागे उरणाऱ्या आठवणी 'मोरपिसा'च्या स्वरूपात त्याचा अमूर्त स्पर्श आणि आठवणी मानवी सुप्त मनात राहतात. ही उपमा सुमाच्या आठवणींना अधोरेखित करते.

परंतु प्लेटो यांच्या विश्लेषणानुसार "स्मृतीमधील मानस – प्रतिमांचे स्वरूप मेणाच्या आधारे स्पष्ट केले. त्यांच्या मते मेणावर कोरलेलं काहीही तसच टिकून राहतं तशीच आपली स्मृती आहे परंतु जसं मेण लवकर वितळतं तशा स्मृती लक्षात रहात नाही."[३] असे स्पष्ट केले. याचा विचार केल्यास आठवणीतून निर्माण होणारे दुःख वा वेदना या काही काळापुरत्या असतात. वेळेनुसार त्या कमी होत असतात, आणि प्रयत्न केल्यान माणूस दुःखातून बाहेर पडू शकतो.

मानसशास्त्रज्ञ कुर्ट लेविन यांनी मानसशास्त्रीय संकल्पनेच्या आधारे मानवी वर्तनाचे स्पष्टीकरण दिले. त्यांच्या मते "वर्तन हे भूतकाळ व भविष्यातील परिस्थितीवर अवलंबून नाही तर वर्तमान स्थितीवर अवलंबून आहे."[४] मानवी व्यवहारातील प्रत्येक कृती ही त्याच्या प्रत्यक्ष त्यावेळच्या स्थितीवर किंवा भावनांवर अवलंबून असते. या मानसशास्त्रीय विधानाला अनुसरून असलेली 'वर्तमान' ही कथा. या कथेत मानवी मनाच्या वर्तमानकालीन आणि कौटुंबिक वातावरणात निर्माण होणाऱ्या मानसिक संघर्षाचा वेध घेतला आहे. ही कथा व्यक्तीला भूतकाळातील कटू स्मृतींमध्ये न रमता किंवा भविष्यातील चिंतेचा अतिविचार न करता, वर्तमानकाळात जगण्याचा मार्ग सुचविते. कथेतील मुख्य पात्र 'सरस्वती' हिच्या वैयक्तित आणि कौटुंबिक जीवनातील मानसिक स्थित्यंतराचे चित्रण यात प्रामुख्याने आढळते. कारण तीचा दुसरा मुलगा 'रवी' हा मतीमंद आहे. रविच्या मानसिक व शारीरिक अवस्थेमुळे सरस्वतीला तीव्र मानसिक ताण जाणवतो. या परिस्थितीशी जुळवून घेताना सुरुवातीला मुलाची अवस्था सहन न झाल्यामुळे ती स्वतःचे मन इतर कामांमध्ये गुंतवून घेण्याचा प्रयत्न करते.

कथानकाच्या अंतिम टप्प्यात नायिकेच्या मानसिकतेमध्ये सकारात्मक स्थित्यंतर घडून येते. ती वास्तववादी भूमिकेतून परिस्थितीचा स्वीकार करते आणि केवळ आपल्या मतीमंद मुलाच्या संगोपनालाच जीवनाचे अंतिम ध्येय मानते. ती भूतकाळातील स्मृतींमध्ये न रमता व भविष्याचा अतिविचार न करता, वर्तमानकाळात जगण्याचा प्रयत्न करते. मानवी जीवनातील समस्यांवर मात करण्यासाठी सद्यकालीन परिस्थितीचा स्वीकार करून वर्तमानातील जगण्याला महत्त्व देणे आवश्यक आहे.

समारोप:

विजया राजाध्यक्ष यांच्या कथा स्त्रीवादी चौकटीत बसणाऱ्या नाहीत. त्या स्त्रियांवर होणाऱ्या अन्यायाविरुद्ध उघडपणे बंड पुकारताना दिसत नाहीत. मात्र विविध कौटुंबिक परिस्थितीत मानसिकरीत्या गुंतत गेलेल्या स्त्रियांचे अंतर्विश्व त्या सूक्ष्मपणे उलघडून दाखवितात. त्यांच्या कथांमधील स्त्रीपात्रे स्वतंत्र जीवन जगण्याचा प्रयत्न तर करतात,

परंतु त्याचवेळी त्या जबाबदाऱ्यांच्या जाळ्यात अडकलेल्या दिसतात. ही पात्रे एकाकीजीवन स्वीकारत नाहीत, तर स्वतःचे आंतरिक एकाकीपण दूर करण्यासाठी त्यांना कुटुंब व सांस्कृतिक मुल्यांची गरज भासते.

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बी.एड. विद्यार्थी-शिक्षकांमधील जनरेटिव्ह AI साक्षरता, चिकित्सक विचारक्षमता आणि जबाबदार AI वापराचा अभ्यास

डॉ. योगेश खंडेराव पाटील

सहाय्यक प्राध्यापक

अध्यापक महाविद्यालय अरण्येश्वर पुणे ०९

सारांश

जनरेटिव्ह आर्टिफिशियल इंटेलिजन्स (Generative Artificial Intelligence—GenAI) मुळे शिक्षण, अध्यापन, अध्ययन, मूल्यमापन आणि शिक्षकांच्या व्यावसायिक निर्णयप्रक्रियेत महत्त्वपूर्ण बदल घडत आहेत. शिक्षक-शिक्षणाच्या संदर्भात केवळ AI साधनांचा वापर करता येणे पुरेसे नसून AI निर्मित माहितीचे चिकित्सक मूल्यमापन करणे, तिची अचूकता व शैक्षणिक उपयुक्तता तपासणे आणि गोपनीयता, शैक्षणिक प्रामाणिकता, नैतिकता व मानवी उत्तरदायित्व लक्षात घेऊन AI चा वापर करणे आवश्यक आहे. प्रस्तुत अभ्यासाचा उद्देश बी.एड. विद्यार्थी-शिक्षकांमधील जनरेटिव्ह AI साक्षरता, चिकित्सक विचारक्षमता आणि जबाबदार AI वापर यांचा अभ्यास करणे हा आहे. अभ्यासासाठी पुणे, नगर आणि नाशिक या तीन जिल्ह्यांमधून प्रत्येकी 60 अशा एकूण 180 विद्यार्थी-शिक्षकांची निवड करण्यात आली. माहिती संकलनासाठी 40 घटकांची प्रश्नावली वापरण्यात आली. प्रश्नावलीची विषयतज्ज्ञांकडून वैधता तपासण्यात आली. मार्च ते एप्रिल 2025 या कालावधीत माहिती संकलन करण्यात आले. सहभागी विद्यार्थी-शिक्षकांची परवानगी घेण्यात आली आणि माहितीची गोपनीयता राखण्यात आली. संकलित माहितीचे विश्लेषण सरासरी, प्रमाणित विचलन, Pearson सहसंबंध, स्वतंत्र नमुना t-परीक्षण आणि बहुविध प्रतिगमनाच्या साहाय्याने करण्यात आले. जनरेटिव्ह AI साक्षरतेची सरासरी 3.62 (SD = 0.56), चिकित्सक विचारक्षमेची 3.56 (SD = 0.47) आणि जबाबदार AI वापराची 3.85 (SD = 0.48) आढळली. तिन्ही चलांमध्ये सकारात्मक व सांख्यिकीयदृष्ट्या महत्त्वपूर्ण सहसंबंध आढळले. लिंगानुसार तिन्ही चलांमध्ये सांख्यिकीयदृष्ट्या महत्त्वपूर्ण फरक आढळला नाही. निष्कर्षांच्या आधारे बी.एड. अभ्यासक्रमात AI साक्षरता, माहिती पडताळणी, चिकित्सक विचार, AI नैतिकता, गोपनीयता आणि मानवी उत्तरदायित्व यांचा एकात्मिक समावेश करण्याची गरज अधोरेखित होते.

की-वर्ड्स : जनरेटिव्ह आर्टिफिशियल इंटेलिजन्स, AI साक्षरता, चिकित्सक विचारक्षमता, जबाबदार AI वापर, बी.एड. विद्यार्थी-शिक्षक, शिक्षक-शिक्षण, शैक्षणिक तंत्रज्ञान

1. प्रस्तावना

कृत्रिम बुद्धिमत्ता आणि विशेषतः जनरेटिव्ह AI या तंत्रज्ञानाने शिक्षण क्षेत्रात नव्या शक्यता निर्माण केल्या आहेत. मजकूर निर्मिती, संकल्पना स्पष्ट करणे, धडा आराखडा तयार करणे, प्रश्ननिर्मिती, भाषांतर, सारांश लेखन, अध्ययनसाहित्य निर्मिती आणि अभिप्राय देणे यांसारख्या अनेक शैक्षणिक कामांमध्ये GenAI चा उपयोग होत आहे. तथापि, AI प्रणालीने तयार केलेली माहिती नेहमीच अचूक, संदर्भसुसंगत किंवा शैक्षणिकदृष्ट्या योग्य असेलच असे नाही. त्यामुळे शिक्षकांसाठी AI चा वापर करण्याइतकेच महत्त्वाचे कौशल्य म्हणजे AI निर्मित माहितीचे चिकित्सक मूल्यमापन करणे होय.

UNESCO च्या AI Competency Framework for Teachers मध्ये शिक्षकांच्या AI-सक्षमताकडे केवळ तांत्रिक कौशल्य म्हणून पाहिलेले नाही. मानवी-केंद्रित दृष्टिकोन, AI नैतिकता, AI ची मूलतत्त्वे व उपयोग, AI आधारित अध्यापन आणि व्यावसायिक विकास या परस्पर संबंधित क्षेत्रांवर भर देण्यात आला आहे. या दृष्टिकोनातून भविष्यातील शिक्षकांनी AI साधनांचे निष्क्रिय वापरकर्ते न राहता त्यांचा चिकित्सक, नैतिक आणि शैक्षणिकदृष्ट्या जबाबदार वापर करणारे व्यावसायिक बनणे अपेक्षित आहे.

बी.एड. विद्यार्थी-शिक्षकांच्या प्रशिक्षणामध्ये या बाबीला विशेष महत्त्व आहे. प्रशिक्षण पूर्ण झाल्यानंतर हे विद्यार्थी शाळांमध्ये अध्यापन, मूल्यमापन आणि विद्यार्थ्यांच्या अध्ययन प्रक्रियेशी संबंधित निर्णय घेणार आहेत. म्हणूनच जनरेटिव्ह AI साक्षरता, चिकित्सक विचारक्षमता आणि जबाबदार AI वापर या तीन घटकांचा परस्परसंबंध समजून घेणे शिक्षक-शिक्षणाच्या दृष्टीने उपयुक्त ठरते.

2. संबंधित साहित्याचा आढावा

2.1 जनरेटिव्ह AI साक्षरता

AI साक्षरता ही केवळ AI साधन वापरण्याची क्षमता नसून AI कसे कार्य करते, त्याच्या मर्यादा कोणत्या आहेत, त्याचा शैक्षणिक संदर्भात योग्य वापर कसा करावा, AI निर्मित माहितीचे मूल्यमापन कसे करावे आणि त्याच्या वापराशी संबंधित नैतिक बाबी कोणत्या आहेत याचे आकलन होय. अलीकडील संशोधनात GenAI साक्षरतेमध्ये ज्ञान, उपयोग, मूल्यमापन, नैतिकता आणि दृष्टिकोन या परस्पर संबंधित बाबींना महत्त्व दिले आहे.

2.2 चिकित्सक विचारक्षमता आणि AI

GenAI प्रणाली भाषिकदृष्ट्या प्रभावी उत्तर तयार करू शकतात; मात्र प्रभावी भाषाशैली म्हणजे माहितीची सत्यता याची हमी नाही. त्यामुळे स्रोत पडताळणी, पुराव्यांचा शोध, पर्यायी स्पष्टीकरणांचा विचार, पूर्वग्रह ओळखणे आणि अनिश्चितता स्वीकारणे या चिकित्सक विचार प्रक्रियांना AI-आधारित शिक्षणात विशेष महत्त्व आहे.

2.3 जबाबदार AI वापर

जबाबदार AI वापरामध्ये गोपनीयता, माहिती सुरक्षा, लेखकत्व, शैक्षणिक प्रामाणिकता, पारदर्शकता, समानता, मानवी देखरेख आणि अध्यापनाच्या संदर्भातील योग्य निर्णय यांचा समावेश होतो. शिक्षकाने AI प्रणालीला अंतिम निर्णयकर्ता न मानता तिच्या सहाय्याने तयार झालेल्या सामग्रीची पडताळणी करून अंतिम शैक्षणिक जबाबदारी स्वत:कडे ठेवणे आवश्यक आहे.

2.4 शिक्षक-शिक्षणातील AI ची गरज

शिक्षक-शिक्षणामध्ये AI चा वापर स्वतंत्र ICT विषयापुरता मर्यादित न ठेवता अध्यापनशास्त्र, मूल्यमापन, शालेय इंटर्नशिप आणि व्यावसायिक विकास या सर्व क्षेत्रांशी जोडणे आवश्यक आहे. विद्यार्थी-शिक्षकांना AI निर्मित सामग्रीचे परीक्षण, पुनर्रचना, स्रोत पडताळणी आणि नैतिक निर्णय घेण्याच्या संधी दिल्यास AI वापर अधिक अर्थपूर्ण होऊ शकतो.AI साक्षरता आणि AI-आधारित शिक्षणाविषयी साहित्य वाढत असले तरी बी.एड. विद्यार्थी-शिक्षकांच्या संदर्भात जनरेटिव्ह AI साक्षरता, चिकित्सक विचारक्षमता आणि जबाबदार AI वापर या तीन घटकांचा एकत्रित अनुभवजन्य अभ्यास तुलनेने कमी आढळतो. विशेषतः महाराष्ट्रातील शिक्षक-शिक्षणाच्या संदर्भात या तीन घटकांमधील संबंधांचा अभ्यास उपयुक्त ठरू शकतो. प्रस्तुत संशोधन ही गरज लक्षात घेऊन करण्यात आले आहे.

4. अभ्यासाचे महत्त्व

प्रस्तुत अभ्यास शिक्षक-शिक्षकांना विद्यार्थी-शिक्षकांच्या AI-संबंधित क्षमतांचे स्वरूप समजून घेण्यासाठी उपयुक्त ठरतो. अभ्यासातून प्राप्त निष्कर्षांचा उपयोग बी.एड. अभ्यासक्रमात AI साक्षरता, चिकित्सक विचार, नैतिकता, गोपनीयता आणि जबाबदार डिजिटल नागरिकत्व यांचा समावेश करण्यासाठी करता येऊ शकतो.

5. संशोधन प्रश्न

1. बी.एड. विद्यार्थी-शिक्षकांमधील जनरेटिव्ह AI साक्षरतेची पातळी किती आहे?
2. विद्यार्थी-शिक्षकांमधील चिकित्सक विचारक्षमेची पातळी किती आहे?
3. विद्यार्थी-शिक्षकांमधील जबाबदार AI वापराची पातळी किती आहे?
4. जनरेटिव्ह AI साक्षरता, चिकित्सक विचारक्षमता आणि जबाबदार AI वापर यांच्यात कोणता संबंध आहे?

6. संशोधनाची उद्दिष्टे

1. बी.एड. विद्यार्थी-शिक्षकांमधील जनरेटिव्ह AI साक्षरतेचा स्तर निश्चित करणे.
2. बी.एड. विद्यार्थी-शिक्षकांमधील जनरेटिव्ह AI संदर्भातील चिकित्सक विचारक्षमेचा स्तर निश्चित करणे.
3. बी.एड. विद्यार्थी-शिक्षकांमधील जबाबदार AI वापराचा स्तर निश्चित करणे.
4. बी.एड. विद्यार्थी-शिक्षकांमधील जनरेटिव्ह AI साक्षरता आणि चिकित्सक विचारक्षमता यांच्यातील संबंध अभ्यासणे.
5. जनरेटिव्ह AI साक्षरता आणि जबाबदार AI वापर यांच्यातील संबंध अभ्यासणे.
6. चिकित्सक विचारक्षमता आणि जबाबदार AI वापर यांच्यातील संबंध अभ्यासणे.
7. लिंगानुसार जनरेटिव्ह AI साक्षरता, चिकित्सक विचारक्षमता आणि जबाबदार AI वापरातील फरक तपासणे.

7. संशोधन गृहीतके

1. H1: जनरेटिव्ह AI साक्षरता आणि चिकित्सक विचारक्षमता यांच्यात सकारात्मक व सांख्यिकीयदृष्ट्या महत्त्वपूर्ण संबंध आहे.
2. H2: जनरेटिव्ह AI साक्षरता आणि जबाबदार AI वापर यांच्यात सकारात्मक व सांख्यिकीयदृष्ट्या महत्त्वपूर्ण संबंध आहे.
3. H3: चिकित्सक विचारक्षमता आणि जबाबदार AI वापर यांच्यात सकारात्मक व सांख्यिकीयदृष्ट्या महत्त्वपूर्ण संबंध आहे.
4. H4: पुरुष आणि स्त्री विद्यार्थी-शिक्षकांच्या जनरेटिव्ह AI साक्षरता, चिकित्सक विचारक्षमता आणि जबाबदार AI वापराच्या गुणांमध्ये सांख्यिकीयदृष्ट्या महत्त्वपूर्ण फरक नाही.

8. संकल्पनात्मक चौकट

या अभ्यासात जनरेटिव्ह AI साक्षरता ही मूलभूत क्षमता, चिकित्सक विचारक्षमता ही AI निर्मित माहितीचे परीक्षण व मूल्यांकन करण्याची क्षमता आणि जबाबदार AI वापर ही ज्ञान, मूल्ये व व्यावसायिक निर्णय यांचा शैक्षणिक वापर मानण्यात आला आहे. या तीन घटकांमध्ये परस्परसंबंध अपेक्षित असून त्याची सांख्यिकीय तपासणी करण्यात आली आहे.

9. संशोधन पद्धती

9.1 संशोधन प्रारूप

प्रस्तुत अभ्यासासाठी परिमाणात्मक, अप्रायोगिक आणि वर्णनात्मक-सहसंबंधात्मक संशोधन प्रारूपाचा वापर करण्यात आला. या प्रारूपाद्वारे विद्यार्थी-शिक्षकांमधील तीन प्रमुख चलांची पातळी निश्चित करणे, त्यांच्यातील परस्परसंबंध तपासणे तसेच लिंगानुसार फरकांचा अभ्यास केलेला आहे.

9.2 लोकसंख्या आणि नमुना

प्रस्तुत अभ्यासासाठी पुणे, नगर आणि नाशिक या तीन जिल्ह्यांतील बी.एड. विद्यार्थी-शिक्षकांचा समावेश करण्यात आला. प्रत्येक जिल्ह्यातून 60 विद्यार्थी-शिक्षकांची निवड करण्यात आली. अशा प्रकारे एकूण नमुना 180 विद्यार्थी-शिक्षकांचा होता.

जिल्हा	विद्यार्थी संख्या	टक्केवारी
पुणे	60	33.33
अहिल्यानगर	60	33.33
नाशिक	60	33.33
एकूण	180	100.00

9.3 नमुना निवड

अभ्यासासाठी पुणे, अहिल्यानगर आणि नाशिक या तीन जिल्ह्यांतून प्रत्येकी 60 विद्यार्थी-शिक्षकांचा समावेश करण्यात आला. जिल्हानिहाय समान प्रतिनिधित्व ठेवण्यात आल्यामुळे तीनही जिल्ह्यांमधील विद्यार्थी-शिक्षकांचा तुलनात्मक विचार करणे शक्य झाले.

9.4 लोकसांख्यिकीय चल

लिंगाचे दोन कोड वापरण्यात आले होते. कोड 1 = पुरुष आणि कोड 2 = स्त्री. लिंग हे या अभ्यासातील एकमेव गट-तुलना चल म्हणून विचारात घेण्यात आले.

चल	कोड/श्रेणी
लिंग	1 = पुरुष; 2 = स्त्री

9.5 संशोधन साधन

माहिती संकलनासाठी एकूण 40 घटकांची प्रश्नावली वापरण्यात आली. प्रश्नावलीमध्ये जनरेटिव्ह AI साक्षरता, चिकित्सक विचारक्षमता आणि जबाबदार/नैतिक AI वापर या अभ्यासातील प्रमुख क्षेत्रांचा समावेश करण्यात आला. प्रश्नावलीची विषयवस्तूची वैधता विषयतज्ज्ञांकडून तपासून घेण्यात आली. तज्ज्ञांच्या सूचनांच्या आधारे आवश्यक सुधारणा करून अंतिम प्रश्नावलीचा वापर करण्यात आला.

9.6 माहिती संकलन प्रक्रिया

माहिती संकलनाचे कार्य सप्टेंबर 2026 या कालावधीत करण्यात आले. निवडलेल्या विद्यार्थी-शिक्षकांना संशोधनाचा उद्देश व प्रश्नावली भरण्याची प्रक्रिया स्पष्ट करण्यात आली. सहभागी विद्यार्थ्यांची परवानगी/संमती घेण्यात आली. त्यांच्या प्रतिसादांची गोपनीयता राखली जाईल आणि संकलित माहितीचा उपयोग केवळ प्रस्तुत संशोधनाच्या उद्देशासाठी केला जाईल, अशी सूचना देण्यात आली.

9.7 माहितीचे सांख्यिकीय विश्लेषण

संकलित माहितीचे विश्लेषण करण्यासाठी सरासरी, प्रमाणित विचलन, मध्यिका, किमान आणि कमाल गुण यांसारख्या वर्णनात्मक सांख्यिकींचा वापर करण्यात आला. चलांमधील संबंध तपासण्यासाठी Pearson सहसंबंध गुणांकाचा वापर करण्यात आला. लिंगानुसार फरक तपासण्यासाठी स्वतंत्र नमुना t-परीक्षणाचा वापर करण्यात आला. जबाबदार AI वापराशी संबंधित चलांचे स्पष्टीकरण करण्यासाठी बहुविध प्रतिगमन विश्लेषण करण्यात आले.

9.8 नैतिक बाबी

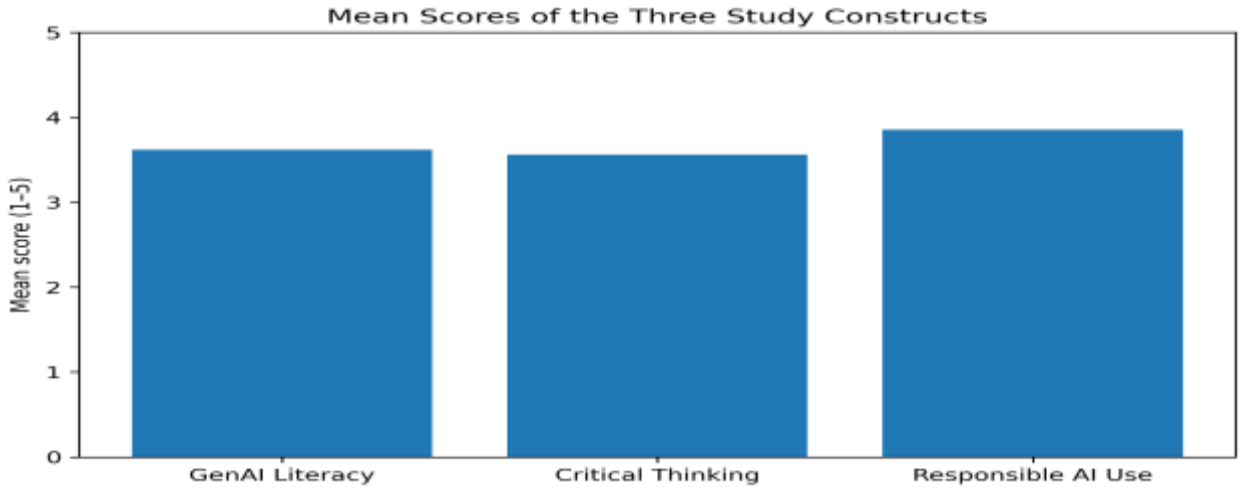
अभ्यासातील सहभागी विद्यार्थी-शिक्षकांना संशोधनाचा उद्देश, प्रश्नावलीचे स्वरूप आणि माहितीच्या वापराबाबत आवश्यक सूचना देण्यात आल्या. विद्यार्थ्यांची परवानगी/संमती घेण्यात आली. सहभागींची वैयक्तिक माहिती गोपनीय ठेवण्यात आली आणि संकलित माहितीचा वापर केवळ प्रस्तुत संशोधनासाठी करण्यात आला.

10. निष्कर्ष व माहितीचे विश्लेषण

10.1 वर्णनात्मक सांख्यिकी

चल	N	सरासरी	SD	मध्यिका	किमान	कमाल
जनरेटिव्ह AI साक्षरता	180	3.62	0.56	3.53	2.75	4.70
चिकित्सक विचारक्षमता	180	3.56	0.47	3.45	2.90	4.50
जबाबदार AI वापर	180	3.85	0.48	3.80	3.10	4.80

जबाबदार AI वापराची सरासरी सर्वाधिक (M = 3.85, SD = 0.48) आढळली. त्यानंतर जनरेटिव्ह AI साक्षरता (M = 3.62, SD = 0.56) आणि चिकित्सक विचारक्षमता (M = 3.56, SD = 0.47) यांचा क्रम होता.

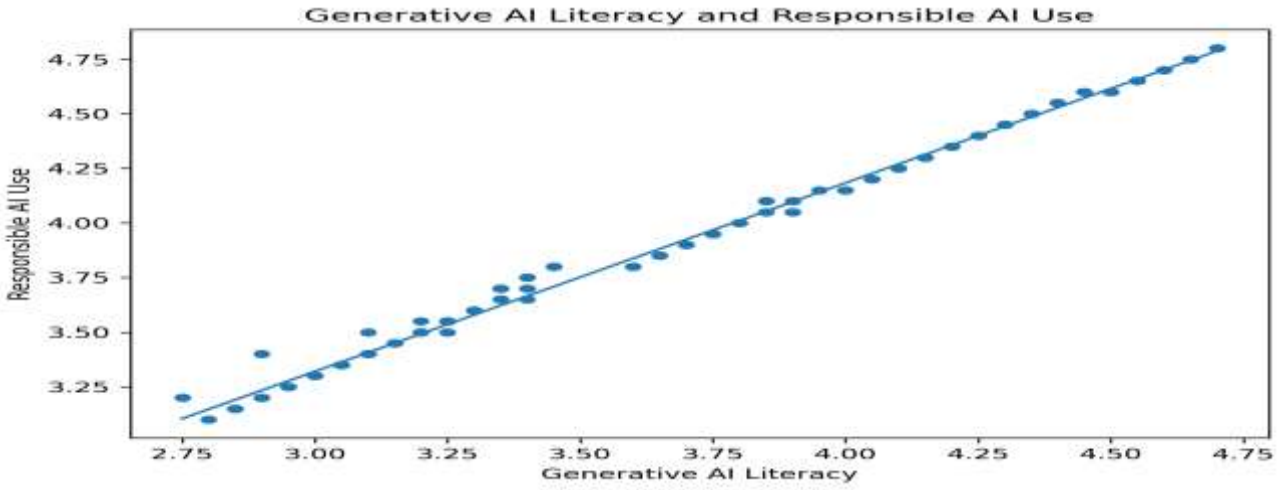


आकृती 1. तीन प्रमुख चलांची सरासरी.

10.2 सहसंबंध विश्लेषण

चलांची जोडी	r	p	अर्थ
AI साक्षरता – चिकित्सक विचार	0.991	< .001	सकारात्मक व अत्यंत उच्च संबंध
AI साक्षरता – जबाबदार AI वापर	0.998	< .001	सकारात्मक व अत्यंत उच्च संबंध
चिकित्सक विचार – जबाबदार AI वापर	0.987	< .001	सकारात्मक व अत्यंत उच्च संबंध

तिन्ही चलांमध्ये सकारात्मक व सांख्यिकीयदृष्ट्या महत्त्वपूर्ण सहसंबंध आढळला. जनरेटिव्ह AI साक्षरता आणि जबाबदार AI वापर यांच्यातील संबंध सर्वाधिक (r = .998) होता. जनरेटिव्ह AI साक्षरता आणि चिकित्सक विचारक्षमता यांच्यात r = .991, तर चिकित्सक विचारक्षमता आणि जबाबदार AI वापर यांच्यात r = .987 असा संबंध आढळला.



आकृती 2. जनरेटिव्ह AI साक्षरता आणि जबाबदार AI वापर यांच्यातील संबंध.

10.3 लिंगानुसार तुलना

चल	पुरुष M	स्त्री M	t	df	p	Cohen's d
Gen AI Literacy	3.55	3.68	-1.54	142.5	0.127	-0.23
Critical Thinking	3.52	3.59	-1.01	143.6	0.312	-0.15
Responsible AI Use	3.79	3.92	-1.89	139.4	0.061	-0.28

जनरेटिव्ह AI साक्षरता, चिकित्सक विचारक्षमता आणि जबाबदार AI वापर या तिन्ही चलांमध्ये पुरुष आणि स्त्री विद्यार्थी-शिक्षकांमध्ये .05 या महत्त्वाच्या पातळीवर सांख्यिकीयदृष्ट्या महत्त्वपूर्ण फरक आढळला नाही.

11. निष्कर्षांची चर्चा

1. अभ्यासातील निष्कर्षांनुसार जबाबदार AI वापराची सरासरी जनरेटिव्ह AI साक्षरता आणि चिकित्सक विचारक्षमता यांच्यापेक्षा अधिक आढळली. यावरून विद्यार्थी-शिक्षक AI चा वापर करताना त्याच्या शैक्षणिक व नैतिक परिणामांचा विचार करण्याची प्रवृत्ती दर्शवितात असे दिसून येते.
2. जनरेटिव्ह AI साक्षरता आणि चिकित्सक विचारक्षमता यांच्यातील अत्यंत उच्च सकारात्मक संबंध हा महत्त्वाचा निष्कर्ष आहे. AI प्रणालींची क्षमता व मर्यादा समजून घेणाऱ्या विद्यार्थी-शिक्षकांना AI निर्मित माहितीचे परीक्षण, स्रोत पडताळणी आणि पर्यायी स्पष्टीकरणांचा विचार करण्याची अधिक क्षमता असण्याची शक्यता या संबंधातून दिसते.
3. जनरेटिव्ह AI साक्षरता आणि जबाबदार AI वापर यांच्यातील अत्यंत उच्च संबंध शिक्षक-शिक्षणाच्या दृष्टीने विशेष महत्त्वाचा आहे. AI चे तांत्रिक ज्ञान आणि त्याचा जबाबदार वापर यांना परस्परपूरक क्षमता म्हणून विकसित करणे आवश्यक आहे.

4. लिंगानुसार तिन्ही चलांमध्ये महत्त्वपूर्ण फरक आढळला नाही. त्यामुळे प्रस्तुत नमुन्यात पुरुष आणि स्त्री विद्यार्थी-शिक्षकांच्या AI-संबंधित क्षमतांमध्ये सांख्यिकीयदृष्ट्या स्पष्ट फरक असल्याचे समर्थन मिळत नाही.
5. प्रतिगमन विश्लेषणामध्ये जनरेटिव्ह AI साक्षरता ही जबाबदार AI वापराशी संबंधित महत्त्वाची भाकीतकर्ता ठरली. मॉडेलचे $R^2 = 0.995$ आणि Adjusted $R^2 = 0.995$ होते. चिकित्सक विचारक्षमता इतर चल नियंत्रित केल्यानंतर स्वतंत्ररीत्या सांख्यिकीयदृष्ट्या महत्त्वपूर्ण भाकीतकर्ता ठरली नाही ($p = 0.214$).

12. शैक्षणिक परिणाम व उपयोगिता

1. बी.एड. अभ्यासक्रमात जनरेटिव्ह AI साक्षरतेचा समावेश स्वतंत्र घटक म्हणून तसेच विविध विषयांमध्ये आंतरविषयक स्वरूपात करावा.
2. विद्यार्थी-शिक्षकांना AI निर्मित माहिती, संदर्भ आणि तथ्ये विश्वसनीय स्रोतांच्या आधारे पडताळण्याचा सराव द्यावा.
3. AI नैतिकता, गोपनीयता, लेखकत्व, शैक्षणिक प्रामाणिकता आणि पारदर्शकता यांवर केस-स्टडी आधारित उपक्रम घ्यावेत.
4. अध्यापनशास्त्राच्या विषयात AI निर्मित धडा आराखड्यांचे चिकित्सक परीक्षण व पुनर्रचना करण्याच्या कृती द्याव्यात.
5. मूल्यमापन प्रक्रियेत AI वापरासंदर्भातील प्रक्रिया पुरावे आणि विद्यार्थ्यांचे स्वतःचे स्पष्टीकरण यांना महत्त्व द्यावे.
6. शालेय इंटर्नशिपमध्ये AI चा वापर कुठे, का आणि कसा केला यावर प्रतिबिंबात्मक नोंद ठेवण्याची पद्धत विकसित करावी.

13. बी.एड. अभ्यासक्रमासाठी शिफारसी

अभ्यासक्रम क्षेत्र	**AI संदर्भातील सुचविलेला समावेश**
अध्यापन-अध्ययन	AI निर्मित धडा आराखड्यांचे परीक्षण व पुनर्रचना
मूल्यमापन	AI-सजग मूल्यमापन, लेखकत्व, प्रक्रिया पुरावे आणि मौखिक स्पष्टीकरण
ICT / शैक्षणिक तंत्रज्ञान	Prompting, पडताळणी, गोपनीयता, मर्यादा व सुरक्षित वापर
शालेय इंटर्नशिप	AI-सहाय्यित अध्यापन नियोजनाचे प्रतिबिंबात्मक दस्तऐवजीकरण
शैक्षणिक मानसशास्त्र	चिकित्सक विचार, metacognition आणि learner agency
व्यावसायिक विकास	AI नैतिकता, जबाबदार वापर आणि सतत व्यावसायिक शिक्षण

14. अभ्यासाच्या मर्यादा

1. अभ्यासातील प्रमुख चलांचे विश्लेषण composite scores वर आधारित आहे; item-level मानसशास्त्रीय विश्लेषण स्वतंत्रपणे प्रस्तुत केलेले नाही.
2. अभ्यासाचे प्रारूप अप्रायोगिक व cross-sectional असल्यामुळे कारण-परिणाम संबंध निश्चित करता येत नाही.
3. स्व-माहितीवर आधारित प्रतिसादांमध्ये सामाजिक अपेक्षेचा परिणाम होण्याची शक्यता असू शकते.

4. तीन प्रमुख चलांमध्ये आढळलेले अत्यंत उच्च सहसंबंध मापन साधनातील संकल्पनात्मक जवळीक तपासण्याची गरज दर्शवितात.

15. पुढील संशोधनासाठी सूचना

1. अधिक मोठ्या नमुन्यावर आणि अधिक शिक्षक-शिक्षण संस्थांमध्ये अभ्यासाची पुनरावृत्ती करावी.
2. 40 घटकांच्या प्रश्नावलीच्या item-level माहितीवर reliability, factor structure आणि construct validity तपासावी.
3. स्व-माहितीबरोबर AI निर्मित सामग्रीतील तथ्यात्मक चुका, पूर्वग्रह आणि नैतिक समस्या ओळखण्याच्या performance-based tasks वापराव्यात.
4. दीर्घकालीन व intervention-based संशोधनाद्वारे AI साक्षरता कार्यक्रमांचा परिणाम तपासावा.
5. विद्यार्थी-शिक्षक, कार्यरत शिक्षक आणि शिक्षक-शिक्षक यांची तुलनात्मक पाहणी करावी.

16. निष्कर्ष

प्रस्तुत अभ्यासातून बी.एड. विद्यार्थी-शिक्षकांमधील जनरेटिव्ह AI साक्षरता, चिकित्सक विचारक्षमता आणि जबाबदार AI वापर हे परस्पर संबंधित व शिक्षक-व्यवसायाच्या दृष्टीने महत्त्वाचे घटक असल्याचे दिसून आले. 180 विद्यार्थी-शिक्षकांच्या माहितीच्या विश्लेषणातून जबाबदार AI वापराची सरासरी सर्वाधिक आढळली. तिन्ही प्रमुख चलांमध्ये सकारात्मक व अत्यंत उच्च सहसंबंध आढळले. लिंगानुसार महत्त्वपूर्ण फरक आढळला नाही.

या निष्कर्षांच्या आधारे बी.एड. शिक्षणामध्ये AI चा वापर केवळ तांत्रिक कौशल्य म्हणून न पाहता चिकित्सक विचार, माहिती पडताळणी, नैतिक निर्णय, गोपनीयता, शैक्षणिक प्रामाणिकता आणि मानवी उत्तरदायित्व यांच्याशी जोडणे आवश्यक आहे.

17. संदर्भसूची

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मराठी मुस्लीम आत्मकथन स्वरूप आणि चिकित्सा

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प्रास्ताविक –

मुस्लीम मराठी साहित्यामध्ये आत्मचरित्र लिहिण्याचे प्रमाण समाधानकारक असल्याचे दिसून येते. मुस्लीम साहित्यिकांनी ही आत्मचरित्रे आपले आत्मपरीक्षण करून लिहिलेली आहेत. एकूण १५ आत्मचरित्रे मुस्लीम मराठी साहित्यामध्ये लिहिली गेली आहेत. त्यापैकी १३ आत्मचरित्रे उपलब्ध आहेत. अनुपलब्ध आत्मचरित्रे म्हणजे 'संधीप्रकाश' आणि 'माझ्या दर्यावर्दी जीवनातील भरती आहोटी' ही होय.

मुस्लीम लेखक व त्यांचे आत्मचरित्र पुढीलप्रमाणे :

१) शांतादेवी तडवी संधीप्रकाश (१९८२)
२) मल्लिका अमरशेख : मला उद्ध्वस्त व्हायचयं (१९८५)
३) मेहरून्निसा दलवाई मी भरून पावले आहे (१९९७)
४) खातुनवी मत्तीकोप : खातून (२०००)
५) नसीमा हुरजूक : चाकाची खूर्ची (२००१)
६) आशा अपराध : दुःख जे भोगले त्याला (२००८)
७) डॉ. अजीज नदाफ : जाग्या झालेल्या सावल्या (१९८२)
८) इब्राहिम खान : मुस्लीम महार (१९९०)
९) हुसेन जमादार : जिहाद (१९९३)
१०) हुसेन दलवाई : क्षितिजे अपार (२०००)
११) अब्दूल गनी अत्तार : कोकरूड ते बर्मिंग हॅम (२००२)
१२) सय्यदभाई : दगडावरची पेरणी (२००९)
१३) लतीफ मगदूम : मी एक कोणीतरी (२००९)
१४) मुनव्वर शाह : एस आय एम गिल्टी (१९९०)
१५) कॅप्टन जुवले : माझ्या दर्यावर्दी जीवनातील भरती आहोटी

वरील सदर आत्मचरित्रांचा धावता आढावा मी या शोधनिबंधामध्ये घेण्याचा प्रयत्न करणार आहे. प्रथम मुस्लीम स्त्री आत्मचरित्राचा विचार करताना शांतादेवी तडवी यांचे 'संधीप्रकाश' या आत्मचरित्राचा विचार करावा लागतो. हे आत्मचरित्र अनुपलब्ध असून यामध्ये पूर्वार्ध आणि उत्तरार्ध असे दोन भाग असल्याचे डॉ. नसीम देशमुख सांगतात. पूर्वार्धात शांता देवीचे बालपण, शिक्षण, वैधव्य आणि दुसऱ्या विवाहापर्यंतचा भाग आहे. तर उत्तरार्धात शांतादेवीचा सुखी संसार, मुले, नवऱ्याचे प्रेम, संसारातील चढ-उतार, पुन्हा एकदा वैधव्य, मुलींचे शिक्षण, त्याचे नोकरीत उच्च पदाला जाणे आणि शांतादेवीची कृतकृत्यता इत्यादी पर्यंतचा भाग आहे.

मल्लिका अमरशेख यांचे 'मला उद्ध्वस्त व्हायचंय' हे आत्मचरित्र १९८५ साली प्रकाशित झाले. त्यांनी आपले अनुभव बिनधास्तपणे मांडल्यामुळे त्या काळात या आत्मचरित्राने खळबळ माजवून दिली होती. मल्लिका ही शाहीर अमर शेख यांची मुलगी असून ती दलित कवी नामदेव ढसाळ यांच्याशी विवाहबद्ध होते. सुरुवातीस त्यांचे एकमेकांवर खूप प्रेम असते. कालांतराने ढसाळांचे संसाराकडे दुर्लक्ष होते. बाहेरखालीपणा वाढतो. त्यामुळे मल्लिका आणि नामदेव ढसाळ यांच्यामध्ये खटके उडत जातात म्हणजे एक प्रकारे कौटुंबिक कलह या आत्मचरित्रामध्ये दिसून येतो.

'मी भरून पावले आहे' या आत्मचरित्राच्या लेखिका म्हणजे हमीद दलवाई यांची पत्नी मेहरून्निसा दलवाई होय. सदर आत्मचरित्रामध्ये मेहरून्निसा दलवाईंनी हमीद दलवाईंच्या कार्यांच्या स्मृतींना उजाळा दिलेला आहे. या आत्मचरित्रामध्ये हमीद दलवाई यांचे त्यांच्या पत्नीवर असलेले प्रेम पदोपदी व्यक्त होते. त्यांनी आपल्या पत्नीची सेवाही केली. तसेच जेथे जेथे काही समाजकार्य करायचे असेल तेथे दलवाईबरोबर त्यांची पत्नी मेहरून्निसा हमखास असायची. या आत्मचरित्राच्या संदर्भात डॉ. नसीम देशमुख म्हणतात, "दलवाईंचे हे आत्मचरित्र म्हणजे केवळ

नवऱ्याचे कौतुक आहे. आत्मचरित्राचे एक वैशिष्ट्ये म्हणजे आत्मचरित्र लिहिणाऱ्या 'स्व' ला केंद्रस्थान मिळाले पाहिजे, कार्लाईल म्हणतो, 'A hero is hero at all poitns' 'स्व' दर्शन नसेल तर ते आत्मचरित्रच राहणार नाही. इथे 'स्व' प्रतिमा बाजूला सारून नवऱ्याचीच प्रतिमा जास्त गडद होताना दिसते. त्यामुळे हे मेहरून्निसा दलवाईंचे आत्मचरित्र आहे की, "हमीद दलवाईंचे चरित्र आहे, याचा पेच वाचकांना पडतो."[१]

खातुनबी मत्तीकोप यांचे 'खातुन' हे आत्मचरित्र २००० साली प्रकाशित झाले. खातुन म्हणजे भारतीय स्त्री. या आत्मचरित्रात कणखर अशा स्त्री आत्मचरित्रांची कहाणी आहे. या आत्मचरित्रामध्ये कौटुंबिक जीवनातील सासुरवास, नवऱ्याचा आणि मुलाचा छळवाद, आजार, घरातील अडचणी या सर्व गोष्टी लेखिकेच्या वाट्याला आल्या होत्या. या सर्व बाबींना तोंड देत लेखिकेने सर्व जबाबदाऱ्या कशा पार पाडल्या. मुलांना उच्चशिक्षित कसे केले, यासंबंधीचे विवेचन म्हणजे 'खातुन' हे आत्मचरित्र होय.

नसीमा हुरजूक यांची 'चाकाची खुर्ची' हे आत्मचरित्र २००१ मध्ये प्रकाशित झाले. हे आत्मचरित्र केवळ मुस्लीम साहित्यातच नव्हे तर सर्व मराठी साहित्यामध्ये मैलाचा दगड ठरावा असे आहे. या आत्मचरित्रामध्ये लेखिका जन्मतः अपंग नाही. त्यांच्या आजाराचे निदान न झाल्यामुळे त्यांना अपंगत्व आलेले दिसून येते. शरीराने अंपगत्व आल्यामुळे लेखिकेने स्वतःचे आयुष्य तर सावरलेच शिवाय असंख्य अपंगाच्या जीवनातही तिने उत्साह भरविला. अपंगांमध्ये त्यांनी आत्मविश्वास निर्माण केला. लाचारीने जीणं न जगता अपंगांना स्वतःच्या पायावर उभे राहायला शिकविले. या आत्मचरित्रामध्ये लेखिकेने अपंग असल्यामुळे त्यांच्या जीवनातील संघर्ष चित्रित केलेला आहे. अपंगांच्या मानसिक पुनर्वसनाची निकड लेखिकेला जाणवत होती. म्हणून तिने कोल्हापूर येथे 'हेल्पर्स ऑफ दि हँडिकॅप्ड' या संस्थेची स्थापना केली. या संस्थेच्या स्थापनेमागे हेतू हाच होता की, अपंगांनी मनाने कणखर व्हावे, आपल्या अपंगत्वाचा कमीपणा वाटून घेऊ नये, शक्य तितके स्वावलंबन स्वीकारावे त्यांनी आनंदी असावे, त्यांनी मुक्तपणे खेळावे, हसावे.

आशा अपराद यांचे सन २००८ साली प्रकाशित झालेले आत्मचरित्र म्हणजे 'दुःख जे भोगले त्याला' हे होय. कोल्हापूरच्या एका शिक्षिकेचे, प्राध्यापिकेचे मुस्लीम समाजातील एका सुशिक्षित स्त्रीचे हे आत्मकथन आहे. एका मुस्लीम महिलेने शिक्षणासाठी केलेला खडतर प्रवास असे या आत्मचरित्राचे स्वरूप आहे. हे आत्मचरित्र लिहिण्यामागचा हेतू सांगताना लेखिका सांगते, मला लिहावे वाटले ते अनेकांच्या आग्रहाखातर. माझे जगणे इतरांना प्रेरणा देणार असेल यासाठी मी लिहावं असा आग्रह त्यांनी केला. माझ्याही मनात आजवर जे साचत गेले ते रिते व्हावे, अशी इच्छा होती. या निमित्ताने केवळ माझे दुःख, माझा संघर्ष सांगावा इतकी सीमित इच्छा नाही तर माझी जडण-घडण ज्या समाजात, ज्या माणसांमध्ये घडली त्याबद्दलही मला बोलायच होत. एकंदरीत मनात साचलेले दुःख हलके व्हावे ज्यांनी चांगले सहकार्य केले ते ऋण म्हणून फेडावे या हेतूने हे आत्मचरित्र लिहिलेले आहे.

प्रा. डॉ. अजीज नदाफ यांचे 'जाग्या झालेल्या सावल्या' हे बावीस प्रकरणात लिहिलेले एक वेगळेच असे कथात्मक आत्मचरित्र आहे. या आत्मचरित्रामध्ये लेखकाने स्वतःचे अनुभव कथन केलेले आहेत. लहानपणापासून गरीबीचे बसणारे चटके पण परिस्थितीशी हार न मानता काम करता करता त्यांनी आपले शिक्षणही घेतले. अशा कलंदर लेखकाचे हे आत्मचरित्र आहे. या आत्मचरित्रासंदर्भात प्रा. फ. म. शहाजिंदे म्हणतात, "कामगार-पुत्र नदाफ हे एक हरहुन्नरी, बहुआयामी व्यक्तिमत्त्व. दारिद्र्यातून वाट काढत, अनेकांच्या मदतीने गिरणी कामगार होण्याचे नाकारून वेगळ्या वाटेने कलेची सेवा करीत, लोक रंजनातून लोकशिक्षण करीत स्वतःचे शिक्षण चालू ठेवत विकसित झालेले हे व्यक्तिमत्त्व या आत्मचरित्राचे एक विलोभनीय वैशिष्ट्ये आहे."[२]

मुनव्वर शहा यांचे एस.आय.एम. गिल्टी हे आत्मचरित्र त्यांना फाशीची शिक्षा ज्यावेळी सुनावली गेली त्यावेळी लिहिलेले हे आत्मचरित्र आहे. पुण्यामध्ये जोशी-अभ्यंकर या नावाने ओळखले जाणारे भीषण हत्याकांड

जानेवारी १९७६ ते मार्च १९७७ या सव्वा वर्षाच्या काळात घडले. त्यामध्ये राजेंद्र जक्कल, दिलीप सुतार, शांताराम जगताप, मुनव्वर शहा या आरोपींना अटक करण्यात आली. मृत्यूच्या दारात माणूस खोटे बोलत नाही, या सूत्रानुसार जे जे घडले ते ते तटस्थपणे सांगण्याचा प्रयत्न या आत्मचरित्रात मुनव्वर शहाने केलेला आहे.

इब्राहीम खान यांचे 'मुस्लीम महार' हे आत्मचरित्र १९९० साली प्रकाशित झाले असून यामध्ये महार आणि मुस्लीम या दोन जातींच्यामध्ये गुंतून पडलेल्या तीन पिढ्यांचे चित्रण करणारे हे आत्मचरित्र आहे. लेखक म्हणतात, महार म्हणून जगलो असतो तर अस्पृश्यतेचा जाच वाट्याला आला असता. बौद्ध झालो असतो तर दलितच राहिलो असतो. म्हणून मुस्लीम झालो. पण मुसलमानांनीही पूर्ण स्वीकारले नाही. एका विशिष्ट मानसिकतेने आमचा छळ केला. हे जगणे म्हणजेच धोबी का कुत्ता घरका न घाटका या कोंडीनेच मला लिहायला प्रवृत्त केले आहे. मनातील ही कोंडी फोडण्याच्या हेतूनेच लेखकाने हे आत्मचरित्र लिहिलेले आहे.

हुसेन जमादार यांचे 'जिहाद' हे आत्मचरित्र मानसन्मान प्रकाशनाने १९९३ साली प्रकाशित केले. 'जिहाद' हे आत्मचरित्र अतिशय तटस्थपणे लेखकाने लिहिलेले आहे. या आत्मचरित्राच्या पूर्वार्धात हुसेन जमादार यांनी घरातील दारिद्र्ये आणि हाल-अपेष्टा यांचे चित्रण केले आहे. तर दुसऱ्या भागात मुस्लीम सत्यशोधक समाजाचा इतिहास आणि कार्य यांचे गुणगान केले आहे.

'क्षितिजे अपार' या आत्मचरित्रामध्ये कृतार्थ जीवनाची वाटचाल हुसेन दलवाई यांनी सांगितली आहे. जुन्या आठवणींना उजाळा देण्याच्या कामासाठी हे आत्मचरित्र लिहिले गेले आहे. मित्रांच्या आग्रहाखातर, शैक्षणिक, सामाजिक आणि राजकीय जीवनातील आठवणींना त्यांनी यामध्ये शब्दबद्ध केलेले आहे. सामाजिक आणि राजकीय जीवनाची आठवणींची पट लेखकाने या आत्मचरित्रामध्ये मांडलेली आहे.

'दगडावरची पेरणी' हे आत्मचरित्र सय्यदभाई यांनी लिहिलेले असून त्यामध्ये त्यांनी आपले कार्यकथन केलेले आहे. दगडावरची पेरणी हे फक्त एका माणसाचे चरित्र नाही किंवा फक्त एका कार्यकर्त्याचेही चरित्र नाही. तर अख्ख्या चळवळीचे हे चरित्र आहे. या आत्मचरित्रामध्ये लेखकाची जडणघडण, लेखकाचे कार्य, वाटचाल, प्रवासात भेटलेल्या विविध प्रांतातील व्यक्ती, प्रशासन, सरकार याविषयीही चित्रण लेखकाने केलेले आहे. मुस्लीम आत्मचरित्रे आपल्या जीवनाचा लेखाजोखा मांडण्याबरोबर कृतज्ञतेची भावना घेऊन लिहिलेली आहेत. या सर्व आत्मचरित्राविषयी राजेखान शानेदिवाण म्हणतात, "मराठीतील आत्मचरित्र वाङ्मय परंपरेला दीर्घ पंरपरा आहे. समाजजीवनाच्या विविध क्षेत्रात कार्यरत असणाऱ्यांनी आपले जीवन लोकांसमोर ठेवले आहे. आत्मचरित्र हा व्यक्तिप्रधान वाङ्मयप्रकार असला तरी ते व्यक्तिकेंद्री होऊन चालत नाही. स्वतःबरोबर सभोवतीची माणसे, त्यांचे स्वभावविशेष रंगविणे आवश्यक असते. ज्याकाळात आपल्या जीवन जाणिवा घडल्या त्या काळाचे सारतत्त्व आत्मचरित्रातून वाचकांसमोर येणे गरजेचे असते. मुस्लीम लेखक/लेखिकांनी असा प्रयत्न कमी अधिक प्रमाणात निश्चितपणे केला आहे. म्हणून मुस्लीम आत्मचरित्रकारांचे मराठी भाषेतील योगदान स्वागतशील वृत्तीने स्वीकारायला हवे. अल्पसंख्य असणाऱ्या या समाजाचे मानसिक, भावनिक आणि सामाजिक अंतरंग समजून घेण्यास या आत्मचरित्रांमुळे मदत होते."[३]

एकंदरीत मुस्लीम आत्मचरित्रकारांनी आपल्या संमिश्र समाजजीवनाबरोबर आपल्या परिसराचाही वेध घेतलेला आहे. महाराष्ट्रातील मुस्लीम समाजाचे अंतरंग, सहजीवन, संमिश्र संस्कृतीचा प्रभाव याबरोबरच भाषिक आणि सांस्कृतिक जीवनाचाही वेध मुस्लीम आत्मचरित्रकारांनी घेतलेला आहे. महाराष्ट्रातील वेगवेगळ्या भागातून प्रतिनिधित्व करणाऱ्या या आत्मचरित्राकारांनी मुस्लीम समाजाचे वास्तव या निमित्ताने मांडले आहे.

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महात्मा बसवेश्वर यांचे प्रशासकीय व सामाजिक क्षेत्रातील कार्य

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सहाय्यक प्राध्यापक व विभाग प्रमुख,

महिला कला महाविद्यालय,छत्रपती संभाजीनगर

भारतात सामाजिक समता व सामाजिक न्याय प्रस्थापित करण्यासाठी भगवान महावीर,भगवान गौतम बुध्द,छत्रपती शिवाजी महाराज, महात्मा ज्योतिबा फुले, सावित्रीबाई फुले, शाहू महाराज, डॉ बाबासाहेब आंबेडकर अशा अनेक महान महामानवांनी प्रयत्न केलेले दिसून येते मध्ययुगीन भारतात सामाजिक समता व न्याय प्रस्थापित करण्याचा प्रयत्न मोठ्या संघर्षातून महात्मा बसवेश्वरांनी केला त्यानी सांगितलेली वचणे तेव्हा आणी आज एकविसाव्या शतकात देखील अतिशय महत्वपूर्ण आहे आजही समाजामध्ये धर्मभेद, जाती भेद, वर्णभेद, गरीब श्रीमंत असे भेद दिसून येतात या वरून असे दिसून येते कि समाजामध्ये सामाजिक समता व न्याय प्रस्थापित करणेसाठी महात्मा बसवेश्वरांनी केलेले कार्य अतिशय महत्वाचे आहे.

बसवेश्वरांनी सर्वसामान्य माणसाच्या भावनेचा सदैव सन्मान करून आपल्या वर्तनातून लोकशाहीचा आदर्श प्रस्थापित केला. भारतात महात्मा संत महापुरुष अशा उपाध्य देऊन महापुरुषाचे कर्तुत्वाला बाजूला ठेऊन चमत्कार काल्पनिकता यावर भर दिला जातो म्हणून महात्मा बसवेश्वारा कडे एक दैवी पुरुष म्हणून न पाहता ते एक तत्वज्ञानी पुरुष होते या दृष्टीने पाहणे गरजेचे आहे त्यांचा विचाराची गरज आज समाजाला आहे असे दिसून येते.

बाराव्या शतकातील जाती व्यवस्था, वर्ण व्यवस्था, लिंग भेद, अस्पृशता अशा अनेक समस्या होत्या या परिस्थितीला बदलन्या साठी महात्मा बसवेश्वरांनी केलेले कार्य अतिशय मोलाचे आहे

शोधनिबंधाचे उद्देश

१ महात्मा बसवेश्वर यांचे प्रशासकीय व सामाजिक क्षेत्रातील कार्य समजून घेणे.

२ महात्मा बसवेश्वराचे अंधश्रध निर्मुलन विषयक विचार व विज्ञान तंत्रज्ञानाचा स्वीकार याचा अभ्यास करणे

३ महात्मा बसवेश्वर च्या जीवनाचा अभ्यास करणे

४ महात्मा बसवेश्वर चे कुशल प्रशासक आणि सामाजिक कार्याचा अभ्यास करून निष्कर्ष काढणे

५ महात्मा बसवेश्वर चा विज्ञानवादी दृष्टिकोनाचा अभ्यास करणे.

महात्मा बसवेश्वरचे बालपण

महात्मा बसवेश्वर चा जन्म कर्नाटकातील विजापूर जिल्हातील इंग्लेश्वर-बागेवाडी येथे ११३१ साली झाला. त्यांच्या वडिलांचे नाव मादिराज व आई चे नाव माद्लाम्बिका होते वयाच्या आठव्या वर्षी ज्ञान मिळविण्यासाठी ते कृष्णा व मलप्रभा या नद्यांच्या संगमावरील कुदाल्संगम येथे गेले. ते वीर शैव प्राचीन अध्ययन केंद्र होते. तेथे महात्मा बसवेश्वरांनी काही वर्ष वास्तव्य केले कुदुल्संगम येथे त्यांनी वेगवेगळ्या भाषा, धर्म तत्वज्ञान इत्यादीचा अभ्यास केला त्यांचा विवाह त्यांच्या मामाच्या मुलीशी झाला तेव्हा ते सोलापुरातील मंगळवेढा येथे आले होते.

महात्मा बसवेश्वर चे प्रशाकीय व सामाजिक कार्य

सामाजिक समता व न्यायाच्या दृष्टीकोनातून काम करण्यासाठी त्यानी गुरूच्या आज्ञे बरोबरच त्यांच्या अंत प्रेरणेने मंगळवेढा येथे गेले त्या ठिकाणी त्यानी कारकुनाचे नोकरी केली. श्रम व कर्तव्य समजून त्यांनी ती नोकरी केली. त्यांनी आपल्या सामाजिक कार्याची सुरवात मंगळवेढा येथूनच केली. त्यानी समाज क्रांती चे पहिले पाउल मंगळवेढा येथून सुरु केले. चांगले व सकारात्मक कार्य करण्यासाठी एका व्यासपीठाची गरज असते श्रम व कर्तव्य ला सर्वस्व मानणारे महात्मा बसवेश्वर यांनी मंगळवेढ्यात सध्या कारकुनाची नोकरी पत्करून सामाजिक समता प्रस्थापित करण्यासाठी प्रयत्न केलेले दिसून येते

महात्मा बसवेश्वर (बसवण्णा) हे १२ व्या शतकातील एक थोर समाजसुधारक, तत्त्वज्ञ आणि वीरशैव लिंगायत धर्माचे संस्थापक होते. त्यांनी समाज परिवर्तनासाठी अनेक महत्त्वाची कार्ये केली:

सामाजिक समता आणि जातीविरोधी लढा: त्यांनी जातीसंस्था, वर्णभेद आणि अस्पृश्यतेचा कडाडून विरोध केला. समाजात सर्व मानव समान आहेत, ही भूमिका मांडली.

अनुभव मंटप स्थापना: बसवकल्याण येथे त्यांनी **'अनुभव मंटप'** (जगातील पहिली आध्यात्मिक आणि सामाजिक लोकशाही संसद) स्थापन केली. यात स्त्री-पुरुषांसह सर्व जाती-वर्गातील लोकांना एकत्र येऊन सामाजिक, धार्मिक आणि आर्थिक विषयांवर चर्चा करण्याचा अधिकार होता.

कायकुवे कैलास (श्रमप्रतिष्ठा): "कायकवे कैलास" (कर्म किंवा श्रम हीच खरी ईश्वरी पूजा आहे) हा सिद्धांत मांडून त्यांनी शारीरिक श्रमाचे महत्त्व पटवून दिले. कोणताही व्यवसाय छोटा किंवा मोठा नसून प्रत्येक श्रमाला प्रतिष्ठा आहे, असा संदेश त्यांनी दिला.

दसोह तत्त्व (संपत्तीचे समन्यायी वितरण): आपण समाजाचे काही देणे लागतो या उद्देशाने त्यांनी असे सांगितले होते कि आपण कष्ट करून कमावलेल्या संपत्तीचा काही भाग गरजू आणि समाजकार्यासाठी वापरावा, हे **'दसोह'** तत्त्व त्यांनी रुजवले.

स्त्री-सक्षमीकरण: त्यांनी स्त्रियांना आध्यात्मिक आणि सामाजिक जीवनात समान स्थान दिले. स्त्रियांना शिकण्याचा आणि धार्मिक कार्यात सहभागी होण्याचा अधिकार मिळवून दिला.

आंतरजातीय विवाह: त्यांनी जातीच्या भिंती पाडण्यासाठी आंतरजातीय विवाहाला प्रोत्साहन दिले आणि स्वतः अशा विवाहांना पुढाकार दिला त्यासाठी त्यांनी शीलवंत आणि कलावती यांचा विवाह लाऊन दिला.

वचन साहित्य: संस्कृतऐवजी सर्वसामान्यांच्या बोलीभाषेत **'वचन साहित्य'** निर्माण केले, ज्यामुळे अध्यात्म आणि विचारांचे लोकशाहीकरण झाले.

इष्टलिंग धारण: त्यांनी जाती-पातीच्या आणि मंदिरांमधील कर्मकांडाच्या बंधनातून मुक्ती मिळवण्यासाठी प्रत्येकाला गळयात 'इष्टलिंग' धारण करण्याची परंपरा सुरू केली.

अहिंसा आणि कर्मकांड विरोध: महात्मा बसवेश्वर यांनी मानवाप्रमाणेच प्रण्यानप्रती हि सर्वांनी दया दाखवावी असे मत मांडले प्राण्यांचे बळी देऊ नये, यज्ञ-याग आणि विविध अंधश्रद्धा-कर्मकांडांचे कठोरपणे विरोध केलेला दिसून येतो. संपूर्ण जीवनाची आचार संहिता त्यांनी आपल्या वाचनातून सांगितली आहे.

नम्रता :- महात्मा बसवेश्वर यांनी आपल्या जीवनामध्ये नम्रता या गुणाला खूप महत्व दिले आहे. व्यक्तीने नेहमी नम्र असावे नम्रतेची अध्यात्मिक क्षमता महात्मा बसवेश्वर यांनी ओळखली होती. महात्मा बसवेश्वर म्हणतात :

मजविना नाही अन्य कोणी लहान
शरण विना महान कोणी नाही.

मानव कल्याणा करिता सर्वांनी हे गुण आत्मसात केले पाहिजे. तसेच ते म्हणतात प्रत्तेकाने वेवेकाने वागावे कारण व्यक्ती जीवन व समाज जीवन उन्नत होण्यासाठी नीती विचार हा आचारणा तून येतो. मानवता समानता बंधुता दया अहिंसा प्रामाणिकपणा सहानुभूती व स्वयं पूर्तता यांना महात्मा बसवेश्वरांनी महत्व दिले होते.

लिंगायत धर्माची स्थापना :-

लिंगायत स्वतंत्र धर्म आहे. तो अन्य कोणत्याही धर्माची जात, उपजात, शाखा अथवा पंथ नव्हे. बौद्ध, जैन, शीख, ख्रिश्चन धर्माला ज्या वैशिष्ट्यामुळे स्वतंत्र धर्म म्हणून मान्यता मिळाली ती सर्व वैशिष्ट्ये लिंगायत धर्म पूर्ण करतो. म्हणून तो एक स्वतंत्र धर्म आहे. स्वतंत्र धर्म म्हणून मान्यता मिळविण्यासाठी धर्मगुरू, धर्मसंहिता, धर्मचिन्ह,धर्माचे नाव,धर्मक्षेत्र, धार्मिक केंद्र, धर्मसंस्कार, धार्मिक विधी, धर्माचा ध्वज, धर्माचे ध्येय इ. लक्षणे असावी लागतात. ती लिंगायत धर्मात आहेत. म्हणून तो स्वतंत्र धर्म आहे.

व्यवस्था परिवर्तन

महात्मा बसवेश्वरांनी व्यवस्था परिवर्तन केले व्यवस्थेत बदल केला. एकांताकडून लोकांताकडे, अज्ञानाकडून-ज्ञानाकडे दानधर्माकडून- दासोहाकडे, मंदिराकडून- अनुभवमंटपाकडे, वैराग्याकडून- गृहस्थीजीवनाकडे,

कठोरतेकडून- सहजतेकडे, शिष्यत्वाकडून- शरणजीवनाकडे, बहुदेवतावादाकडून-एकेश्वरवादाकडे, संस्कृतकडून-लोकभाषा कन्नडकडे, अंधश्रद्धेकडून विवेकवादाकडे ऐतखाऊवृत्तीकडून कायकवादाकडे, विषमतेकडून- - समानतेकडे शिवलिंगाकडून- इष्टलिंगाकडे, देवालयाकडून-देहालयाकडे, शैवपंथाकडुन- स्वतंत्र लिंगायत धर्माकडे, कल्पोकल्पित ग्रंथाकडून- अनुभवी वचनसाहित्याकडे, देहदंडणाकडून- देहधर्माकडे, ग्रंथप्रमाण्यवादाकडून-बुद्धिप्रामाण्यवादाकडे घेऊन जाणारी नवी व्यवस्था निर्माण करणारे महात्मा ब्बास्वेश्वर सामाजिक क्रांतीचे अग्रदूत होती. नवा पथ मार्ग शोधणारे ते एक पथदर्शी होते.

सामाजिक व धार्मिक परिणाम

जातिभेदास विरोध: त्यांनी जन्मावर आधारित उच्च-नीच भेदभाव आणि अस्पृश्यता नाकारली. सर्व मानव समान आहेत असा विचार मांडला.

श्रमप्रतिष्ठा ('कायकवे कैलास'): त्यांनी 'श्रम हाच कैलास' हा संदेश दिला. सर्व प्रकारच्या कष्टाच्या कामांना समान आदर मिळवून दिला.

स्त्री-स्वातंत्र्य व समानता: 'अनुभवमंटप'मध्ये स्त्रियांना समान अधिकार दिले. अकम्मादेवी यांच्यासह अनेक महिला शरणियांनी यात मोठे योगदान दिले.

अनुभवमंटपची स्थापना:

जगातील पहिली सामाजिक-आध्यात्मिक संसद स्थापन करून सर्व जाती-धर्माच्या लोकांना मोकळया संवादाचे व्यासपीठ उपलब्ध करून देणारे महात्मा बसवेश्वर हे महान व्यक्ती होते.

वचनांद्वारे प्रबोधन: त्यांनी सोप्या कन्नड भाषेत 'वचन'साहित्य लिहून सामान्य माणसापर्यंत अध्यात्म आणि विचार पोहोचवले.

महात्मा बसवेश्वर कालीन समाजात वेगवेगळया प्रकारची व्रत वैकल्य, अनुष्ठान उद्यापने, यज्ञ होत असत. पुजारी बडवे, पुरोहित भट ब्राह्मण देव दर्शनासाठी दक्षणा घेत होते. शूद्रांना व अस्पृशाना मंदिर प्रवेश बंद होता. श्रीमंत लोक नैतिक मार्गाने शोषण करून पैसा जमवत होते. व समाजमान्यता व प्रतिष्ठा मिळविण्यासाठी खोट्या प्रतिष्ठेचे प्रदर्शन करीत असत. जातीव्यवस्था अत्यंत काटेकोर व बंदिस्त होती. समाज चातुर्वारणात विभागलेला होता. शूद्रांना विद्यार्जनाचा अधिकार नव्हता. स्त्रीयांवर अनेक प्रकारची बंधने लादली गेली होती. देवदासी प्रथा प्रचलित होती. देवळातून देवाच्या सेवेसाठी तरुण मुली देवदासी म्हणून ठेवण्याची प्रथा समाजात होती. तसेच बहुपत्नी विवाह, बालविवाह, लग्न, कार्यात वधू बरोबर आंदन म्हणून दासी देण्याची प्रथा होती. सामाजिक उल्लंघन करणाऱ्या न जातीतून बहिष्कृत करून दंडित केले जाई. महात्मा बसवेश्वरांनी या सर गोष्टीचा विरोध करून समानता या तत्वाचा पुरस्कार केला.

निष्कर्ष : १.महात्मा बसवेश्वराची तत्वनिष्ठ हि उच्च प्रतीची होती.
२.महात्मा बसवेश्वर यांनी मानवता वादाचा पुरस्कार केला होता.
३.महात्मा बसवेश्वरांनी श्रम पूजेला महत्व दिले होते.
४.बसवेश्वर स्त्री मुक्ती स्वातंत्र्याचे पुरस्कर्ते होते.

समारोप : महात्मा बसवेश्वरांनी आयुष्भर समाजातील विविध क्षेत्रात विषमता नष्ट करून समतेवर आधारित व्यवस्था उभारण्यासाठी लढा दिला . त्यातून त्यांनी आखिल मानव जातीचे कल्याण केले.

संदर्भ: -

१ पाटील भीमराव , युगप्रवर्तक महात्मा बसवेश्वर, अहमदपूर २००६ पृ ३७०/३७१
२ करंजकर प्रवीण महात्मा बसवेश्वर यांचे व्यक्ती विचार आणि तुलना, सुधीर प्रकाशन वर्धा२०१४ पृ २
३. कित्तां पृ ३०
४ कित्ता पृ २८-२९
५ मेदनकुले अशोक १२ व्या शतकातील आद्य समाज सुधारक महात्मा बसवेश्वर सुविधा प्रकाशन सोलापूर २००२ पृ २
६ महाराष्ट्र टाईम २५ एप्रिल २०२०
७ आनंद बळीराम कर्ण, महात्मा बसवन्ना चा वाचन संदेश

आदिवासी जीवनातील वास्तवांचा शोध

डॉ. अंजली जोशी टेंभुर्णीकर

उपप्राचार्य आणि समाजशास्त्र विभाग प्रमुख दयानंद कला महाविद्यालय, लातूर

प्रस्तावना: :

आदिवासी म्हणजे केवळ जंगलात राहणारा माणूस नव्हे, तो जंगलाला जगवणारा आणि जंगलातून जगणारा माणूस आहे.

९ ऑगस्ट हा विश्व आदिवासी दिवस. हा दिवस केवळ आदिवासींच्या गौरवाचा दिवस नाही; तर त्यांच्या अस्तित्वाकडे, अधिकारांकडे आणि आजच्या बदलत्या जीवनाकडे पुन्हा एकदा चिकित्सक नजरेने पाहण्याचा दिवस आहे.

भारताच्या २०११ च्या जनगणनेनुसार, Tribal Research and Training Institute यांनी दिलेल्या संदर्भानुसार, भारतात १०.४ कोटींपेक्षा अधिक अनुसूचित जमातींची लोकसंख्या होती आणि ही लोकसंख्या सुमारे ७०५ अधिसूचित जमातींमध्ये विभागलेली आहे. महाराष्ट्रात अनुसूचित जमातींची संख्या १.०५ कोटी, म्हणजे राज्याच्या लोकसंख्येच्या ९.३५% आहे. परंतु या आकड्यामागे असलेले जीवन एकसारखे नाही.पालघरचा वारली, नंदुरबारचा भिल्ल, गडचिरोलीचा गोंड, अमरावतीच्या मेळघाटातील कोरकू, रायगड-पुणे परिसरातील कातकरी—प्रत्येकाची सामाजिक रचना, भाषा, अर्थव्यवस्था, जंगलाशी नाते आणि विकासाच्या समस्या वेगळ्या आहेत. मुख्य शब्द

जगाशी असलेले ज्ञानसंबंध, स्थलांतर, स्त्रियांचे अदृश्य श्रम, भाषा, वनहक्क, आधुनिक शिक्षणातील संक्रमण आणि शासनाच्या योजनांमधील 'अंमलबजावणीची दरी'

आदिवासी शब्दाची व्याप्ती: संकल्पना आणि वास्तव 'आदिवासी' या एका शब्दामागे किती जग दडले आहे हे पहावयाचे झाल्यास, महाराष्ट्रात आदिवासी लोकसंख्या विशेषतः पालघर, नाशिक, धुळे, नंदुरबार, अमरावती, यवतमाळ, गडचिरोली, चंद्रपूर, ठाणे आदी जिल्ह्यांत मोठ्या प्रमाणात आहे. उदाहरणार्थ, २०११ च्या आकडेवारीनुसार:

जिल्हा आदिवासी लोकसंख्येचे प्रमाण

पालघर - 37.39%

नाशिक- 25.61%

धुळे- 31.55%

महाराष्ट्र एकूण - 9.35%

आदिवासींचे वास्तव

म्हणजेच महाराष्ट्रातील आदिवासी प्रश्न हा केवळ 'गरीबीचा प्रश्न' नाही. तो भौगोलिक अलगाव + जमीन + जंगल + भाषा + आरोग्य + शिक्षण + रोजगार + स्थलांतर + सांस्कृतिक अस्मिता यांचा एकत्रित प्रश्न आहे.आदिवासींचे 'ज्ञान' पुढारलेल्या समाजाला माहित आहे का हा प्रश्नही महत्त्वाचा आहे. कोणत्या निकषांवर आपण आदिवासींना मागासलेले म्हणतो ते पाहणेही महत्त्वाचे आहे. केवळ शाळा महाविद्यालयात न गेलेल्या आणि आपल्यासारखी नोकरी किंवा उद्योग धंदा न करणाऱ्या तसेच आधुनिक तंत्रज्ञान न वापरणाऱ्या आदिवासींना आपण मागासलेले समजतो. परंतु आदिवासी समाजाकडे जंगल, औषधी वनस्पती, पाणी, माती, ऋतू, बी-बियाणे आणि जैवविविधता याविषयी पिढ्यान्पिढ्या संचित झालेले स्थानिक ज्ञान आहे.उदाहरणार्थ, गडचिरोलीतील गोंड समाज

जंगलातील बांबू, तेंदूपत्ता, मोहफूल, लाख, मध, विविध कंद-मुळे आणि औषधी वनस्पतींशी संबंधित ज्ञान वापरतो.पण आधुनिक अर्थव्यवस्था त्या ज्ञानाला अनेकदा 'उत्पादन' म्हणून पाहते, ज्ञानाची मालकी म्हणून पाहत नाही.जंगलातून औषध मिळते, पण त्या औषधी वनस्पतीची माहिती जपणाऱ्या व्यक्तीला त्याचे बौद्धिक मूल्य मिळते का?

आदिवासी विकासाचा पुढचा टप्पा केवळ घर, रस्ता आणि वीज देण्यात नसून स्थानिक ज्ञानाचे दस्तऐवजीकरण, संरक्षण आणि त्यातून आदिवासींना आर्थिक लाभ मिळवून देण्यात आहे. जंगल म्हणजे केवळ जमीन नाही. ते आदिवासींचे सामाजिक विश्व आहे. वनाधिकार कायदा, २००६ ने जंगलावर अवलंबून असलेल्या आदिवासी आणि इतर पारंपरिक वननिवासींच्या हक्कांना कायदेशीर मान्यता देण्याचा प्रयत्न केला आहे. Tribal Affairs मध्ये नमूद केल्याप्रमाणे, यामध्ये वैयक्तिक वनहक्काबरोबरच सामुदायिक वनहक्क (Community Forest Rights) ही अत्यंत महत्त्वाची संकल्पना आहे. याचा अर्थ असा की प्रश्न केवळ "ही जमीन कोणाची?"इतकाच नाही. तर "या जंगलाचे व्यवस्थापन कोण करणार?"हा देखील आहे. डिसेंबर २०२५ पर्यंतच्या केंद्र सरकारच्या माहितीनुसार FRA अंतर्गत ४४,३३,९४० दावे निकाली काढले गेले होते, म्हणजे ८५.४०% दाव्यांवर निर्णय झाला होता, त्यात वैयक्तिक आणि सामुदायिक दोन्ही दावे समाविष्ट आहेत. (Press Information Bureau)ही मोठी प्रगती आहे. पण 'दावा निकाली काढणे' आणि 'प्रत्यक्ष हक्काचा उपयोग होणे' या दोन वेगळ्या गोष्टी आहेत.आज आदिवासी स्त्री ही विकासाच्या चर्चेतील सर्वांत अदृश्य चेहरा आहे.

आदिवासी स्त्री ही केवळ कुटुंबाची सदस्य नाही. ती जंगलातून अन्न आणि इंधन आणते, पाणी आणते, शेतीत काम करते, घर सांभाळते, मुलांचे संगोपन करते, लघुवनोत्पादन गोळा करते आणि अनेकदा स्थलांतराच्या काळातही मजुरी करते. म्हणून तिच्या श्रमाचा मोठा भाग GDP किंवा औपचारिक रोजगाराच्या आकडेवारीत दिसत नाही. महाराष्ट्रातील ३,९२३ आदिवासी महिलांच्या NFHS-4 आधारित अभ्यासात त्यांच्या पोषणस्थितीत लक्षणीय भौगोलिक तफावत आढळली. (ScienceDirect)

यामुळे आदिवासी महिलांचा प्रश्न केवळ 'महिला सक्षमीकरण' म्हणून पाहण्यापेक्षा पोषण + जमीनहक्क + रोजगार + शिक्षण + आरोग्य + सुरक्षित स्थलांतर या एकत्रित चौकटीत पाहणे आवश्यक आहे. महाराष्ट्रातील अमरावती जिल्ह्यातील धारणी आणि चिखलदरा तालुक्यांचा मेळघाट हा आदिवासी आरोग्याच्या चर्चेतील महत्त्वाचा प्रदेश आहे. एका वैज्ञानिक अभ्यासात मेळघाटातील १४ गावांमध्ये समुदायाधारित कुपोषण व्यवस्थापनाचा अभ्यास करण्यात आला.(ScienceDirect) दुसऱ्या अभ्यासात धारणी भागातील १–५ वर्षांच्या मुलांमध्ये ५४% मुले मध्यम ते गंभीर कमी वजनाची असल्याचे आढळले. प्रौढांमध्येही कुपोषणाची समस्या नोंदवली गेली. कुपोषण हा केवळ अन्नाचा प्रश्न नाही. तो जमिनीचा + रोजगाराचा + मातृआरोग्याचा + पाण्याचा + शिक्षणाचा + आरोग्यसेवेच्या उपलब्धतेचा + वाहतुकीचा प्रश्न आहे.म्हणून फक्त पोषण आहार वाढवून कुपोषण संपणार नाही.२०२५–२६ मध्येही मेळघाट आपल्याला अस्वस्थ करणारे प्रश्न विचारतो.

अलीकडील न्यायालयीन सुनावण्यांमध्ये मेळघाटातील आदिवासी बालमृत्यू आणि कुपोषणाबाबत गंभीर चिंता व्यक्त झाली. २०२५ मध्ये जून ते नोव्हेंबर या काळात ६५ सहा महिन्यांखालील बालकांच्या मृत्यूचा मुद्दा न्यायालयासमोर आला. (The Times of India) याहूनही गंभीर बाब म्हणजे न्यायालयीन चर्चेत आरोग्य केंद्रांतील मनुष्यबळ, डॉक्टरांची उपलब्धता, रस्ते, वाहतूक आणि कुपोषणाच्या मूळ कारणांकडे लक्ष वेधले गेले. याचा अर्थ शासनाच्या योजना नाहीत असे नाही.योजना आहेत. प्रश्न त्यांच्या शेवटच्या टप्प्यातील पोहोच आणि सातत्याचा आहे.

आदिवासी युवक आणि 'दोन जगांमध्ये अडकलेली' पिढी हा प्रश्न हे ऐरणीवर आहे. आजचा आदिवासी युवक मोबाईल वापरतो, सोशल मीडिया वापरतो, स्पर्धा परीक्षा देतो, शहरात शिक्षण घेतो.परंतु दुसऱ्या बाजूला त्याची मातृभाषा शाळेत नाही,त्याचे पारंपरिक ज्ञान रोजगारात रूपांतरित झालेले नाही,आणि आधुनिक कौशल्यांपर्यंत त्याची पोहोच मर्यादित आहे.हीच संक्रमणाची अवस्था आहे.एका बाजूला वारली चित्रकला, गोंडी कला, लोकनृत्य, लोककथा, पारंपरिक औषधज्ञान यांचे जागतिकीकरण होत आहे. पण दुसऱ्या बाजूला त्या संस्कृतीचा मूळ वाहक आर्थिकदृष्ट्या मागे राहिला आहे.हा विरोधाभास समजून घेणे आवश्यक आहे.

स्थलांतर : रोजगार की आधुनिक 'मजुरीची गुलामी'?

नंदुरबार, धुळे आणि पालघरच्या काही आदिवासी भागांत हंगामी स्थलांतर ही अर्थव्यवस्थेची वस्तुस्थिती आहे. विशेषतः ऊसतोडणी, बांधकाम आणि कृषिमजुरीसाठी कुटुंबांचे स्थलांतर होते. यामध्ये मुलांचे शिक्षण खंडित होते, महिलांची सुरक्षितता धोक्यात येऊ शकते आणि कंत्राटी मजुरीच्या व्यवस्थेत कर्ज व आगाऊ रकमेचे चक्र निर्माण होऊ शकते. म्हणून आदिवासी स्थलांतराकडे फक्त 'त्यांना गावात रोजगार द्या' असे पाहणे अपुरे आहे.गरज आहे - पोर्टेबल रेशन, पोर्टेबल शिक्षण, आरोग्याची पोर्टेबिलिटी, कामगार नोंदणी आणि स्थलांतरित महिलांचे संरक्षण या सर्व बाबतीत शासनाचे प्रयत्न पाहिल्यास आश्वासनापासून योजनांपर्यंत अनेक बाबतीत उदासीनता दिसते. आदिवासी योजनांचे वास्तव

आज केंद्र आणि राज्य सरकारच्या पातळीवर अनेक महत्त्वाचे कार्यक्रम आहेत. २०२३–२४ मध्ये सुरू करण्यात आलेल्या प्रधानमंत्री जनजातीय आदिवासी न्याय महाअभियान (PM-JANMAN) चा उद्देश देशातील ७५ विशेषतः असुरक्षित आदिवासी समूह (PVTGs) यांच्या सामाजिक-आर्थिक विकासाला गती देणे आहे. या मिशनमध्ये घर, पिण्याचे पाणी, शिक्षण, आरोग्य, पोषण, रस्ते, दूरसंचार, वीज आणि शाश्वत उपजीविका यांचा समावेश आहे. हे १८ राज्ये आणि एका केंद्रशासित प्रदेशातील PVTG समुदायांसाठी आहे. (Tribal Affairs) धरती आबा जनजातीय ग्राम उत्कर्ष अभियान हे २ ऑक्टोबर २०२४ रोजी सुरू करण्यात आले.त्याअंतर्गत १७ मंत्रालयांच्या २५ हस्तक्षेपांद्वारे ६३,८४३ गावांमध्ये पायाभूत सुविधा, आरोग्य, शिक्षण, अंगणवाडी आणि उपजीविकेतील तफावत भरून काढण्याचे उद्दिष्ट आहे. सरकारच्या माहितीनुसार याचा लाभ ५ कोटींपेक्षा अधिक आदिवासींना अपेक्षित आहे. एकलव्य मॉडेल निवासी शाळा ही आदिवासी विद्यार्थ्यांना गुणवत्तापूर्ण निवासी शिक्षण देण्यासाठी महत्त्वाची व्यवस्था आहे. प्रत्येक शाळेची नियोजित क्षमता ४८० विद्यार्थी आहे.

(Tribal Affairs) अपेक्षा

आदिवासींमध्ये बदलांकडे पुढील दृष्टीनेही पाहता येते.

१. शिक्षणाची वाढती आकांक्षा आदिवासी कुटुंबे आता मुलांच्या शिक्षणाला अधिक महत्त्व देत आहेत. २. उच्च शिक्षणात प्रवेश पहिल्या पिढीतील पदवीधर, डॉक्टर, अभियंते, शिक्षक, प्रशासकीय अधिकारी आणि संशोधक निर्माण होत आहेत.

३. वनहक्क कायद्यामुळे कायदेशीर मान्यता जंगलावरील पारंपरिक हक्कांना कायदेशीर चौकट मिळाली.

४. राजकीय प्रतिनिधित्व आरक्षणामुळे ग्रामपंचायत ते संसदेपर्यंत आदिवासी नेतृत्व निर्माण झाले.

५. डिजिटल प्रवेश मोबाईल आणि डिजिटल सेवांमुळे सरकारी योजनांशी जोडले जाण्याची शक्यता वाढली आहे.

६. स्थानिक ज्ञानाला नव्याने महत्त्व जैवविविधता, सेंद्रिय शेती, औषधी वनस्पती आणि पारंपरिक ज्ञानाकडे नव्या दृष्टीने पाहिले जात आहे.

आदिवासींबाबत वर्तमान काळातील सर्वात महत्त्वाचा प्रश्न हा 'Scheme–Outcome Gap' हा आहे. शासनाकडे योजना आहेत. पण योजना -निधी - अधिकारी - गाव - लाभार्थी या साखळीतील प्रत्येक टप्प्यावर अडथळे निर्माण झाले तर शेवटच्या व्यक्तीपर्यंत विकास पोहोचत नाही. उदाहरणार्थ, एखाद्या दुर्गम पाड्यावर शाळा आहे, पण शिक्षक

नाही. आरोग्य केंद्र आहे, पण डॉक्टर नियमित नाही. रस्ता आहे, पण पावसाळ्यात बंद होतो. मोबाईल नेटवर्क आहे, पण डिजिटल साक्षरता नाही. वनहक्क कायदा आहे, पण दावा प्रक्रियेतील कागदपत्रे आणि नकाशांची अडचण आहे. म्हणून 'सरकारने किती पैसा खर्च केला?' या प्रश्नाबरोबरच त्या पैशामुळे आदिवासी कुटुंबाच्या जीवनात नेमका काय बदल झाला?हा प्रश्न विचारणे आवश्यक आहे.

आदिवासींबाबत आजचा सर्वांत मोठा प्रश्न : विकास की विस्थापन?

खनिज, धरणे, रस्ते, औद्योगिक प्रकल्प आणि मोठ्या पायाभूत सुविधांमुळे आदिवासी प्रदेशांमध्ये विकासाच्या संधी निर्माण होतात, पण त्याचवेळी जमीन, जंगल, संस्कृती आणि समुदायाचे विस्थापन होण्याचा धोका असतो. अगदी अलीकडे केन-बेतवा नदीजोड प्रकल्पामुळे मध्य प्रदेशातील आदिवासींच्या संभाव्य विस्थापनाबाबतच्या तक्रारी केंद्र सरकारसमोर आल्या आणि त्या राज्य सरकारकडे पुढील कार्यवाहीसाठी पाठवण्यात आल्या. यातून एक मूलभूत प्रश्न उभा राहतो.

ज्या विकासासाठी जमीन घेतली जाते, त्या विकासाचा लाभ ज्यांची जमीन जाते त्यांना किती मिळतो? आदिवासी विकासाची नवी दिशा काय असावी?माझ्या मते पुढील सात सूत्रे अत्यंत महत्त्वाची आहेत.

१. Welfare पासून Empowerment कडे आदिवासींना केवळ लाभार्थी न समजता निर्णय प्रक्रियेतील भागीदार करणे.

२. जंगलातून उपजीविका नव्हे,जंगलासह उपजीविका. लघुवनोत्पादनाला मूल्यवर्धन करून स्थानिक प्रक्रिया उद्योग उभे करणे.

३. मातृभाषेतील प्राथमिक शिक्षण गोंडी, वारली, कोरकू, भिली इत्यादी भाषांच्या माध्यमातून सुरुवातीचे शिक्षण अधिक प्रभावी करण्याचा प्रयत्न.

४. आदिवासी महिलांना जमीन आणि आर्थिक अधिकार महिला बचतगटांबरोबरच जमीनहक्क, उत्पादन, बाजारपेठ आणि निर्णयक्षमता वाढवणे.

५. स्थलांतरित मुलांसाठी पोर्टेबल शिक्षण कुटुंब ऊसतोडणीसाठी गेले तरी मुलाचे शिक्षण थांबू नये.

६. आरोग्यव्यवस्थेत 'last mile' मजबूत करणे मोबाईल मेडिकल युनिट, प्रशिक्षित स्थानिक आरोग्य कार्यकर्ते, टेलिमेडिसिन, पोषण आणि मातृआरोग्य यांचे एकत्रीकरण.

७. आदिवासी ज्ञानाचे बौद्धिक संपदा हक्क स्थानिक औषधी वनस्पती, बी-बियाणे, कला, हस्तकला आणि पारंपरिक ज्ञानातून निर्माण होणाऱ्या आर्थिक मूल्याचा हिस्सा मूळ समुदायाला मिळणे.

निष्कर्ष

आदिवासींना विकासाची गरज आहे, पण त्यांच्या अस्मितेची किंमत देऊन नव्हे. आदिवासी विकासाचा प्रश्न आपण अनेकदा दोन टोकांमध्ये पाहतो. 'आदिवासी मागास आहेत 'किंवा 'आदिवासींचे पारंपरिक जीवन तसेच ठेवले पाहिजे. 'दोन्ही दृष्टिकोन अपुरे आहेत. आदिवासींना चांगले शिक्षण हवे आहे. चांगले आरोग्य हवे आहे. रस्ते हवे आहेत. इंटरनेट हवे आहे. रोजगार हवा आहे. उच्च शिक्षण हवे आहे. पण त्याच वेळी त्यांना आपली जमीन, जंगल, भाषा, संस्कृती आणि निर्णयाचा अधिकारही हवा आहे.म्हणून खरी विकासाची संकल्पना अशी असली पाहिजे की आदिवासींचा विकास त्यांच्या सहभागाने व्हायला हवा.विश्व आदिवासी दिवस आपल्याला याच गोष्टीची आठवण करून देतो.

जंगल वाचवायचे असेल तर केवळ झाडे वाचवू नका, झाडांशी नाते जपणारा माणूसही वाचवा.आदिवासींच्या जीवनाकडे दयेने पाहण्याची वेळ संपली आहे. आता त्यांच्या ज्ञानाकडे, अधिकारांकडे आणि योगदानाकडे समानतेच्या नजरेने पाहण्याची वेळ आली आहे.

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मराठी साहित्य विश्वात कादंबरी साहित्यप्रकाराला अनन्यसाधारण महत्त्व आहे. साहित्यातून समाजाचे अनेक पैलू चित्रित होत असतात. कादंबरीत कल्पनाविलासबरोबर वास्तववाद येताना दिसतो. मानवी जीवनातील सुख-दुःख, समस्या व संघर्ष कादंबरीत आलेले दिसतात. नागनाथ पाटील लिखित 'कोंडणातलं जिणं' ही विनाअनुदानित शिक्षण संस्कृतीच्या जात्यात भरडल्या गेलेल्या सुशिक्षितांच्या जीवनाचा सर्वांगीण वेध घेणारी वास्तववादी कादंबरी आहे. कादंबरीचा नायक 'रामा गेणू पवार' हा अत्यंत कष्टाने एम.ए. पर्यंत शिक्षण घेऊन विद्यापीठात प्रथम येतो. त्यामुळे घरात सर्वजण आनंदी होतात. नोकरीची अपेक्षा करतात. अनेक ठिकाणी अर्ज करूनही त्याला नोकरी लवकर भेटत नाही. काही दिवसांनी विनाअनुदानित महाविद्यालयात प्राध्यापकाची नोकरी मिळते. तुटपुंज्या मानधनावर त्याला समाधान मानावे लागते. प्रत्येक गोष्टीसाठी, अर्ज भरण्यासाठी त्याला वडिलांकडे पैसे मागावे लागतात. त्यावेळी ते त्याच्यावर प्रचंड चिडतात. 'शिक्षणापेक्षा शेतीकाम बरे' असे त्यांना वाटते. आदिवासी भागामध्ये नोकरी असल्यामुळे रामा लग्नानंतर पत्नीला सोबत घेऊन जाऊ शकत नाही. त्यामुळे त्याला वैवाहिक संघर्षाला सामोरे जावे लागते. नोकरीच्या ठिकाणी वेळेवर मानधन मिळत नसल्याने उधार-उसनवार करून जीवन जगावे लागते.

महाविद्यालयातील गटबाजी व राजकारण या समस्यांमुळे प्राध्यापकांचे हाल होतात. लहरी निसर्ग, सावकारशाही, कर्जबाजारीपणा, सुशिक्षित बेरोजगारांच्या समस्या, महिलांच्या समस्या, महाविद्यालयांचे होणारे खाजगीकरण, नक्षलवाद, भ्रष्टाचार, अंधश्रद्धा, विनाअनुदानित प्राध्यापकांचे शोषण, वेठबिगारी, दुष्काळ, उपासमार अशा अनेक समस्या कादंबरीत आलेल्या आहेत.

महाराष्ट्रातील सर्व विनाअनुदानित महाविद्यालयातील प्राध्यापक मुंबईला उपोषण करतात व अनुदान मिळवण्यासाठी प्रयत्न करतात. त्यामुळे सरकारचे अनुदान जाहीर होते. त्यानंतरही सहा महिने अर्धा पगार प्राध्यापकांना मिळतो सहा महिन्याचा अर्धा पगार व मागील वर्षाचा पूर्ण पगार म्हणजे २५ लाख रुपये महाविद्यालयाच्या इमारतीसाठी वापरायचे असे ठरले जाते. संस्था अध्यक्ष बापूसाहेब स्वतःची पाच एकर जमीन कॉलेजसाठी देतात. हे सर्व मान्य करून 'इथून पुढे एक रुपयाही कोणाला खाऊ देणार नाही' असे सर्वजण मान्य करतात. त्यामुळे सर्वांना समाधान मिळते. कोंडवाडा संपला होता. रामा व त्याचे सहकारी प्राध्यापक खुश होतात. सर्वांना पुनर्जन्म मिळाल्यासारखे वाटते. सर्वांच्या आयुष्याची नवीन पहाट सुरू होते.

'कोंडणातलं जिणं' ही नागनाथ पाटील यांची कादंबरी १९९५ या वर्षात प्रकाशित झाली. विनाअनुदानित शिक्षण संस्कृतीच्या जात्यात भरडल्या गेलेल्या उच्चशिक्षित प्राध्यापकांचा जीवन संघर्ष १७५ पानांमध्ये अत्यंत समर्पकपणे मांडला आहे. प्रामुख्याने ही कादंबरी विनाअनुदानित महाविद्यालयातील प्राध्यापकांची होणारी कुचंबना, शोषण, होरपळ व्यक्त करताना दिसते. 'रामा गेनू पवार' हा कादंबरीचा नायक असतो.

कादंबरीची सुरुवात रामा विद्यापीठात प्रथम येतो येथून होते त्यानंतर तो नोकरीसाठी अनेक ठिकाणी अर्ज, मुलाखती देतो. या सर्व खर्चासाठी त्याला वडिलांकडे पैसे मागावे लागतात. त्यामुळे ती त्याचे वडील त्याच्यावर सतत चिडत राहतात. मुलगा विद्यापीठात प्रथम आल्यामुळे आई बोललेला नवस फेडून देवाचे आभार मानते. बहीण निर्मला, भाऊ रंगा, आई व वडील हे सर्वजण शेतात राबराब राबतात. दुष्काळ, बेभरवशाचा निसर्ग, जुनी बियाणे यामुळे रात्रंदिवस कष्ट करूनही शेतात जास्त उत्पन्न निघत नाही. रामाला रिक्षा चालवणाऱ्या मित्राचा हेवा वाटतो. रामाचे सर ओळखीचे पत्र रामाला देतात. महाविद्यालयात नोकरीसाठी शेती विकून डोनेशन भरण्याचे सुचवतात. त्यामुळे रामा नोकरीचे स्वप्न रंगवतो महिन्याच्या तारखेला पगार मिळेल, आप्पांच्या शिव्या मिळणार नाहीत असे अनेक विचार रामा करत राहतो. मिस्टर नोकरीसाठी प्रयत्न करतो पण काहीच उपयोग होत नाही. त्याचा मित्र दिन्या त्याला नोकरी विश्वातील डोनेशन पद्धतीचे भीषण वास्तव, राजकारण, स्वार्थी वृत्ती उदाहरणासह स्पष्ट करून

सांगतो. त्याला सतत जागरूक करतो. रामाचे समाजभान व वास्तवभान जागृत करण्यात मोलाचा वाटा असतो. नोकरी मिळत नसल्याने आप्पा रामाला दुकानात मुनीम म्हणून नोकरी करण्याचे सुचवतात. उच्चशिक्षित मुलाने दुकानात नोकरी करणे व शेती करणे आईला पटत नाही. काही दिवसांनी आदिवासी भागातील एका विनाअनुदानित महाविद्यालयात रामाला नोकरी मिळते. मानधन तत्त्वावर काम करावे लागते. दरमहा सातशे रुपये पगार मिळतो. तरीही सर्वजण खुश असतात. खूप दिवसांनी प्रयत्न करून नोकरी मिळाल्याने सर्वजण आनंदी होतात. पाहुण्यांना व इतर सर्व लोकांना तीन हजार पगार असल्याचे सांगावे असे आप्पांना वाटते. दुसऱ्याच दिवशी आई सत्यनारायणाची पूजा घालते. नोकरी मिळाल्यानंतर आप्पा रामाला गोड बोलतात. रंगावर मात्र चिडत राहतात. दहावी नापास असलेल्या मुलीशी रामाचा विवाह ठरवला जातो. कारण ती श्रीमंत असल्याने हुंडा जास्त देऊ शकत होती. रामाला आलेला हुंडा घेऊन निर्मला बहिणीचे लग्न केले जाते.

विनाअनुदानित महाविद्यालयात रामाला सहा वर्षे पगार मिळत नाही सातव्या वर्षी अनुदान मिळणार असते. तोपर्यंत सातशे रुपये महिना एवढ्या अत्यल्प पगारावर त्याला स्वतःचा खर्च भागवावा लागतो. रामा व त्याचे सहकारी भानगडे, कांबळे, वाघमारे सर यांचे संस्थाचालक शोषण करतात. वेळेवर पगार देत नाहीत पगारी ऐवजी धान्य देतात उन्हाळ्याच्या सुट्टीचा दोन महिन्यांचा पगार देत नाहीत तरीही प्राध्यापकाच्या खोट्या प्रतिष्ठित सर्वजण जगतात व संस्थाचालक व प्राचार्यांची गुलामी सहन करतात. कॉपी प्रकरणात तर कांबळे सरांना शिवीगाळ व मारहाण सहन करावी लागते तरीही आई व बहिणीसाठी ते सर्वकाही सहन करतात.

स्वाभिमानाचे धडे देणारे कांबळे सर 'जीवनाचे सार म्हणजे गुलामगिरी', असे भयानक वक्तव्य सहकाऱ्यांसमोर करतात. खाजगीकरणामुळे संस्थाचालक व राजकारणी लोक महाविद्यालयांचे सर्व नियम हातात घेतात. डोनेशन घेऊन सुशिक्षित बेरोजगारांची लूट करतात. प्राचार्यांची पदलालसा राखणारे प्रा. राजू मानावार गुणात्मक वाढीपेक्षा संख्यात्मक वाढीलाच महत्त्व देतात. प्रा. खान सर यांना पदावरून दूर करण्यासाठी प्रयत्न करतात. प्राध्यापकांना गुलामगिरी, शोषण, आर्थिक पिळवणूक या समस्यांना सामोरे जावे लागते. यासंदर्भात डॉ. नरसिंग कदम म्हणतात की, "माणसाचे जीवन गुलामगिरीसारखे आहे. जीवनात जन्मतः गुलामगिरी माणसाच्या सोबत आलेली असते. अशा अनेक समस्या लेखकांनी वास्तवतेच्या पातळीवरून मांडल्या आहेत."१

महाराष्ट्रात असणाऱ्या सर्व विनाअनुदानित महाविद्यालयातील प्राध्यापक अनुदान मिळवण्यासाठी मुंबईला उपोषण करतात. त्यानंतर सरकारचे अनुदान जाहीर होते. पण सहा महिने अर्धा पगार मिळणार होता सहा महिन्याचा अर्धा पगार व मागील वर्षाचा संपूर्ण पगार म्हणजे एकूण २५ लाख रुपये इमारतीसाठी वापरायचे असे ठरते. संस्थाध्यक्ष बापूसाहेब स्वतःची पाच एकर जमीन महाविद्यालयाच्या बांधकामासाठी देतात. हे सर्व मान्य करून इथून पुढे एक रुपयाही कोणाला न देण्याचे सर्व प्राध्यापक ठरवतात. सर्वांच्या आयुष्यातील कोंडवाडा भंगला होता. त्यामुळे रामा व त्याचे सहकारी प्राध्यापक आनंदित होतात. सर्वांना पुनर्जन्म झाल्यासारखे वाटते. सर्वांच्या आयुष्याची सोनेरी पहाट सुरू होते.

विनाअनुदानित महाविद्यालयात चालणाऱ्या अनेक गैरप्रकारांवर या कादंबरीने प्रकाश टाकला असून उच्चशिक्षण क्षेत्रातील प्राध्यापकांच्या जीवनाचे धिंडवडे कादंबरीतून समोर आल्याचे दिसते. कादंबरीत वास्तववादासोबत अनेक भाषिक वैशिष्ट्ये आलेली आहेत. भाषाद्वित्त्व व द्विभाषिकता यांचा अतिशय सुंदर प्रत्यय कादंबरीत आलेला दिसतो. रामा घरात व गावाकडे मराठवाडी बोलीभाषेचा वापर करतो. नोकरीच्या ठिकाणी व मित्रांसोबत प्रमाणभाषेत बोलतो. रामा मनात बोलत असतानाही अधिकाधिक प्रमाणात प्रमाणभाषा वापरतो. नोकरीच्या गावात राहताना पहिल्या काही सुरुवातीच्या दिवसात रामा विचार सांगतो की, "मी कविता मन लावून शिकवतो. माझं शिकवणं ग्रामीण भागातल्या विद्यार्थ्यांना आवडतं... विद्यार्थ्यांच्या चेहऱ्यावर तृप्ती दिसते... माझ्याही मनाला समाधान लाभते. खेड्यातील मुलं अधिक जवळ येतात... त्यांना योग्य दिशा दाखवतो... वर्गात शिकवताना विषयाशी एकरूप असतो... माझं स्वतंत्र अस्तित्त्वच राहत नाही... इतका शिकवण्यात तल्लीन होतो..."२ कादंबरीत काही प्रमाणात द्वैभाषिकता देखील आढळून येते. हिंदी-मराठी भाषा संपर्क येथे द्वैभाषिकता निर्माण होते. काव्यप्रतिमा व अलंकार यामुळे कादंबरीचे भाषिक सौंदर्य वाढले आहे. कादंबरीतील व्यक्तिरेखा विविध गुण व अवगुणांसहित मांडलेल्या आहेत.

कादंबरीत बेरोजगारीची समस्या भीषणतेने जाणवते. रामा व त्याच्या मित्रांना नोकरीसाठी अनेक समस्यांना तोंड द्यावे लागते. यासंदर्भात डॉ. नरसिंग कदम म्हणतात की, "शिक्षणसंस्था चालवणाऱ्या लोकांचे शिक्षणात अज्ञान

असूनही उच्चशिक्षितांना त्यांनी निर्माण केलेल्या कोंडवाड्यात नोकरीच्या निमित्ताने स्वतःला कोंडून घ्यावे लागते. अशा अज्ञानी लोकांच्या ताब्यात नोकरी करताना अनेक समस्यांना तोंड द्यावे लागते."३

विनाअनुदानित प्राध्यापकांच्या समस्या व संघर्ष मांडणारी नागनाथ पाटील लिखित 'कोंडणातलं जिणं' ही अत्यंत वास्तववादी कादंबरी असून समाजभान जागृत करणारी आहे.

निष्कर्ष :

१. सुशिक्षित बेरोजगारांना उच्चशिक्षण घेऊनही नोकरी मिळवण्यासाठी संघर्ष करावा लागतो.

२. विनाअनुदानित प्राध्यापकांच्या शोषणाच्या अनेक समस्या कादंबरीतून मांडल्या आहेत.

३. खाजगीकरणाच्या धोरणाचे विपरीत परिणाम उदाहरणासह स्पष्ट केले आहेत.

४. खोटी प्रतिष्ठा व वास्तव जीवन यामुळे होणारा प्राध्यापकांचा कोंडवाडा स्पष्ट केला आहे.

५. सुशिक्षित बेरोजगारांच्या जीवनातील आर्थिक, मानसिक, कौटुंबिक संघर्ष कादंबरीत सविस्तरपणे मांडला आहे.

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महाराष्ट्रातील सार्वजनिक धोरण आणि कल्याण : एक चिकित्सक अभ्यास

डॉ. जयश्री छगनलाल साळुंखे

सहयोगी प्राध्यापक (राज्यशास्त्र)

प्रस्तावना

आधुनिक लोकशाही राज्यव्यवस्थेमध्ये शासनाची भूमिका केवळ कायदा व सुव्यवस्था राखण्यापुरती मर्यादित राहिलेली नाही. नागरिकांच्या सामाजिक, आर्थिक, शैक्षणिक आणि आरोग्यविषयक गरजा पूर्ण करणे, दुर्बल घटकांचे संरक्षण करणे, समान संधी उपलब्ध करून देणे आणि सामाजिक न्याय प्रस्थापित करणे हीदेखील शासनाची महत्त्वाची जबाबदारी आहे. या उद्दिष्टांच्या पूर्ततेसाठी शासनाकडून आखण्यात येणाऱ्या योजना, कार्यक्रम, कायदे, प्रशासकीय निर्णय आणि आर्थिक उपाययोजनांना व्यापक अर्थाने सार्वजनिक धोरण असे म्हणता येते. सार्वजनिक धोरण हे शासनाच्या उद्दिष्टांना प्रत्यक्ष सामाजिक जीवनाशी जोडणारे माध्यम आहे.

भारतीय राज्यघटनेच्या उद्देशिकेमध्ये सामाजिक, आर्थिक आणि राजकीय न्याय तसेच दर्जाची आणि संधीची समानता प्रस्थापित करण्याचे उद्दिष्ट स्पष्ट करण्यात आले आहे.[१] त्यामुळे भारतातील कल्याणकारी धोरणांची पायाभरणी केवळ शासनाच्या प्रशासकीय इच्छेवर आधारित नसून ती घटनात्मक मूल्यांशी निगडित आहे. राज्यघटनेतील मूलभूत अधिकार आणि राज्याच्या धोरणनिर्देशक तत्त्वांमधून सामाजिक कल्याण, आर्थिक न्याय आणि मानवी प्रतिष्ठेला विशेष स्थान देण्यात आले आहे.

महाराष्ट्राच्या संदर्भात सार्वजनिक धोरणाचा अभ्यास अधिक महत्त्वाचा ठरतो. महाराष्ट्र हे औद्योगिक, कृषी, शहरी आणि ग्रामीण अशा विविध स्वरूपाच्या अर्थव्यवस्थेचे राज्य आहे. मुंबई, पुणे, ठाणे, नागपूर यांसारख्या विकसित शहरी भागांसोबतच विदर्भ, मराठवाडा, खानदेश, कोकण आणि आदिवासीबहुल क्षेत्रांमध्ये सामाजिक व आर्थिक परिस्थितीत लक्षणीय फरक आढळतो. त्यामुळे संपूर्ण राज्यासाठी समान धोरण आखतानाच स्थानिक आणि प्रादेशिक गरजांचाही विचार करणे आवश्यक ठरते.

सार्वजनिक धोरणाची घटनात्मक पार्श्वभूमी

भारतीय राज्यघटनेतील कलम १४ कायद्यापुढे समानता आणि कायद्याचे समान संरक्षण याची हमी देते.[२] कलम १५ आणि १६ सामाजिक व शैक्षणिकदृष्ट्या मागास घटक तसेच अनुसूचित जाती आणि अनुसूचित जमातींच्या उन्नतीसाठी विशेष उपाययोजनांना घटनात्मक आधार देतात.[३] कलम २१ नागरिकांच्या जीवन व वैयक्तिक स्वातंत्र्याचे संरक्षण करते. सर्वोच्च न्यायालयाने विविध निर्णयांतून 'जीवन' या संकल्पनेचा अर्थ केवळ शारीरिक अस्तित्वापुरता मर्यादित न ठेवता मानवी प्रतिष्ठेशी संबंधित व्यापक अर्थाने विकसित केला आहे.[४]

राज्याच्या धोरणनिर्देशक तत्त्वांना महाराष्ट्रातील कल्याणकारी धोरणांच्या दृष्टीने विशेष महत्त्व आहे. कलम ३८ सामाजिक, आर्थिक आणि राजकीय न्यायावर आधारित सामाजिक व्यवस्था निर्माण करण्याचे निर्देश देते. कलम ३९ मध्ये नागरिकांना उपजीविकेची पर्याप्त साधने, संसाधनांचे न्याय्य वितरण आणि आर्थिक विषमता कमी करण्याबाबत राज्याची भूमिका स्पष्ट केली आहे.[५] कलम ४१ मध्ये काम, शिक्षण आणि विशिष्ट परिस्थितीत सार्वजनिक सहाय्याची तरतूद करण्याच्या दिशेने प्रयत्न करण्याचे निर्देश आहेत, तर कलम ४२ मध्ये न्याय्य व मानवी कामाच्या

परिस्थिती आणि प्रसूती सहाय्याचा उल्लेख आहे.[6] कलम ४७ मध्ये पोषणाचा स्तर, जीवनमान आणि सार्वजनिक आरोग्य सुधारण्याची जबाबदारी राज्यावर सोपविण्यात आली आहे.[7]

यावरून स्पष्ट होते की महाराष्ट्रातील कल्याणकारी धोरण हे केवळ आर्थिक मदतीचे साधन नसून सामाजिक न्याय आणि घटनात्मक उद्दिष्टांची अंमलबजावणी करण्याचे माध्यम आहे.

महाराष्ट्रातील कल्याणकारी धोरणाचे स्वरूप

महाराष्ट्र शासनाने सामाजिक न्याय, शिक्षण, आरोग्य, महिला व बालकल्याण, कृषी, ग्रामीण विकास, गृहनिर्माण, रोजगार आणि सामाजिक सुरक्षा या विविध क्षेत्रांमध्ये अनेक योजना राबविल्या आहेत. सामाजिक न्याय व विशेष सहाय्य विभागामार्फत अनुसूचित जाती, ज्येष्ठ नागरिक, दिव्यांग, तृतीयपंथीय आणि इतर दुर्बल घटकांसाठी शिक्षण, कौशल्यविकास, रोजगार, गृहनिर्माण आणि आर्थिक सहाय्याच्या विविध योजना राबविल्या जातात.[8]

या धोरणांचा मूलभूत उद्देश सामाजिक विषमता कमी करणे आणि दुर्बल घटकांना मुख्य प्रवाहात आणणे हा आहे. विशेषतः शैक्षणिक शिष्यवृत्ती, शुल्क सवलत, वसतिगृह सुविधा, गृहनिर्माण सहाय्य आणि सामाजिक सुरक्षा योजनांमुळे आर्थिकदृष्ट्या दुर्बल घटकांना शासनाच्या सहाय्याचा लाभ मिळण्याची संधी निर्माण होते. मात्र कल्याणकारी योजनेचे यश केवळ लाभार्थ्यांची संख्या किंवा वितरित निधी यावर ठरविता येत नाही. लाभार्थ्यांच्या जीवनमानात झालेली वास्तविक सुधारणा हा त्याचा अधिक महत्त्वाचा निकष असला पाहिजे.

शिक्षण आणि मानवी विकास

शिक्षण हे सामाजिक परिवर्तनाचे आणि आर्थिक सक्षमीकरणाचे महत्त्वपूर्ण साधन आहे. महाराष्ट्रातील सार्वजनिक धोरणामध्ये विद्यार्थ्यांसाठी विविध शिष्यवृत्ती, शुल्क सवलती आणि निर्वाह सहाय्याच्या योजना उपलब्ध आहेत. MahaDBT प्रणालीद्वारे विविध विभागांच्या शिष्यवृत्ती आणि आर्थिक सहाय्याच्या योजनांसाठी ऑनलाइन अर्ज व लाभ वितरणाची व्यवस्था करण्यात आली आहे.[9]

डिजिटल व्यवस्थेमुळे अर्ज प्रक्रियेत पारदर्शकता वाढविणे, अर्जाची स्थिती तपासणे आणि थेट लाभ हस्तांतरण करणे शक्य झाले आहे. तथापि, ग्रामीण भागातील डिजिटल साक्षरतेचा अभाव, इंटरनेटची मर्यादित उपलब्धता, तांत्रिक अडचणी आणि कागदपत्रांच्या प्रक्रियेमुळे काही पात्र लाभार्थी वंचित राहण्याची शक्यता नाकारता येत नाही. त्यामुळे डिजिटल प्रशासनाबरोबरच सहाय्यक मानवी व्यवस्था उपलब्ध करून देणे आवश्यक आहे.

शिक्षणविषयक सार्वजनिक धोरणाचे अंतिम उद्दिष्ट केवळ विद्यार्थ्याला आर्थिक मदत देणे नसून त्याचे शिक्षण पूर्ण होणे, कौशल्यविकास होणे आणि रोजगाराच्या संधी निर्माण होणे हे असले पाहिजे. त्यामुळे शैक्षणिक कल्याणाचा विचार मानवी विकासाच्या व्यापक चौकटीत करणे आवश्यक आहे.

सामाजिक न्याय आणि दुर्बल घटकांचे कल्याण

महाराष्ट्राच्या सार्वजनिक धोरणामध्ये सामाजिक न्यायाला ऐतिहासिकदृष्ट्या महत्त्वाचे स्थान आहे. अनुसूचित जाती, अनुसूचित जमाती, इतर मागास घटक, दिव्यांग व्यक्ती, ज्येष्ठ नागरिक आणि आर्थिकदृष्ट्या दुर्बल नागरिकांसाठी विशेष उपाययोजना करण्यात आल्या आहेत. सामाजिक न्याय विभागाच्या माध्यमातून शिक्षण, प्रशिक्षण, कौशल्यविकास, स्वयंरोजगार, गृहनिर्माण आणि सामाजिक सहाय्याच्या योजना राबविण्यात येतात.[10]

सामाजिक न्यायाचा अर्थ केवळ समान वागणूक असा नसून वास्तविक समानतेसाठी आवश्यक असलेल्या विशेष उपाययोजनाही त्यामध्ये समाविष्ट होतात. ऐतिहासिकदृष्ट्या वंचित घटकांना समान संधी उपलब्ध करून देण्यासाठी

विशेष शैक्षणिक आणि आर्थिक सहाय्याची आवश्यकता असते. त्यामुळे सामाजिक न्यायाच्या धोरणामध्ये संरक्षणाबरोबरच सक्षमीकरणालाही महत्त्व दिले पाहिजे.

आरोग्य आणि सामाजिक कल्याण

आरोग्य हा मानवी विकासाचा मूलभूत घटक आहे. महाराष्ट्रातील सार्वजनिक आरोग्य धोरणामध्ये प्राथमिक आरोग्य केंद्रे, ग्रामीण रुग्णालये, उपजिल्हा रुग्णालये आणि जिल्हा रुग्णालये यांसारख्या संस्थांद्वारे आरोग्यसेवा उपलब्ध करून देण्याचा प्रयत्न केला जातो. मातृ व बाल आरोग्य, पोषण, लसीकरण आणि ग्रामीण आरोग्य सेवा या क्षेत्रांमध्येही विविध कार्यक्रम राबविले जातात.[11]

आरोग्यविषयक कल्याणाचे मूल्यमापन केवळ रुग्णालयांची संख्या किंवा सरकारी खर्चावर आधारित न राहता नागरिकांना प्रत्यक्षात गुणवत्तापूर्ण आणि परवडणारी आरोग्यसेवा मिळते का, यावर आधारित असले पाहिजे. ग्रामीण व शहरी भागातील आरोग्य सुविधांमधील फरक, प्रशिक्षित मनुष्यबळाची उपलब्धता आणि औषधांची उपलब्धता या बाबी सार्वजनिक आरोग्य धोरणाच्या परिणामकारकतेवर परिणाम करतात.

महिला व बालकल्याण

महिलांचे सामाजिक आणि आर्थिक सक्षमीकरण हा सर्वसमावेशक विकासाचा आवश्यक घटक आहे. महाराष्ट्रात महिला व बाल विकास विभागाच्या माध्यमातून महिला संरक्षण, आर्थिक सहाय्य, बालपोषण, बालविकास आणि महिला सक्षमीकरणाशी संबंधित विविध योजना राबविल्या जातात.[12] महिलांकडे केवळ कल्याणकारी योजनांच्या लाभार्थी म्हणून न पाहता शिक्षण, रोजगार, शेती, उद्योग आणि सामाजिक निर्णयप्रक्रियेत सक्रिय सहभागी म्हणून पाहणे आवश्यक आहे.

बालकल्याणाच्या बाबतीत पोषण, आरोग्य, पूर्वप्राथमिक शिक्षण आणि संरक्षण या सर्व बाबी परस्पर संबंधित आहेत. त्यामुळे बालकांच्या विकासासाठी आरोग्य, शिक्षण आणि महिला व बाल विकास विभागांमध्ये अधिक प्रभावी समन्वय आवश्यक आहे.

कृषी आणि ग्रामीण विकास

महाराष्ट्रातील ग्रामीण अर्थव्यवस्थेचा कृषी हा महत्त्वाचा आधार आहे. सिंचन, सूक्ष्म सिंचन, कृषी यांत्रिकीकरण, पीक उत्पादन, जलसंधारण, शेतकरी सहाय्य आणि कृषी पायाभूत सुविधांशी संबंधित विविध योजना राज्यात राबविल्या जातात. MahaDBT प्रणालीवर कृषी क्षेत्राशी संबंधित विविध योजनांसाठी ऑनलाइन अर्जाची सुविधा उपलब्ध आहे.[13]

कृषी कल्याणाचे उद्दिष्ट केवळ अनुदान किंवा आर्थिक सहाय्य देण्यापुरते मर्यादित ठेवणे योग्य ठरणार नाही. पाणी उपलब्धता, उत्पादनक्षमता, बाजारपेठ, मूल्यवर्धन, तंत्रज्ञान आणि जोखीम व्यवस्थापन या बाबींना समान महत्त्व दिल्यास शेतकऱ्यांचे दीर्घकालीन आर्थिक सक्षमीकरण साध्य होऊ शकते.

महाराष्ट्रातील प्रादेशिक विषमता लक्षात घेता मानवी विकास आणि स्थानिक गरजांवर आधारित नियोजनालाही महत्त्व आहे. नियोजन विभागाच्या मानवी विकास कार्यक्रमामध्ये तुलनेने मागास भागांमध्ये आरोग्य, शिक्षण, पाणी, शेती आणि पायाभूत सुविधांशी संबंधित उपाययोजनांवर भर देण्यात येतो.[14]

सार्वजनिक धोरणातील प्रमुख आव्हाने

महाराष्ट्रात विविध कल्याणकारी योजना असूनही त्यांच्या अंमलबजावणीसमोर अनेक आव्हाने आहेत. धोरण आणि प्रत्यक्ष अंमलबजावणी यांच्यातील अंतर, लाभार्थ्यांना योजनांची अपुरी माहिती, कागदपत्रांची अडचण, डिजिटल दरी, प्रशासकीय विलंब आणि विविध विभागांमधील समन्वयाचा अभाव ही त्यापैकी काही महत्त्वाची आव्हाने आहेत.

याशिवाय राज्यातील प्रादेशिक विषमता हीदेखील महत्त्वाची बाब आहे. विकसित शहरी भाग आणि तुलनेने मागास ग्रामीण किंवा आदिवासी भाग यांच्या गरजा भिन्न असल्यामुळे सर्वांसाठी समान स्वरूपाचे धोरण नेहमीच समान परिणाम देईल असे नाही. त्यामुळे जिल्हा आणि तालुका पातळीवरील सामाजिक निर्देशकांच्या आधारे सार्वजनिक धोरण आखणे आवश्यक आहे.

कल्याणकारी योजनांचे स्वतंत्र आणि नियमित मूल्यमापन करणेही गरजेचे आहे. शासनाने किती खर्च केला यापेक्षा त्या खर्चातून नागरिकांच्या जीवनमानात किती सुधारणा झाली, हा प्रश्न अधिक महत्त्वाचा आहे.

निष्कर्ष

महाराष्ट्रातील सार्वजनिक धोरण आणि कल्याण हे घटनात्मक मूल्ये, सामाजिक न्याय, आर्थिक विकास आणि मानवी सक्षमीकरण यांचा परस्परसंबंध दर्शविणारे व्यापक क्षेत्र आहे. शिक्षण, आरोग्य, सामाजिक सुरक्षा, कृषी, महिला व बालकल्याण, गृहनिर्माण आणि दुर्बल घटकांचे सक्षमीकरण या क्षेत्रांत महाराष्ट्राने विविध धोरणात्मक उपाययोजना विकसित केल्या आहेत.

तथापि, कल्याणकारी राज्याची खरी कसोटी योजनांची संख्या किंवा खर्चाच्या प्रमाणात नसून त्या योजनांचा लाभ पात्र व्यक्तीपर्यंत किती परिणामकारकपणे पोहोचतो आणि त्यातून नागरिकांच्या जीवनमानात किती शाश्वत सुधारणा घडते यामध्ये आहे. भविष्यात महाराष्ट्रातील सार्वजनिक धोरण हे लाभवाटपाच्या दृष्टिकोनातून पुढे जाऊन मानवी क्षमता, कौशल्य, रोजगार, सामाजिक सुरक्षा आणि स्वावलंबन निर्माण करण्यावर आधारित असणे आवश्यक आहे.म्हणून महाराष्ट्रातील कल्याणकारी धोरणाची भावी दिशा **समानता, सामाजिक न्याय, पारदर्शकता, उत्तरदायित्व आणि सक्षमीकरण** या तत्त्वांवर आधारित असणे आवश्यक आहे. शासनाच्या योजनांचा नागरिक हा केवळ लाभार्थी न राहता हक्कधारक आणि विकास प्रक्रियेतील सक्रिय सहभागी बनला, तर सार्वजनिक धोरण हे खऱ्या अर्थाने सामाजिक परिवर्तनाचे प्रभावी साधन ठरू शकते.

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"बाल हक्क आणि सामाजिक संरक्षण : आव्हाने आणि उपाययोजना "

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सारांश (Abstract):

बालक हा समाजाच्या वर्तमानाचा आणि भविष्याचा महत्त्वाचा घटक आहे. बालकांचा सर्वांगीण विकास होण्यासाठी त्यांना शिक्षण, आरोग्य, पोषण, सुरक्षितता, समान संधी आणि सन्मानाने जगण्याचा अधिकार मिळणे आवश्यक आहे. बाल हक्क म्हणजे बालकांच्या शारीरिक, मानसिक, भावनिक, सामाजिक आणि बौद्धिक विकासासाठी आवश्यक असलेले मूलभूत अधिकार होय. तथापि, गरिबी, बालमजुरी, बालविवाह, बालशोषण, कौटुंबिक हिंसा, शिक्षणातील असमानता आणि सामाजिक भेदभाव यांमुळे अनेक बालकांना त्यांच्या अधिकारांपासून वंचित राहावे लागते.

अशा परिस्थितीत सामाजिक संरक्षणाची भूमिका महत्त्वाची ठरते. सामाजिक संरक्षणाच्या माध्यमातून शासन, कुटुंब, शाळा, समाज आणि स्वयंसेवी संस्था बालकांच्या सुरक्षिततेसाठी आणि कल्याणासाठी विविध उपाययोजना करतात. भारतामध्ये बाल न्याय (बालकांची काळजी व संरक्षण) अधिनियम, २०१५, लैंगिक अपराधांपासून बालकांचे संरक्षण अधिनियम, २०१२ आणि बालकांचा मोफत व सक्तीच्या शिक्षणाचा अधिकार अधिनियम, २००९ यांसारख्या कायद्यांद्वारे बालकांच्या अधिकारांना संरक्षण देण्यात आले आहे.

त्याचप्रमाणे मिशन वात्सल्यसारख्या योजनांमधून काळजी व संरक्षणाची गरज असलेल्या बालकांना मदत देण्याचा प्रयत्न केला जातो. प्रस्तुत संशोधन लेखात बाल हक्कांची संकल्पना, सामाजिक संरक्षणाचे महत्त्व, भारतातील कायदेशीर तरतुदी, बाल संरक्षणासमोरील प्रमुख आव्हाने आणि त्यावरील संभाव्य उपाययोजनांचा समाजकार्याच्या दृष्टिकोनातून अभ्यास करण्यात आला आहे.

की-वर्ड्स : बाल हक्क, सामाजिक संरक्षण, बाल संरक्षण, बालकल्याण, बाल शोषण, बालमजुरी, बाल संरक्षण कायदे, समाजकार्य.

१. प्रस्तावना

बालपण हा मानवी जीवनातील विकासाचा अत्यंत महत्त्वाचा टप्पा आहे. या काळात बालकाच्या व्यक्तिमत्त्वाची जडणघडण होते. बालकाला मिळणारे प्रेम, सुरक्षितता, शिक्षण, पोषण आणि सामाजिक वातावरण यांचा त्याच्या पुढील जीवनावर मोठा प्रभाव पडतो. त्यामुळे बालकांच्या विकासाकडे केवळ कुटुंबाची जबाबदारी म्हणून न पाहता सामाजिक आणि राष्ट्रीय विकासाचा महत्त्वाचा भाग म्हणून पाहणे आवश्यक आहे. बालकांना योग्य संधी उपलब्ध करून देणे म्हणजे भविष्यातील सक्षम, संवेदनशील आणि जबाबदार समाजाची पायाभरणी करणे होय. बालकांना जगण्याचा, विकासाचा, संरक्षणाचा आणि सहभागाचा अधिकार आहे. हे अधिकार केवळ कायद्यामध्ये नमूद असणे पुरेसे नाही, तर त्यांची प्रत्यक्ष अंमलबजावणी होणे आवश्यक आहे. अनेक बालकांना आजही गरिबी, कुपोषण, शिक्षणातील अडथळे, बालमजुरी, कौटुंबिक दुर्लक्ष, हिंसा आणि शोषण यांसारख्या समस्यांना सामोरे जावे लागते. काही बालकांना अनाथत्व, पालकांचे स्थलांतर, कौटुंबिक संघर्ष, अपंगत्व किंवा नैसर्गिक आपत्ती यांमुळेही विशेष संरक्षणाची आवश्यकता असते.

बालकांच्या समस्या केवळ वैयक्तिक किंवा कौटुंबिक स्वरूपाच्या नसतात. त्यामागे आर्थिक विषमता, सामाजिक रूढी, लिंगभेद, अपुरी सार्वजनिक सेवा आणि संरक्षण यंत्रणांमधील त्रुटी अशी अनेक कारणे असतात. म्हणून बालकांच्या प्रश्नांकडे सामाजिक दृष्टिकोनातून पाहणे आवश्यक आहे. सामाजिक संरक्षण ही अशी प्रक्रिया आहे, ज्यामध्ये बालकांना धोक्यांपासून सुरक्षित ठेवणे, त्यांच्या मूलभूत गरजा पूर्ण करणे, संकटाच्या काळात मदत उपलब्ध करून देणे आणि त्यांच्या विकासासाठी अनुकूल परिस्थिती निर्माण करणे यांचा समावेश होतो.

भारतामध्ये बालकांच्या संरक्षणासाठी विविध कायदे, धोरणे आणि योजना अस्तित्वात आहेत. मात्र, कायदेशीर तरतुदी आणि बालकांना प्रत्यक्ष मिळणारे संरक्षण यांमध्ये अंतर राहू शकते. त्यामुळे उपलब्ध यंत्रणांची परिणामकारकता वाढवणे, समाजामध्ये जागरूकता निर्माण करणे आणि बालकांच्या सर्वोत्तम हिताला प्राधान्य देणे आवश्यक आहे.

२. संशोधन समस्येचे स्वरूप

बाल हक्कांच्या संरक्षणासाठी भारतामध्ये विविध कायदे आणि संस्थात्मक व्यवस्था उपलब्ध असल्या, तरी सर्व बालकांपर्यंत त्यांचा समान लाभ पोहोचतोच असे नाही. विशेषतः ग्रामीण भागातील, आर्थिकदृष्ट्या दुर्बल कुटुंबांतील, स्थलांतरित कामगारांच्या कुटुंबांतील, आदिवासी समुदायांतील आणि इतर वंचित परिस्थितीत राहणाऱ्या बालकांना शिक्षण, आरोग्य, पोषण आणि सुरक्षिततेच्या सुविधा मिळवताना अडचणी येऊ शकतात.

बालकांवरील अत्याचार किंवा शोषणाच्या घटना अनेकदा कुटुंबाच्या प्रतिष्ठेच्या भीतीने, सामाजिक दबावामुळे किंवा कायदेशीर प्रक्रियेच्या अपुऱ्या माहितीमुळे उघड होत नाहीत. काही वेळा बालकांना त्यांच्या हक्कांची माहिती नसते. पालकांनाही सरकारी योजना, तक्रार नोंदविण्याची प्रक्रिया आणि बाल संरक्षण संस्थांविषयी पुरेशी माहिती नसते. परिणामी, उपलब्ध संरक्षण व्यवस्थेचा अपेक्षित लाभ बालकांपर्यंत पोहोचण्यात अडथळे निर्माण होतात.

या पार्श्वभूमीवर बाल हक्क आणि सामाजिक संरक्षण यांचा परस्परसंबंध समजून घेणे, बाल संरक्षणासमोरील अडचणींचे विश्लेषण करणे आणि अधिक प्रभावी उपाययोजना सुचविणे ही प्रस्तुत संशोधनाची प्रमुख समस्या आहे.

३. संशोधनाची उद्दिष्टे

१. बाल हक्कांची संकल्पना आणि त्यांचे प्रमुख प्रकार स्पष्ट करणे.

२. बालकांच्या विकासामध्ये सामाजिक संरक्षणाचे महत्त्व अभ्यासणे.

३. भारतातील बाल संरक्षणाशी संबंधित प्रमुख कायदे, धोरणे आणि योजनांचा आढावा घेणे.

४. बाल हक्कांच्या अंमलबजावणीसमोरील सामाजिक, आर्थिक आणि संस्थात्मक आव्हानांचे विश्लेषण करणे.

५. बाल हक्कांच्या प्रभावी संरक्षणासाठी व्यावहारिक उपाययोजना सुचविणे.

६. बाल संरक्षणामध्ये समाजकार्यकर्त्यांची भूमिका स्पष्ट करणे.

४. संशोधन पद्धती

प्रस्तुत संशोधन लेखासाठी वर्णनात्मक आणि विश्लेषणात्मक संशोधन पद्धतीचा वापर करण्यात आला आहे. हा लेख दुय्यम माहितीवर आधारित संकल्पनात्मक अभ्यास आहे. यासाठी बाल हक्क, बाल संरक्षण, सामाजिक संरक्षण आणि बालकल्याण यांसंबंधी उपलब्ध शासकीय कायदे, धोरणे, योजनांची माहिती, अधिकृत संकेतस्थळे आणि आंतरराष्ट्रीय संस्थांच्या प्रकाशित साहित्याचा संदर्भ घेतला आहे.

माहितीचे विश्लेषण करताना बालकांचे मूलभूत अधिकार, संरक्षण यंत्रणेचे स्वरूप, अंमलबजावणीतील अडचणी आणि संभाव्य उपाययोजना या प्रमुख बाबींचा विचार करण्यात आला आहे. प्रस्तुत लेखात स्वतंत्र क्षेत्रीय सर्वेक्षण, मुलाखती किंवा प्राथमिक सांख्यिकीय माहितीचे संकलन केलेले नाही. त्यामुळे येथे मांडलेले निष्कर्ष हे उपलब्ध साहित्याच्या संकल्पनात्मक आणि गुणात्मक विश्लेषणावर आधारित आहेत; ते क्षेत्रीय सर्वेक्षणातून सिद्ध झालेले निष्कर्ष नाहीत.

५. बाल हक्कांची संकल्पना आणि स्वरूप

बाल हक्क म्हणजे बालकाला सुरक्षित, सन्मानपूर्ण आणि सर्वांगीण विकासासाठी आवश्यक असलेले मूलभूत मानवी अधिकार होय. संयुक्त राष्ट्रांच्या बाल हक्कविषयक अधिवेशनानुसार, सामान्यतः अठरा वर्षांखालील व्यक्तीला बालक मानले जाते; मात्र अधिवेशनातील तरतुदींनुसार संबंधित देशाच्या कायद्याने प्रौढत्वाचे वय यापूर्वी निश्चित केले असल्यास अपवाद लागू होऊ शकतो. बालकांकडे स्वतंत्र व्यक्तिमत्त्व असलेले अधिकारधारक म्हणून पाहणे हा बाल हक्कांच्या दृष्टिकोनाचा महत्त्वाचा आधार आहे.

बाल हक्कांचे चार प्रमुख पैलू सांगता येतात. पहिला म्हणजे जगण्याचा अधिकार. यामध्ये जीवन, आरोग्य, पोषण, सुरक्षित निवास आणि आवश्यक आरोग्यसेवा यांचा समावेश होतो. दुसरा म्हणजे विकासाचा अधिकार. प्रत्येक बालकाला शिक्षण, खेळ, मनोरंजन, सांस्कृतिक सहभाग आणि स्वतःच्या क्षमता विकसित करण्यासाठी संधी मिळाली पाहिजे. तिसरा म्हणजे संरक्षणाचा अधिकार. बालकांना हिंसा, अत्याचार, लैंगिक शोषण, बालमजुरी, तस्करी, उपेक्षा आणि इतर प्रकारच्या शोषणापासून सुरक्षित ठेवणे आवश्यक आहे. चौथा म्हणजे सहभागाचा अधिकार. बालकाच्या वयाला आणि समजुतीला अनुरूप पद्धतीने त्याचे मत ऐकले गेले पाहिजे आणि त्याच्याशी संबंधित निर्णय घेताना त्याचा विचार केला पाहिजे.

बाल हक्कांची अंमलबजावणी करताना कोणत्याही बालकाबरोबर जात, धर्म, लिंग, भाषा, अपंगत्व, आर्थिक स्थिती किंवा सामाजिक पार्श्वभूमीच्या आधारावर भेदभाव होऊ नये. मुलगा आणि मुलगी या दोघांनाही समान संधी मिळणे आवश्यक आहे. त्याचप्रमाणे दिव्यांग बालके, अनाथ बालके, रस्त्यावर राहणारी बालके आणि संघर्षग्रस्त परिस्थितीतील बालके यांना त्यांच्या गरजेनुसार विशेष सहाय्य मिळाले पाहिजे.

बाल हक्कांचा अर्थ केवळ बालकांचे संरक्षण करणे एवढाच मर्यादित नाही. बालकाला स्वतःचे मत व्यक्त करता येणे, त्याच्या क्षमतांचा विकास होणे आणि समाजामध्ये सन्मानाने सहभागी होता येणे यांचाही त्यात समावेश होतो. म्हणून बालकांच्या हक्कांचा विचार करताना संरक्षण, विकास, समानता आणि सहभाग या चारही घटकांना महत्त्व देणे आवश्यक आहे.

६. भारतातील बाल हक्कांशी संबंधित कायदेशीर तरतुदी

भारतामध्ये बालकांच्या अधिकारांचे संरक्षण करण्यासाठी संविधानिक तरतुदी आणि विविध कायदे अस्तित्वात आहेत. या कायद्यांचा उद्देश बालकांचे शोषण रोखणे, शिक्षणाची संधी उपलब्ध करून देणे, त्यांच्या सुरक्षिततेचे रक्षण करणे आणि संकटात असलेल्या बालकांना न्याय व पुनर्वसन मिळवून देणे हा आहे.

६.१ भारतीय संविधानातील तरतुदी

भारतीय संविधानातील अनुच्छेद १४ कायद्यापुढील समानतेची हमी देतो. अनुच्छेद १५(३) राज्याला महिला आणि बालकांसाठी विशेष तरतुदी करण्याची परवानगी देतो. अनुच्छेद २१ जीवन आणि वैयक्तिक स्वातंत्र्याच्या संरक्षणाशी संबंधित आहे. अनुच्छेद २१-अ नुसार सहा ते चौदा वर्षे वयोगटातील बालकांना मोफत व सक्तीच्या शिक्षणाचा अधिकार आहे. अनुच्छेद २४ नुसार चौदा वर्षांखालील बालकांना कारखाने, खाणी किंवा इतर धोकादायक रोजगारांमध्ये कामावर ठेवण्यास प्रतिबंध आहे. अनुच्छेद ३९(ई) आणि ३९(एफ) बालकांच्या आरोग्याचे संरक्षण, त्यांच्या वयाला आणि क्षमतेला अनुरूप विकासाच्या संधी आणि शोषणापासून संरक्षण यांवर भर देतात.

६.२ बालकांचा मोफत व सक्तीच्या शिक्षणाचा अधिकार अधिनियम, २००९

या अधिनियमाद्वारे सहा ते चौदा वर्षे वयोगटातील बालकांना मोफत आणि सक्तीच्या प्राथमिक शिक्षणाचा कायदेशीर अधिकार मिळतो. आर्थिक परिस्थितीमुळे कोणतेही बालक मूलभूत शिक्षणापासून वंचित राहू नये, हा या कायद्याचा महत्त्वाचा उद्देश आहे. शिक्षणाचा अधिकार प्रभावी करण्यासाठी शाळांमधील सुविधा, शिक्षकांची उपलब्धता, सुरक्षित वातावरण आणि नियमित उपस्थिती यांकडे लक्ष देणे आवश्यक आहे.

६.३ बाल न्याय (बालकांची काळजी व संरक्षण) अधिनियम, २०१५

बाल न्याय अधिनियम हा काळजी व संरक्षणाची गरज असलेल्या बालकांसाठी तसेच कायद्याशी संघर्षात आलेल्या बालकांसाठी महत्त्वाचा कायदा आहे. या कायद्यामध्ये बालकल्याण समिती, बाल न्याय मंडळ, बाल संगोपन संस्था, पुनर्वसन आणि सामाजिक पुनर्समावेशन यांसंबंधी तरतुदी आहेत. बालकाला केवळ दंडात्मक दृष्टिकोनातून न पाहता त्याच्या परिस्थितीचा विचार करून योग्य काळजी, मार्गदर्शन आणि पुनर्वसन उपलब्ध करून देणे हा या कायद्याच्या दृष्टिकोनाचा महत्त्वाचा भाग आहे.

६.४ लैंगिक अपराधांपासून बालकांचे संरक्षण अधिनियम, २०१२

लैंगिक अपराधांपासून बालकांचे संरक्षण अधिनियमाला पोक्सो (POCSO) कायदा असेही म्हटले जाते. बालकांवरील लैंगिक अत्याचार, लैंगिक छळ आणि संबंधित अपराधांपासून संरक्षण देणे हा या कायद्याचा उद्देश आहे. या कायद्यात बालकांच्या हिताला केंद्रस्थानी ठेवून तक्रार नोंदविणे, तपास आणि न्यायालयीन प्रक्रियेमध्ये बालकाच्या गरजांचा विचार करण्यासाठी तरतुदी करण्यात आल्या आहेत. या कायद्याची प्रभावी अंमलबजावणी करण्यासाठी संवेदनशील पोलीस यंत्रणा, प्रशिक्षित अधिकारी, समुपदेशन आणि पीडित बालकाचे पुनर्वसन आवश्यक आहे.

६.५ बालविवाह प्रतिबंध अधिनियम, २००६ आणि बालमजुरीविषयक कायदे

बालविवाह प्रतिबंध अधिनियम, २००६ हा बालविवाह रोखण्यासाठी आणि संबंधित व्यक्तींना कायदेशीर संरक्षण देण्यासाठी महत्त्वाचा आहे. बालविवाहामुळे शिक्षण खंडित होणे, आरोग्यविषयक धोके आणि बालकांच्या स्वायत्ततेवर मर्यादा येणे अशा समस्या उद्भवू शकतात.

बालमजुरीच्या संदर्भात बाल आणि किशोर कामगार (प्रतिबंध व नियमन) अधिनियम, १९८६, त्यातील २०१६ मधील सुधारणा आणि इतर लागू कामगारविषयक तरतुदी महत्त्वाच्या आहेत. बालकांना प्रतिबंधित रोजगारांमध्ये काम करण्यास लावणे आणि त्यांच्या शिक्षण व विकासाला बाधा आणणारे शोषण रोखणे आवश्यक आहे. कायद्याच्या अंमलबजावणीबरोबरच गरीब कुटुंबांना आर्थिक व सामाजिक आधार देणेही तितकेच महत्त्वाचे आहे.

वरील कायद्यांमुळे बालकांच्या संरक्षणासाठी आवश्यक कायदेशीर चौकट उपलब्ध होते. तथापि, कायदे अस्तित्वात असणे आणि त्यांचा प्रत्येक बालकाला प्रत्यक्ष लाभ मिळणे या दोन वेगळ्या बाबी आहेत. त्यामुळे कायद्यांची माहिती, तक्रार नोंदविण्याची सुलभ व्यवस्था, प्रशिक्षित कर्मचारी आणि संस्थांमधील समन्वय यांना विशेष महत्त्व आहे.

७. बाल संरक्षणासाठी शासकीय योजना आणि संस्थात्मक व्यवस्था

बालकांचे हक्क प्रभावीपणे अंमलात आणण्यासाठी शासनाच्या योजना आणि संरक्षण संस्थांची महत्त्वाची भूमिका असते. महिला व बाल विकास मंत्रालय, राष्ट्रीय बाल हक्क संरक्षण आयोग, राज्य बाल हक्क संरक्षण आयोग, जिल्हा बाल संरक्षण कक्ष, बालकल्याण समित्या, बाल न्याय मंडळे, पोलीस यंत्रणा, शाळा आणि आरोग्य संस्था या सर्वांचा बाल संरक्षण व्यवस्थेत सहभाग असतो.

७.१ मिशन वात्सल्य

मिशन वात्सल्य ही बालकांच्या काळजी, संरक्षण आणि कल्याणासाठी राबविण्यात येणारी केंद्र पुरस्कृत योजना आहे. या योजनेचा उद्देश अडचणीच्या परिस्थितीत असलेल्या बालकांना आवश्यक सेवा उपलब्ध करून देणे आणि बाल संरक्षण यंत्रणा अधिक सक्षम करणे हा आहे. यामध्ये संस्थात्मक काळजीबरोबरच पालकत्वाधारित संगोपन, प्रायोजकत्व, दत्तक प्रक्रिया आणि पुनर्वसनासारख्या पर्यायी व्यवस्थांनाही महत्त्व दिले जाते. शक्य असेल तेव्हा बालकाला कुटुंब आणि समुदायाच्या सुरक्षित वातावरणात वाढण्यास मदत करणे हा या योजनेच्या दृष्टिकोनाचा महत्त्वाचा भाग आहे. (महिला व बाल विकास मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार, मिशन वात्सल्य).

७.२ बाल हेल्पलाइन १०९८

संकटात असलेल्या बालकांना मदत मिळवून देण्यासाठी बाल हेल्पलाइन १०९८ ही महत्त्वाची सेवा आहे. बालक हरवलेले असल्यास, अत्याचाराचा धोका असल्यास, बालमजुरी किंवा इतर संकटाची परिस्थिती असल्यास मदत मिळविण्यासाठी या सेवेशी संपर्क साधता येतो. अधिकृत माहितीनुसार बाल हेल्पलाइन सेवा आपत्कालीन प्रतिसाद यंत्रणा ११२ शी समन्वयित करण्यात आली आहे. मात्र, हेल्पलाइन क्रमांक उपलब्ध असणे पुरेसे नाही; कॉलला वेळेत प्रतिसाद मिळणे, प्रशिक्षित कर्मचारी उपलब्ध असणे आणि पुढील मदत व पुनर्वसन सुनिश्चित करणेही आवश्यक आहे.

७.३ राष्ट्रीय बाल हक्क संरक्षण आयोग

राष्ट्रीय बाल हक्क संरक्षण आयोगाची स्थापना बाल हक्कांच्या संरक्षणासाठी आणि संबंधित कायद्यांच्या अंमलबजावणीवर देखरेख ठेवण्यासाठी करण्यात आली आहे. बाल हक्कांबाबत जागरूकता निर्माण करणे, तक्रारींच्या संदर्भात आवश्यक कार्यवाही करणे आणि बालकांच्या हक्कांचे उल्लंघन होऊ नये यासाठी प्रयत्न करणे ही या संस्थेची महत्त्वाची कार्ये आहेत. आयोगाच्या कार्याबरोबरच राज्य आणि जिल्हास्तरीय यंत्रणांनीही तक्रारींवर वेळेत कार्यवाही करणे आवश्यक आहे.

या सर्व यंत्रणांचा प्रभाव वाढविण्यासाठी शासन, शाळा, पोलीस, आरोग्य विभाग, न्यायव्यवस्था, स्थानिक स्वराज्य संस्था आणि स्वयंसेवी संस्थांमध्ये समन्वय असणे आवश्यक आहे.

लकांच्या समस्येकडे केवळ एका विभागाची जबाबदारी म्हणून न पाहता एकत्रित सामाजिक जबाबदारी म्हणून पाहणे गरजेचे आहे.

८. बाल हक्क आणि सामाजिक संरक्षणासमोरील प्रमुख आव्हाने

८.१ बालमजुरी आणि शोषण

बालमजुरीमुळे बालकांच्या शिक्षणावर, आरोग्यावर आणि व्यक्तिमत्त्व विकासावर प्रतिकूल परिणाम होऊ शकतो. घरगुती कामे, लहान उद्योग, हॉटेल, दुकाने आणि इतर असुरक्षित ठिकाणी बालकांकडून काम करून घेतले जाण्याचा धोका असतो. काही वेळा स्थलांतरित कुटुंबांतील बालकांना शिक्षणापासून दूर राहावे लागते. बालमजुरी रोखण्यासाठी कायद्याची अंमलबजावणी, नियमित तपासणी, बालकांची सुटका आणि पुनर्वसन आवश्यक आहे. त्याचबरोबर कुटुंबाला पर्यायी रोजगार आणि सामाजिक संरक्षण मिळणेही महत्त्वाचे आहे.

८.२ बालकांवरील हिंसा आणि लैंगिक अत्याचार

बालकांवरील शारीरिक शिक्षा, मानसिक छळ, लैंगिक अत्याचार, धमकी आणि दुर्लक्ष यांमुळे त्यांच्या शारीरिक व मानसिक आरोग्यावर गंभीर परिणाम होऊ शकतात. अशा घटना घरात, शाळेत, समुदायामध्ये किंवा डिजिटल माध्यमांच्या वापरादरम्यान घडू शकतात. अनेक बालकांना भीती, अपराधीपणाची भावना किंवा विश्वासू व्यक्तीचा अभाव यामुळे आपला अनुभव सांगता येत नाही. त्यामुळे बालकांना सुरक्षितपणे तक्रार करता येईल असे वातावरण तयार करणे, त्यांचे म्हणणे संवेदनशीलतेने ऐकणे आणि आवश्यक कायदेशीर व मानसिक आरोग्यविषयक मदत उपलब्ध करून देणे गरजेचे आहे.

८.३ बालविवाह आणि लिंगभेद

काही सामाजिक परिस्थितींमध्ये बालविवाहाला परंपरा, आर्थिक अडचण किंवा सामाजिक दबाव यांमुळे मान्यता दिली जाते. विशेषतः मुलींच्या शिक्षणावर मर्यादा, सुरक्षिततेविषयीची चिंता आणि लिंगभेद यांमुळे त्यांना कमी वयात विवाहासाठी प्रवृत्त केले जाऊ शकते. बालविवाहामुळे शिक्षण खंडित होण्याची, आरोग्यविषयक अडचणी निर्माण होण्याची आणि स्वतःच्या जीवनाविषयी निर्णय घेण्याची संधी कमी होण्याची शक्यता असते. या समस्येवर मात करण्यासाठी मुलींचे शिक्षण, पालकांचे समुपदेशन, समुदायाचा सहभाग आणि कायद्याची प्रभावी अंमलबजावणी आवश्यक आहे.

८.४ शिक्षणातील असमानता आणि शाळाबाह्य बालके

प्रत्येक बालकाला शिक्षणाचा अधिकार असला, तरी आर्थिक परिस्थिती, शाळेचे अंतर, स्थलांतर, अपंगत्व, भाषिक अडचणी, भेदभाव आणि शाळेतील अपुऱ्या सुविधांमुळे काही बालकांचे शिक्षण खंडित होऊ शकते. शाळेत प्रवेश मिळणे ही पहिली पायरी आहे; नियमित उपस्थिती, गुणवत्तापूर्ण शिक्षण, सुरक्षित वातावरण आणि शिक्षण पूर्ण करण्याची संधीही महत्त्वाची आहे. शाळाबाह्य बालकांची ओळख करून त्यांना शिक्षणाच्या प्रवाहात परत आणण्यासाठी शाळा, पालक, स्थानिक स्वराज्य संस्था आणि बाल संरक्षण यंत्रणांनी एकत्रितपणे काम करणे आवश्यक आहे.

८.५ संरक्षण यंत्रणेतील अडचणी

काही भागांमध्ये प्रशिक्षित कर्मचारी, समुपदेशक, निवारा सुविधा आणि पुनर्वसन सेवांची कमतरता असू शकते. विविध विभागांमध्ये माहितीची देवाणघेवाण न होणे, तक्रारींच्या कार्यवाहीला विलंब होणे आणि योजनांची अपुरी माहिती यांमुळे बालकांना वेळेत मदत मिळण्यात अडचणी येतात. ग्रामीण व दुर्गम भागात सेवांपर्यंत पोहोचणे विशेषतः कठीण ठरू शकते. त्यामुळे स्थानिक स्तरावर प्रशिक्षित मनुष्यबळ, पुरेसा निधी, नियमित देखरेख आणि विभागांमधील समन्वय मजबूत करणे आवश्यक आहे.

९. बाल हक्कांच्या संरक्षणासाठी उपाययोजना

९.१ जनजागृती आणि बाल हक्क शिक्षण

बालकांचे हक्क, त्यांचे संरक्षण आणि तक्रार नोंदविण्याची प्रक्रिया यांविषयी बालक, पालक, शिक्षक आणि समुदायामध्ये जागरूकता निर्माण करणे आवश्यक आहे. शाळांमध्ये बाल हक्कविषयक कार्यक्रम, पालक सभा, ग्रामसभा, जनजागृती मोहिमा आणि स्थानिक भाषेतील माहितीपत्रके यांचा उपयोग करता येतो. बालकांना सुरक्षित आणि असुरक्षित स्पर्श, विश्वासू व्यक्तीची मदत घेणे, ऑनलाइन सुरक्षितता आणि अन्यायाविरुद्ध आवाज उठविणे यांविषयी वयानुसार शिक्षण द्यावे. जनजागृती करताना केवळ माहिती देण्याऐवजी लोकांना प्रत्यक्ष मदत कुठे आणि कशी मिळू शकते हे स्पष्ट करणे महत्त्वाचे आहे.

९.२ शिक्षण आणि पोषणाची हमी

बालकांचे शिक्षण आणि पोषण हे त्यांच्या सर्वांगीण विकासाचे मूलभूत घटक आहेत. प्रत्येक बालकाला शाळेत प्रवेश, नियमित उपस्थिती, गुणवत्तापूर्ण शिक्षण, आवश्यक शैक्षणिक साहित्य आणि सुरक्षित शालेय वातावरण मिळाले पाहिजे. शाळाबाह्य बालकांची ओळख करून त्यांना पुन्हा शिक्षणाच्या प्रवाहात आणण्यासाठी विशेष प्रयत्न करावेत. तसेच पात्र बालकांपर्यंत शालेय पोषण कार्यक्रम, अंगणवाडी सेवा आणि आरोग्य तपासणी यांचा लाभ पोहोचवावा. आर्थिक अडचणीमुळे कोणतेही बालक शिक्षणापासून वंचित राहणार नाही, यासाठी गरजू कुटुंबांना आवश्यक सहाय्य मिळणे आवश्यक आहे.

९.३ कायद्यांची प्रभावी अंमलबजावणी

बाल संरक्षणाशी संबंधित कायद्यांची प्रभावी अंमलबजावणी करण्यासाठी पोलीस, बालकल्याण समित्या, बाल न्याय मंडळे, न्यायालये आणि जिल्हा बाल संरक्षण कक्ष यांना पुरेसे मनुष्यबळ व प्रशिक्षण उपलब्ध करून द्यावे. बालकांवरील अत्याचाराच्या तक्रारी गांभीर्याने घेऊन कायद्यानुसार योग्य कार्यवाही करावी. तपास आणि न्यायप्रक्रियेदरम्यान बालकाच्या सुरक्षिततेचे, गोपनीयतेचे आणि सन्मानाचे संरक्षण करणे आवश्यक आहे. कायद्याची अंमलबजावणी करताना बालकाला पुन्हा मानसिक त्रास होणार नाही, यासाठी बालक-अनुकूल पद्धतींचा अवलंब करावा.

९.४ ग्रामपंचायत आणि स्थानिक संस्थांचा सहभाग

ग्रामपंचायत, नगरपालिका, शाळा व्यवस्थापन समित्या, अंगणवाडी केंद्रे आणि स्थानिक स्वयंसेवी संस्था यांचा बाल संरक्षणामध्ये सक्रिय सहभाग असावा. स्थानिक पातळीवर शाळाबाह्य बालके, बालमजुरीचा धोका, बालविवाहाची शक्यता आणि संकटात असलेली कुटुंबे यांची माहिती संवेदनशील व गोपनीय पद्धतीने संकलित करता येते. त्यानंतर संबंधित शासकीय विभागांशी समन्वय साधून मदत उपलब्ध करून देता येते. बाल संरक्षणाला स्थानिक कास आराखड्यात स्थान दिल्यास समस्यांची वेळेत ओळख आणि उपाययोजनांची अंमलबजावणी अधिक प्रभावी होऊ शकते.

९.५ बालकांचा सहभाग आणि तक्रार निवारण

बालकांशी संबंधित निर्णय घेताना त्यांच्या वयाला आणि समजुतीला अनुरूप पद्धतीने त्यांचे मत ऐकले पाहिजे. शाळांमध्ये विद्यार्थी गट, बालसभा आणि बाल हक्कविषयक उपक्रम राबवून बालकांना सुरक्षित वातावरणात आपले विचार मांडण्याची संधी देता येते. तक्रार निवारण यंत्रणा बालकांना समजेल अशा भाषेत उपलब्ध असावी. तक्रार केल्यामुळे बालकाला धमकी, अपमान किंवा अन्याय सहन करावा लागू नये, याची काळजी घेतली पाहिजे. बालकांचा सहभाग हा केवळ औपचारिक उपक्रम नसून त्याच्या अनुभवांना आणि गरजांना महत्त्व देणारी प्रक्रिया असावी.

१०. बाल संरक्षणातील समाजकार्यकर्त्यांची भूमिका

बाल हक्क आणि सामाजिक संरक्षणाच्या क्षेत्रात समाजकार्यकर्ता महत्त्वाची भूमिका बजावतो. बालकाच्या कौटुंबिक, आर्थिक आणि सामाजिक परिस्थितीचा अभ्यास करून त्याच्या समस्यांची कारणे शोधणे व योग्य मदत उपलब्ध करून देणे हे समाजकार्यकर्त्याचे प्रमुख कार्य आहे.

बालकांवरील अत्याचार, दुर्लक्ष, बालमजुरी आणि बालविवाह यांसारख्या समस्यांची ओळख करून संबंधित बाल संरक्षण यंत्रणेशी संपर्क साधणे, बालकाला समुपदेशन देणे आणि त्याच्या सुरक्षिततेची काळजी घेणे आवश्यक आहे. तसेच पालकांना मार्गदर्शन करणे, शाळाबाह्य बालकांना शिक्षणाच्या प्रवाहात आणणे आणि शासकीय योजनांचा लाभ मिळवून देणे ही महत्त्वाची कार्ये आहेत.

समाजकार्यकर्ता ग्रामपंचायत, शाळा, अंगणवाडी, पोलीस आणि स्वयंसेवी संस्थांमध्ये समन्वय साधून बाल हक्कांविषयी जनजागृती करतो. बालकांच्या गोपनीयतेचा आणि सन्मानाचा आदर करून त्यांच्या पुनर्वसनासाठी प्रयत्न करणे, तसेच बालकांच्या समस्या रोखण्यासाठी कुटुंब व समुदायाला सक्षम करणे, ही प्रभावी बाल संरक्षणासाठी आवश्यक भूमिका आहे.

११. प्रमुख निष्कर्ष

१. बाल हक्क हे बालकांच्या जगण्याशी, विकासाशी, संरक्षणाशी आणि सहभागाशी संबंधित मूलभूत अधिकार आहेत.

२. सामाजिक संरक्षणामुळे बालकांच्या मूलभूत गरजा पूर्ण करण्यास, संकटांचा परिणाम कमी करण्यास आणि त्यांना विकासाच्या संधी उपलब्ध करून देण्यास मदत होऊ शकते.

३. भारतामध्ये बालकांच्या संरक्षणासाठी विविध कायदे, आयोग, समित्या आणि शासकीय योजना उपलब्ध आहेत; मात्र त्यांचा लाभ बालकांपर्यंत पोहोचणे तितकेच महत्त्वाचे आहे.

४. गरिबी, बालमजुरी, बालविवाह, हिंसा, लैंगिक शोषण, शिक्षणातील असमानता आणि डिजिटल धोके ही बाल संरक्षणासमोरील महत्त्वाची आव्हाने आहेत.

५. कायदेशीर उपाययोजनांबरोबरच कुटुंबाला आर्थिक आधार, समुदायाची जागरूकता, गुणवत्तापूर्ण शिक्षण आणि संस्थांमधील समन्वय आवश्यक आहे.

६. समाजकार्यकर्ते बालकांची ओळख, समुपदेशन, संदर्भ सेवा, पुनर्वसन, जनजागृती आणि बाल हक्कांसाठी वकिली या माध्यमांतून महत्त्वाचे योगदान देऊ शकतात.

७. बाल संरक्षणाची परिणामकारकता वाढविण्यासाठी प्रतिबंधात्मक उपाय, वेळेवर हस्तक्षेप आणि दीर्घकालीन पुनर्वसन यांचा एकत्रित विचार करणे आवश्यक आहे.

हे निष्कर्ष उपलब्ध साहित्याच्या वर्णनात्मक आणि विश्लेषणात्मक अभ्यासावर आधारित आहेत. त्यांची व्यापकता आणि प्रत्यक्ष परिणामकारकता तपासण्यासाठी पुढील संशोधनाची आवश्यकता आहे.

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"क्रुझर गाडी चालक व्यवसायाचे आर्थिक विश्लेषण : एक अभ्यास"

संशोधक विद्यार्थी

कु. पायलकौर विशालसिंघ जाधव

कला तृतीय वर्ष, मेजर अर्थशास्त्र, ने. सु. बो. महा. नांदेड.

मार्गदर्शक

डॉ. राजेश गंगाधरराव उंबरकर

सहाय्यक प्राध्यापक ने. सु. बो. महा. नांदेड.

प्रस्तावना :-

क्रुझर गाडी ही भारताच्या ग्रामीण, शहरी व इतर भागात प्रवासासाठी लोकप्रिय गाडी भाडे तत्वावर / किरायाने गाडी चालवण्याच्या व्यवसायाचा - क्रुझर चा एक इतिहास असून 1990 च्या दशकापूर्वी ग्रामीण भागात दळण-वळणाचे अत्यल्प साधन होती. प्रवासासाठी ST बस किंवा जुन्या जीप यावर लोक अवलंबून राहत असत. नंतर हे टप्पो आला आणि नंतर क्रुझर गाडी आली ही गाडी ग्रामीण वाहतुकीसाठी वरदानच ठरली आहे. क्रुझर गाडीची सर्वात मोठी खासियत म्हणजे तीची मोठी बैठक क्षमता होय. भारतात संयुक्त कुटुंब पद्धती मोठ्या प्रमाणात असल्याने एकत्र प्रवास करण्यासाठी किंवा लग्न सराईत हक्काची गाडी निवडून क्रुझर कडे पाहिल जात. तसेच ग्रामीण भागातील जत्रा, देवदर्शनासाठी लोक एकत्र मिळून क्रुझर गाडी किरायाने ठरवू लागले. त्यामुळे व्यवसायी स्तरावर क्रुझर गाडी भाड्याने देण्याच्या व्यवसायाला मोठी गती मिळाली. ही गाडी तरुणांसाठी एक हक्काची व फायदेशीर स्वयं रोजगार निर्माण करून देत आहे. कमी खर्चात जास्त प्रवासी वाहून नेण्याची क्षमता असल्याने मालक, चालक, प्रवासी यांना परवडणारी आहे.

आर्थिक महत्त्व :-

या गाडीचे पहिले अत्यंत टिकाऊ व स्वस्त असल्याने ट्रॅव्हल्स व्यवसाय करण्यासाठी क्रुझर गाडी कमी गुंतवणुकीत जास्त नफा देते. त्यामुळे भाडे तत्वावरील व्यवसायात क्रुझर गाडीची एक प्रकारे मक्तेदारी निर्माण झालेली आहे. कारण आज नवनवीन गाड्या बाजारात आल्या तरी लग्नाची वरात, देव दर्शन व मोठ्या समूहांच्या प्रवासासाठी क्रुझर गाडी किरायाने घेण्याला पहिली पसंती दिली जाते. या गाडीने ग्रामीण, शहरी अर्थव्यवस्थेला रोजगार निर्मितीसाठी व वाहतूक क्षेत्राला एक नवीन दिशा दिली आहे.

महाराष्ट्रात ग्रामीण व शहरी अशा भागात सार्वजनिक ठिकाणी वाहतुकीचा सोयीचे साधन म्हणजे क्रुझर गाड्या होय. गावठाण, तांड्यावर अशा ठिकाणी क्रुझर गाडी वस्ती, तांडा, गावातून वंडक बस स्थानक, दळणवळण अभावी ST अशा परिस्थितीत असल्यामुळे बाजारपेठ वाढविण्यासाठी क्रुझर गाडी हे एक साधन आहे. क्रुझरम हे उत्पन्नाचे प्रमाण आहे. या माध्यमातून हा व्यवसाय वेगळा आहे. क्रुझर गाडीचा इतिहास असा आहे की या गाडीचा उपयोग सामान्य माणसासाठी असून अत्यंत कमी खर्चात प्रवास करता येतो. त्यामुळे या गाडीला मागणी मोठी आहे.

क्रुझर गाडीचा नांदेड ते बीदर या मार्गावरील प्रवासासाठी क्रुझर व्यवसायातील प्रकार व त्याची मांडणी स्पष्ट करते. कारण या गाडीमुळे आर्थिक व खर्चा प्रत्येकाचा कमी आहे. ग्रामीण प्रत्येक आर्थिक अवस्था ही गरिबीची आहे. त्यामुळे अधिकाधिक गाडीला मागणी आहे.

विषय निवडण्यामागील उद्देश :-

हा विशिष्ट विषय अभ्यासण्यामागील माझा समग्र उद्देश म्हणजे मी गुरुद्वारा भागात राहत असून त्या ठिकाणी मी सातत्याने पाहते की अनेक भाविक क्रुझर गाडी बुक करून जवळपासच्या गुरुद्वाऱ्यांना भेट देतात. त्यामुळे माझ्या मनात एक कुतूहल निर्माण झाली की या वाहन चालकांना किती उत्पन्न मिळत असेल, किती फायदा होत असेल व त्यांचा समस्या कोणत्या आहेत हे जाणून घेण्यासाठी मी या विषयाची निवड केली.

वाहतूक व्यवसायात क्रुझर महत्त्वाचा असल्याने त्यामुळे क्रुझर व्यवसाय करणाऱ्या चालकांचा आर्थिक स्थिती, उत्पन्न आणि समस्यांची कोणतीही नोंद कुठेही उपलब्ध नसते. तो समोर आणण्यासाठी मी या विषयाची निवड केली आहे.

तसेच इंधनाचे वाढते दर, गाड्यांची देखभाल खर्च, बँकेचे हप्ते आणि इतर खर्चाचा ताण पडून क्रुझर चालकांना नेमका किती नफा मिळतो. याचा अभ्यास करणे व त्यांच्या अडचणीचा अभ्यास करणे यासाठी मी या विषयाची निवड केली आहे.

संशोधनाची व्याप्ती :-

हा अभ्यास प्रामुख्याने नांदेड-बिदर या प्रवास मार्गावर धावणाऱ्या क्रुझर गाड्यांवर केंद्रित असून गुरुद्वारा या ठिकाणची वाहतूक करणारे चालक प्रामुख्याने विचारात घेतले आहेत. तसेच चालकांचा उत्पन्न, खर्च, नफा विचारात घेतल्यासाठी हा क्रुझर गाडी चालकाचा अभ्यास करण्यात आला आहे. हा अभ्यास प्रामुख्याने चालू आर्थिक वर्षातील माहितीवर आधारित आहे.

संशोधनाची मर्यादा :-

समग्र अभ्यास शास्त्रीय पद्धतीने करण्याचा प्रयत्न केला असून देखील काही मर्यादा दर्शविल्या आहेत. जसे हा अभ्यास प्रामुख्याने नांदेड-बिदर हे एकच मार्गापुरते मर्यादित आहे. त्यामुळे याचे निष्कर्ष इतर भागावरील वाहतूक व्यवसायाला लागू पडतील असे नाही. तसेच फक्त क्रुझर चालकांचाच अभ्यास करण्यात आला आहे. गोळा केलेली माहिती पूर्णपणे चालकांच्या स्मरणावर आणि अंदाजावर आधारित असून वेळेच्या व संसाधनांच्या मर्यादेमुळे केवळ १० चालकांचाच नमुना अभ्यासण्यात आला आहे.

संशोधन पद्धती :-

संबंधित संशोधनासाठी खालील संशोधन पद्धतीचा अवलंब केला आहे.

- प्राथमिक माहिती

नांदेड गुरुद्वारा परिसरातील क्रुझर चालकांकडून प्रश्नावलीद्वारे माहिती संकलित केली आहे. अचूक विश्लेषणासाठी सहसंबंध नमुना पद्धतीचा वापर करण्यात आला आहे. तसेच गोळा केलेल्या माहितीचे वर्गीकरण तक्ता स्वरूपात करून सहसंबंध व सरासरीच्या साहाय्याने आर्थिक विश्लेषण केले आहे.

संशोधनाची उद्दिष्टे :-

1) क्रुझर गाडी चालकांची आर्थिक स्थितीचा अभ्यास करणे.

2) या व्यवसायात भांडवली गुंतवणूक व रोजगार याचा विश्लेषण करणे.

3) क्रुझर चालकांच्या उत्पन्नाचा अभ्यास करणे.

4) क्रुझर गाडी चालक व्यवसायाचे स्वरूप समजून घेणे.

माहितीचे विश्लेषण

संबंधित संशोधनात क्रुझर गाडीच्या चालकांसमवेत माहिती संगहित करण्यात आली असून त्यावरून असे लक्षात आले की क्रुझर चालक हे उच्च शिक्षित नसून माध्यमिक शिक्षणापुरंत त्यांनी शिक्षण घेतलेले आहे.

गुरुद्वाऱ्यातील भाविकांची संख्या ही सण, सुट्ट्या आणि जत्रा उदा. गुरुपूरब या काळात खूप जास्त असते व इतर वेळी ती कमी असते. म्हणजेच हंगामा नुसार उत्पन्नात बदल होऊ शकतो. निवडलेल्या 10 चालकांची सामान्य माहिती पुढील प्रमाणे आहे.

चालकांची सामान्य माहिती

सर्वेक्षणात असे दिसून येते की सुमारे 60% चालक स्वतःच गाडीचे मालक आहेत आणि उरलेले 40% चालक हे पगारी नोकर म्हणून किंवा गाडीच्या जेवढा नफा होईल त्या आधारावर त्यांना मोबदला दिला जातो. ज्यांची स्वतःची गाडी आहे, अशा चालकांचे उत्पन्न किंवा नफा निश्चितच इतरांपेक्षा जास्त असते.

वाहन खरेदी व गुंतवणूक या संदर्भावरून

असे स्पष्ट झाले की गाडी खरेदी करतांना बहुतेक कर्ज चालकांनी बँकेकडून घेतलेल्या होतल आहे. त्यांना बँकेचा कर्जाचा कोठी हप्ता वेळेवर भरावा लागतो. त्यामुळे त्यांच्या उत्पन्नातील बराच भाग हा कर्ज फेडण्यात जातो. तसेच गाडी खरेदी करण्यासाठी घेतलेल्या कर्जाचा व्याजदर हा काही वेळा 13% पर्यंत असल्याचा दिसून आला. हा व्याजदर अधिक आहे. बहुतांश चालक गेल्या 10 वर्षापासून त्याच मार्गावर व्यवसायिक चालक म्हणून काम करत असल्याचे दिसून आले. फक्त एखाद्या प्रसंगी वारीनुसार एकत्र एकसरतार मार्गावर गेल्याचे दिसून येते.

दैनंदिन व मासिक उत्पन्न :-*

दैनंदिन व मासिक उत्पन्नाच्या प्रश्नावरून हे स्पष्ट होते की क्रुझर गाडी चालक हे प्रामुख्याने भाडे या कामासाठी वापरली जाते. अतिगर्दीच्या काळात गाडी साधारण 8 महिन्याला 25 ते 30 ट्रिप्स मिळतात. व ऑफ सिजनमध्ये म्हणजेच मंदीच्या काळात ट्रिप्सची संख्या 15 ते 18 साधारणपणे इतकी खाली येते.

दैनंदिन व मासिक उत्पन्नाच्या दिलेल्या प्रश्नावरून एका दिवसात गाडी सरासरी 250 किलोमीटर ते 300 किलोमीटर धावते. तसेच क्रुझर चालकांना दररोजचे सरासरी एकूण उत्पन्न किती असे प्रश्न विचारल्यावर मासिक सरासरी 4000 ते 5500 रु सांगितले.

भाडेतत्वा:

क्रुझर चालकांना भाडे तत्वावर चालवतांना एका बाजूला इंधनाचा खर्च मोठा येतो. असे सर्वसाधारणपणे सरासरी 80,000 ते 1,00,000 रु त्यामधून गाडीची सर्व्हिस 3000, डिझेल 50,000 हा 60,000 उत्पन्न यामध्ये मालकाला खर्चातून शिल्लक राहणारा नफा तो मालकाला मिळतो.

दैनंदिन व मासिक उत्पन्नाचा तक्ता

मासिक	किलोमीटर सरासरी	दैनिक सरासरी किमी	सरासरी उत्पन्न	एकूण मासिक उत्पन्न	मासिक उत्पन्न
(mean) सरासरी	20	250	4000	80,000	50,000
	25	300	5500	1,00,000	60,000
	22.5	275	4750	90,000	55,000

3 क्रुझर गाडीचा सरासरी 22.5 आणि एकूण उत्पन्न सरासरी 4750 रु आणि मासिक सरासरी उत्पन्न 90,000 व मासिक निव्वळ उत्पन्न 55,000 आहे व अजून एक म्हणजे

सरासरी विश्लेषण :- डिझेल, मेंटनन्स, आणि खर्चात 50% व 53,437.50 म्हणजे खर्चाची - नफा याची स्थिती दर्शवते त्या प्रमाणे खर्च वजा करता येते आणि एकूण नफ्याची स्थिती दर्शवते.

क्रुझर गाडी धावल्यास खर्चावर 15000 हजार इंधनाचा खर्च व इतर 2000 खर्च आणि 68,237.50 मिळतो. इत्यादी.

क्रुझर गाडी व्यवसायाची मालकी असून सुद्धा सरासरी उत्पन्न 50000 असा अभ्यासातून दिसतो. त्यामुळे क्रुझर चालकाचे एकूण उत्पन्न

6 महिने सरासरी उत्पन्न = 6 X 1,00,000

6 महिने नॉन सिझन उत्पन्न = 6 X 60,000 = 3,60,000

एकूण वार्षिक उत्पन्न = 9,60,000

प्रवास मार्गावर गाडी 10 ते 20 ट्रिप्स सरासरी असते. सरासरी खर्च म्हणजे 68,237.50 मिळतो. आणि त्यामधून निव्वळ नफा = एकूण उत्पन्न - एकूण खर्च.

50% सिझन आणि 50% नॉन सिझन

चालकांची गाडीच्या व्यवसायाची स्थिती आणि त्यांचा बचतीचा आलेख 60% उत्पन्न चालकांना फायदा होत आहे.

समजा गाडीचे सरासरी 1,06,875 वार्षिक उत्पन्न (ग्रॉस) आणि 10,000 हे आहे दर महा खर्च + EMI

खर्च = 73,500 + 10,000 = 1,06,875 - 83,500 = 23,375 प्रति महिना.

निव्वळ = 23,375 प्रति महिना.

विश्लेषणामध्ये 20 हजार ते 25 हजार या दरम्यान सरासरी उत्पन्न असल्याचे दिसते. चालकांची गाडीच्या व्यवसायाची स्थिती आणि त्यांचा बचतीचा आलेख 60% उत्पन्न चालकांना फायदा होत आहे. वर्तमान स्थितीत 60% वाहन बचत 50% खर्चात असून 60% वाहन चालक मालक असल्याने नफा वाढतो आणि बचत चांगली होत आहे.

समस्या आणि आव्हाने

क्रुझर गाडी चालक व्यवसायात असणाऱ्या समस्या व आव्हाने खालील प्रमाणे आहेत :

1. वाढत्या इंधन दरामुळे व्यवसायावर परिणाम: क्रुझर गाडी चालकांच्या मते वाढत्या डिझेलच्या किमतीमुळे व्यवसायावर परिणाम होतो. इंधन दर वाढल्याने खर्च वाढतो आणि नफा कमी होतो.
2. या व्यवसायामध्ये सर्वात मोठी समस्या ही इंधनाचा खर्च हीच आहे. चालकाला दिवसाला सरासरी 50 % डिझेलवर खर्च होतो.
3. आरटीओ / पोलीस यांचा त्रास - अनेक वेळा आरटीओ चेकिंगच्या नावाखाली दंड आकारला जातो. कधी कधी कागदपत्रे असूनही त्रास दिला जातो.
4. रस्त्याची अवस्था वाईट असल्याने - खराब रस्त्यामुळे गाडीचा मेंटनन्स खर्च वाढतो आणि प्रवासाला जास्त वेळ लागतो.
5. स्पर्धा खूप वाढली आहे - सध्या प्रत्येक गावात क्रुझर गाडी असल्याने प्रवाशांची संख्या कमी झाली आहे. त्यामुळे एका गाडीला कमी ट्रिप मिळतात.
6. निलंबनाची समस्या - योग्य प्रशिक्षण नसताना अनेक चालक गाडी चालवतात त्यामुळे अपघाताचे प्रमाण वाढते.
7. हंगामी व्यवसाय - लग्नसराई किंवा सण असेल तरच उत्पन्न चांगले मिळते. इतर वेळी व्यवसाय मंद असतो. लग्नकार्य, सण, उत्सव वगैरे असल्यास क्रुझरला मागणी असते पण इतर वेळी क्रुझरला मागणी कमी असते त्यामुळे मंदीच्या काळात व्यवसायावर परिणाम होतो.
8. बँकेचे कर्ज - गाडी खरेदीसाठी घेतलेल्या कर्जाचे हप्ते वेळेवर भरावे लागतात त्यामुळे उत्पन्न कमी असले तरी हप्ता भरावाच लागतो.
9. बहुतेक चालक हे अशिक्षित असल्याने त्यांना कागदपत्रे, विमा, परवाना याबाबत माहिती नसते त्यामुळे त्यांची फसवणूक होते.
10. क्रुझर चालकांना संघटना नाही त्यामुळे त्यांच्या मागण्या मान्य होत नाहीत आणि त्यांना शासनाच्या योजनांचा लाभ मिळत नाही.
11. गाडीची पार्किंगची समस्या - शहरात गाडी पार्किंगसाठी जागा नसते त्यामुळे दंड भरावा लागतो.
12. सरळ साधा व्यवसाय असून सुद्धा या व्यवसायात जास्त परिश्रम करावे लागतात आणि तरीही उत्पन्न कमी आहे. त्यामुळे तरुण वर्ग या व्यवसायाकडे कमी आकर्षित होत आहे.

निष्कर्ष:

या प्रकल्पात क्रुझर गाडी चालक व्यवसायाचा अभ्यास करण्यात आला आहे. या अभ्यासातून असे दिसून आले की क्रुझर गाडी व्यवसायातून चालकांना रोजगार मिळत आहे आणि ग्रामीण भागात वाहतुकीची एक महत्त्वाची सोय उपलब्ध झाली आहे.

चालकांना नफा जास्त मिळतो सणाच्या काळात तर इतर वेळी नफा कमी मिळतो. या अभ्यासाचे निष्कर्ष मर्यादित कालावधीत गोळा केलेल्या आहेत म्हणून माहितीवर आधारित त्यात बदल असू शकतात.

1. क्रुझर गाडी व्यवसायातून चालकांना ग्रामीण भागात चांगला रोजगार मिळत आहे.
2. स्वतः मालक असलेल्या चालकांना जास्त नफा मिळतो पण ज्या ठिकाणी पगारी चालक असेल त्या ठिकाणी आर्थिक नफ्यात फरक पडतो.
3. क्रुझर गाड्यांच्या व्यवसायात एकूण वार्षिक उत्पन्नाचा 70% वाटा हा केवळ सहा महिन्याच्या पिक सिझनमध्ये मिळतो (उदा., लग्न, सराई, सण उत्सव) त्यामुळे या व्यवसायाचे आर्थिक यश या सिझनच्या नियमावर अवलंबून असते.
4. मंदीच्या काळात मासिक उत्पन्न कमी असले तरी रोजचा खर्च भागविण्यासाठी ते अधिक स्थिरता ठेवतात.
5. गाडी दर महा सरासरी 22.5 दिवस रस्त्यावर 275 किलोमीटर धावते हा आकडा गाडीच्या वापराची अत्यंत व्यस्तता पद्धतीने होता असे दर्शवते.
6. सर्व हंगाम मिळून गाडीचे एकूण अंदाजीत वार्षिक उत्पन्न 9,60,000 आहे जर यातून खर्च कमी तर मालकाला दर महिन्याला सरासरी 20 ते 30 हजार नफा मिळू शकतो.
7. एकूण कमाईच्या जवळ-जवळ 85% ते 90% भाग हा खर्च होता. बाकीच्यात संपत आहे.
8. जर एखाद्या महिन्यात गाडी मोठ्या प्रमाणात बिघडली व भाडे मिळाले नाही तर व्यवसायाला स्वतःच्या खिशातून पैसे भरावे लागतात.

थोडक्यात, हा व्यवसाय आर्थिक दृष्ट्या फायदेशीर आणि शाश्वत आहे कारण महिन्याकाठी गाडीचा खर्च पूर्ण पण वेळ न घेता सरळचा खर्च भागविण्या इतका उत्पन्न मिळून देत आहे.

शिफारशी :-

व्यवसायातून क्रुझर गाडीच्या मिळणार उत्पन्न, खर्च, यांचा विचार करून हा व्यवसाय अधिक फायदेशीर व सुरक्षित बनविण्यासाठी खालील शिफारशी करण्यात आल्या आहेत.

1. मंदीच्या काळात उत्पन्न वाढवण्यासाठी जसे शेतीमाल कापसाच्या वगैरे साठी भाडेकरार करून कृषी माल वाहतूक करावी.
2. व्यवसायात इंधनावर सर्वात जास्त खर्च होतो त्यामुळे एकाच वेळी पंपावरून इंधन भरावे व त्याचा काटेकोर हिशेब ठेवावा तसेच इंधनाची बचत करावी.
3. गाडीची वेळच्या वेळी सर्व्हिसिंग करावी म्हणजे गाडीची देखभाल करावी म्हणजे आर्थिक नुकसान होणार नाही.
4. पिक सिझन मध्ये मिळणाऱ्या एकूण नफ्यातील एकूण रक्कमेच्या बचत म्हणून बाजूला ठेवावी जेणे करून मंदीच्या काळात त्याचा वापर करता येईल.
5. परिसरातील इतर ट्रॅव्हल एजंसी यांच्याशी संपर्क ठेवावा जेणे करून गाडी एकटी दिवस रिकामी होणार नाही. त्यासाठी सोशल मीडियाचा वापर करावा.
6. कर्जाचे नियोजन करावे. भाडे पर किमान व कमाल भाडे पर निश्चित करावे.
7. चालकांची एक अधिकृत संघटना स्थापन करावी.
8. पुरक व्यवसायाचे प्रशिक्षण घेऊन इतर उत्पन्नाचे स्त्रोत निर्माण करावेत.

9. बँकांमार्फत कमी व्याज दराने आणि सुलभ हप्त्यावर वाहन कर्ज उपलब्ध करून दिले पाहिजे तसेच हप्त्यांमध्ये लवचिकता असली पाहिजे.
10. चालकांसाठी कल्याणकारी मंडळ स्थापन करून त्यांना विमा व पेन्शनच्या सुविधा देणे.

सारांश :-

गुरुद्वारा भाविकांच्या सेवा मर्यादित असताना क्रुझर गाड्या ही सेवा वाहतुकीसाठी त्यांची गरज पूर्ण करतात त्यातून रोजगार निर्माण होतो. त्यामुळे हा व्यवसाय कमी नफा व जास्त जोखीम असलेला बनला आहे. चालकांचे उत्पन्न केवळ दैनंदिन खर्च राजा भागविण्या पुरतेच मर्यादित राहिले असून बचतीचा अभाव निर्माण झालेला आहे. तसेच हा व्यवसाय पूर्णपणे असंघटित असल्याने चालकांना योग्य न्याय मिळत नाही. यासाठी शासकीय हस्तक्षेप, संघटित प्रयत्न व आर्थिक सुधारणांची गरज आहे.

संदर्भ :

1. प्रत्यक्ष भेट देऊन पश्नावली मार्फत माहितीचे संकलन

संत तुकारामांचे तत्त्वज्ञान आणि आधुनिक समाजातील उपयुक्तता

सुखदा सदाशिव ऱ्हाटवळ
राज्योपाध्येनगर कोल्हापूर.

सारांश -

महाराष्ट्राला समृद्ध आणि महान अशी संतपरंपरा लाभलेली आहे. या संतपरंपरेतील संतांनी समाजाचे प्रबोधन करून मानवाला योग्य जीवनमूल्यांचा मार्ग दाखविला. या परंपरेतील एक अत्यंत महत्त्वाचे संत म्हणजे संत तुकाराम. मानवी जीवनाबद्दल त्यांच्या मनात अपार सहानुभूती, करुणा आणि आत्मनिष्ठा आढळते. समाजामध्ये सद्सदविवेकबुद्धी, नैतिकता आणि सामाजिक जागृती निर्माण व्हावी यासाठी त्यांनी आयुष्यभर प्रयत्न केले. समाजाविषयी असलेल्या त्यांच्या प्रखर तळमळीमधूनच त्यांच्या अभंगवाङ्मयाची निर्मिती झाली.

"बुडती हे जन न देखवे डोळा,
म्हणोनी कळवळा येतो आम्हा."

या भावनेतून संत तुकारामांनी समाजाचे प्रबोधन केले. स्वानुभवाच्या आधारे, साध्या-सोप्या आणि लोकभाषेतील शैलीत त्यांनी अभंगांची रचना केली. त्यामुळेच त्यांचे विचार सर्वसामान्यांपर्यंत सहज पोहोचले आणि तुकोबाराय जगद्गुरु ठरले. त्यांच्या अभंगांचे वैशिष्ट्य म्हणजे ते आजही तितकेच अर्थपूर्ण आणि मार्गदर्शक आहेत.

संत तुकारामांच्या अभंगांमध्ये अध्यात्मिक जाणीव आणि सामाजिक जाणीव यांचा सुंदर संगम आढळतो. त्यांच्या साहित्याने मराठी साहित्यात अजरामर स्थान मिळवले आहे. विज्ञानयुगातही मानवाला पडणाऱ्या अनेक प्रश्नांची उत्तरे तुकारामांच्या अभंगांमध्ये सापडतात. त्यांच्या अभंगसाहित्यात सामाजिकता, समता, नैतिकता, मानवता, भक्ती आणि सामाजिक प्रबोधन यांचा प्रभावी आविष्कार दिसून येतो.

तुकारामांची अभंगवाणी ही सखोल अनुभूतीतून निर्माण झालेली आहे. त्यामध्ये जागरूक समाजचिंतन आणि मानवी जीवनाचे सूक्ष्म निरीक्षण दिसून येते. मानवी जीवन आणि विश्वातील विविध अनुभवांचे रंग त्यांनी आपल्या अभंगांतून व्यक्त केले आहेत. त्यांच्या अभंगांतील उपमा-प्रतिमा सर्वसामान्यांच्या दैनंदिन जीवनातून घेतलेल्या असल्यामुळे त्या थेट मनाला भिडतात. त्यांच्या अभंगांमध्ये कथात्मकता, व्यक्तिरेखाटनाची शैली आणि प्रसंगी आढळणारे विनोदी अंगही उच्च दर्जाचे आहे.

तुकारामांची अभंगरचना ही अनुभवांचे चित्र उभे करणारी आणि जीवनातील व्यावहारिकतेचे दर्शन घडविणारी आहे. त्यांचे अभंग एकाच वेळी सकस, उत्कट, तिखट, वेदक आणि दाहकही असतात. त्यामुळेच ते जनमानसात खोलवर रुजलेले दिसतात. खरंतर आपण अत्यंत भाग्यवान आहोत की तुकारामांची ही अमूल्य साहित्यसंपदा आपल्याला लाभली आहे.

"भाग्य आम्ही तुका देखियेला."

प्रस्तुत शोधनिबंधात संत तुकारामांचे तत्त्वज्ञान स्पष्ट करून ते आधुनिक समाजाला कशा प्रकारे मार्गदर्शक ठरते, याचा अभ्यास करण्यात आलेला आहे.

प्रस्तावना

महाराष्ट्रात संत परंपरेत संत तुकारामांचे स्थान अत्यंत महत्त्वाचे आहे.'तुका झालासे कळस' या उक्तीनुसारच हे स्पष्ट होते. तुकारामांचा अभंगांनी समाजाला खऱ्या अर्थाने तारण्याचे काम केलेले आहे. समाजाला सत्य,करुणा, समता आणि भक्तीचा संदेश दिला आहे. जगद्गुरु तुकोबारायांनी आपल्या साहित्यातून समाजातील अंधश्रद्धा, कर्मकांड, जातीभेद आणि अन्याय यांना विरोध केला आहे, मानवता धर्माचा पुरस्कार केलेला आहे आणि मानवाला केंद्रबिंदू मानून आपल्या समाजाचा उद्धार कसा होऊ शकतो यासाठी मार्गदर्शन केलेले आहे.आजच्या स्पर्धेच्या युगात मानवी मूल्यांचा ऱ्हास होताना दिसत आहे. अशावेळी संत तुकारामांचे तत्वज्ञान त्यांचे अभंग समाजाला योग्य दिशा दाखवून मार्गदर्शकाचे कार्य करतात.

उद्दिष्टे -

1. संत तुकारामांच्या साहित्याचा अभ्यास करणे.
2. संत तुकारामांच्या अभंगातील तत्त्वज्ञानाचा अभ्यास करणे.
3. संत तुकारामांच्या अभंगातील उपदेशाचे विश्लेषण करणे.
4. आधुनिक काळात संत तुकारामांच्या तत्त्वज्ञानाचे विचारांचे महत्त्व स्पष्ट करणे.

संशोधन पद्धती -

संत तुकारामांचे तत्त्वज्ञान आणि आधुनिक समाजातील उपयुक्तता या शोधनिबंधासाठी वर्णनात्मक, विश्लेषणात्मक आणि तुलनात्मक पद्धतीचा वापर केलेला आहे.

संत तुकारामांचे तत्त्वज्ञान -

तुकारामांनी आपल्या अभंगातून परमात्मा जीव जगत माया बंध मोक्ष याविषयी तत्त्वचिंतन केले आहे ते सारे आजच्या समाजाला ही मार्गदर्शक ठरते. समाज प्रबोधन करणारे समाजाला क्रांतिकारी विचार देणारे संत तुकाराम जगद्गुरु तुकोबाराय झाले. वारकरी संप्रदायाच्या माध्यमातून अध्यात्मिक आणि सामाजिक क्षेत्रात समता प्रस्थापित केली. गोरगरिबांचा उद्धार करण्याचा करण्याचे वृत्त घेतलेल्या तुकोबांनी चिरंतन असे अभंग लिहिले आणि मराठी भाषेला एक अमूल्य ठेवा प्रदान केला. त्याच्या प्रत्येक अभंगातून समाजाला उपदेश केला आहे. जगण्याच्या तत्त्वज्ञान सांगितलेले आहेत. संत तुकारामांनी सामाजिक चळवळीतून समाज उद्धाराच्या भावनेतून जे वाग्मयीन आणि सामाजिक कार्य केले त्याचा ठसा आजही जनमानसावर पाहायला मिळतो. प्रपंच आणि परमार्थ या दोन वेगवेगळ्या गोष्टी आहेत प्रपंच करूनही परमार्थ कसा साधता येतो, वर्तन कसे असावे, पैसा धन संपत्ती कशी मिळवावी, गुरु आई वडील यांच्याशी आपले वागणे कसे असावे या सा-याच्या मार्गदर्शन जगद्गुरु तुकोबारायांनी आपल्या अभंगातून केले आहे. समाजातील फसव्या परंपरेचा, अनाचारांचा,ढोंगी साधू संतांचा, विषयासक्त स्त्री-पुरुषांचा, उच्च निच्च भेदभावांचा, पाखंडांचा, दुर्जनांचा आणि क्षुद्र दैवतांचा तुकारामांनी कडक शब्दात विरोध केलेला आहे.

तुकोबाराय एकीकडे खूपच संवेदनशील वाटतात पण दुसरीकडे ते एक क्रांतिकारी सुद्धा वाटतात कोणाचीही भीती न बाळगता समाजातील वाईट लोकांवर, ढोंगी वृत्तीवर,उच्चनिच्चता,स्वार्थी वृत्ती,अनिष्ट रूढी परंपरा, अंधश्रद्धा, कर्मकांड, नास्तिकता यावर परखडपणे तुकोबाराय शाब्दिक प्रहार करतात.

चंदनाचे हात पायही चंदन
परिसरा नाही ना कोण अंग
दीपा नाही पोटी अंधकार
सर्वांनी सकर अवघी गोड
तुका म्हणे तैसा सज्जनापासून
पाहता अवगुण मिळायची ना

संत तुकाराम म्हणतात सज्जन माणसाच्या ठिकाणी कोणताही अवगुण पाहायला मिळत नाही.चंदनासारखे झिजत राहणे आणि दिव्यासारखा जीवनात प्रकाश निर्माण करणे वागण्या बोलण्यात नेहमी गोडवा असणे असा मनुष्य नेहमीच समाजात आदर्श ठरतो.

जोडोनिया धन उत्तम वेव्हारे
उदास विचारे वेच करी
उत्तमचगती तो एक पावेल
उत्तम भोगील जीव खाणी
परोउपकारी नेहमी परनिंदा
परस्त्रिया सदा बहिणी माया

भूतदया गाई पशुचे पालन
त्यान्हेल्या ला जीवन वनामाजी

संसार कसा करावा याचे अगदी आदर्श वर्णन तुकारामाने केलेली आहे. प्रामाणिकपणे व्यवहार करून धन जमा करावे धनाच्या मोहात जास्त अडकू नये. विचार करून उत्तम वर्तन करावे म्हणजे उत्तम गती प्राप्त होते. दुसऱ्यांची निंदा करू नये पर स्त्रियांना माय बहिणीप्रमाणे मानावे प्राणिमात्रावर दया करावी तहानलेल्या पाणी द्यावे कोणाशीही वाईट चिंतू नये, नुकसान करू नये, असे वर्तन करणाऱ्याला नेहमी सुख लाभते. आणि संसारात राहून परमार्थही सांगता येतो.

समाज प्रबोधन आणि अंधश्रद्धेला विरोध

तुकोबांना मानवी जीवनाबद्दल अत्यंत सहानुभूती होती आंतरिक प्रेम होते समाजात सत्याची जाणीव रुजवण्याकरता त्यांनी आयुष्यभर प्रयत्न केला तुकोबांच्या बंडखोर वृत्तीची चिकित्सा करताना तुकोबांनी केलेले पाखंड खंडन हा एक प्रकारे उपदेशच असून भक्तिमार्गाच्या प्रसाराचे विधायक कार्य करण्यापूर्वी समाजातील सडलेल्या कल्पना संस्था आणि संप्रदाय याचा निपात त्यांना करावा लागेल व तो त्यांना निष्ठुरपणे केला.

समाजाच्या दृष्ट व दांभिकतेवर तुकोबा तुकोबांचे शब्द कठोरपणे उमटतात समाजाला नीतीची शिकवण देतात. समाजामध्ये प्रबोधन घडवतात. तुकोबांची अभंगवाणी ही मोठी विलक्षण आहे त्यात समाज निरीक्षण आहे मनोबोध आहे. या अभंगात स्पष्टपणे अंधश्रद्धेला विरोध केला आहे हे अभंग सर्वांना शुद्ध अक्षराचा लोकधर्म सांगतात.

तीर्थी धोंडा पाणी |
देव रोखडा सज्जनी ||
मिळाली या संत संग |
समर्पिता भले अंग ||

कुठल्याही तीर्थस्थानाला गेले तरी तेथे धोंडा आणि पाणी याचाच सुकाळ असतो. मनात भाव नसेल तर तीर्थात दुसरे काय असणार तेथे दगडाचा देव आणि नदीचे पाणी असते,पण साक्षात देव मात्र संत सज्जनाच्या ठिकाणी असतो. कष्ट, श्रद्धा, संयम, सहकार्य, परोपकार, सत्य, दयाशीलता व प्रेमळपणा या सद्गुणांचा प्रसार करणे ही तुकारामांच्या तत्त्वज्ञानामागील खरी भूमिका आहे.

संत आपण होऊन अज्ञानी माणसाचा उद्धार करतात हे केवढे विशेष उलट तीर्थयात्रेला जाऊन शरीराचे कातडे उजळेल जाईल. पण मनाचे काय किंवा आम्ही एवढ्या तीर्थयात्रा केला याचाही अभिमान करील अभिमान टाळला पाहिजे. संतत्व हे रानावनात बाजारात आणि तीर्थक्षेत्रात मिळत नाही ते मिळते सजनाच्या सहवासात असे तुकोबा ठामपणे सांगतात.

काय काशी करती गंगा |
भितरी चांगा नाही तो ||
काय टिळे करती माळा |
भावखळा नाही तो ||

मन पवित्र तर जीवन पवित्र हेच खरे स्वा-अनुभवाशिवाय स्व-अनुभूतीशिवाय ब्रह्मज्ञानाच्या गप्पा मारणे व्यर्थ आहे.

"अर्थविन पाठांतर का सया करावे,व्यर्थची मरावे घोगुनिया"

आपल्या सुखासाठी आणि आपल्या इच्छा पूर्ण करण्यासाठी रोज एक नवी दैवते निर्माण करणाऱ्या लोकांचा तिखट समाचार तुकोबारायांनी घेतलेला आहे. जागोजागी उगवणारी शेंद्राचे देव रक्त आणि मांस यांचा नैवेद्य मागणाऱ्या क्षुद्रदेवता तसेच स्वार्थासाठी निर्माण होणारे नवीन धर्मपंथ आणि त्यांचे अघोरी उपहार यावर तुकोबारायांनी कठोर पणे विरोध केला आहे. भाताच्या शितांची मागणी करणाऱ्या या भूताखेतांची आणि स्वतःच्या पोटासाठी रडणाऱ्या सेंद्रिय देवतांची कोण पूजा करणार ही क्षुद्रदेवते कसले फळ देणार?

सेंद्ररी ही दैवीदैवते |

कोण ती पुजी भुते खेते ||
आपल्या पोटाजी रडते |
मागती शिते अवदान ||
तैसा नव्हे नारायण |
जग व्यापक जनार्दन ||
तुका म्हणे त्याचे करा चिंतन |
वंदू चरण येति सकळा ||

बहिरंगाचा देखावा नव्हे तर अंतरंगाची श्रीमंती फार महत्त्वाचे आहे.बाह्य ढोंग सजवून प्रभू-प्रेम ईश्वर भेटत नाही शुद्ध वाणी शुद्ध मन महत्त्वाचे अहो,एखाद्याने अगदी प्रयत्नपूर्वक तांब्याचे नाणे जरी देशोदेशी फिरवले तरी त्याला सोन्याच्या नाण्याची किंमत येत नाही. कृत्रिम गोष्ट संत सज्जनांच्या मनाला कधीच रुचत नाही. अंतरंगाची शुद्धता महत्त्वाची आहे. गाढवाला कितीही सजवले तर त्याचे घोडे होत नाही किंवा कुत्र्याला थाटामाटाने पालखीत बसवले म्हणून त्याचे भुंकणे बंद होत नाही. वत्तवैकल्य करून शरीर सजवून काय उपयोग अंतरकरणात शुद्ध तळमळ हवी तरच देव भेटतो. म्हणूनच आचार्य अत्रे यांनी तुकोबारायांना महाराष्ट्राचा बंडखोर लोक कवी असे म्हटले आहे.

जो प्राणीमात्राचा मत्सर करतो. त्याचे ब्रह्मज्ञान फुकट आहे असा माणूस पडीक पंडित असतो. तो ब्रह्मज्ञानाची चर्चा करतो पण मनात माणसा माणसाचा भेदभाव व क्रोध करतो असा माणूस लोकांची निंदास्तुती करण्यात आपल्या धन्यता मानतो, वरवर गोड बोलून प्रत्येकाचा मत्सर करतो.नेहमीच स्वार्थीपणाने वागतो माणसात भेद करतो निंदा करतो. असा माणूस समाजाला कलंक आहे. अशाची संगती नेहमी टाळावी असे तुकोबाराय सांगतात.

ऐसे कैसे झाले भोंदू |
कर्म करोनी म्हणती साधू ||
अंगा लावूनिया राख |
डोळे झाकून करती पाप ||
दावूनी वैराग्याची कळा |
भोगी विषयाचा सोहळा ||
तुका म्हणे सांगू किती |
जळो तयाची संगती ||

आजकाल उपासतापास,नवसायास,अंगारे,धुपारे,जादूटोणा यांची चलती आहे. असल्या खोट्या चमत्कारांना नमस्कार करण्यापेक्षा खरा ईश्वरी साक्षात्कार महत्त्वाचा हे भोंदू साधू स्वतःची आणि देवाची फसवणूक करतात अशा लोकांची संगती नेहमी टाळावी.

जातीधर्माने आलेली विषमता आणि अस्पृश्यता तुकारामांना मान्य नव्हती ते माणसा माणसातील एकतेचे व समतेचे पुरस्कर्ते आहेत. दया,क्षमा,शांती इत्यादी सदगुणच माणसाला श्रेष्ठ ठरवतात. जन्माने नाही तर मानव गुणांनी श्रेष्ठ ठरतो. काम क्रोधादी षडरिपू ज्याला सोडून गेले आहेत. असा मनुष्य जातीने खालचा असला तरी तो खरा मनुष्य होय. तुकाराम महाराज सांगतात भक्ती सुळावरची पोळी आहे. ज्याचा पाया खोल नसेल तर त्यावर उभारलेली भिंत पडतेच चांगले लक्ष देऊन जर स्वयंपाक केला तर पदार्थाला रुची येतेच तशीच भक्तीसाठी सुद्धा मनाला ताब्यात ठेवले पाहिजे. तरच परमार्थ भेटेल मनाचा आरसा स्वच्छ असायला हवा. कर्म चांगले असले तरच परमेश्वर भेटेल.

तुका म्हणे नाही जाती सवे काम |
ज्याचे मुखी नाम तोचि धन्य ||
तुझे आहे तुझपाशि |
परी तू जागा चुकलासी ||

मोक्ष हा देवापाशी नसतो स्वतः जवळच असतो फक्त अंतकरण आणि नारायण एकत्र येण्याची गरज आहे.

संत तुकारामांचा तत्त्वज्ञानाची आजच्या काळातील उपयुक्तता

तुकारामांच्या अभंगवाणीत परमार्थ ज्ञान आहे आणि व्यवहार ज्ञानही आहे. जे ज्ञान भक्ती योग शिकवते तसेच कर्मयोग ही शिकवते आणि परमार्थिक गुणांचा अविष्कार करून देते. सामाजिक सद्गुणांची ओळख करून देते. खरेच तुकारामांचे शब्द धन हे महाराष्ट्राचे लोक धन आहे जे पिढ्यानपिढ्या लोकांसाठी उपयुक्त ठरणार आहे.

पर्यावरण जनजागृती -

संत तुकाराम यांच्या अभंगामध्ये निसर्गप्रेम पर्यावरण संवर्धन आणि सर्व जीवसृष्टी बद्दल आदर आहे. निसर्गाचे महत्व ओळखून त्यांनी आपल्या अभंगातून सुंदर संदेश दिला आहे. त्यांनी मांडलेले विचार आजच्या पर्यावरणीय संकटाच्या काळात खूप महत्त्वाचे ठरतात. तुकारामांचे तत्वज्ञान मानवाला निसर्गाशी मैत्रीपूर्ण संबंध ठेवून संतुलित जीवन जगण्याची प्रेरणा देतात. निसर्गाच्या साह्यानेच आपले जीवन खूप सुंदर आणि यशस्वी होऊ शकते आनंदी होऊ शकते.पशुपक्षी झाडे वेली हे सुद्धा आपले नातलगच आहेत.यांचे रक्षण करणे आपले आद्य कर्तव्य आहे.

वृक्षवल्ली आम्हा सोयरे वनचरे |
पक्षीही सुस्वर आळविती ||
आकाश मंडप पृथ्वी आसन |
रमी तेथे मन क्रीडा करी ||
तुका होय मनाशी संवाद |
आपुलाची वाद आपणाशी ||

व्यसनाला विरोध -

संत तुकाराम व्यसनी लोकांवर ही परखडपणे बोलतात दारू तंबाखू सेवन करणाऱ्यांचा अंत होतो. व्यसन हा मानवाच्या विकासाचा विकासातील खूप मोठा अडथळा आहे.व्यसनामुळे मनुष्याचे आर्थिक,शारीरिक आणि सामाजिक नुकसान होते. त्याचे संपूर्ण कुटुंब उध्वस्त होते आणि शेवटही वाईटच होतो. म्हणूनमाणसाने व्यसन करू नये. कर्तव्य दक्ष राहावे आणि जबाबदारीने वागावे तरच कुटुंबाची पर्यायाने समाजाची देशाची प्रगती होते.

ओढुनी तंबाखू काढील जो धूर |
बुडेल ते घर तेणे पापे ||

मातृभूमीचा अभिमान -

संत तुकाराम आणि जनतेला श्रमाचे धनसंपत्तीचे आणि काटकसरीचे महत्त्व पटवून सांगितले आहे.कष्ट केले पाहिजे चांगल्या मार्गानेच पैसा कमविला पाहिजे आणि तो योग्य ठिकाणी योग्य वेळी खर्चही केला पाहिजे. सोन्या-चांदीवर संपत्तीवर प्रेम करण्यापेक्षा आपल्याला जगवणाऱ्या मातीवर आपल्या देशावर प्रेम करा. पोटाची भूक भागवण्यासाठी आपल्याला अन्न लागते आणि हे अन्न आपल्याला मातीतूनच मिळते म्हणून मातीही सोन्याहून मूल्यवान आणि श्रेष्ठ आहे असे ते सांगतात.

सोने चांदी मृत्तिके समान |
मृत्तिका सोन्याहून मूल्यवान ||

स्त्री सन्मान -

आजच्या आधुनिक युगामध्ये सुद्धा स्त्रियांच्या वाटेला येणारे दुःख आणि तत्कालीन समाजामध्ये सुद्धा स्त्रियांना सोसावा लागणारा त्रास हा सुद्धा तुकारामांचा नजरेतून सुटलेला नाही. त्यासाठी त्यांनी सांगितले आहे परक्या स्त्रीला आपल्या मातेसमान बहिणी समान माना त्यासाठी काय तुमचा पैसा खर्च होणार आहे का? स्त्रीला सन्मानाने वागवा त्यांची अवहेलना करू नका, त्यांना त्रास देऊ नका स्त्रियांचा नेहमी आदर करा. चित्त शुद्ध ठेवा.वाईट बुद्धी ठेवू नका तरच तुमचा उद्धार होईल.

परविया नारी माऊली समान |
मानलिया धन काय वेचे ||

समानता -

संत तुकारामांना विषमता भेदाभेद अजिबात मान्य नव्हते सर्व माणसे समान आहेत कोणीही उच्च कुणी गरीब श्रीमंत नाहीत. सर्वजण सारखेच आहेत कोणताही धर्म श्रेष्ठ कनिष्ठ नाही तर मानवता हाच खरा धर्म आहे.माणसांनी एकमेकांना कमी लेखू नये, एकमेकांवर अन्याय करू नये, तर माणसाने माणसाशी माणसासारखे वागणे हाच खरा मानवता धर्म आहे, हे तुकाराम महाराजांनी आवर्जून सांगितलेले आहे.

भेदाभेद भ्रम अमंगल |
सर्वांची एकची वीण |
तेथे कैसे भिन्नाभिन्न ||

समतेचा आग्रह धरणाऱ्या तुकोबारायांनी विषमतेला समाजातील वर्ण व्यवस्थेला कडाडून विरोध केला आहे.

सदाचरण -

नम्र झाला भुता |
तेने कार्ड कोंडीले अनंता ||

नम्र व्यक्ती नेहमीच परमेश्वराला हृदयात कोंडून ठेवतो

म्हणूनच तुकोबाराय म्हणतात की मानवाने नेहमीच नम्र असावे, सहानुभूतीपूर्वक वर्तन करावे. ऐहिक सुखापेक्षा आत्मिक सुख महत्त्वाचे आहे. याची नेहमी जाणीव ठेवावी. आयुष्य खूपच सुंदर आहे पण ते जगताना खूपच अडचणी येतात त्यावर मात करायला शिकले पाहिजे. देवाचे नामस्मरण या सगळ्यातून तुम्हाला तारुण नेईल टाकीचे घाव सोसल्याशिवाय देव पण येत नाही. 'जया अंगी मोठेपण तया यातना कठीण ' हे नेहमीच लक्षात ठेवावे. पैसा धन संपत्ती म्हणजे आत्मिक सुख नव्हे तर आंतरिक शुद्धी महत्त्वाची आणि तीच मानवाचा उद्धार करते.. सर्वांशी चांगले वागा, सर्वांचा आदर करा, प्रामाणिक राहा, अहंकार बाळगू नका, कोणाचाही अपमान करू नक, दुसऱ्यांना दुःख देऊ नका, परद्रव्याची आशा करू नका, तर तुम्हाला खऱ्या अर्थाने सुख मिळेल आणि ईश्वर प्राप्तीचा आनंदही मिळेल. नशिबावर विश्वास ठेवू नका. प्रयत्नवादी रहा. सतत कष्ट करत रहा. जगात कोणतीही गोष्ट अशक्य नाही. प्रयत्न केल्याने अशक्य काम शक्य होतेच हे सांगताना तुकोबाराया आजकालच्या तरुणांनाही खूप सुंदर उपदेश देतात.

असाध्य ते साध्य करिता सायास |
कारण अभ्यास तुका म्हणे ||

सत्य दर्शन -

जगद्गुरु तुकोबारायांनी जे अनुभवलं जे पाहिलं ते ते सगळं आपल्या अभंग रूपानी समाजासमोर ठेवले आहे आणि ते नेहमीच जगताना लोकांना उपयोगी पडते. समाज कसा असतो किती स्वार्थी असतो लोक कसे वागतात याविषयी सांगताना तुकाराम म्हणतात.

जन हे सुखाचे दिल्या घेतल्याचे |
अंतकाळी नाही कोणी ||
तुका म्हणे माझी नव्हतील कोणी |
तुझं चक्रपाणि वाचोनिया ||

समाजातील कित्येक लोक फक्त स्वार्थासाठी एकमेकांच्या जवळ येतात सुखाचे दिवस असताना छान वागतात. पण जेव्हा संकट येतात दारिद्र्य येतं तेव्हा हेच लोक आपल्याला एकटं सोडून निघून जातात. कोणत्याही प्रकारची मदत करत नाहीत. पैसा, संपत्ती, धनदौलत असणाऱ्या व्यक्तीलाच कुटुंबात आणि समाजात महत्त्व आहे. अशा वेळी हताश न होता माझं कुणीही नाही असे समजून वागावे आणि म्हणूनच तुकोबारायांना एकांतवास प्रिय होता. गरीबी आल्यावर अगदी आपल्या जवळची रक्ताची नाती ही परकी होतात. हा अनुभव आपल्याला आजही येतो आणि अश्या वेळी तुकारामांचे विचार आपल्याला पुन्हा नव्याने उभं करतात.

तरुणांना उपदेश -

तुकारामांचे अभंग सतराव्या शतकातील असतील तरीसुद्धा आजही ते तितकेच उपयोगी पडतात तुकारामांनी आजच्या तरुण तरुणांसाठी सुद्धा खूप चांगले तत्त्वज्ञान सांगितले आहे आणि हे सर्वांनी आत्मसात केल्यात केल्यास

आयुष्य सुंदर बनेल. नेहमी चांगल्या माणसाची संगत करावी वाईट लोकांची संगत केल्यावर त्याचे अवगुण आपल्या मध्ये येतात. वाईट माणसांची संगत सापाप्रमाणे असते कधी दोष करेल ते सांगता येत नाही. म्हणून नेहमी दुर्जनांपासून सावध राहावे. सज्जनाची संगत करावी. योग्य मार्गाने पैसा कमवावा. आचरण शुद्ध ठेवावे. श्रम करावे. प्राणिमात्रांवर दया करावी. गोरगरिबांना मदत करावी. बुद्धी चांगली ठेवावी कोणाचे वाईट चिंतू नये व्यसन करू नये. आळस करू नका आळस हा माणसाचा खूप मोठा शत्रू आहे.आळशी माणसाला कोणतीच इच्छा नसते त्यामुळे त्याची प्रगती होत नाही. त्यामुळे नेहमी उद्योगी रहा मन पवित्र ठेवा हे सारे उपदेश तरुणांना आजही लागू पडतात.

जीवनात उपयोगी ठरणारी तुकोबांची सुभाषिते

आज मराठी भाषेमध्ये प्रचलित असलेली सुभाषिते म्हणी वाक्यप्रचार तुकोबांच्या काव्यातूनच निर्माण झालेली आहेत नित्याच्या व्यवहारात पदोपदी उपयोगी पडणाऱ्या सावध करणाऱ्या या सुभाषितांनी तुकोबांना आजही जनमानसात जिवंत ठेवले आहे सहज बोलणे ही तो उपदेश असे त्याचे स्वरूप आहे. रोजच्या जीवनात जनमानसात याचा नेहमी वापर पाहायला मिळतो हे तुकारामांच्या कवित्वाचे खूप मोठे महत्त्वाचे वैशिष्ट्य आहे.

एकमेका साह्य करू अवघे धरू सुपंथ ||
ज्याचे अंगी मोठेपण तया यातना कठीण ||
नाही निर्मळ मन काय करील साबण ||
शुद्ध बीजापोटी फळे रसाळ गोमटी ||
मन करा रे प्रसन्न सर्व सिद्धीचे कारण ||
आलिया भोगासी असावे सादर ||
जगाच्या कल्याणा संतांच्या विभूती ||
महापुरे झाडे जाती तेथे लव्हाळे वाचती ||
चणे खावे लोखंडाचे.. तेव्हा ब्रह्मपदि नाचे ||
साधुसंत येती घरात तोचि दिवाळी दसरा ||
बोले तैसा चाले त्याची वंदावी पाऊले ||
बोलाचीच कढी बोलाचाच भात जेवून या तृप्त कोण झाला ||
सुख पाहता जवापाडे... दुःख पर्वताएवढे ||

अशा अनेक सुभाषितातून कमीत कमी शब्दांमध्ये खूप मोठा अर्थ सामावलेला दिसतो तो आजही लोकांना नेहमी मार्गदर्शक ठरतो.

निष्कर्ष

तुकारामांचे अभंग सर्वच साहित्य मानवाच्या सर्वांगावर प्रकाश टाकते. त्यांच्या कवितेतून लोकजीवन लोक संस्कृती समाज स्थिती समकालीन मूल्य व्यवस्था मानवी संबंध असे अनेक पैलू स्पष्ट होतात. जीवनात येणारा प्रत्येक अनुभव सुचणाऱ्या विचार पडणारा प्रश्न या सर्वांची चित्रण तुकोबारायांच्या अभंगात दिसते. तुकारामांच्या वाणीतील भेदकता,बुद्धीचे स्वातंत्र्य आणि अंतरीची तळमळ या तीन गुणांमुळे त्यांचे अभंग श्रेष्ठ झाले आहेत. त्यांच्या त्यांच्या काव्यात लोकांविषयी खरी तळमळ आहे, जिव्हाळा आहे. त्यामुळे हे आपलेसे वाटतात. सर्व प्रसंगांमध्ये गुरु सारखे मार्गदर्शन करतात. अडचणींचा सामना कसा करावा कठीण प्रसंगातून मार्ग कसा काढावा इतरांशी कसे वागावे. जणू काही तुकोबारायणी मानवाला यशस्वी जीवनाचा गुरुमंत्रच या अभंगातून सांगितला आहे. आत्मविष्कार हा त्यांच्या काव्याचा प्राण आहे.

तुकोबांची वाणी कधी कोमल तर कधी कठोर वाटते. पण काळजाला मात्र नक्कीच भिडते. या वाणीत आत्मपरीक्षण आहे. आचरण कसे ठेवावे आपल्या चरणातूनच ईश्वर सेवा कशी करावी. याची उत्तम मार्गदर्शन

तुकोबारायांनी सर्वसामान्य जनतेला दिलेले आहे. तुकोबांच्या अभंगाची वैशिष्ट्ये म्हणजे हे सर्व त्यांनी स्वानु अनुभवातून आणि आत्मनिष्ठने लिहिल्यामुळे ते अंतकरणात शिरतात आणि प्रसंगी ओठावर येतात. आणि म्हणूनच ते आजही सर्वांच्या मुखात दिसतात. अध्यात्म आणि आधुनिकता याचा सुरेख संगम तुकोबारायांच्या कवित्वात दिसतो. त्यांनी सांगितलेला मार्ग अवलंबला तर खरंच सर्वांचे जीवन सुखी आणि आनंदी होईल.

संदर्भ सूची :

1) पाटील. म. वा. संत तुकाराम व्यक्ती आणि वाङ्मय पुणे पद्मगंधा प्रकाशन.

2) डॉ शिवशंकर उपासे- महाराष्ट्र भूषण सहा संत साहित्यिक फडके प्रकाशन.

3) डॉ महावीर अक्कोळे - संतांचा तो संग नव्हे भलतैसा... तेजस प्रकाशन,कोल्हापूर.

4) डॉ. आ.ह.साळुंखे - तुकारामांचा शेतकरी – एक्सप्रेस प्रकाशन कोल्हापूर.

समकालीन मराठी साहित्य आणि सामाजिक जाणिवा

डॉ. अरविंद बा पाटील
अनिकेत कॉलेज ऑफ सोशल वर्क वर्धा

प्रस्तावना :

समकालीन हा शब्द कालवाचक आहे. सम म्हणजे समान, समांतर, जे साहित्य काळा सोबत वाटचाल करते ते समकालीन साहित्य होय. त्या त्या काळातील सामाजिक, आर्थिक, राजकीय परिस्थिती तसेच रुढी, परंपरा यांचा तपशीलवार विचार साहित्यातून केला जातो. ' साहित्य' ही संज्ञा व्यापक अर्थाने वापरली जाते. कथा, कादंबरी, नाटक, ललित,निबंध, प्रवासवर्णन,लेखन, वैचारिक निबंध या सर्व प्रकारच्या लेखनाचा निर्देश ' साहित्य' या संज्ञेत होतो. साहित्याची निर्मिती करणारा कवी ज्याला त्या काळी साहित्यिक असा शब्द वापरत असे. तर 'कवे:कर्म काव्यम' अशीच काव्याची व्याख्या केली जात असे. 'साहित्य' हा शब्द सहित या रुपातून साकार झाला. शब्द आणि सांस्कृतिक अर्थ याचे सहअस्तित्व, एक जिवित्व हा आशय साहित्य या शब्दातून व्यक्त होतो. 'हित' म्हणजे ठेवलेले व 'स' म्हणजे एकत्र :तेव्हा सहित वा साहित्य या शब्दाचा अर्थ सकल मानवी मनातील अंतरंग समकालीन साहित्यातून साहित्यिकाने कसे रेखाटले याचा आढावा या लेखातून घेण्यात आला आहे.

माणूस हा साहित्याचा केंद्रबिंदू :

प्रत्येक साहित्यकृतीला तिचा स्वतःचा आशय असतो. अथांग मनाचा थांग लावणे, अंतरंग उलगडून टाकणे हाच उजेडाचा ध्यास साहित्यकृतीचा असतो. अंधारात वाट दाखविण्यासाठी जशी दिवटी आपली भूमिका बजावित असते, तशी भूमिका साहित्यिकाची असते. माणूस हाच साहित्याचा केंद्र बिंदू आहे.मानवी मन हाच साहित्याचा विषय आहे. साहित्य ही एक कला आहे. साहित्य दिव्या सारखेच आहे. साहित्य ही मौलिक बाब आहे. साहित्य जीवनप्रकाश आहे. "साहित्याच्या वाचनाने माणसाची झोप उडून जाऊन त्यांची विचार शक्ती जागृत झाली पाहिजे"[1] साहित्य हे समाजसापेक्ष आहे. साहित्य सामाजिक अनुभवातून निर्माण होत असते. समाजाचे दुःख, वेदना, संघर्ष आणि विद्रोह प्रातिनिधिक स्वरूपात साहित्यातून मांडले जातात. ' जीवनावर भाष्य करणे हेच साहित्याचे प्रयोजन होय.' असे मॅथ्यू अर्नोल्डने सांगितले. माणसाचे सौदर्य त्यांच्या माणूस असण्यात आहे. समता, स्वातंत्र्य , बंधुता बहाल करणे हे सामाजिक जाणिवेची मूलतत्त्व आहे. म्हणून सामाजिक जाणीव बाबत डॉ. नागनाथ कोतापल्ले म्हणाले की, " ही जाणीव नेहमीच समाजाच्या स्थितीगतीच्या , जडणघडणीच्या, समाज घटकांच्या परस्पर संबंधाचा, अंत:प्रवाहातील गुन्ह्यांचा शोध घेतांना असे एक सत्य तिच्या हाती येते की, जिथे माणूस पणावरचा विश्वास हा मोठा असतो" [2]

साहित्य, समाज व भाषा यांची भूमिका :

साहित्य आणि समाज यांचे अतुट नाते आहे. भाषेतून समाजाचे मन फुलत असते. शब्द हे समाजाच्या मनाची चित्रेच रेखाटत असतात. "सामान्यांमधल असामान्यत्व ओळखणं आणि नंतर सामान्य शब्दात काही तरी असामान्य लिहिणं म्हणजेच साहित्य " [3] असं बोरिस पास्तरनाक म्हणायचा. साहित्यात उदात् जीवनमूल्य असावे. मानवाच्या हिताची भूमिका मांडणार साहित्य अंधारातून प्रकाशाकडे मार्गक्रमण करीत असते. माणूस अत्त दीप व्हावा ही त्याची भूमिका असते. कल्पनेच्या झोपाळ्यावर झुलणार साहित्य नसावं. वास्तव रेखाटणार असाव. म्हणूनच साहित्यिक वि. स. खांडेकर म्हणाले की, " साहित्याने कल्पनारम्यतेच्या पाठीशी लागण्यापेक्षा वास्तवाशी आपले नाते जोडले पाहिजे. मृगजळाची शोभा पाहण्यात दंग होण्यापेक्षा वादळी समुद्राचे निरीक्षण त्याने केले पाहिजे."[4] असे वि. स. खांडेकर यांनी साहित्यिका बाबत म्हटले. साहित्य बंदिस्त असता कामा नये. रोखठोक भूमिका घेणारे आणि जीवनाचे

नवे भान प्रकाशित करणारे असावे. कल्याणकारी विचाराची निर्णायक दिशा निश्चित करून मानवी उत्थानासाठी पुढाकार घेणारे असावे. साहित्याने मार्गदीप बनावे. म्हणूनच "जीवनाच्या सर्व कल्याणकारी विचाराला साहित्याने आपला दीपस्तंभ मानली पाहिजे."[5] असे टॉलस्टायने म्हटले आहे.

अंधाराचा अस्त व उजेडाचा ध्यास धरून समतेच्या साम्राज्यात सामाजिक न्यायाची सौंदर्य फुलवून अन्यायाविरुद्ध लढण्याची प्रेरणा त्यातून मिळावी. म्हणूनच बडगबाळकर म्हणतात की, " साहित्य हे व्यक्तीच्या पाठीवर हात ठेवून त्याला लढण्यास प्रवृत्त करते. कधी धीर दिलासा देते. तर कधी उत्साह वाढविते. वैफल्यापासून, ताण-तणावापासून दूर करण्याचे सामर्थ्य साहित्यात असते व आनंदाची उर्मी, प्रेरणा साहित्य देऊ शकते हे नक्की "[6] साहित्य कुठल्याही नावाचे असो ते समाज परिवर्तनाच्या बांधिलकीचा स्वीकार करणारे असले पाहिजे. ' सत्य असत्याशी मन केले ग्वाही, मानिले नाही, बहुहिता' ही तुकाराम महाराजा सारखी तटस्थ भूमिका हवी. साहित्यिक हे समाजाचे डोळे असून मानवतेचे बीजारोपण करणारी भूमिका कायम ठेवण्यासाठी उजेडाची मशाल होऊन तेवत राहावे लागेल. नीती मूल्याचं संगोपन व संवर्धन करणे हीच साहित्य निर्मिती मागील भूमिका असायला पाहिजे.

समकालीन सामाजिक जाणिवेच्या कविता :

"कविता म्हणजे सामाजिक वास्तवाचे भान" असे वसंत पाटणकर कवितेविषयी सांगतात. संगणक युगात स्वार्थी प्रवृत्ती बळावली आहे. विश्वासू खांदा उरला नाही. कुणाच्या खांद्यावर विश्वासाने मान टाकावी कळत नाही.' वैरी अखेर वैरी सखा तो होत नाही, डास धरून ठेवी, मोका सोडत नाही' अशी परिस्थिती कवितेच्या माध्यमातून अनेक कवीनी रेखाटली आहे.

केशवसुत आणि त्याचे समकालीन कवींच्या कवितेमध्ये (1885-1920) क्रांतिबीज दिसून येते. पहिली पिढी ना. वा. टिळक, माधवानुज, दत्त विनायक, लक्ष्मीबाई टिळक इत्यादी कवींचा प्रामुख्याने समावेश होतो. दुसÚ;k पिढीमधे गोविंदग्रज, रेंदाळकर, बी , बालकवी इत्यादींचा समावेश होतो. 19 O;k शतकात मराठी साहित्यामध्ये परिवर्तन घडवून येऊ लागले. 'जुने जाऊ द्या , मरना लागुनी जाळूनी किंवा पुरुन टाका' ही सामाजिक परिवर्तनाची भावना कायम ठेवली. आधुनिक युगाचा प्रारंभ मराठी साहित्यात हरिभाऊ आपटे, केशवसुत,.गोविंदाग्रज, बालकवी आधी कवींच्या कवितेतून रूढी परंपरेला नाकारून नव्या विचारांची पेरणी करणारा विचार आढळून येतो. "मराठीत जोतीबा फुले आणि केशवसुता पासून सूर्य तेजाचा परिवर्तनवादी मूल्यांचा गौरव करणारी कविता लिहिली जात आहे. आधुनिक मराठी कवितेत सूर्यकुलांच्या कवितेचा पाया जोतीराव फुले यांच्या अखंडांनी रचला. केशवसुतांच्या कवितेने या पायावर भव्य असे बांधकाम उभे केले. आणि पुढे नारायण सुर्वे यांनी आणि नामदेव ढसाळांनी आंबेडकरवादी कवींनी या बांधकामाची सर्वतोपरी प्रतिष्ठा वाढविणारी कविता लिहिली" [7]

आदिविद्रोही कवी केशवसुत यांनी मूल्य व्यवस्थेच्या विरोधात बंड पुकारतांना म्हणाले की,

बंडाचा तो झेंडा उगवुनी धामधूम जिकडे तिकडे
उडवून देऊनी जुलमांचे या करू पहा तुकडे तुकडे

अशा प्रकारे अंधार युगाला प्रकाशमुल्यांची जाणीव करून देऊन 'उठा उठा बांधा कमरा, मारा किंवा लढत मरा' असा उर्जावान संदेश उजेडाच्या तुतारीने फुंकून समतेची स्वातंत्र्याची विश्वबंधुत्वाची ओळख पटवून देतात. तर मुक्तीबोधानी बंगालमधील दुष्काळाची संघर्षमय पार्श्वभूमी रेखाटली आहे. माणसाची होणारी ससेहोलपट याचे विदारक सत्य 'नवी मळवाट' या कवितेतून मांडतात की,

मानवा मानवा काय ही स्थिती
किड्याचे मरण जिन्याची भीती
काय ही लाचारी । अलोट दुःख
जाळते जीवन भूक ही किती (नवी मळवाट, :९)

वरील ओळीतून मानवी जीवनातील भीषणता अधोरेखित केली आहे. मानवतेला काळीमा फासणाÚ;k घटनांची नोंद कवीने घेतली आहे. सावित्रीबाई फुलेचे काव्यकर्तृत्व हे केशवसुतपूर्व काळातील मुख्यत्वे निगडित आहे. त्यांच्या बाबत गौरवोद्गार काढताना कृ. प. देशपांडे म्हणाले की, "अर्वाचीन मराठी साहित्यात केशवसुतांनी जी क्रांती केली असे आपण म्हणतो, त्याची पूर्व तयारी या (सावित्रीबाईच्या) कवितांनी केली असे म्हणायला मला तरी कोणतीही अडचण दिसत नाही"[8] फुले दांम्पत्यांनी सामाजिक न्यायाची लागवड केली. तर नारायण सूर्वेनी वेदना चित्रे साकारतांना सूर्यकुलातील लोकांना थांबणे माहित नाही. असा आशावाद व्यक्त करतांना" वाटा सरळ होतील अन् पुन्हा आयुष्य घेईल वळणे" म्हणत

कामगार आहे मी तळपती तलवार आहे
सारस्वतांनो थोडासा गुन्हा करणार आहे.
सावध असा तुफानाची हीच सुरुवात आहे
एकटाच आलो नाही युगाची ही साथ आहे .

(ऐसा गा मी ब्रम्ह : पृ . १३)

नव्या सृजनास प्रारंभ करीत सुंदर आणि निरोगी मनुष्यतेची स्वप्न आणि कवितेतून पाहिले. तर आंबेडकरवादी कवी वैभव सोनारकर कवितेतून भूमिका मांडताना..

"बाबासाहेब,
हजारो डोकी जिथे नत होतात
असं तुमचं पाऊल
आम्ही आमच्या हृदयात जपला आहे
तुम्ही दिलेले हात
आता करू लागले आहेत
जागोजागी प्रकाश वृक्षाची पेरणी
सूर्याची कवच कुंडली घेऊन
लढत आहे तुमचे शब्द
सा़ऱ्या दिशा होऊ लागल्या आहेत रक्तिम
बाबा,
दाही दिशातून आता क्रांतीची पहाट फुटत आहे ('बाबासाहेब ' पृष्ठ ९०)

युगायुगाच्या शोषित अंधाराला कायमची मूठमाती देणारे व्यक्तिमत्व म्हणजे डॉ. बाबासाहेब आंबेडकर होय. तर भूषण रामटेके 'वास्तवाशी नाते या कवितेत म्हणतात

कधी स्वप्न दुसऱ़्यांच्या डोळ्यांनी पाहू नये आपण
कधी डोळे दुस-या जवळ गहाण ठेवू नये आपण
गहाणलेले डोळे कधी दगा देतील याचा काही नेम नाही
डोळे डोळ्याशी भिडल्याशिवाय डोळे पण लाभत नाही .

(भूषण रामटेके (२००७) उजेडाच्या कविता पुलगाव पूजा प्रकाशन पृष्ठ २९) तर 'जीवन असाव गतिशील' या कवितेत **केतन पिंपळापुरे म्हणाले की,**

जीवन असाव गतिशील
जीवन असाव कृतिशील
जीवन असावा धैर्यशील
जीवन असावं संघर्षशील
जीवन असावं सच्छिल

('जीवन असावा गतिशील' पृष्ठ क्र. 18 19)

म्हणूनच मानवी जीवनाच्या संदर्भात यशवंत मनोहर म्हणतात की, "परिवर्तन हेच जीवनाचे सर्वात सुंदर आणि यथार्थ वर्णन आहे. वाहते पण हेच जीवनाचे असतेपण आहे. प्रगतशीलता हाच जीवनाच्या जिवंतपणाचा पुरावा आहे. जिवंत मनच प्रगतीशीलतेची पर्वे जन्माला घालत असतात. जीवनात परिवर्तन उमलत राहत."[9] अशा सम्यक विचारातून साहित्य जीवनावर प्रकाश टाकते.

भाषा संवादाचे माध्यम :

भाषा हे संवादाचे माध्यम आहे. भाषा म्हणजे विचार करण्याचे साधन.' भाषा' हा शब्द 'भाष्य' या संस्कृत धातूपासून आला असून त्याचा अर्थ बोलणे किंवा बोलण्याचा व्यवहार करणे असा आहे. भाषेचा प्रवाह अखंड चालू असतो. मनुष्य अनुकरणशील प्राणी आहे. प्राणी मात्राच्या तुलनेत मानवाने प्रगती केली. भाषा अनेक प्रकारच्या आहेत. कानडी, मराठी, गुजराती, हिंदी, तमिळ, तेलुगु, बंगाली आदी जशा भारतीय भाषा आहेत तसाच इंग्रजी, फ्रेंच, जर्मन, जपानी अशा परकीय भाषा आहेत. भाषेची देवाण-घेवाण म्हणजे भाषेचा व्यवहार व्यवस्थित रितीने चालावा यासाठी भाषेचा वापर केला जातो. दर बारा कोसावर भाषा बदलत आहे. मराठी भाषेचे एका पिढीकडून दुसÚ;k पिढीकडे तिचे संक्रमण होत असते.

भाषा ही नदीच्या प्रवाहासारखी असते. भाषा ही ओघवती असते. संकेत व्यवस्थेवर अवलंबून असते. मनातील भावना, आशय दुस-या व्यक्तीच्या मनापर्यंत पोहोचविण्याच माध्यम ठरत असते. शिवाजी महाराजांच्या काळातील मराठी किंवा त्यांच्या नंतरची महात्मा फुलेंच्या काळातील मराठी आणि आताच्या मराठी मध्ये खूप मोठा अंतर आपल्याला पाहायला मिळते आहे.

निष्कर्ष :

भाषा ही माणसाच्या वर्तनाचा अंगभूत भाग आहे. भाषा ही केवळ जैविक देणगी नसून त्या त्या संस्कृतीची निर्मिती असते. साहित्य समाजभिमुख असली पाहिजे. प्रत्येक माणसाने माणूस म्हणून जगावे. साहित्याचे मूल्य मानवतावादी असले पाहिजे. समाज क्रांतीची वाटचाल करून जीवनदृष्टी व समताधिष्टीत समाज रचना निर्माण करून मानवतावादी मूल्याची लागवड करणारे साहित्य असले पाहिजे.

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महाराष्ट्रातील राजकारणाची सद्यकालीन स्थिती : एक चिंतन

विद्या वैजनाथराव यशवंते

नांदेड.

सारांश

महाराष्ट्र हे भारताच्या राजकीय, आर्थिक आणि सामाजिक क्षेत्रात महत्त्वाचे स्थान असलेले राज्य आहे. राज्याच्या राजकीय प्रक्रियेवर प्रादेशिक अस्मिता, सहकार चळवळ, ग्रामीण अर्थव्यवस्था, आरक्षणाचे प्रश्न, औद्योगिक विकास, शहरीकरण आणि सामाजिक न्याय यांसारख्या विविध घटकांचा सातत्याने प्रभाव राहिला आहे. मागील काही वर्षांत महाराष्ट्राच्या राजकारणात लक्षणीय बदल घडून आले असून, २०१९ नंतरच्या काळात पारंपरिक राजकीय समीकरणांमध्ये मोठी पुनर्रचना झाली. शिवसेना आणि राष्ट्रवादी काँग्रेसमधील पक्षफुटींमुळे राज्यातील राजकीय पक्षांची रचना, आघाड्यांचे स्वरूप आणि सत्तासमीकरणे बदलली. २०२४ च्या विधानसभा निवडणुकीत महायुतीने २३४ जागा मिळवून स्पष्ट बहुमत प्राप्त केले. यामध्ये भारतीय जनता पक्षाला १३२, शिवसेनेला ५७ आणि राष्ट्रवादी काँग्रेसला ४१ जागा मिळाल्या. सध्या देवेंद्र फडणवीस यांच्या नेतृत्वाखाली राज्य सरकार कार्यरत असून एकनाथ शिंदे आणि सुनेत्रा अजित पवार हे उपमुख्यमंत्री आहेत.

महाराष्ट्रातील सद्यकालीन राजकारणाचा विचार करता सत्ताधारी महायुतीमधील समन्वय, विरोधी महाविकास आघाडीची संघटनात्मक स्थिती, मराठा आरक्षणाचा प्रश्न, कल्याणकारी योजनांची अंमलबजावणी, शेतकरी व रोजगाराशी संबंधित समस्या तसेच स्थानिक स्वराज्य संस्थांचे राजकारण हे प्रमुख विषय ठरतात. या पार्श्वभूमीवर प्रस्तुत संशोधनामध्ये महाराष्ट्रातील बदलती राजकीय रचना, सत्तासमीकरणे, सामाजिक व आर्थिक प्रश्न आणि प्रमुख राजकीय प्रवाह यांचा अभ्यास करण्यात आला आहे. तसेच, २०१९ नंतर झालेल्या राजकीय पुनर्रचनेचा आणि २०२४ च्या विधानसभा निवडणुकीनंतर निर्माण झालेल्या परिस्थितीचा विश्लेषणात्मक आढावा घेण्यात आला आहे.

कळीचे शब्द : महाराष्ट्र, समकालीन राजकारण, महायुती, महाविकास आघाडी, राजकीय पुनर्रचना, मराठा आरक्षण, कल्याणकारी योजना, सत्तासमीकरण

प्रास्ताविक

महाराष्ट्र हे भारताच्या राजकीय, आर्थिक आणि सामाजिक क्षेत्रात महत्त्वाचे स्थान असलेले राज्य आहे. देशाची आर्थिक राजधानी म्हणून ओळखल्या जाणाऱ्या मुंबईचे महत्त्व लक्षात घेता, महाराष्ट्रातील राजकीय घडामोडींचा प्रभाव केवळ राज्यापुरता मर्यादित न राहता राष्ट्रीय पातळीवरही जाणवतो. राज्याच्या राजकीय प्रक्रियेवर प्रादेशिक अस्मिता, सहकार चळवळ, ग्रामीण अर्थव्यवस्था, आरक्षणाचे प्रश्न, शहरीकरण, औद्योगिक विकास, सामाजिक न्याय तसेच विविध सामाजिक घटकांचा राजकीय सहभाग यांचा सातत्याने प्रभाव राहिला आहे. महाराष्ट्राच्या राजकीय इतिहासात आघाडीचे राजकारण हे महत्त्वाचे वैशिष्ट्य राहिले आहे. २०१९ च्या विधानसभा निवडणुकीनंतर भारतीय जनता पक्ष आणि शिवसेना यांच्यातील सत्तावाटपाच्या प्रश्नावर मतभेद निर्माण झाले. त्यानंतर शिवसेनेने काँग्रेस आणि राष्ट्रवादी काँग्रेससोबत एकत्र येऊन महाविकास आघाडीचे सरकार स्थापन केले. जून २०२२ मध्ये एकनाथ शिंदे यांच्या नेतृत्वाखाली शिवसेनेतील आमदारांच्या एका गटाने स्वतंत्र भूमिका घेतल्यानंतर राज्यातील सत्तासमीकरणात पुन्हा बदल झाला आणि भाजपच्या सहकार्याने नवीन सरकार स्थापन झाले. त्यानंतर जुलै २०२३ मध्ये राष्ट्रवादी काँग्रेसमध्येही पक्षफूट झाली आणि अजित पवार यांच्या नेतृत्वाखालील गट सत्ताधारी आघाडीत सहभागी झाला.

या राजकीय घडामोडींमुळे महाराष्ट्रातील पक्षीय रचना, नेतृत्वाचे स्वरूप, आघाडीचे राजकारण आणि पक्षनिष्ठा यांमध्ये महत्त्वपूर्ण बदल झाले. पारंपरिक राजकीय समीकरणांमध्ये झालेल्या या पुनर्रचनेचा परिणाम पुढील निवडणुकांवरही दिसून आला. विशेषतः २०२४ च्या विधानसभा निवडणुकीने राज्यातील बदललेल्या राजकीय समीकरणांना स्पष्ट निवडणूक स्वरूप दिले आणि महाराष्ट्राच्या राजकारणात नव्या सत्तासमीकरणाचा उदय झाला. या पार्श्वभूमीवर महाराष्ट्रातील सद्यकालीन राजकीय परिस्थितीचा अभ्यास करणे महत्त्वाचे ठरते. सध्याच्या राजकारणात सत्ताधारी आघाडीतील परस्पर संबंध, विरोधी पक्षांची भूमिका, सामाजिक आरक्षणाचे प्रश्न, कल्याणकारी योजनांची अंमलबजावणी, शेतकरी व रोजगाराशी संबंधित समस्या तसेच स्थानिक स्वराज्य संस्थांचे राजकारण या घटकांचा विशेष विचार करणे आवश्यक आहे. प्रस्तुत संशोधनामध्ये या सर्व घटकांचा अभ्यास करून महाराष्ट्रातील बदलत्या राजकीय परिस्थितीचे वस्तुनिष्ठ आणि विश्लेषणात्मक स्वरूपात परीक्षण करण्यात आले आहे.

महाराष्ट्रातील बदलते राजकीय सत्तासमीकरण

महाराष्ट्राच्या राजकीय इतिहासात काँग्रेस पक्षाचे दीर्घकाळ वर्चस्व राहिले. मात्र १९९० च्या दशकापासून राज्याच्या राजकारणात नवीन राजकीय शक्तींचा प्रभाव वाढू लागला. विशेषतः शिवसेना आणि भारतीय जनता पक्ष यांच्या आघाडीमुळे राज्यातील सत्तास्पर्धेला नवे स्वरूप प्राप्त झाले. १९९९ मध्ये राष्ट्रवादी काँग्रेस पक्षाची स्थापना झाल्यानंतर महाराष्ट्रातील राजकारणात काँग्रेस–राष्ट्रवादी काँग्रेस आणि शिवसेना–भाजप या दोन प्रमुख राजकीय आघाड्यांची रचना अधिक स्पष्ट झाली. पुढील काळात या आघाड्यांमधील राजकीय स्पर्धा महाराष्ट्राच्या निवडणूक राजकारणाचे प्रमुख वैशिष्ट्य ठरली.

२०१४ च्या विधानसभा निवडणुकीनंतर भारतीय जनता पक्ष हा राज्यातील सर्वाधिक जागा मिळवणारा पक्ष ठरला आणि देवेंद्र फडणवीस यांच्या नेतृत्वाखाली सरकार स्थापन झाले. या काळात भाजप आणि शिवसेना हे दोन्ही पक्ष सत्तेत सहभागी होते. मात्र २०१९ च्या विधानसभा निवडणुकीनंतर मुख्यमंत्रीपद आणि सत्तावाटपाच्या मुद्द्यावर दोन्ही पक्षांमध्ये मतभेद निर्माण झाले. परिणामी शिवसेनेने भाजपपासून वेगळे होत काँग्रेस आणि राष्ट्रवादी काँग्रेससोबत महाविकास आघाडी स्थापन केली आणि राज्यात नवीन सरकार अस्तित्वात आले. या घडामोडींमुळे महाराष्ट्रातील पारंपरिक राजकीय समीकरणांमध्ये महत्त्वपूर्ण बदल झाला. त्यानंतर झालेल्या शिवसेना आणि राष्ट्रवादी काँग्रेसमधील पक्षफुटींमुळे राज्यातील राजकीय पक्षांची रचना आणखी बदलली. परिणामी महाराष्ट्राच्या राजकारणात केवळ पक्षीय स्पर्धेपेक्षा आघाड्या, नेतृत्व, पक्षांतर्गत गट आणि सत्तासमीकरणे यांना अधिक महत्त्व प्राप्त झाले. त्यामुळे आघाडीचे राजकारण हे महाराष्ट्राच्या समकालीन राजकीय व्यवस्थेतील एक महत्त्वाचे वैशिष्ट्य म्हणून पुढे आले आहे.

२०१९ नंतरची राजकीय पुनर्रचना

२०१९ ते २०२४ हा कालखंड महाराष्ट्राच्या राजकीय इतिहासातील महत्त्वपूर्ण संक्रमणाचा काळ ठरला. या कालावधीत राज्यातील पारंपरिक पक्षीय समीकरणांमध्ये मोठ्या प्रमाणावर बदल झाले आणि नव्या राजकीय आघाड्या व सत्तासमीकरणे उदयास आली. २०१९ च्या विधानसभा निवडणुकीनंतर शिवसेना, काँग्रेस आणि राष्ट्रवादी काँग्रेस यांनी एकत्र येऊन महाविकास आघाडीचे सरकार स्थापन केले. या सरकारचे नेतृत्व शिवसेना पक्षप्रमुख उद्धव ठाकरे यांनी केले. मात्र जून २०२२ मध्ये शिवसेनेतील अंतर्गत राजकीय संघर्ष तीव्र झाला. एकनाथ शिंदे यांच्या नेतृत्वाखाली शिवसेनेतील आमदारांच्या एका गटाने स्वतंत्र भूमिका स्वीकारली. त्यानंतर भारतीय जनता पक्षाच्या सहकार्याने एकनाथ शिंदे यांच्या नेतृत्वाखाली नवीन सरकार स्थापन झाले. या सत्तांतरामुळे राज्यातील राजकीय समीकरणांमध्ये महत्त्वपूर्ण बदल झाला.

त्यानंतर जुलै २०२३ मध्ये राष्ट्रवादी काँग्रेसमध्येही फूट पडली. अजित पवार यांच्या नेतृत्वाखालील आमदारांचा गट सत्ताधारी आघाडीत सहभागी झाला आणि अजित पवार यांनी उपमुख्यमंत्रीपद स्वीकारले. परिणामी, महाराष्ट्रातील प्रमुख राजकीय पक्षांमध्ये स्वतंत्र गट निर्माण झाले आणि पूर्वीची आघाडीव्यवस्था अधिक गुंतागुंतीची झाली. या घटनांमुळे महाराष्ट्राच्या राजकारणात पक्षीय संघटन, नेतृत्व, पक्षनिष्ठा, निवडणूक चिन्ह आणि राजकीय प्रतिनिधित्व या प्रश्नांना विशेष महत्त्व प्राप्त झाले. तसेच, पक्षफुटीनंतर निर्माण झालेल्या राजकीय गटांना मिळालेली मान्यता आणि त्यांच्या संघटनात्मक ओळखीबाबतही राजकीय व कायदेशीर चर्चा झाली. त्यामुळे २०१९

नंतरचा कालखंड हा महाराष्ट्रातील पक्षीय पुनर्रचना आणि बदलत्या सत्तासमीकरणांचा महत्त्वपूर्ण टप्पा म्हणून अभ्यासता येतो.

२०२४ विधानसभा निवडणुकीनंतरची स्थिती

२०२४ च्या महाराष्ट्र विधानसभा निवडणुकीने राज्यातील बदललेल्या राजकीय समीकरणांना स्पष्ट स्वरूप दिले. या निवडणुकीत महायुतीतील भारतीय जनता पक्षाने १३२, शिवसेनेने ५७ आणि राष्ट्रवादी काँग्रेसने ४१ जागा मिळवत एकूण २३४ जागांवर विजय मिळवला. दुसरीकडे, महाविकास आघाडीतील शिवसेना (उद्धव बाळासाहेब ठाकरे) २०, काँग्रेस १६ आणि राष्ट्रवादी काँग्रेस-शरदचंद्र पवार या पक्षाने १० जागा मिळवल्या. या निकालांमुळे विधानसभेतील सत्ताधारी आणि विरोधी पक्षांच्या संख्याबळामध्ये स्पष्ट फरक निर्माण झाला. निवडणुकीनंतर भारतीय जनता पक्षाचे देवेंद्र फडणवीस यांनी मुख्यमंत्री म्हणून पदभार स्वीकारला, तर एकनाथ शिंदे आणि सुनेत्रा अजित पवार यांनी उपमुख्यमंत्रीपदाची जबाबदारी स्वीकारली. महाराष्ट्र शासनाच्या अधिकृत माहितीनुसार हे सत्तासमीकरण सध्या कार्यरत आहे. या निवडणूक निकालामुळे महायुतीला विधानसभेत भक्कम संख्याबळ प्राप्त झाले आणि राज्यातील शासनव्यवस्थेला स्थैर्य मिळाले. तथापि, महायुतीतील भाजप, शिवसेना आणि राष्ट्रवादी काँग्रेस या तीन घटक पक्षांची स्वतंत्र संघटनात्मक रचना, राजकीय उद्दिष्टे आणि विविध भागांतील प्रभाव लक्षात घेता, आघाडीतील समन्वय हा शासनकारभार आणि आगामी राजकीय प्रक्रियेसाठी महत्त्वाचा घटक ठरतो. त्यामुळे २०२४ नंतरच्या महाराष्ट्राच्या राजकारणाचा अभ्यास करताना केवळ निवडणूक निकालांपेक्षा आघाडीतील परस्पर संबंध, धोरणात्मक निर्णय आणि स्थानिक पातळीवरील राजकीय समीकरणांचाही विचार करणे आवश्यक ठरते.

महायुतीचे राजकारण

महायुती ही भारतीय जनता पक्ष, शिवसेना आणि राष्ट्रवादी काँग्रेस या प्रमुख घटक पक्षांची राजकीय आघाडी आहे. या पक्षांची संघटनात्मक रचना, सामाजिक आधार, प्रादेशिक प्रभाव आणि राजकीय प्राधान्यक्रम यामध्ये काही प्रमाणात विविधता आढळते. त्यामुळे आघाडी सरकारच्या कार्यक्षमतेसाठी घटक पक्षांमध्ये धोरणात्मक समन्वय आणि परस्पर सहकार्य महत्त्वाचे ठरते. २०२६ मध्ये स्थानिक स्वराज्य संस्थांच्या निवडणुकांच्या पार्श्वभूमीवर महायुतीतील घटक पक्षांमध्ये जागावाटप, स्थानिक प्रतिनिधित्व आणि विविध संस्थांमधील सत्तावाटप यांसंदर्भात चर्चा झाली. ऑगस्ट २०२६ मध्ये भाजप, शिवसेना आणि राष्ट्रवादी काँग्रेस यांनी स्थानिक स्वराज्य संस्थांच्या निवडणुका समन्वयाने लढविण्याच्या संदर्भात चर्चा केल्याचे वृत्त प्रसिद्ध झाले. या प्रक्रियेत स्थानिक राजकीय परिस्थिती आणि घटक पक्षांचे स्वतंत्र हितसंबंध यांचा विचार करण्यात आला. महायुतीच्या राजकीय कार्यपद्धतीचा अभ्यास करताना आघाडीची सामूहिक भूमिका आणि प्रत्येक घटक पक्षाची स्वतंत्र संघटनात्मक ओळख या दोन्ही बाबी विचारात घेणे आवश्यक आहे. सत्तेतील सहभागासोबतच स्वतंत्र राजकीय विस्तार कायम ठेवण्याची गरज असल्याने आघाडीतील समन्वय, जागावाटप आणि स्थानिक पातळीवरील सहकार्य हे महत्त्वाचे राजकीय घटक ठरतात.

महाविकास आघाडीची स्थिती

महाविकास आघाडीमध्ये शिवसेना (उद्धव बाळासाहेब ठाकरे), भारतीय राष्ट्रीय काँग्रेस आणि राष्ट्रवादी काँग्रेस-शरदचंद्र पवार हे प्रमुख घटक पक्ष आहेत. २०१९ मध्ये स्थापन झालेल्या या आघाडीने महाराष्ट्राच्या राजकारणात पर्यायी सत्तासमीकरण निर्माण केले. पक्षफुटीनंतर या आघाडीची संघटनात्मक रचना आणि राजकीय कार्यपद्धती यांमध्येही बदल झाले. २०२४ च्या विधानसभा निवडणुकीत महाविकास आघाडीतील शिवसेना (उद्धव बाळासाहेब ठाकरे)ला २०, काँग्रेसला १६ आणि राष्ट्रवादी काँग्रेस-शरदचंद्र पवार पक्षाला १० जागा मिळाल्या. त्यामुळे या तीन पक्षांचे विधानसभेतील एकूण संख्याबळ ५० जागांपर्यंत राहिले. सध्याच्या परिस्थितीत महाविकास आघाडीसमोर घटक पक्षांमधील समन्वय, संघटनात्मक पुनर्बांधणी, स्थानिक पातळीवरील राजकीय सहकार्य आणि मतदारांशी सातत्यपूर्ण संवाद ही प्रमुख क्षेत्रे आहेत. पक्षांची स्वतंत्र राजकीय ओळख कायम ठेवत आघाडीच्या पातळीवर सामूहिक भूमिका निश्चित करणे हा या आघाडीच्या कार्यपद्धतीतील महत्त्वाचा घटक ठरतो.

मराठा आरक्षण आणि सामाजिक राजकारण

मराठा आरक्षणाचा प्रश्न महाराष्ट्रातील सामाजिक आणि राजकीय चर्चेतील महत्त्वाचा विषय राहिला आहे. शिक्षण आणि सरकारी सेवांमध्ये आरक्षणाची मागणी विविध टप्प्यांवर पुढे आली असून या मागणीचा संबंध सामाजिक प्रतिनिधित्व, शैक्षणिक संधी आणि रोजगाराच्या उपलब्धतेशी जोडला जातो. या पार्श्वभूमीवर महाराष्ट्र सरकारने २०२४ मध्ये मराठा समाजासाठी शिक्षण आणि सरकारी नोकऱ्यांमध्ये १० टक्के आरक्षणाची तरतूद करणारा कायदा केला. या कायद्याच्या घटनात्मक वैधतेसंदर्भात न्यायालयीन प्रक्रिया सुरू राहिली आहे. मराठा आरक्षणाचा प्रश्न केवळ आरक्षणाच्या धोरणाशी संबंधित नसून त्यामध्ये सामाजिक प्रतिनिधित्व, ग्रामीण समाजरचना, शिक्षण, रोजगार आणि विविध सामाजिक समूहांच्या आरक्षणाशी संबंधित मागण्यांचा समावेश होतो. त्यामुळे या विषयाचे विश्लेषण करताना सामाजिक परिस्थितीबरोबरच घटनात्मक तरतुदी, न्यायालयीन प्रक्रिया आणि शासनाच्या धोरणांचा विचार करणे आवश्यक ठरते.

कल्याणकारी योजना आणि राजकीय परिणाम

महाराष्ट्राच्या समकालीन राजकारणात कल्याणकारी योजनांना विशेष महत्त्व प्राप्त झाले आहे. महिलांना आर्थिक सहाय्य देण्याच्या उद्देशाने राबविण्यात येणारी मुख्यमंत्री माझी लाडकी बहीण योजना ही राज्यातील प्रमुख सामाजिक कल्याण योजनांपैकी एक आहे. २०२६ मध्ये या योजनेतील लाभार्थ्यांच्या पात्रतेची पडताळणी करण्यात आली. Indian Express च्या वृत्तानुसार पडताळणी प्रक्रियेनंतर ९२ लाखांपेक्षा अधिक लाभार्थी योजनेतून वगळण्यात आले. त्यापैकी सुमारे ६२ लाख प्रकरणांमध्ये अनिवार्य e-KYC प्रक्रिया पूर्ण झालेली नसल्याचे वृत्तात नमूद करण्यात आले. या प्रक्रियेमुळे कल्याणकारी योजनांच्या अंमलबजावणीशी संबंधित विविध प्रशासकीय प्रश्न पुढे येतात. त्यामध्ये लाभार्थी निवड, पात्रतेची पडताळणी, डिजिटल प्रक्रियेचा वापर, आर्थिक तरतूद, पारदर्शकता आणि योजनांची सातत्यपूर्ण अंमलबजावणी यांचा समावेश होतो. त्यामुळे कल्याणकारी योजनांचा अभ्यास हा सामाजिक धोरण, सार्वजनिक प्रशासन आणि राजकीय प्रक्रियेच्या परस्परसंबंधांच्या संदर्भात करणे आवश्यक ठरते.

समारोप: महाराष्ट्रातील समकालीन राजकारणाचा आढावा घेतल्यास राज्याच्या राजकीय व्यवस्थेत मागील काही वर्षांत लक्षणीय पुनर्रचना झाल्याचे दिसून येते. २०१९ नंतर झालेल्या राजकीय घडामोडींमुळे पारंपरिक पक्षीय समीकरणे बदलली असून आघाड्या, पक्षफुटी, नेतृत्वातील बदल आणि नव्या राजकीय गटांची निर्मिती यांना विशेष महत्त्व प्राप्त झाले आहे. शिवसेना आणि राष्ट्रवादी काँग्रेसमधील पक्षफुटींमुळे संबंधित पक्षांच्या स्वतंत्र राजकीय गटांची निर्मिती झाली आणि त्याचा परिणाम राज्यातील पक्षीय संघटन तसेच निवडणूक राजकारणावर झाला. २०२४ च्या विधानसभा निवडणुकीत महायुतीतील घटक पक्षांना एकत्रितपणे २३४ जागा मिळाल्या. या निकालामुळे विधानसभेतील सत्ताधारी आघाडीचे संख्याबळ लक्षणीय राहिले. सप्टेंबर २०२६ पर्यंत देवेंद्र फडणवीस यांच्या नेतृत्वाखाली राज्य सरकार कार्यरत असून एकनाथ शिंदे आणि सुनेत्रा अजित पवार हे उपमुख्यमंत्री आहेत. मात्र महाराष्ट्राच्या राजकीय परिस्थितीचे विश्लेषण केवळ विधानसभा निवडणुकीतील संख्याबळाच्या आधारे करणे पुरेसे ठरत नाही. मराठा आरक्षणाचा प्रश्न, सामाजिक प्रतिनिधित्व, कल्याणकारी योजनांची अंमलबजावणी, कृषी व शेतकरी प्रश्न, रोजगारनिर्मिती, आर्थिक विकास तसेच स्थानिक स्वराज्य संस्थांमधील राजकीय स्पर्धा हे घटकही राज्याच्या राजकीय प्रक्रियेवर प्रभाव टाकतात. या विविध घटकांचा परस्परसंबंध लक्षात घेतल्यास महाराष्ट्रातील समकालीन राजकारणाचे स्वरूप अधिक व्यापकपणे समजून घेता येते.

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सांस्कृतिक अभ्यासात एआयचा वापर ऐतिहासिक दृष्टिकोन प्रवास आणि पर्यटन..

प्रा. डॉ. बाळासाहेब नानासाहेब देवकाते

रयत शिक्षण संस्थेचे, इतिहास विभाग, महात्मा फुले महाविद्यालय, पिंपरी पुणे

प्रस्तावना-

भारताला प्राचीन काळापासून ऐतिहासिक सांस्कृतिक वारसा लाभलेला आहे. भारत हा विविधतेने नटलेला देश आहे. संस्कृती, समाज जीवन, आर्थिक जीवन समजून घेणे आवश्यक आहे. संस्कृती समजून घेण्यासाठी प्रवास आणि पर्यटन स्थळे हे सर्वात प्रभावी माध्यम आहे त. ऐतिहासिक स्थळांना भेटी देवून आपण मानवी संस्कृती चा विकास कला आणि परंपरा यांचा प्रत्यक्ष अनुभव घेता येऊ शकतो. ऐतिहासिक दृष्टिकोन (Historical perspective) ऐतिहासिक दृष्टिकोन अनेक परंपरा दिसून येतात. प्राचीन परंपरा हा एक प्रकार आहे. भारतात तीर्थ क्षेत्राची मोठी परंपरा लाभलेली आहे.काशी,गया,पंढरपूर, जत्रा, यात्रा,उरूस यांची मोठी ऐतिहासिक परंपरा आहे.

भारत हा विविधतेने नटलेला देश आहे. वेगवेगळ्या राज्यांची आपली परंपरा आजही टिकून ठेवलेली दिसतात. हे त्यांच्या संस्कृतीचे वैशिष्ट्ये म्हणावे लागेल. जगात ऐतिहासिक परंपरेचा सुंदर मिलाफ आपल्या कलेतून उलघडला आहे,ज्ञानार्जन मिळविण्यासाठी प्राचीनकाळी बौद्ध भिक्खू, जैनमुनी आणि बुध्दिवंत लोक ज्ञानाच्या प्रसारासाठी भ्रमण करून ज्ञानार्जन मिळवीत असतात. मध्ययुगीन काळात अनेक परकीय प्रवासी भारतात येऊन भारताचे वर्णन आपल्या ग्रंथात टिपलेले आहेत. इब्न बतुता (तहकिक ए हिंद), ह्युएनत्संग (चीनी प्रवासी) या प्रवाशांने भारताच्या वैभवाची साक्ष टिकून ठेवली आहे.त्याचे ऐतिहासिक महत्त्व अधोरेखित होते. इब्न बतुता यांने आपल्या लेखणीतून मध्ययुगीन काळातील सल्तनतकालीन सुलतानाच्या कारकीर्दवर प्रकाश टाकला आहे. मध्ययुगीन काळातील भारत कसा होता. मुस्लीम राजवटीचा राजकीय, सामाजिक, आर्थिक व धार्मिक जीवन समजण्यास उपयुक्त ठरतो. हिंदुस्थानची लोकजीवन, परंपरा या विषयी माहिती आपल्या ग्रंथात विशद केली आहे. ह्युएनत्संग हा प्राचीन काळातील चीनी प्रवासी असून त्यांने वर्धन घराण्यातील हर्षवर्धन राजांच्या कारकिर्दीवर प्रकाश टाकला आहे. हर्षवर्धनचे प्रशासन, सामाजिक, आर्थिक व धार्मिक परिस्थितीवर प्रकाश टाकला आहे. कल्याणकारी राजा, दानशूर, धार्मिक सहिष्णुता इ. गुणांनी युक्त असा राजा म्हणून उल्लेख करतो. प्रत्यक्ष राजाच्या दरबारात राहून त्यांची ख्याती पाहिली होती. काही काळ दरबारात राहून राजाचे प्रशासन जवळून पाहिले होते. त्यांनी आपल्या **'सि-यु-की'** या आपल्या ग्रंथात हिंदुस्थानातील राजाविषयी भरभरुन कौतुक केले आहे.

फाहियान हा दुसरा चिनीप्रवासी चंद्रगुप्त दुसराच्या काळात भारतात आला होता. गुप्त काळाविषयी माहिती जाणून घेऊन **'फो-क्वो-की'** या ग्रंथात गुप्तांचा काळ आदर्श कल्याणकारी, सुवर्णयुगाचा होता असे नमूद केले आहे. पूर्व पश्चिम, दक्षिण उत्तर अशा सीमा त्यांच्या भिडल्या होत्या. यावर त्यांनी आपले प्रभुत्व मिळविले होते. सांस्कृतिक देवाणघेवाणी मध्ये आदान प्रदानता व्हावी यासाठी प्रवास करणे गरजेचे वाटते. प्रवासात भाषा, खाद्य संस्कृती आणि कलांचे आदानप्रदानता होत असते. यातून कला विकसीत होण्यास मदत होते. कलेतून कलाविष्कार- सौदर्य

याचा मिलाफ होत असतो. कलेतून तेथील संस्कृतीवर प्रकाश टाकण्यास भारताला उपयुक्त ठरतात. पर्यटनस्थळे संस्कृती जतन करण्यास उपयुक्त ठरत आहेत. संस्कृती अभ्यासासाठी पर्यटनाचा वापर (use for cultural studies) होणे आवश्यक आहे. या पर्यटनातून सामाजिक, धार्मिक संस्कृतीचे दर्शन होण्यास मदत होते. त्याचबरोबर ज्ञानार्जनातून अर्थाजन प्राप्त होण्यास वाव मिळतो. म्हणूनच आज पर्यटन स्थळे ऐतिहासिक वारसा स्थळे म्हणून युनेस्कोने मान्यता दिलेली आहेत. म्हणूनच स्थळांचे संवर्धन व संरक्षण होणे आज काळाची गरज बनली आहे.वास्तुकलेचा अभ्यास ऐतिहासिक दृष्टिकोनातून होणे फार महत्वाचा आहे. वास्तुकलेतून आपणास इतिहासाची, राजाची कारकीर्द,प्रासाद, किल्ले, लेणी इत्यादीचा अभ्यास करण्यास मदत होते.यातून प्राचीन स्थापत्य विशारद कला याचे ज्ञान मिळते.यावास्तुकलेचा आविष्कार कलाकाराने आपल्या कला बंदिस्त वेगवेगळ्या स्थापत्य मूर्ती, शिल्प कोरलेली आहेत. ती अजोड आहेत. अजिंठा, वेरूळ चित्रे ही जगाला थक्कच करणारी पेटिंग व गौतम बुद्धांचे जीवन जातक कथेवर आधारलेली आहेत. कलाकाराने आपली कला जीव ओतून साकारलेली आहे. कलेला अनेक छटा आहेत. त्यात स्थानिक कला, लोकसंगीत, लोकनृत्य आणि हस्तकला (उदा.पैठणी साडी) याची आपल्या समज होत असते त्याकाळात पैठणला अनन्य साधारण महत्त्व होते व आजही आहे. ग्रामीण व शहरी भागातील जीवनशैलीवर त्यांच्या राहणी मानावर अवलंबून असते. शहरी व ग्रामीण भागातील लोकजीवन, पेहराव आणि चालीरीतीचा अभ्यास त्याच्या जीवनशैलीतून दिसून येतो. साहित्य व इतिहास जाणून घ्यावयाचा असेल तर स्थळावरील शिलालेख, ताम्रपट आणि संग्रहालय याद्वारे लिखित इतिहासाची पडताळणी करता येते.

प्रवास आणि पर्यटनाचे महत्व- पुस्तकी ज्ञानापेक्षा प्रत्यक्ष स्थळाला भेट दिल्यामुळे समजण्यास अधिक उपयुक्त होते. प्रत्यक्ष अनुभव कामी उपयोगी पडत असतो. प्रत्यक्ष स्थळाचे निरीक्षण करून त्यावर मत मांडता येते, स्थळाविषयी सखोल ज्ञान प्राप्त होते. सांस्कृतिक जतन हे पर्यटनाचे महत्त्व अधिक दृढ करते. पर्यटनामुळे ऐतिहासिक वारसाचे महत्त्व वाढत जाऊन इतिहास समजण्यास उपयोगी पडतो. त्यामुळे त्याचे जतन आणि संवर्धन होणे आज काळाची गरज बनली आहे. राष्ट्रीय एकात्मता टिकवून ठेवण्यासाठी प्रत्येकाच्या मनात पर्यटनाचे कुतुहल असावयास हवे. राष्ट्रीय एकात्मता टिकवून ठेवण्याची प्रत्येक नागरीकाची जबाबदारी आहे. देशहिताला कोणताही बाधा पोहोचणार नाही. यासाठी प्रयत्न करणे आवश्यक आहे. देश विदेशातील अनेकविध संस्कृतीचा परिचय झाल्यामुळे एकमेकांच्या संस्कृतीची ओळख झाली. त्यातूनच बंधुत्वाची भावना वाढीस लागण्यास मदत झाली. अर्थव्यवस्थेला बळकटी प्राप्त झाली. स्थानिक हस्तकला, हॉटेल्स आणि वाहतूक व्यवसायाला चालना मिळत गेली. पर्यटनाचे अनेक प्रकार सांगता येतील. ऐतिहासिक पर्यटन- ऐतिहासिक पर्यटन इतिहासाच्या दृष्टिकोनातून महत्वाचा विषय आहे.

ऐतिहासिक स्थळे पर्यटन म्हणून आज नावारूपाला आली आहेत. जुने किल्ले, राजवाडे, लढावयाची ठिकाणे इत्यादीची माहिती घेण्यासाठी प्रत्यक्ष स्थळांना भेटी देऊन ऐतिहासिक घटना अभ्यास करणे संशोधकाला सोयीस्कर ठरेल त्यासाठी प्रत्यक्ष स्थळाना भेटी देणे गरजेचे असते.

धार्मिक/ आध्यात्मिक पर्यटन- मंदिरे, मशीद, चर्च व गुरूद्वार यांना भेटी देऊन त्या त्या स्थळांची मंदिरातील पुजारी, मशीदमधील उलेमा, मौलवी तसेच चर्च मधील फादर, बिशप्स, पाद्री यांचे धार्मिक आध्यात्मिक दृष्टिकोनातून केलेले कार्य मौलिक आहे. सांस्कृतिक पर्यटक हा पर्यटनाचा महत्वाचा प्रकार मानला जातो. भारत हा विविध वास्तूनी लाभलेला देश आहे. सण समारंभ, यात्रा, जत्रा रुढी परंपरेनुसार भारतीय लोक साजरा करीत असतात. आजही सांस्कृतिक ठेवाजतन केलेला आपणास पहावयास मिळतो. गावा गावातील देवदेवतांच्या जत्रा उत्सव साजरा करुन

आनंद द्वि गुणित करीत असतात. विद्यार्थी आणि संशोधका साठी शैक्षणिक पर्यटन आवश्यक असते. त्यासाठी प्रवास करणे आवश्यक असते. संस्कृतीचा सखोल अभ्यास करण्यासाठी इतिहास, भूगोल, भाषा, वंश शास्त्राचा एकत्रित अभ्यास पर्यटनाच्या माध्यमातून करता येईल. म्हणूनच प्रवास हा संस्कृतीचा आरसा म्हटले तर वावगे ठरणार नाही.

पर्यटन शास्त्र (Tourism) पर्यटन ही संज्ञा प्रवास (Tour) या शब्दाशी संबंधित असून प्रवास हा शब्द Tour हा शब्द लॅटिन भाषेतील Tornos या शब्दापासून आलेला आहे. Tornos शब्दाचा मूळ अर्थ वर्तुळ किंवा वर्तुळाकार असा आहे. याच शब्दापासून पुढे वर्तुळाकार प्रवास किंवा पॅकेज टूर्स हा शब्द रुढ झाला. एका व्यक्तीने किंवा व्यक्तीसमुहाने एका ठिकाणावरुन दुसऱ्या ठिकाणी मनोरंजनासाठी, अभ्यासासाठी, कामासाठी केलेला प्रवास म्हणजे पर्यटन होय. मनोरंजन, फुरसत किंवा कामासाठी केलेला प्रवास म्हणजे पर्यटन होय. जागतिक पर्यटन संस्था world Tourismorganization म्हणून ओळखली जाते. जे लोक प्रवास करतात आपल्या परिसराबाहेरील जागी जाऊन सलग एका वर्षापेक्षा कमी काळ मनोरंजन, काम व इतर कारणासाठी राहतात ते अर्थ पर्यटकांची व्याख्या करते. पर्यटन हे फुरसतीचे वेळ चालविण्याचे एक महत्त्वाचे साधन म्हणून जगभर लोकप्रिय झाले असून दोन हजारच्या शतकाच्या अखेरीस अधिक जागतिक मंदीने व H1N1 फ्लूच्या साथीने २००८ पासून ते २००९ च्या अखेरीस पर्यंत रोडवले. मात्र पर्यटनाला फक्त बरे दिवस आहेत. २०१२ मध्ये जागतिक पर्यटकांच्या संख्येत१००कोटीचा पल्ला गाठला असून इतिहासात पहिल्यांदाच घडले आहे.

आंतरदेशीय पर्यटन उत्पन्न (आंतरदेशीय देणे जमा खात्यातले पर्यटनावरचे उपखाते) २०११मध्ये१.०३ लाख कोटी अमेरिकन डॉलर (७४ हजार कोटी युरो) इतके वाढले. ते २०१० च्या तुलनेत ३.५टक्के अधिक होते. २०१२ ला चीन जगातील पर्यटनांवर सर्वात जास्त खर्च करणारा देश बनला. आणि त्याने अमेरिका व जर्मनी यांना व्यवसायात मागे टाकले आहे.चीन व उदयोन्मुख राष्ट्रे(रशिया,ब्राझिल)यांच्या पर्यटनावरचा खर्च गेल्या दशकात लक्षणीय वाढला आहे.अतिप्राचीन काळा पासून प्रवास ही मनुष्य प्राण्याची सहज प्रवृत्ती आहे. प्राचीनकाळातील प्रवास पध्दती व संकल्पना या आजच्या काळातील प्रवास पध्दती वेगळ्या आहेत. प्राचीनकाळी प्रवासाचा उद्देश नवीनप्रदेशाचा शोध घेणे, व्यापार करणे व धार्मिक स्थळांना भेटी देणे हा होता.हे प्रवासी व व्यापारी विविध भूप्रदेश देश व राज्यातून प्रवास करीत असतात. त्यामुळे विविध राज्यांच्या राजधान्या शहरे,बंदरे,बाजार पेठांची क्रेंद्रे व्यापारी मार्ग यांचा त्याच्याशी संबंध येतो.

प्रवास व व्यापार यातून विविध मानवी समूह, संस्कृती यांची परस्पर ओळख झाली. अनेक गोष्टी देवाण घेवाण झाल्यामुळे एकमेकांच्या समाज जीवनाची ओळख होण्यास मदत झाली. प्रवास व पर्यटनाच्या वाढीस या गोष्टी अनुकूल ठरल्या.मध्ययुगात व्यापाराची प्रवास पध्दती बदल करून आनंद देण्यासाठी मनोरंजनासाठी प्रवास ही संकल्पना प्रथम युरोपातील रोमन लोकांनी रुजवली. रोमन साम्राज्याच्या काळात येथील लोक इजिप्त मधील पिरॅमिडस,ग्रीसमधील अथेन्स व स्पार्टा या नगराची भव्यनगर रचना तेथील देवदेवतांची मंदिरे, मूर्ती तेथील क्रीडांगणे पहाण्यासाठी जात असत.युरोपात पुनरूज्जीवनाची लाट आल्यामुळे जगभरातील वसाहतीक व साम्राज्यवादाचा विस्तार घडून येण्यास मदत झाली. पुनरुज्जीवन याचा अर्थ परिवर्तन, बदल नवनवीन शोध लागले. याचा ज्ञान वैज्ञानिक दृष्टिकोन वाढीस लागला. औद्योगिक क्रांती युरोपात झाली. इंग्लंडने त्याचा पुरेपूर वापर करून घेतला.संपत्तीचा ओघ वाढल्याने पर्यटकात श्रीमंतीचे मक्तेदारी न राहता मध्यम वर्ग सुध्दा या पर्यटनात सहभागी होऊ लागला. त्यात जात, धर्म, प्रवास विद्वान, लेखक, कवी व व्यापारी यांचा समावेश होता. युरोपियन पर्यटकांनी

आधुनिक पर्यटनाचा पाया घातला गेला. महापर्यटन व्यवसाय पर्यटनाचा प्रकार मानला जातो, या द्वारे मोठमोठ्या टुर्स काढून निसर्गातील सौंदर्याचा आनंद पर्यटक प्रेमींना घेता येत असतो. अशा टुर्स वीणा पाटील आयोजित करून लोकांना या महापर्यटनात सामील होण्याचे आव्हान करतात. देशविदेशातील रमणीय स्थळांना भेटी घडवून आणण्याचे महत्वाचे कार्य करतात. त्यामुळे तेथील संस्कृती समाज जीवन, आर्थिक जीवनाची ओळख होते. त्यातूनच अर्थाजन होण्यास मदत होते. पर्यटनाच्या ठिकाणी व्यसायिकांना व्यवसाय करण्याची संधी मिळते.पर्यटन म्हणजे दैनंदिन प्रवासा व्यतिरिक्त किंवा कामाव्यतिरिक्त केलेला प्रवास होय. कामातून फुरसत सुट्टी घेऊन आनंद मौजमज्जा करण्यासाठी निसर्गरम्य सौंदर्याचा अनुभूती घेण्यासाठी केलेले नियोजनबध्द पर्यटन म्हणजे फुरसत, तीचे पर्यटन होय. ब्रिटिश राजवटीच्या काळात समुद्रमार्गे व्यापार चालत होता. हिंदी शिपायांना समुद्र पर्यटन करण्यास मज्जाव होता. समुद्र पर्यटन केल्यास त्या परिसराची ओळख होईल याची धास्ती ब्रिटिश अधिकाऱ्याना होती. समुद्रपर्यटन करण्याचे माणसाला सागर सफरीचे पूर्वीपासूनच ज्ञान होते. अगदी पोहोण्यापासून ते व्यापार करण्यापर्यंतचे सखोल गोष्टी यासागर पर्यटनामुळे शक्य झाले. समुद्र किनारे, बंदरे, सागरसफरी यामुळे समुद्र पर्यटनाचा विकास घडून येण्यास मदत झाली. टायटॅनिक जहाजांमध्ये जगातील पहिली सागर सफर ठरली. आधुनिक काळात छोट्या छोट्या बोटीद्वारे तसेच मोठ-मोठ्या जहाजाद्वारे देखील समुद्राचे सौंदर्य पहावयास मिळते. समुद्राच्या गर्भा विषयी माणसाच्या मनात पूर्वीपासून आकर्षण होते. तेथील विविध जीवसृष्टी जलचर, शैक्षणिक सहली वनस्पती या पहाण्यासाठी समुद्र पर्यटनात वाढ झालेली दिसून येते. तसेच वॉटरप्रुप टेक्निसचा वापर करून पाण्यात देखील घरे बांधली जात आहेत. एआयचा वापर करून आधुनिक पध्दतीची घरे बांधली जावू लागली आहेत. त्यात रहाण्याचा आगळा वेगळा आनंद माणसाला उपभोगता येऊ लागला हे नवल म्हणावे लागेल. आधुनिक पर्यटनाचा उद्देश डोळ्यासमोर ठेवून पर्यावरणाचे जतन करणे, पुरातत्त्व वस्तूची हानी होऊ नये हा उद्देश आहे. हिवाळी पर्यटन हा ब्रिटिश पर्यटकांना पर्वणीचा क्षण मानला जातो. त्यामुळे हजारो पर्यटक भारतीय पर्यटनाकडे आकर्षित होत असतात. भारतीय पर्यटनाच्या इतिहासात हजारो वर्षापासून प्रक्रिया आहे. हजारो वर्षांपासून भारतीय उपखंडातील लोक तीर्थक्षेत्रांना भेटी देण्यासाठी एका ठिकाणाहून दुसऱ्या ठिकाणावर फिरत असतात.

भारतीय ग्रंथामध्ये याचे पुरावे उपलब्ध आहेत. उदा. पंढरीची वारी, कुंभमेळा इ. चे संदर्भ वाचावयास मिळतात. १८१८ नंतर पेशवाई बुडाल्यानंतर इंग्रज राजवट सुरू झाली. शनिवार वाड्यावरील भगवा ध्वज जाऊन युनियन जॅक फडकवला. इंग्रजांनी जेव्हा भारतावर राज्य करण्यास सुरुवात केली, तेव्हा त्यांनी राजधान्या निर्माण केल्या.हिवाळी राजधानी व उन्हाळी राजधानी होत्या. उन्हाळी राजधानीच्या काळात इंग्रज हवा पालटण्यासाठी पाचगणी, महाबळेश्वर, शिमला, काश्मीर, उटी, म्हैसूर इ.ठिकाणी हवेच्या ठिकाणी राहणे पसंत करीत असत. त्यांच्याकडे कामासाठी किंवा निगराणीसाठी भारतातील राजे महाराजे किंवा अधिकारी होते. त्याना कामा निमित्तइंग्रजांच्याबरोबर त्या ठिकाणी जावे लागत असे. भारताला स्वातंत्र्य मिळताच इंग्रज देश सोडून गेले पण त्यांच्यामागे तेथील श्रीमंत घराण्या तील आणि राजे महाराजे यांना मात्र अशा फिरण्याची मोठी हौस झडली. स्वतंत्र भारतात फिरण्याची वेगवेगळे प्रदेश बघण्याची इच्छा प्रत्येक सामान्य माणसाला होती. त्या लोकांना बघून उदयास आली. अशाप्रकारे आधुनिक भारतात हिवाळी पर्यटनाला चालना मिळाली. धार्मिक पर्यटन हे सुद्धा पर्यटन क्षेत्रात नावारूपाला येऊ लागले आहे. माणसाचे जीवन भक्तीभाव देखील पर्यटनाला पोषक ठरत आहे. तसेच प्रत्येक व्यक्ती स्वतःचा धर्म, संस्कृती अधिक प्रिय असते. त्यामुळे सांस्कृतिक, धार्मिक पर्यटनाचा विकास होण्यास मदत झाली.

भारतासारख्या खंडप्राय देशामध्ये धार्मिक पर्यटन स्थळे अधिक प्रमाणात दिसू लागली. दोन लाखाच्यावर मंदिरे, तीन लख मशीदी दहा हजार सातशे एक चर्च अस्तित्वात असलेली आपणास दिसतात. इतर धर्माशी निगडीत हजारो ठिकाणे असलेली दिसतात. यातून लक्षावधी यात्रा, ऊरुस मिरवणूक निघत असते. धर्मातील विविध रुढीपरंपरमुळे लक्षावधी वस्तूची विक्री होत असलेली पहावयास मिळते. त्यामुळे साधारण सर्व सामान्य लोकांना रोजगाराची संधी निर्माण झाली. अनेक विध भागातील लोक तीर्थयात्रा करण्यासाठी घराबाहेर पडलेली दिसून येतात. ऊरूस, जत्रा, यात्रा, चारधामयात्रा असते. सणासुदीच्या दिवशी लोकांची देवदर्शन घेण्यासाठी स्थळावर गर्दी पहावयास मिळते. यातून लोकांची भावना देवाविषयीची दिसून येते, यातून परिवहनाला अधिक चालना मिळते. लोकांची भ्रमंती होऊन मनोरंजन यातून होत असते. आत्मीय समाधान प्राप्त होते. धार्मिक पर्यटनस्थळे देखील पर्यटन विकास होण्यास उपयुक्त ठरत आहे हे विसरता येत नाही.आरोग्य पर्यटनातून मानवी जीवन सुखकर होण्यास मदत होते. मानवी जीवन अल्हादायक, निरोगी राहण्यासाठी स्वच्छ हवामान निकोप वातावरण शरीर प्रवृत्ती स महत्वपूर्ण ठरत आहे. निकोप हवामान आरोग्य शैली सुंदर राहण्यास मदत होते. लो. टिळक हवा पालटण्यासाठी सिंहगडावर जाऊन राहत होते. प्रदूषण मुक्त आल्हाददायक वातावरण शरीर आरोग्यास पोषक ठरत आहे.

आजच्या धकाधकीच्या जीवनात पुरेसा वेळ मिळत नाही आरोग्य धोक्यात आले आहे. शरीर व्याधीने जडलेले दिसते यावर यावर रामबाण औषध म्हणजे निसर्गाच्या सान्निध्यात राहून आनंद रहस्यमय जीवन शैलीचा जगण्याचा आनंदलुटा व घ्या .अआयच्या माध्यमातून आपणात मानवी जीवनशैलीत बदल घडवून आण्ण्यात ए आयचा वापर कितपत केला जावा असा प्रश्न मनाला पडला आहे. स्थानिकपर्यटक जवळच्या निसर्गरम्य शांत संपन्न व सौदर्यांनीयुक्त नटलेला परिसर आत हवा पालटण्यासाठी जात असतात. एक आठवडा ते तीन महिन्यापर्यंत वास्तव्य करून राहत असतात. माथेरान, चिखलदरा, पाचगणी इ. शैक्षणिक पर्यटन हा एक महत्त्वाचा प्रकार आहे.

अभ्यासाच्या दृष्टीने एका ठिकाणावरुन दुस-या ठिकाणी केलेला प्रवास होय. यामध्ये शैक्षणिक सहली, अभ्यास सहली आयोजित करुन त्या परिसराची सखोल माहिती मिळत असते. संशोधनाच्या दृष्टीने सायन्स पार्क, एन. सी. एल. सारख्या रिसर्च इन्स्टिट्यूटला भेट देवून संशोधन विद्यार्थी आपली बुध्दिमत्ता वैज्ञानिक प्रयोगातून सिद्ध करीत असतो. हे वैज्ञानिक दृष्टिकोनातून महत्त्वाचे मानले जाते. देश विदेशातून अनेक प्रवासी पर्यटन अभ्यास करण्यासाठी ऐतिहासिक स्थळांना भेटी देतात, त्याचा इतिहास समजून घेतात.

आजच्या धकाधकीच्या जीवनात एक. आय हा परवलीचा शब्द झाला आहे. सर्वच क्षेत्रात एआय आर्टिफिशियल इंटेलिजन्स म्हणजेच कृत्रिम बुद्धिमत्ता हा शब्द वापरला जातो. शिकलेल्या लोकांना आपलासा वाटतो तसा अडाणी कमी शिकलेल्या शेतकरी वर्ग, गृहिणी, व्यापारी, दुकानदार यांना सुध्दा आपलासा वाटतो कारण जास्त त्रास घेता विचार न करता, आपण लगेच आपणास पडलेला पाहिजे तो प्रश्न सोडवू शकू असा गुरुस्थानी मानवनिर्मित एआय आहे. मार्गदर्शक, सखा, मित्र साक्षीदार म्हणून काम करतो, यावर संशोधन चालू आहे. वापर, प्रचार, व प्रसार कसा करावा, त्याचे फायदे तोटे काय याविषयी विचार मांडले आहेत. वेगवेगळ्या वृत्तपत्रातून कृत्रिम बुद्धिमत्तेचा माणूस यावर लेख प्रकाशित झाले आहेत. डॉ. दिपक शिकारपूर यांनी उद्योजक व संगणक साक्षरता प्रसारक अन्वयार्थ यात अजेंटिक एआय ने काम करेलच, विचारही स्वतः च करेल यात आपले विचार मांडले. (लोकमत ४ ऑगस्ट २०२५) तंत्रज्ञान विकासासाठी संशोधन संस्था-डॉ.अनिल काकोडकर यांनी देश अग्रेसर होण्यासाठी इतरांची कॉपी उपयोगाची नाही. आपल्या कल्पनेनुसार पुढे जाण्याची धमक हवी. असे विचार जेष्ठ शास्त्रज्ञ आणि अध्यक्ष

एमकेसीएल(विवेक सावंत) यांनी मांडले. सामोऱ्या एआय द्वारे ऊस लागवड केल्याची बातमी सकाळ टुडे २९ जुलै २०२५ म्हाळुंगे पडवळ यांनी साखर कारखानाच्या माध्यमातून सामोरे(आंबेगाव) येथे प्रा. अनिल चिखले यांच्या शेतात कृत्रिम बुद्धिमत्ता एआय तंत्रज्ञानावर आधारित ऊस लागवड धोरण राबविण्यात आले होते. एआय काळाची गरज बनली आहे. हे विसरता येणार नाही .

संदर्भ सूची :-

१ पर्यटन खर्चाच्या आकड़ेवारीचे संग्रहण २०१०

२ चीन जगातील पर्यटनस्थळ प्रथम क्रमांकाची बाजारपेठ २०२३

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