IAWS

INDIAN ASSOCIATION FOR WOMEN'S STUDIES

XVII NATIONAL CONFERENCE

7-10 September 2023
In collaboration with
Government College for Women,
Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala

Theme:
Women's
Studies and
Women's
Movements:
Challenges and
Resilience

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Book of Abstracts

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Women in
Freedom Movements:
Safeguarding Constitution,
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1.1
Women's Movement in India: Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya and the Complex Role of AIWC

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In this abstract, Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya's significant contributions to the Indian women's movement are examined. It also critically examines the All India Women's Conference's (AIWC) role in launching the movement, recognising both its successes and shortcomings. This abstract seeks to offer a nuanced picture of the women's movement in India and the difficulties related to AIWC's achievements by offering a balanced viewpoint.

In India, there has been a persistent fight for gender equality and female empowerment that has addressed a range of social, cultural, and political concerns that affect women. This movement's leader Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya was a key player in determining its course. Chattopadhyaya advocated for economic empowerment, education, and women's rights as a politician, social reformer, and activist.

Even if AIWC made a tremendous contribution to raising awareness of women's issues and starting substantial reforms, it is crucial to evaluate its accomplishments critically. The AIWC has occasionally come under fire for being urban-centric and elitist, which has limited its appeal to and efficacy among marginalised areas. The movement spearheaded by AIWC largely represented the interests and concerns of middle-class and upper-class women, thereby marginalising their voices and experiences.

Furthermore, the AIWC's emphasis on legislative changes occasionally overshadowed grassroots activism and the necessity of structural adjustments. Although the organisation helped pass significant laws, the execution and enforcement of these regulations frequently fell short. In order to overcome deeply ingrained patriarchal institutions and societal norms, a more thorough and holistic strategy is required because the gap between legal reforms and the lived realities of women has persisted.

In addition, the AIWC's emphasis on maintaining and advancing conventional gender roles and cultural practises has come under fire. While acknowledging the economic potential of traditional handicrafts and cottage industries, it is possible that in doing so, it unintentionally contributed to the continued limitation of women to particular fields of employment. While reflecting the variety of women's experiences and aspirations, a more intersectional and inclusive approach would have enhanced AIWC's impact and relevance.

In conclusion, it is important to critically evaluate Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya's accomplishments and the part AIWC played in the Indian women's movement. Although AIWC gave women's advocacy a platform and started significant reforms, its shortcomings in terms of representation, community involvement, and confronting deeply ingrained social systems should be noted. In order to assess the course and influence of the women's movement in India, it is essential to have a thorough awareness of the complexities and subtleties related to AIWC's contributions.

1.2
Writing Life in History: Dakshayani Velayudhan and her Times

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History has not always been generous to women in politics. Often considered a male-dominated sphere, the contribution of women in politics has been seriously overlooked or underestimated. Indian political history has been smeared with male bias until very recent times. A conscious reworking and rewriting of

histories has led to a paradigm shift that resulted in uncovering women's voices from the margins of history. Dakshayani Velayudhan was an exceptional woman in politics. She was a brilliant student, a teacher, an activist, and also a woman in science who had contributed much to history and Indian politics but has constantly been marginalised from the narratives. Hailing from a Pulaya family in the erstwhile Cochin province, a community which occupies the lowest rungs in the hierarchical caste system, Dakshayani was a woman of many firsts in her life- the first Dalit women graduate in India, the first Dalit women member of the legislative assembly in Kerala and the first Pulaya women to wear upper cloths.

Among 299 members of the constituent assembly, Dakshayani was also the youngest and the only Dalit women, making her representation significant and politically important. Indian constituent assembly which came into form on 9th December 1946 was predominantly a male-dominated enterprise with only 15 women representatives who were mostly Hindu upper caste women. Constituent Assembly had an immense role to play in reshaping Indian lives in accordance with democratic and secular principles and women in the assembly had contributed much to this effort. But the lives and efforts of these women including that of Dakshayani Velayudhan often fail to receive attention and consideration as much as their male counterparts receive.

This paper attempts to engage in life history writing enquiring into the life and times of Dakshayani Velayudhan and challenges the conventionalities of history writing. Writing life history of Dakshayani Velayudhan is an attempt with dual objectives, to probe into the "personal" and to identify the intersectional nature of identity, experience and agency that positions Dakshayani as a Dalit woman in the context of her times and to enquire into the "public" -the politics- and also at the same time move away from the paradigms of caste and gender to newer possibilities. This paper is an attempt to go beyond the vulnerability of one voice in history to identify and incorporate multiple perspectives that can be radical and controversial at times. This paper is also an attempt to analyse the departures in Dakshayani's political and ideological philosophies, from the contemporary dominant understandings and how her location, as a woman, as a Dalit and a Malayali has contributed to such departures.

1.3
Transformative Vision of
Gender Equality in India:
Examining the Discourses of Freedom Struggle and
Constituent Assembly Debates

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An historical precursor to India national movement, the social and religious reform movements across the multiple communities grappled with the issues of gender discrimination,modes of exploitation, persisting social, cultural, educational and economic disadvantages and methods to enhance their participation/empowerment in all those spheres. This greatly influenced the emergent nationalist consciousness culminating into a prolonged and historically significant organised freedom struggle movement. Gender justice and empowerment constitutes an important ideological paradigm of Indian struggle for independence along with a vision of democratic, secular, republican social welfares state. The voluminous participation of women in freedoms struggle movement although in a graduated manner aligned the gender issues with the broad framework of social justice in the ideological currents of national movement. This further influenced the debates of Constituent Assembly centringaround the provisions of social and gender justice located in the Chapters of Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles of State They reveal the original intentions of the framers of the Constitution of India enacted and adopted to guide the fundamental political transformation and reconstruct the society itself in India. It was to assume the role of a charter of social revolution which will transform and transplant the traditional social, religious and cultural practices putting certain social groups like women in grave disadvantageous position.

Out of 389 members of the Constituent Assembly, only 15 were women. The women members of the Constituent Assembly were Ammu Swaminathan, Dakshayani Velayudhan, Begum Aizaz Rasul, Durgabai Deshmukh, Hansa Mehta, Kamla Chaudhary, Leela Roy, Malati Choudhury, Purnima Banerjee, Rajkumari AmritKaur, Renuka Ray, Sarojini Naidu, Sucheta Kriplani, Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit and Annie Mascarene.

It is important to recognize the efforts of these trailblazing women who worked tirelessly to ensure that the voices of women and marginalized communities were

heard and represented in the Constitution. Their zeal and contributions to the assembly's debate and the constitution-making are a prominent reflection of their experiences in society as they represented diverse ideological views on different subjects and also actively participated in the socio-economic, and socio-political issues they were innately passionate about.

These women had endured adversities (such as child marriages, widowhood, humiliation, etc.) and still, they sat in the constituent assembly to discuss, debate, and provide a just and equitable constitution for the country.

These women, like other members, came from diverse backgrounds and represented the views of not only women but also socially deprived people from different professions and ways of life. They were lawyers, reformists, and freedom fighters and many of them belonged to several women's organizations and were a part of feminist movements since 1917.

This research paper is a humble attempt on part of me to indulge into a focused scrutiny of the emergence of a vision of gender justice in entwined social religious reform movements and national movement in India. This is to further examine the debates and discourses in Constituent Assembly of India and participation of women members on the issues surrounding the gender/social justice.

1.4
Break the cage:
A Case Study on Pinjra Tod Movement and its Role in Redefining Women's Spaces in Indian Educational Institutions

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The cause of gender justice has been extensively promoted in the 21st century through various national movements in India. The women's movement that happened in India against their subordination was internationalized and gained

space in various national media at varying degrees, according to the values held by the masses that mobilized and the causes for the struggles. In most cases, student movements for gender equality have gained national attention.

Indian higher educational institutions have traditionally perpetuated patriarchal norms and reinforced gender-based discrimination, particularly through strict hostel regulations and curfew timings for female students. In response to this age-old regressive system, women activists in the capital of India started the Pinjra Tod movement in 2015, which literally translates into Break the Cage. This was a feminist movement that challenged and dismantled the patriarchal rules that were prevalent in numerous national educational institutions. The movement seeks to obtain women's autonomy in educational institutions while fighting for gender equality.

The methodology employed for this study involves qualitative approaches. A case study will be conducted on student groups that were proactive throughout the movement. An extensive literature review will be carried out for secondary data analysis. Drawing from feminist theories and qualitative research methods, this research explores the objectives and outcomes of Pinjra Tod movement. It also aims to explore the movement's use of various social media platforms and protests to mobilize students, raise awareness, and demand institutional reforms. The study will also conduct an ex-ante and ex-post analysis of the movement in the respective educational institutions. Moreover, the paper investigates the impact of the Pinjra Tod movement on Indian educational institutions. It analyzes the responses of various universities and colleges to the movement's demands, as well as the broader discourses and debates sparked by its activism.

1.5
It's complicated:
A critical feminist reading of the POCSO law

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The autonomous feminist movement owes it genesis to the three prominent cases in the late 1970s and early 1980s created a public debate around rape. While in all the three cases the rape was committed by policemen, the tipping point was

the instance where a minor girl, a tribal agricultural labourer, named Mathura. She was raped by two policemen inside the police station. That debate led to, what came to be known as, the autonomous feminist movement in India. The nation wide anti-rape campaign led to amendments to the rape laws under the Indian Penal Code, 1860 (IPC) in 1983.

All feminist discourses on rape in the Indian context, begins with this case because of the legal and political debates that stemmed from it; and the legal change that it effected. In the context of this paper, this moment is also critical because there were two more intersections to Mathura's identity - that of her being under 16 and that she was a tribal girl. Both these intersections are as important in understanding her vulnerability, as the fact that the perpetrators were policemen. However, in terms of organising around the issue, both these intersections were not the key points of political discourse.

This paper attempts trace the history of the engagement of the feminist movement in India with the issue of child sexual abuse and the making of the 'child' as a political subject. It also tries to analyse this engagement against the backdrop of critique from within the movement for reliance on law for justice, even though in most cases the implementation remains far from ideal, much less feminist. It maps the points of intervention in the trajectory leading up to the Prevention of Children Against Sexual Offences (POCSO), enacted in 2012, which was the first law since 1947 that was solely dedicated to the issue of child sexual abuse. It also hopes to examine a few prominent judgments to understand and reflect on the kind of language used in them to unravel the contradictions and biases (if any).

1.6
The Age of Consent Act of 1891: Bengali Women's Unheard Voices

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The Age of Consent Act passed by the British government in India in 1891 raised the age of consent of women, both married and unmarried, from ten to twelve, triggering a nationwide controversy of unprecedented proportions. Historical discussions on the Age of Consent controversy in the context of Bengal have

tended to focus predominantly on the hostility of the Hindu male population. In the context of Bengal, the fervent opposition of the Hindu revivalist male intellectuals to the Act has been analysed threadbare. The voices of Bengali women, however, have remained largely unrecorded in existing historiography. Bengali women, it was argued, were passive, and had little to say about this Act, compared to their Maharashtrian counterparts who were more vocal in their demand for a higher age of consent. Despite stereotypes of passivity, the voices of Bengali women did resonate in the public sphere in support of the Act. Moreover, evidence reveals that a few Bengali Muslim women availed this legal instrument to redress the wrongs dome to themselves or their daughters. The proposed paper will question the notion of passivity of Bengali women, and bring to light their public articulations and actions with regard to the consent issue. The paper seeks to redress the politics of exclusion and marginalization underpinning Indian historiography and calls for a more nuanced understanding of the age of consent issue in colonial India by bringing forth the voices of Bengali women in this regard.

1.7
1905 Smarthavicharam and 2017 #MeToo: Stories of Invisible and Visible Women

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Sexism being the oldest form of oppression, Bell Hooks remarked that "the eradication of sexism ... is necessary before attention can be focused on racism or classism". The Smarthavicharam, or the inquiry into the moral conduct of antherjanam accused of adukkala-dosham or illegitimate sexual relations in medieval Kerala, was a form of sexist oppression within the Namboothiri community. The viral #MeToo in 2017 offered a platform for women to speak out even though they were selectively heard. Thatri addressed the sexist oppression in her community, while the #MeToo movement considered the racist and classist differences in the visibility of women.

Thus, this paper is a comparative study of Thatri's smarthavicharam and the modern #MeToo movement as women's legal battle for equal social justice and dignity. The paper also attempts to talk about the effectiveness of these movements in light of the theories of Bell Hooks.

1.8
Alternative history to Indian land struggle movement shaping the constitution through a feminist lens

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The participation of women in the resistance movement has always been seen as invisible work. The paper highlights the gender division of mass movements, created by gender-specific identities. The revolution shaped by the society makes male full timers and women as passive participants. The cyclic violence against women starting from colonial state repression to household subjugation leaves them with the critical inquiry to the patriarchal nature of the mass movements and freedom with no izzat within home. The theoretical framework of this study takes into account the relationship between landless women and land through women studies. The framework addresses the question of how landless women participating in the land rights movements see the land as? The intersectionality of class, caste, and gender interplays to understand the social standing of women in the feudal-patriarchal state and draws an argument of women's relationship with the land resistance movement through invert nature of folk songs and overt nature by direct participation. The resistance was for the land to be received as capital for economic emancipation, social capital with relation to identity determination for the land, and security capital for izzat, to end the cyclic violence from sexual exploitation by zamindars. Land rights in absolute ownership, independence from the family unit as a whole (Mitakshara law and Dayabhaga law as a patriarchal feudal remnant in the present Hindu Succession Act). The land resistance movement pre-Independence to Post-Independence aimed at the central demand for those who sow to be the ones who own and not the one who owes. The paper deals with the theoretical debate between patriarchal feudalism and the abolition of feudalism in the Indian Agrarian Society, through legal changes. The debate covers if abolishing zamindari gave equal rights to all? The social practices attached to patriarchal feudalism like the Dola custom of where the landless lower caste woman had to sleep with the local landlord first on the marriage night were never eradicated. The paper argues for a greater understanding of zamindari as a social system that structures caste and gender with patriarchal feudalism to weaken the landless politically and socially. To

address the question of caste and gender identity by creating a perpetual war between the landless and the land-owning for power over the main means of production. To understand the treatment of women as sexual slaves and bonded labor.

The methodology for empirical research drives from a Case Study of Bodhgaya Land Movement, Bihar, and its agrarian economy and status quo that shaped the women's resistance through militancy and non-militancy against the feudal forces for land-owning rights (Bihar Land Reform Act 1961, The Minimum Wage, The Patta system) for women through a sociological jurisprudence. The central idea is to understand the social movements led by women from Bihar and around India pre-independence to Post-Indepence that lead to Parliamentary Debate for constitutional changes, for example- 1951 on the Hindu Code Bill that created an image of social reality in front of the law to change and accommodate.

1.9
The Suffrage Question and Women's Writings in Bengali Periodicals

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The all-India delegation of prominent women, led by Sarojini Naidu, in 1917, to meet with Edwin Montagu and Lord Chelmsford, marked the beginning of women's struggle for political and civil rights. These women claimed franchise on the same terms as men. In order to achieve the suffrage, Indian women had to contend with a two-pronged patriarchy: colonial patriarchy and patriarchy of the Indian nationalist movement. At every step of the suffrage debate, British official policy was characterized not only by patriarchal arrogance committed to denying Indian women the right to vote, but also exhibited conspicuous duplicity. While in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, British critique of Indian society rested on the deplorable condition of women, in the 1920s they were criticising the leaders of suffrage movement as unrepresentative of rural women, and used this new critique as the rationale to deny women the right to vote. The

first phase of the suffrage struggle culminating in the India Act of 1919 was a dismal failure: the Act did not extend the franchise to women.

The second phase of women's suffrage movement in India, commencing with the appointment of the Simon Commission, again encountered British apathy on the one hand and nationalist betrayal on the other. Women organisations fighting for suffrage were ever eager to throw their support behind the nationalist agenda: thus they joined the Indian National Congress in boycotting the all European Simon Commission. Again while the first Round Table Conference called by the British government to discuss the next step towards dominion held out the possibility of talks about increasing women's suffrage, women's organizations could not take advantage of the situation because Indian National Congress decided to boycott the conference and women's organizations again stood behind the Congress. The events that followed the Gandhi-Irwin pact- the second Round Table Conference, the communal award and the Poona Pact completely undermined women's fight for political rights to other political calculations. Nationalist leaders of all genre- Gandhians and revolutionaries alike, nurtured the opinion that political emancipation from British rule should gain precedence over the question of women's vote. The implicit assumption was that once the nation achieves political freedom, women's demand for suffrage will be taken care of.

Against this backdrop, the present paper would seek to analyse women's writings in Bengali periodicals on the issue of political rights of women. Since the last quarters of the nineteenth century, Bengali women were becoming increasingly visible in Bengali print media. In the wake of the Swadeshi Movement which was a milestone in the political mobilisation of Bengali women, periodicals like Bharati and Bharat-Mahila played significant roles in rousing political awareness among women. In the twenties and thirties of the 20th century, women writers voiced their opinion on various issues of their concern in periodicals like Bharatbarsha, Probasi and other journals. Jayasree, published since 1932 was dedicated to creating political awareness among women. During the suffrage movement, women like Swarnalata Basu, Sita Devi, Manorama Basu, Begum Shamsun Nahar, Anindita Devi wrote eloquently on the franchise question. The purpose of the present paper is to analyse the thought and opinion of Bengali women as expressed in the periodicals.

1.10

Women's Contribution in the Making of the Indian Constitution: A Historical Analysis

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The Indian Constitution, adopted on January 26, 1950, is a remarkable document that laid the foundation for the world's largest democracy. While the Constitution is often associated with prominent male figures such as Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Jawaharlal Nehru, and Mahatma Gandhi, it is essential to recognize the significant contributions made by women in shaping this pivotal document. This research paper aims to shed light on the often-overlooked role of women in the making of the Indian Constitution. Drawing upon extensive archival research, primary sources, and secondary literature, this study presents a comprehensive analysis of the involvement of women in the constitutional-making process. It delves into the pre-independence era and highlights the participation of key women leaders, activists, and intellectuals who championed the cause of gender equality, social justice, and fundamental rights. The research paper examines the contributions of notable women such as Sarojini Naidu, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Durgabai Deshmukh, Hansa Mehta, Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, Annie Mascarene, Sucheta Kriplani, Renuka Ray, Purnima Banerjee, Malati Choudhury, Leela Roy, Kamla Choudhary, Begum Aizaz Rasul, Dakshayani Velayudhan and Ammu Swaminathan among others. It explores their efforts in various dimensions, including their representation in the Constituent Assembly, advocacy for women's rights, and their influence on shaping crucial provisions related to gender equality, education, and social welfare. Moreover, this paper explores the challenges and obstacles faced by women during the constitution-making process, such as societal prejudices, cultural barriers, and limited representation. It critically evaluates the extent to which their voices and concerns were integrated into the final constitutional framework. The findings of this research highlight the significant contributions made by women in framing the Indian Constitution and emphasize their role as agents of social change and progress. By acknowledging their contributions, this study aims to rectify the historical oversight and foster a deeper understanding of the multifaceted efforts undertaken by women in the making of the Indian Constitution. This research paper contributes to the existing

scholarship on the Indian Constitution by offering a nuanced perspective on women's contributions. It serves as a foundation for further research, dialogue, and policy considerations aimed at promoting gender equality, representation, and inclusivity in constitutional processes and beyond.

1.11
Woman Freedom fighter and the Biographical Lens: A Case Study

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A. V. Kuttimaluamma was born in Anakkara Vadakathu family of Ponnani Taluk in Malabar, Kerala in 1905. No discussion of the history of political struggles in Kerala would be complete without mention of the mettle and vigour of the freedom fighter, A. V. Kuttimaluamma and her exceptional embodiment of nationalistic fervour. Influenced by Gandhiji, and drawing on inspiration of the Gandhian activists of Kerala, A .V. Kuttimaluamma defined and explicated the necessity of blurring the boundaries between women's revolutionary aspirations and their realization. In 1930, Kuttimaluamma organized fellow women for political rallying and ensured women's active participation in the Swadeshi movement. In 1931, deconstructing the dominant cultural notion of the vulnerability of women and challenging all exhortions to reveal themselves as docile and compliant beings, foreign clothe shops in Kozhikode (Calicut) were pickteted by a group including men and women, led by Kuttimaluamma. In a Gandhian vein, she refused to oblige, committed herself to the cause of the nation and subjected herself to torture. As a consequence of participating in the Quit India Movement (1942), she was imprisoned for two years in Presidency Jail at Amaravati. As a vibrant member of Indian National Congress, Kuttimaluamma participated in Civil Disobedience Movement, got herself arrested and confined in prison with a two month old baby. Thus, not keeping quite and articulating her thoughts clearly and effortlessly in public gatherings, she re-wrote the cultural imaginary replete with reluctance to accept politically informed and courageous women.

Through this paper, I intend to focus on the life of Kuttimaluamma and her life writings to negotiate with the assumed high stability of dominant historical

accounts relegating women fighters to the backdrop or sublimating them outside the purview of the master narrative.

Secondly, taking cue from Kuttimaluamma's life, life-narrative and life struggles, the need to re imagine the importance of subjectivity and multiple subjective accounts of history, thereby theorizing a pluralistic view of history would be stressed.

Thirdly, the analysis would focus on the intersection of gender performativity, nationalism and historical absences of 'her-stories' and bringing into question the grounds on which the 'essence' of a woman freedom fighter is constructed in chosen texts on Kuttimaluamma.

Fourthly, the question of how mythification and glorification of such narratives within set frameworks of reference contradict certain arguments of post feminist theory and praxis is focused. The biography of A.V.Kuttimaluamma composed by Navaikulam Sukumaran Nair is identified as the primary text. Secondary materials include journal articles, book chapters, newspaper articles and personal interviews.

1.12
Women's Legal Battle against Caste-Based Violence: Ensuring Social Justice and Dignity

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This research paper explores the legal battles fought by women against caste-based violence and their crucial role in advancing social justice and upholding human dignity. Caste-based violence remains a pervasive issue in many societies, particularly affecting marginalized communities, where women are disproportionately targeted. The study delves into the experiences of women who have confronted caste-based violence, examining the legal frameworks and mechanisms available to seek justice and secure their rights. Drawing upon interdisciplinary research and qualitative analysis, this paper highlights the multifaceted dimensions of caste-based violence against women and the challenges they encounter when pursuing legal remedies. It underscores

the complex intersections of caste, gender, and socio-economic factors that contribute to the perpetuation of violence and discrimination. Additionally, the research explores landmark legal cases, legislative reforms, and international human rights instruments that serve as catalysts for change in addressing caste-based violence. The findings of this study reveal the transformative potential of women's legal battles in challenging the deeply ingrained structures of caste-based oppression. It demonstrates how their resilience, agency, and activism contribute to dismantling discriminatory practices, promoting social justice, and safeguarding human dignity. Furthermore, the research examines the role of grassroots movements, civil society organizations, and women's rights advocates in supporting survivors, raising awareness, and fostering community mobilization against caste-based violence. The paper also critically assesses the existing gaps in legal frameworks and enforcement mechanisms, identifying areas for improvement to enhance access to justice for survivors of caste-based violence. It emphasizes the importance of comprehensive legal reforms that address the root causes of caste-based discrimination, gender inequality, and violence against women. Ultimately, this research paper underscores the imperative of a holistic and intersectional approach to combat caste-based violence against women. By highlighting the stories of survivors, analysing legal strategies, and advocating for social change, it aims to contribute to ongoing efforts in achieving social justice, dignity, and equality for all individuals, irrespective of their caste or gender.

1.13
Women's Education & Feminist Thoughts in Colonial India: Lives of Tara Bai Shinde, Rokeya Hossain, Cornelia Sorabji & Pandita Ramabai

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Social reform movements across the Indian sub-continent during colonial times emerged with the objective to improve the socio-political and economic conditions of women and providing a platform for nascent nationalist movements (Sarkar &

Sarkar, 2007). Hence, to understand the redefined role of women in nationalist movements, it is imperative to explore the shifting social context of women. In this context, using secondary data sources, this paper examines how social reforms and modern education changed the gender dynamics for women in the public sphere in colonial India. It also maps the shifts that were taking place in gender roles which led to changes in the social position of women.

The paper brings forth examples of women like Tara Bai Shinde, Cornelia Sorabji, Pandita Ramabai, and Rokeya Hossain. These women could access Western schooling and were writing about the women's concerns in colonial India. It highlights the struggles that these women had to go through to claim their rights and reforms against the harsh practices against women defined in culture and religion. This struggle was loaded with strong resistance from the dominant male social order and values of patriarchal structures.

During colonial times, processes of documentation and codification of discourses such as social rituals, trends, and customary practices, as well as ethnographic surveys, were conducted by British rule. This provided a basic platform for the newly educated class of Indian society to establish their own socio-political and cultural discourses and to raise their voices in the public sphere. However, colonization also re-defined and re-established the role of women and social reform movements in terms of culminating the oppressive sociocultural practices against women in Indian societies.

This shift was happening for the first time in colonial India where women learned the English language and were trying to engage with social injustice against women in Indian society. This also shaped the early feminists' thoughts in the Indian context that challenged and questioned the dominance of men. The social reformers felt the fear of losing the custom, tradition, and indigenous culture hence, took the responsibility of women social reforms redefining their social role as saviors of tradition and culture while reproducing gender constructions yet redefined modernity for women.

1.14
Sati and its Afterlife:
Social Desire and Women's Agency

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Sati – the act of self-immolation on the husband's funeral pyre – was abolished in British India in 1829. The banning of Sati marked a turning point in the history of women's rights in India, establishing their right to live even after the death of their husbands. Following this, there were a plethora of legal disputes over reforms such as widow remarriage, raising the minimum age of consent, and other issues. But, though the banning of sati addressed a person's most fundamental right — her right to life — women's voices/actions are essentially inaudible from this discourse that seems to have a thriving afterlife long after its legal abolition. Known as the last known case of sati in India, 18-year-old Rup Kanwar jumped into the funeral pyre of her husband in an act of self-immolation in September 1987. This jolted the state of Rajasthan and spurred a massive nationwide human rights campaign and the law against the long-abolished practice of 'sati' was made more stringent in 1988 with The Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act of 1987. Recently, Sangita Lakhra, a 28-year-old computer engineer, took her life by jumping into the Sabarmati river, leaving a suicide note, allegedly under duress as her in-laws kept pressurizing her to become a sati. Her death reposes the woman-tradition-law nexus in a political environment that is blatantly fanatical. This paper will try to address the question of social expectations for women and investigate whether women are still merely a critical subject of enquiry without any voice of their own or whether they have begun to emerge as independent actors negotiating with the social expectations in different ways than their predecessors, focusing on the case of sati. It will examine women's agency in the contentious context of religious orthodoxy, regarding their rights, by examining news-reports, interviews, official documents, and artistic representations regarding sati.

1.15

From Purdah to Politics: 'Inventing modern Indian womanhood at Indraprastha College for Women'

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Set against the backdrop of colonial rule and a conservative Indian society, several efforts were made to encourage education for women in India. One such remarkable speech delivered by Annie Besant in 1903, paved the way for the establishment of Indraprastha School in Chhipiwara, Old Delhi. The changing nature of the city presented problems as well as new avenues for furthering the idea of higher education for women, the oldest women's college of Delhi - Indraprastha College for Women (IPCW) was born at that time, in 1924. The period from 1904 to the decade after Independence, was marred with numerous obstacles but its consolidation into degree college of the University of Delhi made it possible for women to continue with their higher education at an all-women's institution.

IP college can be seen as a movement as its evolution influenced both the pursuit and struggle for women's education in India, as well as the participation of women in the national movement. As the rich archival sources suggest, the college not only shaped and empowered women but also inculcated liberal and radical thinking. A seminal study undertaken by Meena Bhargava and Kalyani Dutta documents the evolution of the first women's college in Delhi, however the period covered is till the end of 20th century, leaving a vast expanse of unexplored themes over the last 23 years - untouched. The erasure of the history, especially with reference to IPCW's participation in the national movement, their invisibility in the records clearly points to the gender gap and reinforces the claim of male-dominated discipline of history. IPCW as a site of resistance shaped young women to re-configure their status in the society, question the orthodoxy, become critical, spread harmony, and extend solidarity. The college has served as the site of feminist awakening for both the students and the teachers for over a century. However, the growing apolitical identity of IPCW created an upheaval in the minds of many, during the last few years. This problem is both personal and political to me. In light of the long-stretched participation and efforts to reclaim the land of struggle, solidarity and revolution that it once was, this paper is rooted in my lived experiences centered around the time of the anti-CAA protests across

the country, to uphold the constitutional principles and resist the attack on its legacy from the sectarian forces. The paper is an attempt to understand and explore the intertwined and erased history of IPCW with the national as well as women's movement in India. It will also interrogate the changing nature of IP women's participation in the contemporary socio-political movements and efforts made to reclaim the space. The paper will rely majorly on unstructured interviews and materials from the Museum and Archives Learning Resource Centre at IPCW as a primary source to back the case study method. Books, journals, newspapers, magazines and letters will constitute the secondary source. The coming together of personal, political and emotional will be one of the thrusts of this paper.

1.16
The Shifting Agency of Women in Colonial India: Legal Debates and Print Culture

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M.A. (History) from the University of Delhi (2019-2021)

Scholars of modern India have often grappled with the 'women's question' under the broad banner of social reform during the colonial times. These discussions encompass various themes, including education, domesticity, age of consent, marriage, sexuality, widow remarriage, and the practice of sati. Mrinalini Sinha traces the shift in women's agency in legal debates from the abolition of sati in 1829 to the passing of the Sarda Act in 1929. If the nineteenth century saw a woman as merely a subject of the modernising project of Indian nationalists, the twentieth century saw an unprecedented involvement of women in the social reform movement, constructing them as "both the subjects and the objects of social reform in India".

This paper attempts to look at the role of print culture, especially through women's journals, run by first generation educated women, as a factor that led to this shift in the agency of women in terms of their own participation in a discourse, and their influence in the 'public sphere'. By reading women who were writing in modern north India (1880s - 1940s), this research intends to question the already existing paradigms regarding the position of women as the subject of politico-legal reforms.

Do we see heterogeneity in the legal arguments when studied from a woman's perspective compared to men? In what ways were women questioning the conventional norms regarding their participation in a political movement? Did they resist the patronising attitudes of mainstream political leaders by placing their meanings of political rights beyond the mere anti-colonial, masculine perspective? Although these women very often belonged to the higher echelons of society, considering the limited educational facilities to lower castes and classes, we do see exceptional cases. This Paper will take into consideration the different socio-economic-cultural backgrounds of women while examining their legal debates.

Francesca Orsini's examination of the primary sources and especially women's journals in Hindi is an important intervention in this field. She particularly focuses on the ways in which these journals provided a platform for women to express themselves and engage in public discourse on a wide range of issues. Orsini also highlights the ways in which women's Hindi journals facilitated the circulation and dissemination of new ideas and perspectives.

The primary source for this study will include journals including 'Chand', 'Stri-Darpan', and especially 'Stri-Dharma' published by the Women's Indian Association from 1918 to 1936. It is said to have endeavored to be the voice of the Indian women's rights movement addressing political and social issues facing women in India. Some of the women who were writing in these magazines include Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay, Sarojini Naidu, Rameswari Nehru, Parvati Devi, Candravati Lakhanpal, Rameswari Goyal, Vidyavati Seth, and more.

1.17
Guarding the Female Body: The Contagious Disease Act of 19th Century British India

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The Contagious Disease Act was a series of legislative measures enacted in 19th-century colonial India and later in England, Scotland, and Ireland. These acts aimed to combat sexually transmitted diseases, particularly syphilis and

gonorrhoea, by implementing mandatory medical examinations and treating women on the street. The rationale behind these acts was to protect the health of the military by preventing the spread of sexually transmitted infections. However, the act specifically targeted women involved in prostitution, largely ignoring the role of men in spreading the disease. The legislation faced opposition from various quarters, including women's rights activists, religious groups, and those concerned with civil liberties. In this article, an attempt has been made to see the impacts of these acts on the sex workers of colonial India and how they were received and experienced by the natives at the time, when the nation was undergoing its own reform movement. The several pieces of literature on guarding and controlling the female body have also been taken into account in order to show how the British government legitimized the act and what the nature of resistance against the act was among women.

1.18
The forgotten women freedom fighters in the Province of Bihar: Uncovering their Role, participation, and Contribution.

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This study attempts to shed light on unsung and underappreciated female independence warriors from the Bihar sub-province. The battle for independence from British colonial control in India is generally recognized, yet the historical record typically ignores or marginalizes the role and contributions of women in this historic movement. Our historiography is narrated with the gender discriminative view and we ignored those women who not only came up to fight with the colonial government but also raised their voice agent the social-domestic boundary. This research aims to fill up this gap by concentrating on the Bihar sub-province particularly and revealing the crucial roles played by women in the province throughout the battle for independence. This investigation reveals the tales of brave women who actively participated in many facets of the liberation

fight in Bihar via a thorough review of historical documents, memoirs, and interviews with relatives. These women actively participated in politics, defying traditional expectations. The study investigates the socio-political environment of Bihar during the freedom struggle and examines the elements that motivated women to come out of their domestic environment and join the movement. In order to question conventional gender stereotypes and fight for their country's independence, these women encountered difficulties and obstacles from both their families and society at large. The study also emphasizes the alliances and support systems formed by women liberation fighters, highlighting the value of teamwork in their endeavours. Women freedom fighters like Prabhavati Devi Narayan (from Siwan district and wife of Jaya Prakash Narayan), Raj Kumari Gupta (prominent part of the Quit India Movement of 1942), and Kalyani Das are some of the unsung names from pre-independent Bihar and Bengal. This project intends to challenge preexisting historiographical narratives and enlarge our knowledge of the liberation movement in Bihar by locating and preserving the experiences of these forgotten women freedom warriors.

1.19
Feminist Claims to Public Space in India: Reflections on Citizenship

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In this presentation I focus on the ways in which women's feminist claims to public space in the 21st Century have evolved. I reflect on the connections between women's claims to public space as citizens over the last two decades and the protests in December 2019 and January 2020 where women led movements against the Citizenship Amendment Act (2019) making visible public claims to a democratic citizenship. I also draw attention the protest against sexual harassment by Brij Bhushan Singh, Lok Sabha MP from the BJP by women wrestlers in 2023 and the particular politics of visibility that played out. Against these protests, I examine various feminist movements claiming public space in the last two

decades. I trace feminist claims such as the Blank Noise project, Pinjra Tod, Break the Curfew, Why Loiter, the murals of the Fearless Collective in thinking through how these claims draw on citizenship as the fulcrum around which to build a movement and politics. I suggest that women's claims to the public are both located in citizenship and contribute to making democratic claims to citizenship more visible and robust, particularly in contemporary times.

1.20
Locating the anti-colonial movement within the Telangana Armed Struggle: A study of intersecting and conflicting social movements

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In this paper I explore how the Telangana Armed Struggle (TAS) offers a lens to study varying intersecting and conflicting resistance movements. I specifically look at the ways in which the TAS occupies an interstitial position with respect to the anti-colonial nation building actions of the time. The TAS which took place broadly between 1946-1951 was primarily a peasant rebellion against the feudal zamindari system and the regime of the Nizam. In this paper, through my ethnographic and archival research, I explore how the TAS and the anti-colonial movement intersected and also clashed with each other. While members of the TAS were also a part of the "freedom struggle," the TAS in itself did not take a significant position against the colonial rule. For the TAS, the resistance to feudal systems through a Marxian class analysis was of significance. Much like gender and caste, even colonialism was seen as a fight for the post-revolution period. This paper explores this tension between the party line and that of individual members in the formation of the Indian nation-state. I do specifically by looking at the gendered aspect of it and understanding how the figure of the woman conflicted and complemented with each of these movements. A general reading of history would like us to believe that all movements of the time were against colonial rule. However, the TAS shows how the anti-colonial struggle was just one of the movements which existed and one which attempted to co-opt all other

existing struggles of the time. This becomes particularly pertinent in the context of the army's invasion of Hyderabad on the pretext of unifying the Indian nation-state – Operation Polo of 1948. This army attack however also was a mounted attack on the communist movement and brought the TAS to its knees. I offer through this paper, the ways in which the TAS serves as a counter-narrative to the unified nation building ideal.

1.21
Interrogating Modesty -
A curious case of the Supreme Court
and fractured idea of Modernity

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Assault or criminal force to woman with intent to outrage her modesty. —Whoever assaults or uses criminal force to any woman, intending to outrage or knowing it to be likely that he will thereby outrage her modesty, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to two years, or with fine, or with both.

• **Section 354, Indian Penal Code.**

Word, gesture or act intended to insult the modesty of a woman.—Whoever, intending to insult the modesty of any woman, utters any word, makes any sound or gesture, or exhibits any object, intending that such word or sound shall be heard, or that such gesture or object shall be seen, by such woman, or intrudes upon the privacy of such woman, shall be punished with simple imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year, or with fine, or with both.

• **Section 509, Indian Penal Code.**

Above mentioned provisions of Indian Penal Code juxtaposed and viewed in light of two landmark judgements i.e Tukaram v State of Maharashtra and R.D. Bajaj v K.P.S. Gill paved a way to understand the idea of 'woman' and the contours of modesty imposed upon her. They have a denominating effect on the perceived entity called, 'the issue of women' and 'women's movement' putting forth the

gendered paradigm of the women as a subject and what constitutes the idea of modernity for the women. They use the colonial framework i.e Indian Penal code in its post-colonial yet Indianised avatar of selective application of Victorian moralities. My paper thus shall trace the impact of Victorian modernity in the framing of post-colonial elitist modernity compounded by the idea of Bhadralok moralities negating the Chotolok epistemological experiences that go into the framing of selective essentialist and existentialist idea of woman depending upon their sociological location. These judgments lay bare the fissures within the perceived conceptualization of the category of 'modest women' and their succumbing to fragmented yet selective modernities. My analytical framework shall try to trace what hegemonic yet multiple patriarchal impositions are imposed on the category of women and also delineating the imposed hegemonic multiple constructs, and fissures in the idealization of 'ideal woman' and how it is portrayed as encompassing entire womanhood. Using the due process of these judgments my paper shall highlight the societal moralities and challenge the conceptualization of gendered women, a construct by tea and biscuit elitist yet polite society as stated by Partha Chatterjee. Using constructive critical yet qualitative analytical framework, I shall try to theorize the abstract yet a 'new social' by borrowing from tenets of Subaltern and Dalit feminism, a constitution of new Maitree that shall evolve into a new normal paving a way for a new 'subaltern-dalit' hyphenated new social. This Social shall strive for a new social democracy based on the Deweyian ideal of 'associated living' and Ambedkarite end of democratic mental disposition of society providing for Social democracy based on the gendered ideal of Sisterhood.

1.22
Founding (feminist) Moments: Imagi-Nation through Memoirs

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This paper will be concentrating on those women, who were part of the Constituent Assembly— there were fifteen of them, who played a key role in the shaping of the Indian Constitution. But among the fifteen, five wrote memoirs. Begum Qudsia Aizaz Rasul wrote From Purdah to Parliament: A Muslim Woman

in Indian Politics (2001), Durgabai Deshmukh wrote Chintaman and I (1981) Renuka Ray wrote My Reminiscences: Social Development during the Gandhian Era and After (1982), Sucheta Kripalani wrote An Unfinished Autobiography (1978) and Vijaylaxmi Pandit wrote The Scope of Happiness: A Personal Memoir (1979). While Dakshayani Velayudhan did not write an autobiography, but her daughter Meera Velayudhan, has extensively written about her mother and that will be included in this paper. All the other women have extensive written texts available including in vernacular languages, which will not be considered in this paper. While these are all clubbed together within the genre of memoirs, it maybe necessary to suggest that some are more about political ideologues, some about the prominent husband in politics and some about one's own political journey. These are very important figures in the history of nation building and constitution making in India, who have taken to memoir writing—not common among women political leaders of any generation or time. While these women were key players in the making of the Indian Constitution, they are writing their memoirs much later—it will be interesting to connect some arguments they made during the Constituent Assembly debates with what they are exploring in their memoirs. It will enable us to argue that in order to make feminist sociological sense of memoirs it is always important to connect with other forms of writings of the same women to get a more comprehensive narrative. Using the genre of memoir writing, this paper will explore the following: A) The contestation that these women expressed around the political imagination of India B) The description of continuities between the public and the private C) The imagination of (modern) women as citizens in a free nation It is important to note that while the memoirs mentioned above will form the core texts through which to explore the above mentioned contestations, reports like Women's Role in Planned Economy (1947) or the Abducted Persons (Recovery and Restoration) Act, 1949 will be intersecting texts to both contextualise as well as problematise the memoirs. While this paper will read memoirs and understand these women as constitutional actors, it intends to make concluding comments on the relevance of these writings in the contemporary moment for feminist politics.

1.23

Saree, Veil and Legal Rights: Historicizing the Indian women's movement walk towards right to suffrage 1917- 1920s

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In the year 1918, Delhi during the 33rd Session of Indian National Congress, Smt. Sarladevi Chaudharni supported the legal right to vote for Indian women in her remarkable speech "sphere' of women included comradeship with men in all spheres of life including politics''. The resolution, proposed by her was made with an intent to officially space women, in equal terms with men in the socio-political sphere of Indian society. Suffrage, or the basic right to vote, is a very important and empowering political right in the contemporary democratic scenario across the globe. The term Universal adult franchise, another common name for suffrage, a basic fundamental right in Indian constitution, gives all the individual's the equal right to vote and liberty. This privilege was rather granted to men, over women considering their degraded social status, making them scientifically and politically un-fit for important decisions like legislations and legality. The right to suffrage issue was taken up first by the west in 1870's, following mid-20th century in India, was a struggle for women's movement started prior to Independence. In India the claim to women's vote was undertaken within the framework of colonial legal and socio- religious reforms. The campaign later helped women to secure political and civil rights for all women in India, challenging constitutional and political reforms of 1919, 1935 and finally 1950 with attaining the legal right. The equal right to vote, culmination of prolonged history of women's movement and resistance, which didn't come easily, often forgotten and less pondered upon in history books, has been attempted to be re- traced in this paper. This paper is divided in three sections: Taking the first stage of the Indian suffrage movement, 1915's & 1917's. The first instance under the backdrop of examining the scenario of granting political rights to the Indian women ignored and denied during the Montague Chelmsford Reforms. The second part of the paper deals with the emphasized role of the women's organizations like Women's Indian Association (WIA) and 'Bharat Stree Mandal' and the associative women with it leading the

pertinent demand for equal women's franchise. Another important event during this phase was an all-women's delegation led by Smt.Sarojini Naidu, 1917 fourteen prominent women, to present the demand for British women's suffrage in the new Franchise Bill in London. These Indian women, clad in 'sarees' and 'veils' carrying the symbolic flag elephant, representing provincial India, selling votes, on the streets of London was captured. Indian women raised questions of the representational status accorded to the women in Britain, which in a way saw the kick start of women's public participation in Indian legislature for the coming years. The fruits of this struggle bore not only women's suffrage to be decided by provincial legislatures, but also partial voting rights to women in 1920's later as legislative candidates too. The paper also odes to some lost pioneers in Indian Suffragette movement like Millicent Fawcett, Annie Besant, Mrs. Sushama Sen, Mrs. H.A. Tata, Kamladevi Chaottopadhaya, Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy, Madam Bhikaji Cama, Lolita Roy, Cornelia Sorabji, Bhagmati BholaNauth, Ramdhulari Devi and Princess Sophia Duleep Singh and many unknown women.

1.24
Unveiling the Matrilineal Fabric: Property Rights and Gender Relations among Jaintia Women

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This research paper offers a comprehensive examination of gender relations within the Jaintia tribe of Meghalaya, with a specific focus on the nuanced aspects of property rights. The Jaintia society is distinguished by its enduring adherence to a matrilineal system governed by firmly established customary laws, albeit currently undergoing notable transformations influenced by diverse social and political factors. The intricate interplay between gender dynamics and the matrilineal structure, structured around clans, exhibits a mutually reinforcing association within the societal fabric. Property rights are intricately delineated within the matrilineal framework, ensuring the allocation of entitlements and responsibilities to both genders within the confines of exogamous clans. Traditional and contemporary administrative institutions assume a pivotal role in upholding and perpetuating the matrilineal structure, which encompasses the

safeguarding of property rights. The primary objective of this paper endeavor is to shed light on the fundamental elements underlying women's property rights in Jaintia society, encompassing manifold manifestations and variations, while critically examining the strategies employed to sustain these rights amidst the ongoing evolutionary dynamics of the society.

1.25

Forging New Paths: Revisiting the Urdu Popular Writers and Their Contribution in Shaping the Muslim Women's Imagination in 19th Century Colonial India

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The notion of respectability (Sharafat) and reform (Islah) became the highpoint feature of the Urdu literature produced in the colonial India. The Urdu periodicals, newspaper columns and the fictional writings played a significant role as proponent of the much-required reform in the Muslim society, however apart from that it also endeavored for recuperation of respectabilityof the Ashraf of the 19th century colonial India. A close look into the Urdu novels and journals written for targeted audience simply draws attention to its emphasis on making of Sharif (respectable) women and their education as its core concern.

This article examine some of the well-known Urdu works that address issues of education and the appropriate conduct for the respectable Muslim women and henceforth contributing to inculcate the notion of respectability among the Sharif women in Colonial India. The Urdu works that are under analysis are Mirat-al-Urus (The Bride's Mirror), Taubat-un-Nasooh (The Penitence of Nasooh), Sharif Beti (The Gentle Daughter), fewextracts from Urdu Journal Moallim-e-Niswan (1896) and other texts. Mirat-al-Urus and Taubat-un-Nasoohwere written by renowned author Nazir Ahmed who rose to an eminent position after publishing a number of Urdu books during colonial era. Muhammadi Begum who wrote

Sharif Beti popularly holds the distinction of being the first woman to have ever edited an Urdu magazine. While Moallim-e-Niswan was edited by Maulavi Muhib Hussain.

The writings of the era simply highlight how the notion of respectability (Sharafat) and reform (Islah) usurped a new position in the whole discourse and how it was instituted and addressed with a new zeal. However, apart from that the era also displayed a sense of class-consciousness and insecurity on part of Ashraf. 'The notion of Sharafat, as has been asserted by Lelyveld, was a matter of cultural style associated with the heritage of the Mughal court, in dress, manners, aesthetics, and above all, language and literature. Elaborate politeness formulas, familiarity with Persian and Urdu literary conventions, the art of elegant conversation, all of these marked a person as Sharif.' The phenomenon then simply played a predominant role in shaping Urdu writings, inculcating and strengthening the idea of values and respectability.

The essay, hence, tends to examine how Urdu texts and writings contributed to fashioning the notion of respectability (Sharafat) and its recuperation. It has also been tried to analyze the socio-political and cultural milieu of Indian Muslims during which these texts were produced. The essay also examines how the attempt was made to put the onus of new sensibilities and notion of respectability on the shoulders of women. The gendered angle of the responsibilities and accountabilities has also been tried to analyze in this paper through a study of the articles and advice manuals published in Urdu journals for the purpose of producing and nurturing Sharif girl and boy to be a part of respectable society.

1.26
Safeguarding women's legal rights:
A case study of two texts*

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The rising political consciousness among women in the first three decades of the twentieth century was evident in their relentless struggle for women's rights. An attempt has been made in this paper to analyse two significant texts in Marathi entitled Streeyanchya Hakkanchi Sudharana (1930) and Hindu- Vyavahardharma-

Shashtra (1931) which brought out a scathing criticism of the Hindu legal system. The author of these texts - Balutai Khare alias Vibhavari Shirurkar (1905-2001) -- a foremost feminist writer and K. N. Kelkar -- an expert lawyer, believed that the Hindu legal system was the root cause of the declining status of Indian women from ancient times. They alleged that Indian women were reduced to the most insignificant position by depriving them of all economic as well as legal rights. These works also lambasted the British legal system for further decaying the legal status of women in colonial period. The authors firmly championed the legal rights of Hindu women in terms of marriage, divorce, adoption and inheritance. The two works came out as staunch feminist critiques of the Indian legal system. The legal reforms advocated by them were also demanded later by Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar in the Hindu Code Bill. Eventually, Hindu women received many of these legal rights in the post-independent times. Nonetheless, it was an outcome of the unceasing efforts of the feminist movement in India of those times and of the staunch supporter of women's rights - Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar. In that sense, Vibhavari Shirurkar and K. N. Kelkar can be considered as one of the pioneers in creating public opinion suitable for women's legal rights. Vibhavari and Mr. Kelkar scrupulously pointed out that the changes brought in by the British rule in the Indian legal system were disastrous. British understanding of the judicial system in India was superficial and faulty. The British rulers undermined the importance of customs which for ages had remained the basis of Hindu laws. The two authors claimed that the British rulers brought some insignificant legal texts such as Dattakmimansa and Dattakchandrika to prominence. They ascertained that there was a plurality in the laws in India in terms of locality, region and caste in pre-British times. Many traditions received a serious setback after the advent of the British rule. Vibhavari and Mr. Kelkar firmly challenged the British construct of a monolithic 'Hindu' judicial system. It was a very commonly accepted notion till 1980s among the intellectuals in India that British rule was instrumental in bringing positive changes in the lives of Indian women by way of bringing few legal reforms. The post-colonial critique of the British rule in terms of legal reforms has sprung up in the last four decades. Nonetheless, Vibhavari and Mr. Kelkar expressed the limitations and lacunae in the judicial system initiated by the British rulers in India in a very clear-cut manner in the colonial times itself and this critique is certainly very novel, bold and significant.

'Sabarimala Temple is South India's Ayodhya': Women's Bodies and Temples as Sites of Contestation

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From a restricted area to a common place of worship, the State control over Hindu temples post-Independence changed the characteristics of religious space in India. Temple trusts and the State play major roles in the administration of temples. The engagement of Hindu Right-wing parties with the question of women's entry in religious spaces contributes towards the creation of a homogenized Hindu identity. By using the support from the court verdicts, the Sangh Parivar in Kerala ideologically reinforced the meaning of Hindu as a temple going theist. A number of key developments beginning with the growth of Hindu nationalism in the early 1990s shape contemporary discussions of the interrelation of gender, religion and religious space in India. One needs to constantly unpack what it means to be a Hindu believing woman in this moment or what significance a religious space holds and how state and law come together to shape and homogenise the categories of woman and religious space.

In this research paper, I engage with the reception of the landmark Supreme Court verdict (2018) on Sabarimala by the regional and national Hindu right-wing organisations. The verdict ruled that women of all age groups could enter the Ayyappa Temple in Sabarimala, Kerala and was followed by hyper-masculine Hindutva protests and violence when the temple was opened in the Malayalam month of Thulam in 2018. In the aftermath of the verdict, media persons were attacked and a few women who attempted to undertake the Sabarimala pilgrimage were threatened and attacked and their homes and vehicles vandalised. The regional media in Kerala and the national media redefined the idea of who is a true Hindu and a unified Hindu culture with Sabarimala at the center of these debates. Vishwa Hindu Parishad has time and again asserted that Sabarimala is South India's Ayodhya and has asked for a different kind of 'Karseva' by women devotees in this religious space. Now, it's interesting to look at who is the other in this religious space and how women devotees are being pitted against one another.

Concomitantly, the popular Hindu nationalist discourse redefined the category of Hindu believing woman. My primary source in this chapter is a set of above seventy Malayalam newspaper reports published in Malayalam Manorama, Mathrubhumi, Janmbhumi and shows run by Janam TV in Kerala. I also engage with the notices published by the Nair Service Society (NSS) and Ayyappa Dharma Sena.

In the recent years, Hindutva's cultural politics has been reshaping the question of temple entry, temple protection and moving towards a new edition of temple reinvention and re-centralisation. The segregation of women plays an important role in the remaking of the religious space in contemporary India.

Sub-theme **2**

Women's dislocations and livelihood struggles: Pandemic and Post pandemic Contexts

2.1
(Un) Veiling Agency of Women: Art and Science of managing livelihood strategies in emergency.

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This paper analyses on the question of 'agency' of women against buzz-words like women empowerment 'most visible during the yearly celebration of International Women's Day', thereby, illuminating its subsequent invisibilization in terms of contextualized reality enmeshed within historical specificity of the region. Mediated through artwork of Mithila painting and its exposure to market economy of 90s driven by epidemic crisis of the region an attempt has been made to foreground role of women in coping risks and vulnerabilities particularly during emergency situation. Analogically, the paper sought to draw insight into contemporary emergency situation wherein pandemic crisis has made intrusion in livelihood crisis to a massive extent. The detrimental role of women in managing livelihood strategies which gets invisibilized in discussion, discourse and public-realm in general has been the concern of this paper. Taking artwork as reflective framework to draw similar tendencies of struggle in emergency times of pandemic inflicted with multilayered catastrophes like stringent COVID-19 protocols, reverse migration, homelessness, unemployment, poverty, ecological disasters etc. of a 'social-field' requires a nuanced inquiry to explicate role of women as bearers of multi-layered crisis situated within a peculiar spatio-temporal location. A perspectival Marxist question of how different groups placed within a hierarchical social location gets impacted differently holds relevance in

the paper. Where are women located in this spectrum of vulnerability during crisis, wherein, the idea ought to debunk gendered nature of reality, thereby, invisibilizing their significant role in livelihood management. How does such macro-events of emergency impact 'selfhood' of women rendering them as active agents during a catastrophe? While artwork has immense functional value for market and formal economy, the attention requires focal ground on who are the artists? Ostensibly, the least discussed matter in this regard would be the purportedly invisibilized role of women in production, depiction of its material and heritage as a trans-local entity, owing to agency in folk-art as site of self-reflexivity. In a similar fashion, delving into the critical situation of pandemic times womenfolk stand out as the sole bearers of resource crisis and their role in evolving livelihood strategies with regional specificity demands space in the public realm of discussion, deliberation, theorization and discourse making. This paper draws primary data from field visit and interview with the shop-dwellers at Dilli-haat INA and secondary sources like newspaper, journals, government archives and scholarly writings.

Key-Words: Agency, Invisibilization, Livelihood Strategy, Artwork, Emergency.

2.2
COVID-19 Pandemic: Increasing Women's Struggle in Employment with Special Reference to Marginalised Women

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This study looks at how the COVID-19 epidemic has affected women's employment, with an emphasis on underrepresented or female workers in the developing cities. The study demonstrates how the pandemic has made already existing gender disparities in the workforce worse, creating new difficulties for women in obtaining career chances, job security, and financial stability.

The study uses a qualitative approach to analyse previous research, reports, and case studies in order to examine the difficulties faced by underrepresented women or women workers during the epidemic. The effects of these battles on women's wellbeing, their families, and society at large are also covered. In light of the COVID-19 crisis, the research intends to highlight the urgent need for gender-responsive policies and support structures to meet the particular needs and vulnerabilities of marginalized women or women workers.

This research paper contributes to understanding the gendered components of the crisis and the urgent need for specific responses by examining the effects of the COVID-19 epidemic on women's employment, with an emphasis on marginalized women or women workers. It offers policymakers, businesses, and stakeholders' information and suggestions on how to overcome the difficulties women experience in the workforce, advance gender equality, and create more inclusive and robust economies in a post-pandemic world.

Keywords- Covid-19 pandemic, Women's Struggle, Unemployment, Marginalised women, Gender Inequalities

2.3
The Pandemic and After: Gendered Vulnerability of Migrant Worker Families in Odisha

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The COVID-19 pandemic has varied impacts on the lives and livelihoods of people cutting-across society. Based on field-based qualitative research, this paper highlights the gendered experiences of the pandemic in Odisha, mainly focusing on the vulnerabilities of women migrant workers and their families. During September-December, 2021, in-depth interviews were conducted with inter-state migrant women from Odisha in Delhi and intra-state migrant women in Bhubaneswar identified through snow-ball sampling. This was supplemented by telephonic interviews conducted with women migrants in their places of origin and interviews with left-behind women in two villages of the Jajpur district in Odisha.

The findings of the study suggest that while the majority of migrant workers faced a drastic loss of employment, earnings and savings, women migrant workers found it difficult to regain their lost employment. Women in migrant workers' families were central to the survival and coping mechanisms adopted at the household level. Women tried to supplement household finance by picking-up new jobs, cutting down consumption, and borrowing money.

Migrant women, irrespective of their occupational status, faced heavy work burdens during the lockdown. Increased hours of work, stress, additional care work, care of the sick and conflict within the family meant significant physical and mental stress for the women. Many of the migrant families faced severe financial problems because of ill health- leading to indebtedness, and its impact on the household economy is being felt even after many months. The children's education got disrupted, and in some cases, it meant additional expenditure. Women's earnings maintained many migrant families. Women's earnings were critical for household survival. Women's ornaments were sold or mortgaged first as it was more convenient than land and other assets.

A study of the coping strategies adopted during and after the pandemic suggests that food was an important issue, and three crucial survival strategies were reported (i) dependence on PDS and Anganwadi at origin and later at destinations; (ii) reliance on self-cultivated food, either through direct participation or through claiming a share from family (iii) reliance on donations, gifts by NGOs and religious organisations. Another significant finding of the study is that both intra and inter-state migrants owning houses were less vulnerable than those who lived in rented establishments. Access to house ownership was pivotal in having access to state and non-state institutions and social networks.

The stayed-behind women in the origin villages were deeply aware of the increased difficulty of finding work in the destinations. Reduced and uncertain remittances have meant a new level of difficulties in maintaining pre-pandemic living standards. While women are trying to cope with this loss by searching for work and earnings opportunities, few jobs are available in the local area.

This paper argues that focusing on the gendered nature of the crisis and coping strategies provides a nuanced understanding of the pandemic-induced vulnerabilities.

Keywords- Migrant women workers, Interstate Migration, Intra-state Migration, Pandemic, Livelihood

2.4

After Forced Lockdown:
Story of Semi-Skilled Women Assistants
in Beauty Parlours and Unisex Salons
in Semi-Urban Communities of
Pune City after Covid-19.

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This paper examines the struggles faced by semi-skilled women assistants employed in beauty parlours and unisex salons in semi-urban communities of Pune City following a series of lockdowns imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath. This paper aims to critically examine the struggle of these women employing a feminist lens and incorporating perspectives from labour studies, India's female labour force participation rate (LFPR) is often low and stagnated as data from the survey shows. 29.4% of women (aged 15-59) were part of India's labour force. In post Pandemic period it has fallen. (PLFS July 2021-June 2022)

The COVID-19 pandemic and the ensuing lockdowns had profound effects on various sectors, particularly the beauty and salon industry. In this study, we aim to focus on the experiences of semi-skilled women assistants, who comprise a significant part of the workforce in this sector.

Alternate opportunities in the gig economy have become the buzzword and are often suggested as a remedy to cope with the crisis and recover from the economic setbacks caused by the pandemic. In reality, traditional work usually has a long-term employer-employee relationship, where the worker earns a salary or a wage payment, receives certain benefits, and in rare instances, it might be covered under minimum wage and anti-discriminatory laws.

We aim to examine the status of semi-skilled women workers from beauty parlours working in tier two or tier three levels as general duty assistants. We will try to argue by examining the case of a semi-skilled worker in the beauty and wellness industry from the Dhayari-Nerhe the semi-urban community on the outskirts of Pune city. Through qualitative interviews and quantitative analysis, we aim to illuminate the challenges faced by these women.

The findings of this study may highlight that the series of lockdowns resulted in unparalleled hardships for semi-skilled women assistants in beauty parlours and unisex salons. The closures and restrictions placed on these establishments led to job insecurity, loss of income, and financial vulnerability for these women. Many of them faced temporary layoffs or experienced reduced working hours, exacerbating their economic precarity. We aim to map the gendered dimensions of the pandemic's impact on these women.

Keywords- Semi-skilled women assistance, Beauty parlour, Layoff, pandemic, economic precarity

2.5
ASHA Workers -What we do not know about them? - A Case Study from Kerala

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Community engagement is not limited to outbreaks or pandemics, but it is essential in strengthening various other aspects of the healthcare system and availing services. Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA) are a part of community health workers acting as agents between the community and the public health care system. They are frontline health workers who work at the grassroots level for the improvement of the health care system of India and direct impact on the sustainable development goals. Though ASHA workers are married, divorced or widowed women from different backgrounds, existing literature has little attention paid to the gendered nature of their work and policies regarding this. Moreover, the intersections in their life and work should be explored.

This paper highlights the experiences and challenges ASHA workers face and their strategies to cope with their work and personal life. This study analyses their work from the perspective of care and gender, where the care aspect of ASHA work is a significant part of their work. Gendered nature of their work and the implications of gender norms on the care work are also highlighted in the paper. The notion of caregiving as non-productive and unnecessary, the systemic inequality of women's work is explored in the study.

The study used unstructured qualitative interviews with 5 ASHA workers, aged between 45-50, with the experience of 13 years from the district of Thrissur, Kerala. Each interviews lasted 1-1.30 hours. Interviews were conducted in the month of May-July 2023 in post covid scenario. Responses were analyzed using multiple case study method.

Results show the irregularity in getting the honorarium, less amount of honorarium compared to an average of 6-7 hours of work per day, issues with supervisors and authorities, problems with the availability of washrooms and other facilities, the double burden of managing both home and work, having more than the prescribed work, containing more than 1000 populated wards, burnout, lack of social security. This paper brings out that ASHA workers from minority background experience these issues differently and with more intensity. Since the frontline health workers are directly involved with the people and the community, their training, incentives and other facilities will influence their work.

Keywords- Community health workers, ASHA workers, Caregivers, Healthcare, Double burden

2.6
Mitigating the Impact of Covid-19 on period Poverty among the Interstate Unskilled migrant women labourers in Kerala

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Period poverty is a significant issue that affects women, transgender and gender nonconforming people, the homeless, people who work in the unorganized sector, and others who are already at a disadvantage. Few researchers have examined how women in informal settlements manage their daily menstrual cycles. According to a study published in The Palgrave Handbook of Critical Menstruation Studies (Vora, 2020), homeless women who were interviewed reported their periods as

"emotional" and "painful" and linked it to poor mental health. In this context, the present study mainly looked at how the COVID-19 pandemic made "period poverty" worse for interstate unskilled migrant women laborers living in urban slum settlements. This research was based on in-depth interviews with migrant women in urban slums in Kerala, India. Findings from the research are organized into four themes: 1) Perceptions of menstruation, 2) Inadequate access to resources, 3) Pandemic challenges, and 4) Potential Solutions. As a result of the findings, factors in the social environment, such as the stigma of menstruation and social and gender inequality, as well as resource limitations, such as lack of water, sanitation, disposal facilities, and waste management, have an impact on menstrual management, which affects the physical environment as well.

Keywords: COVID-19, Period poverty, Interstate labour migration, Unskilled migrant women, Urban slums, Kerala

2.7
"We Are Not in the Same Boat": A Feminist Understanding of Malayali Nurses' Lives During the COVID-19

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The global feminist discussions during COVID-19 highlighted how the existing gender inequalities were exacerbated through increased incidences of domestic violence. Reports from South Asia showed how the pandemic increased existing work burden of women at home. Women, especially those who were based in informal or contractual occupations experienced job loss. However, the pandemic has affected the lives of women 'differently' and this can be captured only by exploring women's lives through their varied positionalities.

In the case of women healthcare providers, the pandemic heightened their work burden. India, with its poor healthcare infrastructure was highly depended on trained healthcare providers such as doctors, nurses, and ASHA workers to

survive the pandemic. The World Health Organization (WHO) has acknowledged the vital role that Indian nurses play in the fight against the virus and has urged the country to invest in the nursing sector to ensure that everyone has access to quality healthcare. Yet, scant literature is available to understand how COVID-19 impacted the lives of women healthcare providers.

Despite being professionally qualitied, nurses in India experience inequities in wages and are not often treated well in their workspaces. Even after a massive strike organized by them in South Indian state Kerala in 2012 for better wages and equal treatment, and subsequent constitution of Balaraman Committee by the state government to look into the issues, significant improvement was not achieved in their pay scale and working conditions.

Drawing feminist debates on South Asian women's work during the pandemic, this paper delves into the everyday of Malayali nurses working in private hospitals during the pandemic. In-depth interviews were conducted with nurses who were selected through purposive sampling. This study analyses how the pandemic has impacted the professional and personal lives of nurses from Kerala. It aims to understand the major shifts in the familial and gender roles, specifically, motherhood experience of female nurses at home and society and the attitude of public towards their work. The study also explores the response and support from various stakeholders including the state and workplace to provide safe and secured work conditions.

The pandemic has redefined their familial and gender relations. Also, during this period, the over burden of work, has affected their mental health as well. By taking advantage of the situation, their labour was exploited without providing adequate salaries and proper working conditions. Apart from the glorification by the media and the state, nurses from the private sector have a different story to share.

Key Words: COVID-19, Nurses, Kerala, Gender roles, Global pandemic, Private hospitals

2.8

Intersectional Experiences and Livelihood Struggles of Paid Domestic Workers in India

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Women from marginalised sections have very limited livelihood options, especially in rural areas. They either work in agricultural fields, small factories or as domestic workers. The wages they get paid doing these informal labours are insufficient for survival. In addition to this, they also face caste, class, religious and gender discrimination at their workplace. This forces many women to migrate to cities. Even after relocating to urban spaces for better livelihood and working conditions, these women find themselves entangled in the same web of hierarchy, stigma, and subjugation.

One of the most vulnerable and least protected groups of women in the unorganised sector are the paid domestic workers. Despite being a significant part of the informal economy, paid domestic work is often invisibilized, perhaps because it is primarily performed by women and inside the domestic sphere. Since the private household is not considered a workspace by conventional norms and is not governed by several labour laws, paid domestic work is the most unregulated, informal, and unorganised labour, due to which paid domestic workers are highly vulnerable to exploitation, harassment, and extreme forms of abuse.

Paid domestic work in India is characterised by gender, caste, and class hierarchies. It is the lower caste, poor, migrant women who carry the burden of domestic labour in India. Historically, servants and enslaved people have performed domestic labour in India. Domestic labour becoming waged work is a recent phenomenon. Even today, domestic labour is not considered work, and the legacies of caste and slavery fundamentally structure the nature and practice of paid domestic work in India. There also exists caste-based stratification and hierarchy within domestic work.

During the covid-19 pandemic, domestic workers were among the most adversely affected groups. They not only suffered job loss, but many of them who were migrants had to return to their villages with no livelihood. They suffered poverty,

increased stigmatization, social exclusion, and discrimination. Post-pandemic, their conditions have not improved much.

This paper will attempt to study the nature and organisation of paid domestic work in India from an intersectional perspective. Based on primary research conducted with domestic workers during the pandemic and post-pandemic periods from two different sites (Chandauli district of Uttar Pradesh and New Delhi), one being rural and the other being urban, this paper argues that caste, class, gender, and religious identities shape the organization of paid domestic work in India. There is not only a division of labour but also a division of labourers within domestic work. There is hierarchical stratification of occupations within domestic work, and domestic workers are graded one above the other based on their caste.

Keywords: domestic labour, paid domestic worker, caste, gender

2.9
Work from Home or Long-term Social Quarantine? Gendered Implications of Work from Home in the Post-Pandemic Times

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In the post-pandemic era, mandatory work from home (WFH) has emerged as a prevalent mode of work, particularly among IT professionals. Popular narratives label WFH in the IT sector as a feature of flexibility. However, in the Indian context, where intersections of caste, class and patriarchy operate in a specific way, my fieldwork accounts which have been done in the IT parks of Kerala, a South Indian state, reveal a different picture.

The paper attempts to unravel the interplay of neoliberalism and patriarchal power structure when the workspace is extended to the home. The paper argues that the neo-liberal workspace 'intrudes' into women's lives through WFH and brings about changes in their everydayness and gender relations. Further, the study argues that the implications of WFH are gendered, and WFH is found to be curtailing the hitherto progress made by women in terms of mobility and access

to the public in a society where work is one of the limited ways for women to come out of their homes and when WFH is made a norm, women are pushed back to the premises of homes.

The paper uses the Bourdieusian framework of capital to understand work. Also, insights from the works of Denis Kandiyoti and Kumkum Sangari on everyday patriarchal bargains were significant to the paper. The paper relies on in-depth fieldwork conducted virtually between August 2020 and March 2022, i.e., during and after the pandemic. It captures the lived experiences of women professionals from the IT parks of Kerala, India, considering the intersections of caste, class and motherhood.

Keywords: Negotiation, Work from home, Pandemic, Everydayness, Power, Kerala.

2.10
Covid-19 crisis and the inclusion of circular-migrants: The continued invisibilizations at the intersections of caste, class and gender

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Policy and Development Advisory Group

In the South Asian context, especially in India, a spatio-temporally organized scalar politics of migration has invisibilized the 'peripheral and contingent movements of marginalized populations' within national borders. The COVID-19 induced pandemic and ensuing nationwide lockdown exposed the particular precarities of internal migrants, especially the circular-migrant-labourers. Subsequently, the imperatives of the modern developmental-state and the initiatives of rights-based activism converged to push for the recognition of rights of these migrant-labourers. However, existing sources of data provide limited insights on the gendered composition of internal migrants in India thus, undercounting the incidence of migration among female participants, especially for work. Though feminist interventions have tried to correct the data bias, they have not been able to adequately challenge the normative understanding of a migrant-laborer, especially circular-migrants, which derives from a relatively privileged male experience. Consequently, the (male)-normative understanding through which

the nation-state seeks to institutionally recognize and support internal migration continues to result in the exclusion of women circular-migrants.

Findings from a state-wide study of internal-migration in Jharkhand (Jharkhand Migration Study), suggests that the female circular-migrants often belong to the most marginalized sections of the society in terms of caste/ethnicity and class status. Limited land holdings, insufficient irrigation facilities, absence of market linkages, inadequate proceeds from NTFP and declining yields due to climate change among other factors contribute to the financial difficulties faced by such households. In the absence of market relevant cultural, educational and social capital it induces precarious circular-migration as a coping strategy. While men from such families migrate to longer distances and for longer durations in search of relatively better opportunities, women owing to their responsibilities of socially reproducing their families and concerns around gendered respectability cannot afford to undertake such migration. Only when it becomes inevitable women undertake migration, usually working as agricultural/plantation labourers, brick-kiln workers, domestic workers or as di-urnal migrants to nearby cities as daily wage earners. The contingent nature of their migration has a significant impact on their labour-market outcomes, when compared to consistent patterns of migration among men. Moreover, in these instances, women migrate for shorter spans (ranging from every day to a few weeks) and for shorter distances as compared to male migrants. Only in the case of domestic work the period of migration is considerably longer (one year or more on an average).

The male-centric definition and recognition of migration in policy discourse, especially in terms of temporal duration, however, excludes these circular movements of women restricting their access to state-service-delivery. Additionally, the experience of exploitation in such engagements has a gendered nature deriving from an essentialized understanding of femininity and labour, such as surveillance & violation of work contract in the case of domestic work and lower wages & threats of sexual exploitation in other cases. These aspects are not addressed adequately by a policy discourse that is based on an unidimensional articulation of precarities faced by circular-migrants.

The intersectional systems of caste, class, ethnicity and gender thus, come together to perpetrate structural violence against women circular-migrants. On one hand, it triggers most precarious forms of migrant labouring among a significant section of women participants and on the other hand, it structurally excludes them from accessing social security measures that can provide minimum protection against such precarity.

Keywords- Women circular migration, social security, structural violence, pandemic

2.11
Plight of Women and Girl Domestic Workers during Covid-19 Pandemic: A Comparative Study on Nagaland and Meghalaya

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The Covid-19 pandemic has severely affected many livelihoods and the global economy in general. There is a need to acknowledge the differential impact of Covid-19 pandemic on society. One such impact can be seen on domestic workers, who are often left out of the discourse even when talking about the informal sector. The Covid-19 crisis has exposed the risk and susceptibility of domestic workers, especially women and girl domestic workers in the unorganised and informal sectors. Though the effects and risks faced by the women and girl domestic workers are not always immediately visible, studies show that crisis with high economic impact worsen the risk factors of domestic workers and are likely to increase its prevalence. Economic stress on families during a crisis pose a serious threat to women and girls, and expose them to increased risk. Women and girls facing severe economic shocks are most likely to take on high-risk work for the survival of their families. They take on more responsibilities, taking longer hours in domestic and care duties in the hope to earn for their families. Domestic workers are usually categorised under unorganised and informal sectors, which are not constitutionally guaranteed. Another major problem faced by the domestic workers is that the nature of their work is not recognised as work by the State. With strict levels of lockdown being imposed, domestic workers were unable to go to work. Because of this reason, many of them were laid off by their employers leaving them with no means to earn their livelihood. These domestic workers are rendered jobless, without financial and social security. The present paper will present a comparative study on the plight faced by women and girl domestic workers in Nagaland and Meghalaya during the Covid-19 pandemic. The paper will focus on the one major differentiation in between domestic workers that is, those who live in the homes of their employers (live-in domestic helpers) and those who don't (live-out domestic workers). The study will also emphasise on the

status of girl domestic workers besides women domestic worker, as in Nagaland and Meghalaya most of the live-in female domestic workers are migrant girls who are below the age of 18 years. The paper will also study the coping mechanisms of domestic workers during the pandemic. Many were kept at a distance by their employers for fear of infection and were laid off. Lack of financial aid from the government during the lockdown had burdened domestic workers with fighting for survival.

Key Words: domestic workers, unorganised sector, economic challenges, coping mechanisms.

2.12
Exploring the Impact of Pandemic on the Livelihood of Women Vegetable Vendors in Ranchi

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The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on various aspects of society, including the economic activities of marginalized groups, and women vegetable vendors who form an important segment have confronted additional challenges due to gender bias. This study aims to explore the effect of the pandemic on women vegetable vendors in Ranchi city, specifically focussing on changes in their livelihoods, income, and overall well-being.

A sample of 150 women vegetable vendors, who actively sold vegetables before and after the pandemic, was randomly selected from three major weekly markets: Morabadi, Kanke, and HEC. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the selected vendors to obtain insights into their experiences during the pandemic. The interviews covered various aspects, including changes in market dynamics, challenges faced, coping strategies adopted, and changes in income and livelihoods. Additionally, direct observations were made at the weekly markets to understand the physical arrangements, customer interactions, and overall market conditions. The study employed a mixed approach, thematic analysis of qualitative data obtained from interviews and observations, complemented by appropriate statistical tools for quantitative analysis.

The majority of the women vendors were middle-aged married women, ranging from 36 to 55 years. Despite their limited or no formal education, these women exhibited remarkable expertise in the vending business, with an average experience of over 20 years. Most of these women procured the vegetables from the local market. A significant majority belonged to the Sahu Community and were the sole providers for their families. Only a small number of vendors received support from their husbands, who were also involved in the vegetable selling activity.

The study revealed how the pandemic disproportionately affected women vegetable vendors, forcing them to stay at home for unpaid childcare and increased domestic workload, hindering their vending activities. In contrast, men from similar backgrounds continued working with safety adjustments. This observation highlights the pervasiveness of gender bias in society and how it becomes even more pronounced during times of crisis.

Post pandemic, women vendors faced a decline in market share due to the emergence of new vendors and fall in demand due to the rise of online vegetable retailers like Big Basket. As a result, recovering costs became a struggle, let alone making profits. To prevent spoilage, unsold vegetables were sold at significantly reduced prices during the late evening hours. The post-COVID period witnessed a substantial price spread in the market.

The study also highlighted persistent issues faced by women vendors, including harassment from local authorities. Vendors struggled to secure suitable vending places and often had to make underhand payment ("vasooli") to do so, further straining their limited resources. Additionally, the lack of basic amenities, such as access to toilets, remained a concern.

These findings emphasize the need for policy interventions and support systems to ensure sustainable livelihoods for marginalized women and their families.

Keywords: Women Vegetable Vendors, Pandemic, Gender Bias, Livelihood

2.13
An empirical study on the livelihood of women vendors in Balat-Dalura Border-Haat between India and Bangladesh during the Covid-19 Pandemic

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India and Bangladesh had a very cordial relationship after the independence of Bangladesh. However, the fencing process of both countries created artificial barriers among people, which pass through villages, communities, and settlements. Many existing connections between the tribes of Meghalaya and the Bengalis of Bangladesh were simply disconnected, while Meghalaya's borderland became even more isolated, affecting the livelihoods of women as the new boundary severely impacted commercial centers and local markets, disrupting the livelihoods of locals, specifically women. The government has lacked the commitment to address infrastructural problems. To escape being marginalized, the border inhabitants need others from beyond the border, especially regarding daily commodities.

Therefore, a decisive step taken by the governments of India and Bangladesh to formalize Border-Haats after many decades was later marked by the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding in New Delhi on 23 October 2010. Till now, five Border-Haats have been operationalized between India and Bangladesh. Balat, Kalaichar, and Bholaganj at the Meghalaya-Bangladesh border, and Kamlasagar and Srinagar at the Tripura-Bangladesh border. Balat-Dalura Border-Haat takes place once a week at certain specified points on zero lines of the India-Bangladesh border to allow people residing within the premise of 5km of the border of both countries to trade with each other.

The paper will reveal women-specific participation rates in the Balat-Dalura Border-Haat. This determinant of livelihood is a good conduit for women to engage in cross-border trade, with the potential to provide a livelihood to local women in remote border areas. Structural inequalities enforced women in the region and do not have access to adequate financial literacy, banking, and microfinance procedures. It is worth noting here that Balat-Dalura Border-Haat promotes the highest number of women vendors among the other Border-Haats. The remaining Border-Haats of the India-Bangladesh border are witnessing a

decline in women's participation. Despite their lower earnings, women vendors appreciate the livelihood opportunities offered by the Border-Haat, given the limited job opportunities for women. It has been reported that there are deep insights into overlapping challenges and barriers women face as vendors at Border-Haats.

The pandemic has worsened the existing condition of women vendors and left them unheard in the labor force. The fieldwork was carried out in Balat-Dalura in October 2022 and June 2023, and this post-pandemic study has revealed that women vendors of Balat-Dalura were severely affected. They were not even able to migrate to cities for their livelihood as they were overwrought by the lack of resources. Besides livelihood, security threats, people-to-people micro trade, entrepreneurship of women vendors, and most importantly, women getting a chance to become independent have been severely impacted due to covid havoc. It has been reported that many women vending was inoperable during the lockdown, and even post-opening of the Border Haat, they could not get the vendor-ship.

Keywords: Border-Haat, Women vendor, Covid-19, Livelihood, Lockdown, Structural Inequalities

2.14
Women's livelihood struggle in pandemic and post pandemic context: with reference to women street vendors

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The COVID-19 pandemic has had severe global repercussions, and among the hardest hit are the street vendors in Vijayapur. These vendors, lacking the necessary skills and resources, have struggled to overcome the challenges brought about by the crisis. In this research, we investigate the economic hardships faced by Vijayapura's street vendors during the pandemic, as well as their strategies for coping and mitigating the adverse effects. To conduct our study, we employed a mixed-methods approach. A survey questionnaire was completed by 91 women

vendors, and an additional 15 women vendors participated in interviews. The findings revealed a significant decline in business and consumption among these vendors. Immigrant vendors were particularly affected, experiencing more pronounced negative impacts compared to their local counterparts. Furthermore, street vendors operating in wet market areas faced greater economic burdens than those situated near schools or recreation centers. It was evident that the street vendors lacked effective coping strategies to sustain their businesses. However, they resorted to various mitigation mechanisms to ensure essential consumption. This study emphasizes the urgent need for urban social policies that can provide support to this vulnerable group during a pandemic. We also discuss the policy implications for cities and economic development, with a specific focus on the plight of street vendors in Vijayapur.

Keywords: women street vendors, livelihood, pandemic covid-19

2.15
Reflections on the everyday lives of the domestic workers in Guwahati, Assam during Covid-19

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Indian households are seen as a workspace for a certain section of people in the society who are identified as 'domestic workers'. This sector of work has been categorised as informal employment by International Labour Organisation (ILO) as this group rarely have access to rights and protection. The everyday life of the people engaged in this work sector comprises of many hurdles ranging from social to economic problems. From 2019 onwards, with covid-19 the pandemic situation all over the world had impacted the workers from informal sector in severe manner. This article is an attempt to understand the workspace dynamics of the domestic workers in Guwahati city of Assam during and after the time of Covid-19. The attempt is to analyse the lived experiences of the domestic workers in terms of the social acceptance, fear and stigma related to covid protocols. For the domestic workers, covid-19 has intensified the uncertainty hardwired into their work, their living spaces and their everyday lives. The article reflects on the nuances from the everyday life of the domestic workers which expresses the

ingrained stigma from not only covid-19 but also from the existing structures of inequality in the society such as class, caste, gender. The differential positions of the domestic workers posted them with discrepancies leading to economic and social problems.

Keywords: Domestic workers, lived experience, fear and stigma, covid-19

2.16

Assessing the Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic and Experiences of Women Workers in the Handloom and Power loom Industry

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Weaving is predominantly a rural occupation, and it is the second-largest economy and employment generator, followed by agriculture in India. Approximately 95% of the hand-loom and power-loom sector in India is unorganised in nature. As the weaving sector in rural areas is predominantly home-based; there is a lot of participation from women in the weaving industry. Even if women are not weaving, they will be part of the allied workforce since it involves the entire family. According to the Handloom Census 2019-2020, out of the total no. of allied workers, 70% are women; even after being the dominant workforce in the allied sector, their contribution goes invisible and unrecognized. The handloom and power-loom sectors play a vital role in the livelihoods of women workers, providing them with opportunities to work in their family business or to work from home as contractual labourers.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a substantial effect on numerous industries, including the handloom and powerloom sectors. The COVID-19 pandemic presented a unique situation in the handloom and power loom sector in which some women workers were negatively impacted by the economic downturn and faced economic hardship as a result of the pandemic, while others experienced an increase in their work as demand for their products (particularly '*gumcha*', which was in high demand in the market at the time) became essential commodities during the crisis.

This research proposal intends to assess the impact of the pandemic on handloom and powerloom women workers, identify the factors that contribute to their different experiences, and address the disparities between these women workers. The objective of the research will be to evaluate the economic and social impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on handloom and power-loom women workers in their family businesses and as contractual workers and to identify the factors contributing to the divergent experiences of women workers during the pandemic, including opportunities to work in the textile business.

The data will be collected through interviews using a random sampling method. The study will be conducted in Ambedkar Nagar district, Uttar Pradesh, where the weaving industry is the primary source of income.

This research proposal aims to generate valuable insights into the experiences of handloom and power-loom sector women workers during the COVID-1!9 pandemic, shedding light on the factors that contributed to their differential outcomes. The expected outcome of the research includes a comprehensive understanding of the economic and social impact of the pandemic on handloom and power-loom women workers and the identification of key factors that influenced divergent experiences, including opportunities to work in the handloom and power-loom sector.

Keywords: Women Worker, Covid-19 Pandemic, Handloom-Powerloom Sector, Work experience

2.17
The changing nature of precarity post-pandemic: Incomes and livelihoods of leather homeworkers in Ambur, Tamil Nadu

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According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), informal employment accounts for more than 90 per cent of total employment in more than half of low-income countries. Characterised by lack of income and social security, informal

employment is more precarious for women, who are engaged in low-paying and vulnerable occupations such as unpaid workers in agriculture and family enterprises, domestic workers and homebased workers etc. Recent studies show that Covid-19 and the associated lockdowns have added to these pre-existing economic vulnerabilities of informal workers and continues to do so. This article focuses on a particular kind of informal worker: the homeworkers, a sub-set of homebased workers. Homeworkers are over-represented by women. They are located at the bottom end of Global Value Chains (GVC), earning piece-rates for adding value to a large range of products and services, for domestic and international markets. This article focuses on unorganized homeworkers at the heart of the leather industrial cluster at Ambur, Tamil Nadu in Southern India, where women are engaged in stitching uppers of leather footwearshoes and chappals- by hand in their 'homes'. In a context where the place of work is their 'home', where paid and unpaid work confluence, the paper studies the effects of Covid-19 on both their personal and professional lives. Based on qualitative data collected through indepth interviews from 58 households in Ambur, this article finds that homeworking is an important part of the livelihood portfolio of the household, contributing significantly to the income and funding expenditure of the household. The income a homeworking woman earns in a day is subjected to the fluctuations of the season affecting the number of pairs she can stitch while performing both paid and unpaid work at their homes. Lack of demand from international leather footwear importers during Covid-19 resulted in the temporary (some permanent) closure of leather manufacturing factories and job-work units; the factories and units that both the men and women of Ambur depended on. The men who worked in factories were robbed off their jobs, the women homeworkers did not get any supply of uppers from the contractors, thereby earning zero incomes during the pandemic. In order to cope with this crisis, homeworking women resorted to exhausting their pre-existing limited savings from upper stitching, mortgaged their jewellery and small assets and availed both formal and informal loans, to feed the family and ensure survival. Relief packages extended by local political leaders, religious organizations and NGOs provided them with some respite. While pre-pandemic, the earnings from upper stitching had been largely used towards small spending and savings, post-pandemic these earnings have become absolutely essential for day-to-day survival, to educate children and to pay back debts. Adverse incorporation into the value chains of disaggregated production networks continue keep their work seasonal, piece-rates stagnant and incomes meagre, the pandemic has only exacerbated these precarity and vulnerability. This article is an enquiry into the lives, livelihoods and incomes of homeworkers, especially in the post-pandemic context.

Keywords: Informal employment, homeworkers, livelihoods, post-pandemic, precarity, leather.

2.18
The Post Pandemic Know-Hows
and the Resilience of Fish vending women;
A Case Study of Poonthura, Thiruvananthapuram

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Women empowered society is one where women live with equal status and opportunities, where they are enabled to make free choices and decisions and live in a safe environment. Empowered women take full control of their lives in the family, work place and society at large with perfect freedom of mobility and personal choices. They live freely, a life with contentment, of self-respect, self-worth and dignity of human being. Due to socio-economic inequalities prevalent in our society, fewer women work in the formal sector with secure environments and assured social security, while majority are forced to work in informal sectors where there are greater chances to be exploited, manipulated and cheated. Hence, many women lack a conducive atmosphere for self-expression, self-dignity and self-respect. Fish vending women belong to the latter category and are exploited much.

This study focuses on approximately900fishvendingwomenwithin the aegis of St. Thomas church at Poonthura.These women are well-known for their ability to manage the various needs of their families in adverse circumstances and for their contribution towards the socio-economic development of their community over the years. Earlier, they had to compete with men and women engaged in similar livelihood toget favorable locations and customers. But post pandemic, the emergence of digital technology in daily life and the changes in the market culture are posing new challenges that threatens their livelihood of fish vending women. Due to the challenges for which these women are ill-equipped, this unique profession of womenis slowly disappearingand the women in the fishing community are losinga lucrativejob opportunity that has empowered them for decades.Women can be swept away from this venture itself, unless the state and the civil society intervenes to change the present status. Targeted efforts must be

taken by the government and non-government organizations to give a new face to this profession so that fish vending can become an attractive and promising source of job for the younger generation of women.

This ethnographic study was undertaken with close participant observation and with particular emphasis on their cultural factors. The field-based research was conducted with the fish vending women with a sampling ratio of 0.13. The respondents were selected from the 15 wards of St Thomas Catholic church, Poonthura, which is the major socio-economic-religious institution in this fishing village. Seven structured In- depth Interviews, three Focus Group discussions and three Key Informant Interviews were done with the fish vending women and social workers associated with Poonthura.

The findings of the study shed light on the resilience shown by the fish vending women in the face of challenges caused by existing socio-cultural factors and emerging challenges caused by the post pandemic scenario. The study has also come up with suggestions and recommendations for the greater empowerment of the fish vending of Poothura.

Keywords- Fish vending women, post-pandemic, digital technology, livelihood

2.19
Empowering Struggle for Dignity and Equitable Labour Conditions among Domestic Workers: A Case Study of Collective Action by Underpaid Care Workers in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh

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In India, domestic workers facilitate the work of other workers and a population that is growing and ageing. However, as they remain in the informal sector, they continue to face vulnerable workplace conditions at private homes and remain at severe risk for abuse and exploitation. Though the Indian government approved

Convention 189 of ILO, which talks about 'decent work' for domestic workers, it is yet to be ratified, and there is a need for comprehensive legislation that deals with the work of domestic workers so that their health, social security and occupational safety are ensured.

With the onset of the pandemic, a major chunk of them have lost work and were forced to remain unemployed. However, the domestic workers who were part of unionizing and organising had some basic support emanating from different directions before, during and after the pandemic through which they were collectively able to negotiate with the employers and the governments to get their work recognised and have a minimum wage announced for their work.

The domestic workers' movement can be a source of inspiration for the larger women's movement and the labour world. It is a battle for self-respect and an invitation to an egalitarian society. This paper looks at the collective work of the domestic workers in Telugu states with a special focus on the journey of Gruhakarmikula Union Telangana State and Domestic Workers Federation Andhra Pradesh as they pushed through the pandemic to come back resiliently in achieving and reclaiming their space and voice in fighting for dignity at work, and legal protection, social security and constitutional support from the state.

Keywords: Domestic workers, care work, decent work, ILO Convention 189, Gruhakarmikula Union Telangana State, Domestic Workers Federation Andhra Pradesh

2.20
Lived Experiences of Elderly Women during COVID-19 Pandemic

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The COVID-19 pandemic has affected people around the globe in a differently. The effect of pandemic among people varies across age, place of residence, gender, race, class, caste, religion, occupation and living condition. The infection of COVID-19 virus asserted high mortality risk amongst the older population (60 and above years), especially with pre-existing comorbidities. Various studies conducted globally have reiterated the increased risk for hospitalization and

case fatality rates among elderly population in several countries dealing with the virus. Since elderly population belongs to high category of being get infected by COVID-19 pandemic, the elderly population were forced to observe the COVID protocol more seriously than other groups. These COVID protocols of social distancing have severely affected the elderly population across the globe physically, emotionally. COVID-19 pandemic has changed the elderly people's daily routines and it has adversely affected their physical and mental health. In this paper an attempt was made to analyse the lived experiences of faced elderly women during COVID-19 pandemic was analysed. For this study case study of 15 elderly women belonging to the age group of 60-70 years residing at Thenjipalam Gramapanchayat of Malappuram district, Kerala were interviewed. The result of the study exposes various sorts of gender issues faced by elderly women during COVID-19 pandemic. Few respondents replied that lockdown period was a happy period in their life, since they got enough to spend life with children and grand children, but for others it was not. The data obtained from the study exposes the need for more governmental intervention to address the specific needs of elderly women in the developmental programmes and policies in coming future.

Keywords- Pandemic, elderly women, lockdown, health.

2.21
Educational Migration: Lived Experiences of Female Migrants Pre & Post Pandemic

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This paper will examine the experiences of women who went on educational migration to pursue their dreams. While studying their experiences, this paper also aims to break away from the general perception of migration as always being associated with the unorganized sector. It will also investigate the differences in their experiences before, during, and after the pandemic.

The women of the current generation are more aware of their capabilities and aspirations. Thus, they are willing to migrate wherever the best opportunities take them. With globalization, convenience and favourable circumstances have

entered the majority of our lives. They have more self-esteem and societal respect, and they are increasingly functioning as more independent, autonomous beings capable of living more fulfilling lives (Bindu & Selva, 2011).

The general notion of migration in India is always linked to the unorganized sector. However, that constitutes only one type of migration. The Census of India captures the reasons for migration. It categorizes migration reasons as work/employment, business, education, marriage, moving after birth, moving with a household, and any other.

Despite all of the empowerment and benefits of women migrating for education, they still face challenges and face discrimination while negotiating traditional norms and expectations as they seek to redefine their private and public spheres. Whether intrastate or interstate or migrating from other countries in India, women face difficulties based on language, culture, religion, identity, etc. Even when moving from one place to another within the same state, one notices differences in cultural aspects, as India is a melting pot of cultures and religions.

Covid-19 affected every aspect of the world, from the economy, employment, job security, and medical advancement to the smallest sectors. Academia was another sector that suffered similarly. The migrated students faced a number of changes and challenges as a result of the reverse migration caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and the lockdown. Female students, on whom there was the pressure of domestic chores (because of our patriarchal society), were most likely to be adversely affected.

Thus, this paper will look at the challenges, experiences, and burdens that these female migrants face. The paper will make use of various sets of interviews conducted with various female migrant participants.

Keywords: Educational Migration, Women, Covid-19, Lived Experiences, Double Burden

Domestic Violence against
Migrant Women during Covid-19 in India

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The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has not only posed significant health challenges worldwide but has also exacerbated existing social issues, including domestic violence. This abstract focuses on the specific issue of domestic violence against migrant women in India during the COVID-19 pandemic. The aim of this study is to explore and understand the impact of the pandemic on the prevalence and nature of domestic violence experienced by migrant women in India and to analyze the response of the Indian government and civil society organizations in addressing this issue. This study employs a qualitative research design, utilizing interviews and focus group discussions to collect data from a diverse sample of migrant women who have experienced domestic violence during the pandemic. Additionally, secondary data from government reports, NGOs, and media sources will be analyzed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the issue. The study will adopt a feminist perspective to examine the complex interplay between gender, migration, and the pandemic in shaping experiences of violence. Preliminary findings indicate a significant increase in domestic violence cases against migrant women during the COVID-19 pandemic in India. The restrictive measures such as lockdowns and economic disruptions have contributed to heightened tensions within households, leading to a surge in violence against women. The study also identifies specific vulnerabilities faced by migrant women, such as limited access to support systems, language barriers, and dependence on their abusive partners for livelihood. Furthermore, the study highlights the shortcomings in the response mechanisms of the Indian government and civil society organizations in addressing the issue. Limited availability of shelters, lack of awareness about existing helpline numbers, and inadequate legal support are some of the challenges faced by migrant women in seeking help and justice. The findings emphasize the urgent need for a comprehensive and gender-sensitive response to domestic violence against migrant women in the context of the pandemic. The implications of this study extend beyond academia, aiming to inform policymakers, government agencies, and civil society organizations about the urgent need to prioritize the protection of migrant women during crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. The study emphasizes the importance of strengthening support mechanisms, including helplines, shelters, and legal aid

services, specifically tailored to address the unique challenges faced by migrant women. In conclusion, this study sheds light on the alarming issue of domestic violence against migrant women in India during the COVID-19 pandemic. By highlighting the vulnerabilities faced by migrant women and identifying gaps in the response mechanisms, this research contributes to the growing body of literature on gender-based violence during crises.

Keywords: Domestic Violence, Migration, Pandemic, Indian Women

2.23
Reinterpreting the University as A Golden Cage: Revelations From Surviving The Covid-19 Pandemic

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For a majority of young women in India, educational institutions have been the only accessible public space for a very long time. The college and university campuses serve as a space where a young woman as a student or a research scholar or a young academic can shed off her domestic roles and assume an identity of her own which is defined by her work. Further, the space also enables her to form relations with her peers and enjoy the freedom to explore and engage her social environment on their own terms for which she doesn't have to be accountable on a daily basis to their natal homes or their in-laws. Given this understanding, one may ask the question how did the shutting down of the educational institutions during the Covid-19 pandemic impact the young women who were forced to return to their homes in midst of pursuing their academic degrees. In particular, this paper seeks to explore the impact of the lockdown and response to the shutting down of the academic institution among the young women (21-35 age group) of Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi comprising of students and research scholars. This particular study is mostly concerned with the 'feminist method' which is helpful to understand the gendered accounts of social phenomena, especially in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. Our aim in this study is not to recognize certain methods as feminist, but rather to connect

the subjectivity of the researcher's feminist ideology to the primary objective of this particular research. As feminist scholars, we have the provision to articulate the participation of various women groups based on their age, caste, class, religion, language and most importantly 'gender.' However, the gain and the loss due to lockdown to various women's group vary from region to region. The gendered nature of this variation is significant because of its connection to the access/lack of access of both the private and public spaces. According to Menon (2012:viii-ix), "When a feminist 'sees' from the position of marginality he or she has deliberately chosen to occupy, it is a gesture of subversion towards power; it disorganizes and disorders the settle field, resist homogenization, and opens up multiple possibilities rather than closes them off." Given this understanding the paper employs specific 'real-life methods' that include in-depth interviews, observation, walking interviews, and focus group discussion. Reality is seen as both 'real' and 'concrete'(Marx:1964), indeed there is an existence of ideology when we define reality. Therefore, the real-life methods of 'approaching life and politics' (Hartshock, 1983:283-310) have been for this study to draw out a story of how female students and scholars from JNU survived through the pandemic and led to reinterpretative understanding of the university beyond a gendered space.

Keywords: Young women, private and public space, educational institution, pandemic.

2.24
Braving the Pandemic:
Case of frontline leaders of
SHG federations in Madhya Pradesh

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During the unprecedented social and economic crises of the Pandemic, various state as well as nonstate actors came forward to support people in distress. The exemplary work of frontline health workers as well as their challenges have been discussed and documented in scholarly and activist circles. Less known is

the contribution of women leaders of community institutions such as Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and their federations created under the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM). This paper discusses the case of Community Resource Persons (CRPS) known as Samta Sakhis working on gender issues with Cluster Level Federations (CLFs-federations of SHGs at the Block level) in Sheopur and Karhal blocks of Sheopur district of Madhya Pradesh.

The general understanding of the role of SHGs during the pandemic is that women were involved with production and distribution of masks and sanitizers. However, Samta Sakhis of Sheopur went much beyond that to provide support for stranded migrants (those trying to return to Sheopur), quarantine support, entitlement support (such as PDS or Jan Dhan), support for domestic violence cases, awareness generation around prevention measures, and vaccine. In all these efforts, they worked actively with local institutions and administration such as Panchayats, Block Development Office, and Hospitals, thereby creating strong synergies between community institutions and institutions of local governance as well as local administration. Like ASHA workers, they too braved transport challenges and health risks to go door to door and monitor compliance of quarantine measures, identify returnee migrants and help stranded migrants to find ways to return, facilitate access to benefits and schemes of the Government during the Pandemic and respond to issues of domestic violence. The collaborative work with other institutions and their reach among the community during this period also enabled these women to establish their legitimacy as a leader in the eyes of the community as well as administration. There were many instances where earlier conflicts and problems that they had faced with Panchayats or local people were resolved because of their role during the Pandemic.

This paper focuses on the role and strategies adopted by Samta Sakhis during the Pandemic to support rural communities. It further discusses how collaborative strategies were employed and the role they played in enabling Samta Sakhis gain recognition and legitimacy as leaders. Given that many of these Samta Sakhis are from marginalised social and economic backgrounds, such process of leadership building is also an important study of understanding how gender and social norms can be disrupted and sustained through positive action, network building and sustained outreach.

Keywords: Pandemic, women collectives, rights, women, convergence

2.25
Adversities, Resilience and the Everyday: Informal Migrant Women Workers in Northeast India

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In the wake of the covid-19 pandemic when all things came to a halt, life seemed to stop for everyone. Discussions over TV, social media, and regular conversations among the people revolved around how each of us devoid of caste, creed, religion, gender is going through the same struggle together. Although all of us were passing through the same predicament, to state that the impact of it was similar for all would be too far-fetched of an assumption. Our everyday lives are shaped and narrated upon our positionalities in the power hierarchies of the society. The position one holds within the intersectionalities of these hierarchies shaped the way each one of us experienced the ongoing pandemic and the after-effect of it. The curb on movement and mobility--- a central aspect of human life, brought on by the pandemic and how it changed people's lives has been a central theme of most post-pandemic literature. However, the main focus of these literature has been on the 'citizen' who belongs to the upper-middle class/ middle class strata, with more or less some education, is able-bodied and male. It then becomes necessary to ask where do women fit into these narratives? How were their struggles exacerbated by the pandemic? How were the vulnerabilities and struggles faced by non-affluent women similar or different than women from affluent backgrounds? How much did their positionalities in the social hierarchy lead to difference in their experiencing what the pandemic brought about? And where do they currently stand in the post-pandemic world?

This paper therefore focuses on the experiences of informal migrant women workers from rural Assam in Northeast India. From among the various kinds of migration that women involve in, I'm particularly interested to explore the lives of those whose migration is embedded in what can be defined as everyday migration. These are women who do not categorically fall under the traditional definition of migration, however mobility from a place of origin to a place of destination is present in their day-to-day lives. Further, where the discourse on migration largely revolves around rural-to- urban migration, I particularly focus on women who engage in rural-to-rural migration and explore the 'why' behind

the particular kind of movement that they engage in.

The paper will also look into the continuum of paid and unpaid work which the women engage in, the vulnerabilities that come with this kind of mobility and security and safety of the work that they do. The paper will also explore the presence or absence of mechanisms of the state and non-state actors and policies to protect their rights. In this paper, I therefore explore the changes and shifts that the pandemic brought about in their lives, inside and outside their homes. The paper would be based on primary data, which would be collected through in-depth interviews and personal observations. For in-depth analysis of the data, secondary data derived from journal articles, research papers, newspapers, government policies, reports and statistics will also be used.

Keywords: Migrant Women, Covid-19, Northeast India.

2.26
A study of Banjara Women
in Ranchi: In Context of Post Covid-19

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The Banjara community residing out of the village with their own traditions and customs. The community is geographically isolated to the continuous migration the smare of criminal tribes. The Banjara Women migrate along with men and children. The migration has a large impact on the life of the banjara people. It influences the education, health and livelihood of the community. The tandas are worst hit by loosing the traditional jobs and sources of Income. The Status of Women in Banjara community is noticeably wearing from Tanda-to-Tanda. Banjara Women hailing from Urban and Semi urban peripheral are increasingly subjected to various new dimensions of challenges, business and constraints and ever-changing needs in shifting Market paradigm. Being measure urban livelihood sources for specially for poor and vulnerable section of society. Here, the main research objective is to find out the struggle and problem of banjara Women during Covid-19 and needs for Banjara Women operating in Ranchi. In addition, there is no proper attention which is given to Banjara Women by Government, NGO, or any other policy Maker, Decision Maker. At present, there

is an even strong negative measures and views prevailing against Banjara women both by Local government and by the Formal business operators. Banjara Women are continuously increased in Ranchi District. Now a days Banjara women are facing many problems in the course of running their activities. Therefore, the focus of this study is to access the struggle of Banjara women's during pandemic and post pandemic in Ranchi District.

Keywords: Banjara Women, Livelihood, pandemic, Post-pandemic, Challenges, Business Constraints.

2.27
Study of Pinjara Community Women's Livelihood struggle during pandemic in Karnataka State with special reference to Kittur Karnataka region

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Pinjara community has century's history. 500 years ago the Pinjara community received the Islam religion in the administration of Mughal emperor Aurangzeb. After accepting Islam, they made clinging and weaving as their profession. From ever since, they have been growing cotton and opting weaving profession that produces cotton and are recognized as professionals. Pinjara women work equally to the man in the family. The women also has a place for heritage division of work. The role of Pinjara girls/women is important in the process of traditional occupation that men and women share. Women do almost all of the things men do, and women's partnership is also involved in market affairs. Though they are illiterate persons they have the business knowledge. She can buy cotton, Make cotton bed, pillow, blanket and sell. The woman has the opportunity to keep the money earned from the sale for herself and spend also. Pinjara women engage themselves in agricultural activities in rural areas, leaving heritage career. They suffered to survive in COVID-19. They will eat when they earn it, but they will not survive if they do not work. They suffered greatly during the pandemic. This article concentrate on shows the Pinjara Ladies' endurance battle in Pandemic.

2.28
Changing Food Preference of People during Lockdown Restrictions: A Cross Sectional Study in Coimbatore

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The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns have had a significant impact on global food preferences and consumption habits. People have been more conscious of their lifestyles since initial days of pandemic. The shock of the pandemic has led to significant changes among people in India, which is one of the most affected countries in the world. The contagion had primarily altered the food choices of people during the lockdown restrictions. Coimbatore is renowned as the hub for educational institutions and booming industry, where the floating population, as well as the heterogeneous class, makes a sign to the place. The isolating period, for instance, border and other logistical constraints limited the flow of goods and people to stop the spread of disease, which leads remarkable complications and challenges for the population. So The purpose of the study is to determine how the lockdown affected people's consumption behaviors during the lockdown restriction period in Coimbatore, India. The study was conducted during the second lockdown period from March 15th to March 25th, 2021 though a web-based cross-sectional survey, using a semi-structured Google questionnaire. The study focused on examining changes in food preferences and their implications for physical and mental health, i.e. it highlights the relation between dietary practices and physical health and mental health, with a substantial proportion of respondents experiencing challenges such as weight gain, loss of appetite, poor sleep, increased work pressure, and boredom. Emotional consumption, including alcohol and smoking, witnessed an upsurge, and excessive use of social media further affected participants' mental health. This study elucidates the indispensable role of women in shaping food preferences, emphasizing their propensity for healthier dietary choices while

additionally highlighting their pronounced motivation for weight management, often leading to dieting or restrained eating practices. By providing insights into non-communicable diseases and promoting a healthier lifestyle, this study contributes to understanding the broader implications of food choices and can guide future interventions. This paper was an extended portion of the Miniproject submitted as a part of my master's degree in Bharathiyar University (2020).

Keywords: Covid issues, Changes in food preferences, Food trends, Emotional Consumption.

2.29
Women Rural Sanitation Workers in Haryana: Struggles and Challenges Amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic

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This paper delves into the experiences of women rural sanitation workers, an often overlooked and marginalized group within rural Indian society and examines the profound impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their lives and livelihoods. The authors had conducted exploratory research with rural sanitation workers in 2021 to investigate the nature of work, the risks they faced, and the challenges they encountered during the pandemic. Through a qualitative analysis, this study sheds light on the manifold increase in the workload of rural sanitation workers and reveals how their working conditions have become increasingly unsafe, hostile, and precarious. In this paper, we will focus on the women participants of the study.

In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the demands placed on women rural sanitation workers had surged significantly during the lockdown periods. As hygiene and cleanliness became even more critical in preventing the spread of the virus, these workers were tasked with additional responsibilities, including disinfection, waste management, and public health awareness campaigns.

However, this increased workload has not been accompanied by commensurate support, resulting in heightened physical and emotional exhaustion among these workers. Our paper highlights the inadequate response of the state in safeguarding the well-being and safety of this vulnerable workforce. Government measures to protect and support sanitation workers during the pandemic have been insufficient, leaving them exposed to various health hazards and lacking the necessary protective equipment. The study also emphasizes the crucial role played by workers' unions in a period of heightened vulnerability. These unions have been instrumental in raising awareness about the challenging conditions faced by the workers and in mobilizing efforts to improve their working conditions and overall welfare. By shedding light on the struggles and challenges faced by women rural sanitation workers in Haryana, our paper will contribute to a broader understanding of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women employed in a vulnerable labour force. It emphasizes the need for systemic changes, including improved working conditions, better health and safety provisions, and enhanced social support for this marginalized workforce.

Keywords: Women and labour, Rural Sanitation Workers, Social Policy

2.30
Lessons from post-pandemic Pune: Unveiling the Challenges Faced by Domestic Workers and the Need for Decent Work

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This paper aims to shed light on the challenges faced by domestic workers, emphasizing the urgent need for centralized laws and support systems to protect their welfare and transform domestic work into 'decent' work.1

Domestic workers, primarily women, play a critical role in private households, providing various care services that contribute to the care economy. However, in the Indian context, domestic workers are often seen as readily available,

inexpensive, and affordable laborers due to societal perceptions rooted in gender, poverty, and marginalized caste contexts. Domestic workers are not recognized as "workers" under any labor laws, depriving them of benefits such as minimum wage, maternity benefits, and payment guarantees etc. The absence of centralized laws to safeguard their well-being became evident during the pandemic, as domestic workers faced economic losses, deteriorating living conditions, unpaid or partial wages, a lack of job opportunities, increased competition, and uncertainty regarding their children's future. Additionally, they endured social stigma as potential carriers of the disease and suffered from limited access to public transportation due to lockdown measures. Older domestic workers faced additional challenges due to age restrictions and the absence of government support or pensions. The pandemic exacerbated workers' already impoverished circumstances, leading to starvation, depleted savings, increased medical expenses, and economic hardship. Furthermore, In Pune city, domestic workers were not classified as essential workers, forcing them to risk legal consequences when going to work despite, in some cases, their essential role as primary caregivers for their employers. The children of domestic workers also suffered, facing barriers to online education due to limited resources and financial constraints.

The purpose of this paper is to highlight the challenges faced by domestic workers and to emphasize the critical need for centralized laws and support systems to protect their welfare. The COVID-19 pandemic has unveiled the vulnerabilities and inequalities experienced by domestic workers, underscoring the imperative to address these issues and ensure their well-being and rights are safeguarded. The insights presented in this paper stem from my extensive engagement with domestic workers over the course of the last two years for an action research project titled "Understanding the Changing Dynamics of Paid Domestic Services during the COVID-19 Pandemic in the Pune Metropolitan Region," conducted by the Department of Women and Gender Studies, Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune.

Keywords - Domestic Workers, Paid Domestic Work, Pandemic, Informal Sector, Participatory Action Research

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2.31
Reverse Migration of Informal Safai Karamcharis - From Ulhasnagar (Maharashtra) to Ghaziabad, Meerut and Bulandshahr (Uttar Pradesh)

Shama Mehrol

The focus of this study is to understand the implications of COVID-19 and the subsequent lockdown on the lives of the informal safai karamcharis Valmiki women in Ulhasnagar, Maharashtra. During a pandemic, there were restrictions on mobility, which adversely affected the safai karamcharis capacity to do work, they were unable to earn wages and were not able to pay the rent for the accommodation in the city, which also became a factor for their return to their native homes in Uttar Pradesh. In rural areas-caste based practices are embedded in everyday life. In many cases, Dalits are treated as less than human, and relatedly, caste-based atrocities cases are persistent. The study also attempted to show the various challenges the Valmiki women faced after returning to their native homes.

While the pursuit of emotional, social and financial security triggered this reverse migration, their lives in the rural areas were also entangled in various forms of complications that emerged on account of staying with joint families, lack of proper redressal for domestic violence, specific forms of labor relations that were shaped by the caste dynamics in their villages. There was always romanticisation of womanhood and motherhood, these ideas get weaponized to glorify the role of women without actually addressing their needs or concerns.

The study was conducted using feminist research methodology and standpoint location. It is a qualitative research inquiry of the life history method through an in- depth narrative to understand the lived experience of Valmiki women who were part of distressed migration. The different narratives indicate how the women were able to get the support systems that they were unable to access in the cities, also complicate the idea of life after migration and bring out instances in which women had to reconcile with many forms of systemic violence that they encountered after coming back. The main objective is to study the relationship between labor and its intersections of caste, class, gender and stigmatization of Valmiki women's sexuality.

I explored through the study how the intersection of caste, class, and gender

continued to shape the lives of Informal Safai Karamchari Valmiki women during a pandemic. It further comprehends life before COVID-19, during the pandemic, and the distressed migration that followed it. When they return to their native towns and villages, they were made to do caste-based work which was often considered 'impure'. The caste hierarchies played out in significant ways in both urban and rural areas. The gender- based power play also shapes the Valmiki women's experiences within the family, as they attempt to find sources of support in instances where they are on the receiving end of violence from their male counterparts.

In conclusion, it is quite visible how despite the promise of social security in the native villages, many women are also waiting to go back to the city to resume their lives there. This gravitation towards the city was also understood through various factors like better opportunities for work and education, as well as the space to be able to practice agency outside of the constant surveillance of the family. It also tried to bring out the desire to go back to the city as it promised a life with more opportunities.

Keywords: Safai-kaam, Valmiki women, labor, COVID-19, stigma, migration.

2.32
Increased rate of Gendered violence in Covid times – An inclusive study of gendered based violence based on some case studies

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Covid times in the world brought about fear of anxiety, stress which had become a scenario in the entire Lock-down period. Stress and Lock-down became related with each or we can say it could be used interchangeably during this phase. Society had witnessed several cases psychosocial implications of children and adolescents during this period. Another issue that also had come into analyses was gendered based violence which increased to an utmost level during this

period. There is a saying that often persist for ages "Home is not a safe place for me'. Let's revisit this sentence and rethink on it on the ground that what became the implication of this very common sentence during this lock down period. Official data is scarce but there had been reports found the countries of China, United Kingdom, United States of America, India and many other countries which says that there was a significant rise of the domestic violence cases during this period of lock-down. When we are talking of domestic violence is not necessary to speak violence against women. Here by the term domestic violence, we are essentially speaking of gendered based violence which has its specification of the all the genders.

If we talk of violence, Gender-based violence, had always been a global issue before this pandemic and had exaggerated with the outburst of COVID-19. Lockdowns with several restriction in the mobility had trapped not only women but children or more specifically women of different ages with their abusers vis-à-vis in the same place. The support network during this period had also become very limited during this period. Government during this period had really helped the people by providing subsidiaries to the poor section of the society, but did the government address this issue of gendered violence which its height during this pandemic.

In this paper the author wants to focus on the several gender-violence based crises which intensified to its height during the lock-down of covid-19 pandemic irrespective of age taking reference of some case studies with regards to a particular region of India. This paper also harp on the steps taken by the government to address this issue and also whether the actions taken by the government were gender neutral.

Keywords – government, covid-19, gender, violence, lockdown

Unheard Narratives: Exploring the Everyday Gendered Experiences and Challenges Faced by Women Workers in Delhi During the COVID-19 Pandemic

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This research paper aims to conduct an in-depth analysis of the gendered impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women working in diverse sectors in Delhi, India, focusing on their 'everyday experiences'. The pandemic and subsequent restrictions have significantly impacted women's everyday lives, particularly those in paid employment. Women across various sectors have faced common and distinct challenges, including the dual and increased responsibilities of increased household duties alongside work, navigating safety concerns in public spaces and limited transportation options, lack of support from organisations and assuming primary caregiving roles for their families' well-being.

Occupations such as healthcare workers, paid domestic workers, sanitation workers, activists, and journalists have encountered additional hardships due to their continued essential work outside their homes during that period, amplifying the complexity of their challenges. This study seeks to comprehensively understand the everyday experiences of women who either lost their jobs or had to leave due to job requirements, as well as those who persisted despite new obstacles and heightened responsibilities and attempts to uncover how their everyday lives were changed because of the pandemic. The blurring of boundaries between the public and private spheres during the pandemic has significantly impacted their professional and personal lives. Furthermore, many women have had to grapple with unique challenges posed by lockdown measures while receiving minimal to no support from their organisations or the state, resulting in further hardships and detrimental effects on their physical and mental well-being.

This study uses qualitative research methods and semi-structured interviews to capture the voices and uncover these women's everyday experiences and lived realities, primarily overlooked and marginalised in mainstream media discourse. Through a meticulous analysis of their everyday lives, the research aims to

identify the specific challenges they have faced or continue to face due to the pandemic and subsequent restrictions. Additionally, this study delves into how these changes have redefined the daily lives of women workers, reshaped their interactions within and outside their immediate environments, transformed their responsibilities, altered their perceptions regarding their work, affected their aspirations and mental well-being, and highlighted the inadequacy of systematic support. By shedding light on the gaps in state and media responses, this research contributes to a comprehensive understanding of the gendered impact of the pandemic on women's lives, ultimately advocating for inclusive and supportive measures to address these disparities.

Keywords: Gendered impact, COVID-19 pandemic, Women workers, Everyday experiences, Qualitative research, Delhi, India.

2.34

Unveiling Resilience: An Analysis of Survival Strategies of Women Home-Based Workers in Unorganised sector during the COVID-19 Crisis.

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Globally, women home-based workers form a significant group of informal sector workers. They have a major impact on the world economy. Domestic space is the workplace of a significant group of them, and that exacerbate their proneness towards various circumstances. They lack social protection, organisational capacity, legal protection, etc. Women working in the unorganised sector have been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly those engaged in home-based work. The pandemic has further worsened their vulnerabilities, as restrictions on movement and economic disruptions have severely impacted their livelihoods. This study intends to explore the coping mechanisms, resilience strategies, and work-life balance challenges faced by women home-based workers in the unorganised sector during the COVID-19 crisis. Using a qualitative research design, data will be collected through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with a diverse sample of women home-

based workers. The study is specifically looking at the experiences of women home-based workers in Kerala. Information will be gathered from women home-based workers in the unorganised sector across Kerala.

The study will look at the coping mechanisms employed by participants to navigate the difficulties posed by the pandemic. Coping mechanisms are essential for women home-based workers to withstand the problems brought about by the pandemic. These mechanisms may include making use of social networks, identifying personal strengths, practicing self-care practices, and seeking support from community organizations, etc. The research will also examine the resilience strategies used by women home-based workers to maintain their livelihoods and overcome adversity. Resilience is the capacity to overcome difficulties, adjust to changes, and overcome failures. Therefore, identifying and analysing the resilience strategies used by these women can help developing effective support systems and policies tailored to their specific needs. In addition, the study will investigate the work-life balance challenges experiences by women home-based workers. These challenges may include juggling household responsibilities, caregiving duties, and limited access to childcare facilities, while also meeting work obligations, etc. The impact of these challenges on their well-being, mental health, and job satisfaction will be investigated.

The findings of this research will provide insights into the unique circumstances of women home-based workers in the unorganised sector during the COVID-19 crisis. The results will be useful in policy debates and interventions that target the particular needs and issues of this particular vulnerable group. Moreover, acknowledging the contributions and challenges faced by women home-based workers is essential for building a more equitable and inclusive society that values their work and ensure their well-being. The studies recommendations will emphasis on enhancing coping mechanisms, resilience strategies, and work-life balance support to empower women home-based workers and promote their well-being in the face of future crises.

Keywords: COVID-19, Home-based workers, Women, Coping Mechanism, Resilience, Work-life balance, Unorganised Sector, India, Kerala.

2.35

Impact of COVID-19 on Girls' Education: A Case Study of Baghmara Block of Dhanbad, Jharkhand

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During the COVID-19 pandemic, schools, colleges, and other educational institutions in India were closed to protect students from the virus and prevent its spread. This closure had a significant impact on millions of students, with the education system being severely affected for over a year. Among all the states in India, Jharkhand experienced the longest duration of school closures. As a result, students faced mental stress, knowledge gaps, and other related issues. Providing education, especially to girl students, became a challenge due to technical and economic barriers, as well as family restrictions.

This study focuses on the technical problems faced by students, domestic violence experienced at home, changes in study time duration, and other related issues. The research was conducted in the Baghmara block of Dhanbad district in Jharkhand, and interviews were conducted with girl students from 6th to 10th grade. The data was collected through a field survey using the interview method with stratified random sampling. The findings revealed that 82 percent of the students had the option to attend online classes conducted by their schools. However, 88 percent of them did not have access to a device to attend these classes. Consequently, many students had to rely on their elder brothers or fathers for access to a suitable device, which was not always available. Furthermore, the study time of girl students significantly declined during the pandemic. Some students even stopped studying altogether, as they were required to dedicate 6 to 7 hours a day to household chores, with no defined upper limit. This situation often led to arguments and conflicts at home.

This paper aims to explore the challenges faced by girl students in accessing education during the COVID-19 pandemic. It will also examine the effects of the pandemic on their education and the domestic issues they encountered, including domestic violence and changes in study time. (The term "technical problems" encompasses a broader spectrum of issues associated with digital education. These challenges include inadequate internet connectivity, insufficient access to

devices, limited digital literacy skills, and disparities in technological resources. All these factors contributed to the widening educational divide, particularly for girl students.)

Keywords- COVID-19, Digital Education, Girls' Education.

2.36
Lavani artist in urban area: an intersectional inquiry of performance, question of livelihood and consumption of pandemic period.

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Folk art is closely related to the musical culture of a specific region, and cultural identity. 'Lavani' is prominent folk art of Maharashtra, It is also known as a popular culture of the state identity at national level as well as international too. This folk art run by oral tradition, are cultivated be the nomadic and backward castes. One of these folk artists 'Lavani' found to be popularized in the seventeenth century during the Peshwa Period and discovered its extensive financial base in the late Peshwa Period (Rege, 2002; Dhond 1956).However this form of art, which has some degree of social and economic independence. It's like daily based work with contractual bond. In this context, Lavani is important to preserve the folk art and to understand the process of political economy and gendered perspective through feminist lens. In the pandemic time period most of the 'Lavani' artist faced scary question that, how do survive without a work? Lack of education, there is no one to take these artists for work, because this artist doesn't know any other professional skill in work space in urban area. In pandemic period some artists went to do domestic work and other selling vegetables(Marathi news paper issue,{Loksatta}).The question of livelihood this becomes a key critical issue to make links between how the procedures of the differentiation of entertainment industry of classical and folk forms might intrinsically affect chances of their effective survival. Even though folk artists have been research is conducted on the basis of notated cultural material. In this paper will take a interview of

various urban Lavani artists for their livelihood question in pandemic time, how pandemic affects their performance aspects from work field. Main challenges arise from the fact that the not getting any work for food, medicine and more.

Keywords: Lavani, Culture, Economy, Hereditary occupation, Gender.

2.37
Women and Covid-19:
An Empirical study of Delhi Slums

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The slums are an integral part of Delhi, during COVID-19, all the people who had migrated and came here had to face a lot of difficulties especially when we see it from the gendered lenses. In maximum cases women migrate either along with their families or after their settlement in Delhi. But once they are here, the city welcomes them with certain challenges. Lack of skills and education, social beliefs and economic conditions makes it even worse. Over half of the population of Delhi lives in slum areas. These unplanned settlements are growing faster despite the government planning. The main cause behind it is the over population. The population of Delhi has grown rapidly throughout the years, in-migration is one of the main reasons for it. Although during COVID we have witnessed the reverse migration. The people living in the slums were affected the most by the Pandemic as these are the one who migrated from other places and came here. But As COVID came, they were left with no option but to go back. There are empirical evidence of people walking miles to reach their parent state or city/village. In a situation where already, people mobility was freeze by the government, neither enough resources were available to serve everyone. The males from these colonies are mainly engaged in Rickshaw pulling, vegetable vendors, laborers and domestic helpers etc. on the other hand the women of JJ colonies are either staying at home, working as maids at others houses or engaged in some unorganized work.

The paper not only talks about the difficulties faced by women in the JJ colonies of Delhi during Pandemic but also highlights the role they played during Pandemic. In many households the finance was taken care by the women when the males

lost their jobs. Their experiences when they had to leave Delhi for which they left their city has also been discussed. It also increased the domestic violence, and the mental health was effected badly during Pandemic. In the JJ colonies taken for this study named: Anna Nagar Community and Khichari Pur, mostly women are engaged in unorganized sector if at all they are working. The study has tried to understand the challenges faced by the women unorganized labors, how they supported their families and their lives before Pandemic, during pandemic and post-pandemic. The data is collected through, observation and semi-structured interview method, the site visit method is also used. The case studies from both the colonies have been taken.

Keywords: Women, COVID-19, Delhi Slums, unorganized labors

2.38
Home, Hearth, and Housewife: Declining Status and Evolving Activism

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Home and hearth have bound Indian women to the unending care-domestic work since immemorial but within the shifting scenario of Indian cities in twenty-first century, where women are taking up paid jobs as a norm, their culturally institutionalised identity of grihini/ housewives and domestic work assigned to them have receded into a very complex dichotomous position of nullification and necessity. In comparison to other brutalities done to women within domesticity, the exploitation due to care and domestic work is shielded in terms of duty and altruistic nature of women towards their family members. The report compiled by Mridula Sarabhai in 1940 under National Planning Committee on Status of Women suggested to recognise and remunerate women's work in Independent India but 76 years later, the suggestion is still unfulfilled instead the work has been devalued further. The devaluation accorded to the role of a housewife and her care-domestic work has occurred through a gradual process of increasing distance and difference between ghar (domestic) and bahir (public). Economic structure of the country and family politics affect and foster the devaluation.

The decline in the value of housework and housewife corresponds with demand

for recognition of the economic and cultural value of housewives' domestic work through various mediums. The issue was mostly absent in professed first and second wave of feminism in India; however, the loose third wave beginning from twenty first century has dispersed acts of resistance and rebellion. There has never been a direct demand to the government in form of protests and rallies by Indian women like Global Women's Strike in 2000 demanding remuneration for all caring work. However, the subtle acts of activism started appearing in disseminated form during benchmark court trials where judges remunerated family members against lost services of the deceased wife/mother, data collection through Time Use Surveys to determine the difference in hours spent by men and women on unpaid domestic work, political parties during elections offering monthly meagre remuneration to housewives, changing content of television commercials and few daily soaps, short and long movies vociferously trying to make visible the invisiblized work of the Indian housewives and educational institutes promoting awareness courses and research. There is significant surge in the acts after the pandemic forced people to notice women's work at home. Although these acts belong to different sectors of society, they contribute in forming a diffused feminist movement (active mostly in digital form) to establish new consciousness against devaluation of housewives and their work.

The paper would aim at tracing the changing stature of Indian housewives and their domestic work, shifting from occupying a place of sanctity to devaluation with notions of exploitation ever present. Along with historical and current evidence, the arguments would be supplemented by Ela Bhatt's and Nancy Folbre's theories of housewifisation and caregiving. The paper would also try to analyse the building up of the diffused feminist movement to value housewives' and their work and how far it has been successful to bring the change—both ideological and practical.

Keywords: Care, domestic work, housewife, activism, feminism

2.39
Girls Speak Out –
Story of Corona in Her Voice

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Understanding the enhanced vulnerabilities of adolescent girls and young women during Covid times, and the challenges they faced due to socio-cultural and economic barriers, is important to formulate solutions around it. The multi-fold impact of the pandemic on girls' and young women's health, education, mobility, safety and livelihoods has been very evident and has taken a toll on the overall growth and development of this group.

Vacha Trust is a Mumbai based feminist organisation established in 1990. Its work with adolescent girls and young women (13- 24 years) has focused on building their capacity, agency and leadership over the years. Our work is the in urban bastis (Commonly known as slums) of Mumbai and Thane districts with the migrant and marginalised population. During the pandemic, there was reverse migration to villages and girls and women belonging to the bottom of the pyramid were affected the most. When classes started online, they were unable to access these as most of them did not own smartphones. There was no access to online education, nutrition, menstrual health and hygiene. Moreover, continuous engagement in household responsibilities shouldering a major chunk of unpaid care work left them with little time for rest and sleep. Witnessing and experiencing domestic violence and abuse and neglect, many of them were also forced into early marriages. They rarely got any opportunity to voice their wishes, needs and even evade violence.

Vacha through its work, found a strategic solution to this challenge wherein the girls and young women were roped in to undertake the relief work in the community who planned and executed the distribution of essential supplies in their own localities. They were also provided with mobile phones to access online sessions. During these tough times, we witnessed the exemplary work of adolescent girls and young women working around extending these essential services.

In order to help girls express themselves, and provide a safe space (virtual), Vacha stayed in regular touch with the girls and also introduced a diary writing programme to express themselves through which some girls were able to narrate their daily tales. This emerged as a very crucial document in recording the lived

realities and challenges in their lives as well as opened a cathartic window for them. Its aim was to provide a platform for adolescent girls to share their experiences and challenges with respect to the impact of lockdown on their education, health, safety, and their agency to exercise their choices.

Post-pandemic too, the threat to girls' and young women's autonomy, freedom and aspirations continued as many of the young women could not complete their education as they were expected to contribute to family income. They ended up in unwanted marriages, unskilled low-paid jobs and unpaid care work.

In this paper, we explore adolescent girls and young women's narratives about their experiences, challenges around education, livelihood, safety and mobility. It also highlights some of Vacha's interventions to address these challenges, reduce vulnerabilities and voicing their aspirations.

Keywords: Covid Challenges, Vulnerability, Livelihood, Girl's Voices, Negotiating spaces

2.40
Socio-economic condition in Post pandemic scenario: A study of Female Domestic Workers of Aurangabad city

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We proudly celebrated our 75th Independence Day on 15th August, 2022. Despite many developments and advancements in education and employment, women are treated as secondary in all respects. They face discriminations inside their family as well as in society. The social, economic and cultural structure of our Indian society is patriarchal.

Women are discriminated in male dominant society. In fact, they are exploited under multiple folds of class, patriarchy and hierarchical ethnicity of caste system. Women constitute a major portion of workforce in India. However most of them

are employed in informal or unorganized sector of domestic work is one of the major types. More than 90% of domestic workers are women in Maharashtra as well as in India. Maharashtra is known to be a progressive state which has been birth ground of many women movements and social reforms but still number of women work in informal sector has an increase day by day. Domestic women were unionized early in 1980s in Pune, in Domestic women organization which later rapidly spread all over Maharashtra from Kolhapur, Mumbai, Sangli and Aurangabad. This certainly helped women to attain their identity as a worker and united them to struggle for their rights at workplace, wages, working conditions and enhance their dignity. Since then, awareness about human rights of domestic worker women was increased at least to some amount in both employers and domestic workers. Domestic work was assumed to be the most easily available and decent work as compared to other informal sector works till COVID-19.

During pandemic, many domestic worker women were suddenly bereaved from their regular work. Domestic work has its workplace in 'private sphere' or 'household area'. domestic worker women were denied entry to their work areas as everyone including domestic worker women and their employers were confined to their households. Also, people were extremely afraid of coming in contact of outsiders. During pandemic most, domestic worker women either lost their jobs or if on job hardly were paid; they faced discriminations; financial difficulties; increase in workload; harassment and much more. Total and partial lock downs during pandemic left them in worst conditions in post pandemic scenario.

My research paper shall focus on topic "Socio-economic condition in Post pandemic scenario: A study of Female Domestic Workers of Aurangabad city", based on the study of ways in which COVID-19 has affected their socio-economic condition. The objective of my paper shall be to study their working conditions after COVID-19, loss of job, job switch, migration, discrimination, presence or absence of state support, awareness and need of organizations or unions among domestic worker women. My paper shall depend on the findings of qualitative and quantitative study of domestic worker women of Aurangabad to investigate the research questions.

Keywords: Domestic workers, women, Post pandemic

2.41
Uncovering the Value of Unpaid Work: An analysis of value creation by women during COVID-19

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The shock of COVID-19 pandemic caused women to be disproportionately burdened both in the public (market) and in the private sphere (household). This has worsened the issue of gender inequality. Unpaid care work in the households is an important part of social reproduction and are necessary to be performed on a daily basis for the maintenance of life and to reproduce the next generation. These activities are highly feminised due to the traditional gender roles creating a sexual division of labour. The households were burdened with more hours of unpaid care work due to the stringent lockdown rules. This meant more hours of cooking, cleaning care for children and the elderly etc. Due to the feminine nature of household work, women presumably carry more of the burden. Additionally, the loss of jobs affected the income sources of the households leading to even more dire conditions. A comparative analysis between women and men before, during and after the pandemic by mapping the average time allocation between paid and unpaid work is necessary. So, the first objective of the paper is to study the gender differential impact of COVID-19 on the time spent on unpaid care work across various demographic and socio-economic cohorts mainly social groups, marital status, number of children, education and income group. The second part of the study emphasises on the interdependence of market production (paid work) and social reproduction (unpaid care work). Although the value created by unpaid care work activities lies outside the production boundaries of the market and are not considered in the national accounts, they enhance the productivity of the overall market by sustaining the players of the market (workers). It has taken a shock like COVID-19 to highlight the significance of care work when the market for paid social reproduction (food outlets, crèches etc.) were no longer able to function and all burden fell on the households. Highlighting the interdependence between paid and unpaid work will help uncover the value created by many women that goes unaccounted for. The second objective of the paper to study the effect of COVID-19 as an event, through the changes in time spent on unpaid work and its effects on female labour force participation using

the difference-in-difference method of analysis. The paper uses different rounds of the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) conducted by the NSSO from 2017-18 to 2021-22, followed by the People of India survey for time use allocation conducted by CMIE as the data sources. The study considers nineteen significant states for the analysis, which account for almost ninety per cent of the total GDP and population from which age group 15 and above have been chosen for the analysis of the labour force participation rate.

Sub-theme 3

Contemporary Women's
Movements: Grassroots,
New Forms, Strategies,
and Challenges

3.1

Cultivating Equity: Dalit Women's Fight for Land Rights in Marathwada

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This paper explores the grassroots movement led by Dalit women in Marathwada, Maharashtra, as they fight for land rights. In the face of poverty, and starvation, these women have become pivotal figures in the Jamin Adhikar Andolan (Land Rights Movement), advocating for their rightful ownership of grazing land. Marathwada, known for its drought-stricken conditions and entrenched male dominance, has sadly witnessed the highest number of farmer suicides in India. The ownership of land for Dalits has remained a contentious issue, but Dalit women have challenged societal norms and transformed barren areas into thriving fields, cultivating essential food grains. Despite facing opposition from villagers, enduring crop destruction, and experiencing attacks on themselves and their children, these women have remained steadfast in their pursuit of self-esteem and economic independence.

The movement has successfully mobilized over 50,000 landless Dalit families, encouraging them to file ownership claims for the approximately 2,40,800 hectares of grazing land in the region. However, the government continues to view them as encroachers, depriving them of government aid, crop insurance, and credit due to the absence of land titles in their names. To overcome these challenges, Dalit women have united in self-help groups, providing mutual support in cultivating the land and combating caste-gender discrimination, political pressures, physical violence, and oppression. The strategies developed

by these women offer both theoretical and practical insights into the concept of 'Fight for Equality' and 'Equality in the movements'.

This movement has not only brought about economic empowerment for Dalit women but has also instigated changes in the perception of gender equality within the land rights movement. Additionally, their adoption of environmentally friendly farming practices aligns with the urgent need for climate action in the drought-prone Marathwada region, where land desertification poses a growing threat. This paper sheds light on the inspiring journey of Dalit women as they persist in their fight for land rights and development, showcasing their resilience, determination, and the transformative potential of their movement.

3.2
Review of Contemporary Student Activism in Higher Education in India from a Dalit Feminist Standpoint

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Activism is predicated on the ontological assumption and act of human beings as not docile and silent but active and conscious participants working to restructure dominant social relations, structures and practices. Therefore, students' activism and resistance take various forms, such as rallies, protests and strikes, carried out at multiple sites such as Universities, public spaces and more recently through social media, television, Youtube and academia. Garalyte (2020) reiterates Bourdieu's understanding of social spaces and the spatial distribution of powers in which she explains that no space exists without social hierarchies and there are always power relations in these spaces. Thus, the marginalization of groups already marginalized exists even in the activist spaces, which have the promise to bring about a change in society. In the light of Garalyte's argument, therefore, this paper attempts to critically review the aspects of contemporary student activism in Indian Universities, while also focusing on left and anti-caste organizations which are/were believed to be progressive spaces from gendered marginalized positions as well. Dalit Feminist perspective gives us a vantage point to address the inequalities existing in society in a nuanced manner. This paper aims to critically analyze and understand the political activism of University students

hailing from marginalized social groups in higher educational institutions. This paper attempts to navigate the disparate aspects of students' activism rooted in caste and gender dynamics in Indian Universities. Sadly, even the progressive spaces, such as left and anti-cast organizations, have not risen above the caste stratagems. Contemporary student activism and anti-caste student activism do reproduce discrimination on the basis of gender. Students from both categories do not generate space for Dalit women students to raise their concerns and voices. The identity of Dalit women has always been in a fluid state that is/was not accepted by the patriarchal and casteist mindsets. So far, the research has critically analyzed the educational experiences, drop-out rates, unemployment and social exclusion. However, in the dominant narratives, Dalit women have always been portrayed as the victims of power structures. The scholarly engagement has been unsuccessful in bringing out the active and agentic voices of Dalit women activists in organizational cultures at college campuses or universities. The present paper tries to map these trajectories on two accounts- firstly, potential reasons for the absence of political assertion of students from marginalized social groups, and secondly, on account of Dalit women student activism and their efforts to bridge the gap between activism and academia as Dalit women engage in community work which brings about individual and collective aspirations. Hence, the objective of the argument in this paper is to understand student activism in Indian Universities and to problematize the role of Dalit women's participation vis-a-vis Dalit men and their upper caste counterparts.

3.3
The Role of Digital Space in Iranian Women's Protests: A Catalyst for Change

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This study explores the significant role of digital space in empowering Iranian women and facilitating their participation in protests and movements for social change. The advent of digital technologies, particularly social media platforms, has revolutionized the way women in Iran voice their concerns, mobilize support,

and challenge societal norms and restrictions. This study examines the impact of digital space on Iranian women's protests and sheds light on its implications for the broader feminist movement in the country.

Drawing upon qualitative research methods, including interviews, content analysis, and case studies, this study aims to analyze the multifaceted role of digital space in Iranian women's protests. The findings suggest that digital platforms have provided Iranian women with a safe and accessible means to express their grievances, share personal stories, and build networks of solidarity. Online spaces have allowed women to transcend geographical barriers, connect with like-minded individuals, and collectively amplify their voices.

Furthermore, digital space has served as a catalyst for organizing protests and mobilizing support in an environment where traditional modes of activism are heavily regulated. Social media platforms, such as Twitter, Instagram, and Telegram, have facilitated the dissemination of information, coordination of activities, and the formation of virtual communities. Women have utilized these platforms to raise awareness about gender inequality, promote women's rights campaigns, and document instances of injustice, thus garnering national and international attention.

However, the study also acknowledges the challenges and limitations associated with digital activism in Iran. The government's efforts to control and censor online content pose significant obstacles to women's digital organizing. Women activists face surveillance, harassment, and even arrest for their online activities. The study explores the strategies employed by women to circumvent these barriers, such as using encrypted messaging apps and employing anonymous accounts.

In conclusion, this study underscores the transformative role of digital space in Iranian women's protests, acting as a powerful tool for mobilization, advocacy, and solidarity. It emphasizes the need to understand the interplay between online and offline activism and highlights the importance of safeguarding digital spaces for women's voices. By recognizing and supporting the digital resistance of Iranian women, policymakers, activists, and international organizations can contribute to the advancement of gender equality and human rights in Iran.

3.4
Redefining Political Subjectivity: A Study of the Gender Ideology of the Catholic Charismatic Movement in Kerala

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Charismatic Renewal in the Catholic Church is a Christian revivalist movement that originated in the late 1960s, influenced by the surging global popularity of the Pentecostal phenomenon. While Pentecostalism in Kerala dates back to 1909, the movement took root in the Catholic Church in the late 1980s and has emerged as a popular form of spirituality within the community since then. Total transformation of the self through an ecstatic spiritual experience is central to the spirituality of Charismatic Pentecostalism. The movement has witnessed a disproportionately high participation of women since its inception. 'Democratisation' of spiritual practice has been attributed to the movement owing to the possibility of an egalitarian congregation that negates social hierarchies, but the rupture, a socially conservative minority religious phenomenon creates in the post-secular feminist discourse on feminist political subjectivity remains underexplored. The Catholic Church managed to develop a hybrid of global Pentecostalism the spiritual radicalism of which was carefully subsumed under Catholic authority to allow for a mediated direct' experience of the divine. This then was presented as providing a 'retreat' from the vagaries of the economy, society, and even institutionalised religion. The Charismatic phenomenon provides a modernised infrastructure for the Church to serve as a mechanism for reproducing the social relations of gender within the community vis-a-vis the authority of the Church. I argue that the movement produces a paradoxical subject occupying a dichotomous middle space between an other-worldly asceticism (theology of detachment) and the prosperity doctrine of 'entrepreneurial religion'. The trajectory of Charismatic Pentecostalism has been that of firmly placing the 'individual' at the centre of its doctrine, a subject bestowed with agency and charisms, enterprising and rebuilding, but divorced from the 'community', the world, and the realm of the profane at the same time. I problematize the process of subjectivation in Charismatic retreats, in which belief becomes an engaged subjective position or as Slavoj Zizek (2022) has argued, belief as structured

by a "material power of ideology". This would entail going beyond religion as ideology that already interpellates individuals as concrete subjects or religion as a discursive field structured by ideas and belief systems. Instead, I argue that Charismatic Pentecostalism produces a subjectivity that is embedded in its rituals, theology, practices of spirituality, hierarchies, and the political economy of the church while also being existentially 'transformed' in its moment of encounter with the 'holy spirit'. It is in the unravelling of this 'Pentecostal subjectivity' can one locate the transformation of social structures of gender, caste and community among the Catholic community of Kerala.

3.5
Everyday Production of Gendered Spaces: Cotemporary Challenges and Resilience

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Our everyday lives- played out through a variety of freedoms and constants- unfold upon and practiced through specific spaces. Despite of our assumption of spaces having neutral characteristics it always implicates a dual identity: they are both sites upon which different social identities play out in different ways. Space often constitutes different forms of normative expectations, modality and standards of behaviour. This study elaborates how spaces are gendered through examining living experiences of women from everyday perspective. The idea public sphere as presented as a domain of rationality and action historically been defined as that of men and the private sphere for women. This public-private dichotomy has the components to bolster opposite gender powers. Public space which is historically tended to be the preserve of men creates a position that reinforces male control and authority over women. Private sphere is denoted as immune of outside intervention whereas in public sphere connotation for women entails the factor of risk. Public space also represents itself as sites where women may both be allowed or afforded the security of movement as long as they behave 'as women should'. Each public space for example, streets, parks, clubs and office corners has its own protocol of ideal behaviour for both the

genders. Where men can loiter freely in public spaces women have to construct a purpose for using public space at late night. Almost every city, supposedly, have some alleys, streets or sites those are abandoned for women. Women in night clubs who wear 'revealing' dresses are often regarded as having forfeited the right (male) protection and regard. These notions also construct female body as fragile entailing the risk of harassment. Women face multiple hostile bodies in public spaces and secure their safety in many ways- by carrying a cell phone or having a large sized bag or by using weapons like pepper sprays. This paper will also study the coping strategies and how women are reclaiming those spaces. With a small-scale survey of 50 women in Kolkata this paper is trying to point out how public space operates as force of creating gender disparities and upholds different lived experience and the challenges for women.

3.6
Unmasking Invisibility: Examining Women's Participation in the Farmers' Protest of 2020 and Mainstream Media Neglect

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&

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Women farmers and agricultural laborers undertake most of the agricultural tasks. Despite the fact that women farmers and agricultural laborers perform the majority of agricultural tasks, their contributions have been disregarded, and they are hardly considered as "farmers." This research paper focuses on women's participation in the farmers' protest of 2020 in India and explores its mainstream media representation through the lenses of intersectionality, patriarchy, situatedness and agency. This paper analyzes the exceptional and unprecedented participation of women in the farmers' protest, which was greatly eclipsed by the mainstream media's portrayal of this protest as the typical male farmer protest.

This study highlights the importance of women's participation in the farmers' protest, emphasizing their role as farmers, laborers, activists, and leaders. It recognizes the institutional challenges that women confront in the agricultural sector, as well as the ways in which their contributions have often been underestimated. The study investigates the intersections of gender, caste, class, and other social identities, pointing out to the need of understanding women's experiences in the protest movement from an integrated perspective.

Furthermore, the study analyses the mainstream media's portrayal of women farmers in this protest. It reveals the stark disparity between the reality of women's significant participation and the media's representation of them as merely supporting figures, like wives, daughters, and mothers of male farmers. The research explains how skewed representations foster gender stereotypes, limit women's visibility, and discredit their major role in the protest movement.

To address this gap, the study involves a systematic literature review as well as a content analysis of the media coverage during and after the protest. The study seeks to offer a fair evaluation of the portrayal of women protesters in the mainstream media by reviewing existing research and examining media content. It aims to highlight the disparities between media representations of women protesters and their actual experiences and contributions to the protest movement.

The outcomes of this study highlight the critical need for media reform and more inclusive portrayal of women protesters as well as women farmers. The research underlines the significance of battling patriarchal norms and magnifying the voices and power of women inside protest movements by identifying the intersecting dynamics of gender, caste, and class. It advocates for a media environment that appropriately portrays the extent and nature of women's participation, challenges gender biases, and recognizes women's significant contributions to agriculture.

Finally, this study provides a deeper comprehension of the participation of women in the 2020 farmers' protest and the role of media in shaping public narrative. The paper emphasizes the importance of addressing the underrepresentation and misrepresentation of women farmers by the mainstream media. It encourages media strategies that promote gender parity, challenge stereotypes, and provide a more truthful representation of women's agency and participation within social justice movements such as the farmers' protest.

A Critical News analysis on the contribution of Social and Women's Movements towards Justice for Rape victims

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Gender Based violence is very common all over the world and over the years getting normalized is the sorry state. Physical, psychological, and structural violence on a woman's body is still perpetuated in various social, political, and cultural contexts. Violence against girls and women is on the increase and reporting has been improved in recent years. Though there are several forms of violence against women right from ,female feticide, early marriage, dowry death, domestic violence, sexual harassment and violence, molestation, immoral trafficking, honor killing etc,, rape has been recognized as a major issue in the global context. The nature, cause, and consequences of rape differ in various socio-political contexts. Rape has been perceived as a women's issue and it is pointed to women only for any kind of violence. It is necessary to inform society that it is a social issue, not a woman's issue which the feminist movements with their concerted efforts, have been doing throughout the world. In the 1970's the second wave of the women's movement created Consciousness Raising groups to intervene and raised the consciousness of "Personal is Political". Moreover, the feminist movements took rape as a serious agenda for their collective activism. In India, the anti–rape protest organized by the women's movement became popular and visible in the Mathura rape case. In the Indian religious and cultural context, the virginity of women is considered valuable and to be safeguarded. However, in this context, access to the criminal justice system is a huge challenge despite the laws being enacted and amended in India. Public protest and the legal intervention of the women's movement served as pressure groups for the government to enact laws amend the Constitution and bring changes in existing laws. Mathura and Nirbhaya rape cases brought in the two criminal law amendments in 1983 and 2013 which are the outcome of the continuous pressure and solidarity of the women's movements. Research evidenced the

contribution of the women's movement and their key role in ensuring the new law or amendments to the existing laws. Media has been playing a significant role in disseminating the ideology and demands of anti–rape campaigns of women's movements and social movements and pressurizing the law and policy makers through their continuous reporting, debating, and opinion-making. However, the media and social or women's movements have contributed each together to bring legal and social justice for the rape victims. It is in this backlog this paper has been structured to examine how media and women, or social movements played a crucial role to bring justice to specific high-profile rape cases. This paper will analyze how the news media represents the perspective and demands of women or social movements on rape cases toward justice for rape victims. For the purpose of the study, purposive sampling was used in selecting the sample. Six samples were selected based on those highly publicized by the media and highlighted by the women or social movement. Out of the six high-profile rape cases, four were selected which got national attention and nationwide news coverage, and the remaining two were selected from the Tamil Nadu context. Since, Times of India and The Hindu are the widely circulated newspapers, which have been selected for this study. The qualitative content analysis method was adopted for the analysis.

3.8
Decolonizing knowledge and practice: How women's movement and women's studies came together to build a feminist approach to addressing early marriage in India

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The act of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is often carried out "top-down" or from a distance by "professionals" as opposed to the community or group who benefits from the development intervention. There has been a tendency to use

linear logic models to understand and conceptualize interventions, even though the reality is complex, messy, and not always predictable (Batliwala and Pittman 2010; Earl, Carden and Smutylo 2001).

What would mapping change look like if it emerged from the ground-up, from grassroots work, bringing evidence from the field?

From 2014-2020, the women's studies department of a research institution, an international donor organization and 29 grassroots organizations who were affiliated to social movements, working in diverse contexts collaborated in a participatory action research project to map incremental change resulting from interventions designed to address the root causes of early and child marriage in India. The defining indicator of "success" in child marriage interventions has been delay in age at marriage, with little attention to other indicators (such as agency, mobility or voice) on transforming the quality of girls' lives. The research aimed at decolonizing conventional M&E practices, specifically around the issue of child marriage, by empowering grassroots organizations to redefine what counts as "success" (beyond age) in work with young people on a layered and complex issue like early marriage.

Through adaptation of outcome mapping methodologies, the process mapped outcomes of not just organisational work but complex changes and intangible outcomes in girls and women's lives. In doing so, it replaced a top-down perspective and practice in addressing early marriage, revealed incremental shifts that are often ignored by M&E discourses to be big wins, brought together the worlds of activism and academia and captured local efforts at social change that aligned with larger feminist goals. Most significantly, this collaboration between a women's studies centre and women's movement actor enabled the building of a complex of grassroot activism and feminist theory from the global South.

3.9

Gender Equality, Trade Unions, and the Struggle for Recognition: Examining the Subjectivity of Mid-Day Meal Workers in Kerala

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The battle for gender equality in the political system has been a subject of criticism and debate. One particular aspect that requires attention is the representation of women, which remains a contentious issue in the fight for equality. This study aims to explore the concept of women in politics by examining the perspective of gender equality in trade unions. Additionally, it investigates how class consciousness is formed among workers, focusing on mid-day meal laborers in Kerala. In Kerala, thousands of mid-day meal laborers currently work in schools. The noon meal scheme is implemented in every school in the state, with funding provided by the central and state governments in a 60:40 ratio. However, these workers are currently facing a severe crisis in fund allocation. Although the mid-day meal scheme is centrally sponsored, the delay in receiving funds from the central government has resulted in workers being denied their rightful pay. This issue places a burden not only on the workers but also on the state government. The public education system has played a crucial role in providing education to the poor and marginalized, and the mid-day meal program has been instrumental in shaping this system. Consequently, mid-day meal workers have become highly visible in schools, and strong unions have emerged to advocate for their rights. By collecting data from this working class, this paper aims to analyze their subjectivity as laborers in Kerala. One of the central questions is why this line of work is still predominantly considered a female job. Is it perceived as an extension of domestic labor traditionally associated with women? Moreover, the study seeks to identify leaders from this union who have been actively involved in mainstream politics, particularly within left-wing politics. Materialist feminists have introduced the concept of an underclass, asserting that female workers are largely peripheral to the class system, or in other words, women are positioned as an underclass. In this paper, I adopt this concept to analyze the subjectivity of mid-day meal workers as laborers. Trade unions are attempting to politicize these workers, and the paper explores whether this process can help them overcome their underclass position. This paper raises the main question of whether trade unions can enable these workers to transcend their underclass status.

3.10
Reimagining feminist solidarity and friendship in neoliberal times

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> *Tod todke bandhano ko dekho behne aye he…*
> *Woh dekho logo dekho behne aye hain*
> *Ayenge, zulm mitayenge*
> *Woh to naya zamana layenge…'*

1980s. The autonomous women's movement burst into scene much like the rhythms of this song that had captured the imagination of so many women – women who were trapped in families, women who were battling sexism in their workplace, women suffocating in abusive marriages, women struggling to be seen and heard in political organizations that still refused to see gender as a primary question - women from different backgrounds, professions, caste, class, religion, political beliefs – all of whom who were ill at ease with their worlds, their homes, their works and were struggling to breathe, grappling for a new home, came together in solidarity, resistance, rage and imagination. While the rumblings of the women's movement, of feminist politics could be felt long back since the waging of the freedom struggle, there was a novelty in the way the 80s moment brought in scores of women to talk, scream, organize, sing, dance, shout slogans, march, ideate on things that moved them, on what they construed to be 'women's issues'. The idea of sisterhood, however, soon encountered the anti-Mandal commission agitation, the rise of Hindutva politics that exposed the cracks, faultlines of any notion of sisterhood that subsumed identities of caste, religion. Furthermore, the emergence of the queer movement challenged the category 'woman' in itself raising important question on the underlying assumptions that premised the construction of universal sisterhood.

The journey of feminist movement, therefore, has also been a journey of making and remaking of ideas of sisterhood, solidarity, of the collective 'we'. While the critical interventions from identity based movements have torn down the inherent 'naturalness' of women's friendships – bringing to question the identities and political locations that make the collective 'we', it has also thrown up the challenge - how do we then think of forging bonds of resilient comradeships, of waging collective struggles in times of cancel culture and neoliberal notions of 'allyship'. Informed by and building on the debates on 'intersectionality'

(Nivedita Mennon, Mary John, David Mcnally, etc), learnings from identity based interventions in movements, and Marxist feminist interventions, this paper will examine Jodi Dean's theorization of the communicative 'we' and reflective solidarity, Devika Jain's reconfiguration of Ambedkar's concept of 'maitri' and insights from activists in the struggle to unpack how we can think of building companionship of resistances in today's times. Furthermore, as we interrogate the possibilities of friendship in organizing social relations in the new world, we will also look into the possibilities it then holds in crafting a new morality, new ethics.

3.11

Construction and Politics of Space and Women's Embodied Presence in Public University Spaces: A Case Study of Hokkolorob and Pinjra Tod

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This paper will explore the discourses around constructed space and built environment within two public universities of India- Delhi University and Jadavpur University, through the lens of gender with respect to the study of two student movements- Pinjra Tod in Delhi and Hokkolorob in Kolkata. While questions of women's safety and issues of sexual violence within educational institutes had emerged as a mainstream concern both within the student population as well as among the larger society following the 2012 Delhi rape case, discussions were predominantly couched in a rhetoric of protectionism, having scarcely "progressed" from the culture of victim-blaming. The Pinjra Tod movement could be read as calling out for a clear and foremost articulation of occupying and reclaiming space from a rights-based point of view where elements of pleasure, risk-taking, and freedom become important for women who had hitherto been denied access to these spaces or granted only conditional access. Sameera Khan, Shilpa Phadke and Shilpa Ranade in their seminal work Why Loiter?: Women and Risk on Mumbai Streets argue that the city in its very construction of the built environment innately renders itself inaccessible to women and people of other marginalities. In other words, the city becomes a site

which has been essentially constructed to cater to the upper class, upper caste, cis-heterosexual, able–bodied male. Within the site of the educational institute, a female student is molested when upon finding all women's toilets locked, she is compelled to go to the men's hostel to merely relieve herself; women in Banaras Hindu University are routinely harassed by male students within full view of campus security guards; Undergraduate female students of Allahabad Muslim University are prohibited to enter the main University library on the pretext of "lack of space", and most recently, a trans student of Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute in Kolkata was denied hostel accommodation which was won only after relentless protest from the student body. Female exclusion from the University space occurs in terms of actual architectural and infrastructural non-access as well as through gendered violence. As Phadke, Ranade, and Khan argue in their book, infrastructure and built environment is not only a reflection of social attitudes but in turn actually inform and influence social perception. Thus, lack of access or non-access for female students to crucial institutional spaces and to something as basic as a washroom reinforces, as Udita Sen writes, "the same patriarchal mind-set that sees women as not really belonging to public spaces? Deserving to be locked up (for their own safety, of course) at night?" This same attitude is reflected, replicated, and perpetuated in the form of sexual violence against female and trans students, whom male students perceive as not fully belonging to the space of the University. Keeping in mind this contextual background and students' increasing, more vocal resistance to and retaliation against gendered violence and misogynistic attitudes, how does the space of the University play out in this scenario? How is it constructed, reconstructed, and reclaimed in its contentious relationship with female bodies and what implications does it have for contemporary students' movement and the history of Indian women's movement at large? The first part of my paper will look at archival material in the form of posters, graffiti, wall writings, slogan, songs, social media articles, and pamphlets from both these movements to trace the discursive interrelation of women's rights and freedom with the politics of space. In this regard I will read Hokkolorob, after Paromita Chakravarti and Jhelum Roy, as anticipating a more radical articulation of women's embodied presence and their reclamation of public space, which is more explicitly amplified in Pinjra Tod. The second part of my paper will be based on analyses of interviews with female students regarding their individual and collective experiences with the space of the public University in terms of accessibility, sexual harassment, and overarching questions of belonging, reclamation and resistance.

3.12
Exploring the perception of gendered participation in social movements: Women and Muthanga Struggle.

Soummya Prakash

Forests play a significant role in the lives of adivasis/ indigenous people. They are the sacred living entity even for the Paniya adivasis belonging to Wayanad, Kerala. Paniyas are recognized as the numerically dominant hitherto landless adivasis of Kerala. Despite being landless, they derive the sense of belonging through their association with forests and the land of Wayanad. They along with the Adiya, another group of adivasis living in Wayanad who were also indentured slaves led the struggle at Muthanga range of forests in the month of February 2003. However, the political landscape of Kerala was smeared when the adivasis, who had occupied Muthanga suffered police violence forcing them to evacuate from the forests, which they call as 'home'.

This struggle at Muthanga, which is popularly referred as 'Muthanga Struggle' was led by C.K. Janu, an Adiya adivasi woman leader. They decided to occupy Muthanga and demanded to accelerate redistribution of land to the landless adivasi families of Wayanad. However, this struggle was brutally suppressed by the police unleashing firing on the adivasis and subsequent arrests of the leaders and also those who participated in the struggle including women and children.

Drawing from my ethnographic research among adivasis in Wayanad, this paper explores the relationship of Paniya adivasis with the land and forest of Wayanad. It also tries to understand the role, women play in sustenance of the movement and also try to guage the role of women leaders and their impact in mobilizing people in favour of their demands. This paper argues how there has always been attempts to 'infantilize' the movement leadership as it was led by woman from marginalized community. This paper also seeks to comprehend the questions of credibility and discredibility around a women leadership when she exercises her autonomy.

Capacity building of grassroots organisation to analyse service data: Learnings from an intervention project

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The area of research is a new one for several grassroots organisations, but it needs to be harnessed given their close engagement with the community. Most community-based organisations collect service data and information in different ways and record it but do not have the capacity to carry out synthesis of their own data. The organisations which are involved in providing services to young women and girls are in a key position to provide data and influence the formulation of policy, laws, and programs. Further, conducting any kind of primary research on issues like violence against women and girls (VAWG) face several ethical and methodological challenges. Thus, the service data of grassroots organisations can act as a catalyst for bringing changes in policies. Centre for Enquiry Into Health and Allied Themes (CEHAT), a Mumbai- based research organisation, undertook a project working on VAWG to develop a systematic method of analysis of their own service records by collaborating with three grassroots organisations. The project attempted to break the existing monopoly of research and generating evidence. It aimed at enabling frontline workers to reclaim ownership and management of the data produced as a result of the service provision. The process of capacity building of grassroots organisations was conceptualised with a feminist approach to deconstruct the hierarchies between civil society organisations and the research community. This essentially implies that the team member of grassroots organsiations were at the centre of whole process and led the process of knowledge creation. The process placed the experiences and perspectives of frontline workers with least power at the core. CEHAT team made efforts to enable grassroots organisations to decide the issue for analysis based on the work of each organisation. Capacity building process of analysing data was customised for each organisation depending on availability of resources with the organisation. The frontline workers were trained on data validation, cleaning, and analysis in Microsoft Excel. The organisations worked on their own existing datasets to understand the gaps and need to strengthen their documentation and Management Information System (MIS). Through the capacity building, the organisations were able to generate useful evidence on issues like adolescent

pregnancy among sexual violence survivors, role of community para- legal workers in providing legal aid to marginalised communities and joint meeting as an intervention strategy in cases of domestic violence. The findings were useful in highlighting the importance of an intersectional approach while addressing social inequities and achieving a change at a large scale. The evidence helped organisations to sharpen their intervention strategies and identify new areas of work. For example, Jan Sahas analysis showed the importance of working with health sector in cases of sexual violence. This project has provided insights on how analysis of service data can enable organisations to become more effective advocates.

3.14
Mapping Ideological Threats and Backlash against the # MeToo Movement in India

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The #MeToo Movement is a watershed movement in the arena of postmodern intersectional feminism prominently known for creating a discourse and narrative of women survivors of sexual assault and other forms of gender-based violence. Hollywood actress Alyssa Milano, one of the pioneering voices of the movement gave a call for the survivors of sexual assault across the world to share their stories of assault, trauma, and survival, with the hashtag #MeToo on Twitter and other social networking sites in 2016 which gave the movement a vast impetus. Subsequently, it reached India in October 2017, when Raya Sarkar, a Dalit law student shared a crowdsourced list of male sexual predators in South-Asian academic spaces on Facebook. The list was based on the testimonies of multiple survivors of sexual harassment and assault. This led to the hosting of debates, dialogues, and discussions on gender-based violence in academic spaces, empowering many women to share their stories of trauma, pain, and survival thereby leading to formation of digital and physical consciousness-raising spaces fostered on the bond of collective sisterhood.

The new movement, a prime manifestation of digital feminism, spread widely to

non-digital spaces as well reaching out to formally inaccessible women owing to their restricted digital and physical mobility. The #MeToo movement that originally advocated the cause of systematically suppressed marginalised women later accelerated into a movement solely representing the traumatised voices of upper-class, upper-caste, urban cisgendered privileged women, excluding dalit, adivasi, disabled and other marginalised women, drawing widespread backlash (Susan Faludi) and protests. One major ideological threat imposed from "outside" upon the #MeToo movement and its underlying feminist epistemology and praxis in the Indian context was the emergence of Men's Rights Activists (MRAs) and Men's Rights Movement (MRM).

The MRM in India, (originating in early 1990s) has introduced a counter-narrative discourse representing suppressed voices of heteronormative middle-class, Savarna (upper-caste) urban cisgendered men apparently victimised by "false cases" of dowry, domestic violence and sexual harassment filed by feminist women.. The MRM became prominent in the wake of the #MeToo movement in India indicated through the viral usage of the hashtag #MenToo which mainly aimed at refuting and undermining the historical cause of the former. The article will map the ideologies, theory, and praxis of Men's rights groups and activists which centres majorly on anti-feminist propagandist politics, and also assess its intersections with right-wing politics and activism. Therefore, the major research question that the paper would aim at addressing is: How do internal contradictions and resistances amongst feminists along with external forces such as right wing groups and men's rights activists/movement challenge the pathways of contemporary Indian feminist movements and thinking in the context of the #MeToo Movement. A self-reflexive feminist lens (Srimati Basu) from the self-conscious identity of a male feminist subject (Nivedita Menon) shall be the adopted research methodology.

3.15
Utlilising available institutional structures for women's grassroots activism: The case of Samta Sakhis of Sheopur, Madhya Pradesh

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In rural India, one of the largest public programmes that mobilise millions of women is the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM). The Self- Help Groups (SHGs) and their federations at the village, block and district level are structures that involve millions of women in thrift and credit activities, connecting them to the formal financial system. However, mobilising does not necessarily mean feminist organizing, which is about collective conscientization or collectively raising a political or social agenda. A lot of evidence from the ground points to the fact that SHG women mobilise for individual/familial financial gain without any collective vision or experience of social change. Despite this overwhelming evidence, there are also instances of collectivities and solidarities that move beyond financial transactions, to create social change that disrupt existing social and gender norms. The Gender Justice Programme (GJP), a gender pilot within the NRLM framework led by ANANDI in Sheopur, Madhya Pradesh is one such instance.

The GJP took a multipronged approach to gendering the NRLM space. It focused on strengthening community institutional structures such the Cluster Level Federation (CLF-SHG federations at the Block level); creating community level feminist leaders, known as Samta Sakhis, who could lead processes of social change from the ground; and bringing about policy level changes at state and national level. Research on the GJP by the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) showed that this approach helped build a strong cadre of women at the grassroots level who, given their location within the system (Samta Sakhis were Community Resource Persons attached to the CLFs), were slowly but surely changing it from within, and creating space, desire and capacity for social change led by SHGs and their federations.

This paper focuses on the role of grassroots activism led by these Samta Sakhis which ranged from support to domestic violence survivors to access to various entitlements such as pensions or ration to social action for public goods such as drinking water or primary health centres. The paper also discusses the ways in which Samta Sakhis helped establish systems and platforms for identifying, raising and acting upon various needs of the rural community, especially members of SHGs and their federations. In so doing, they were also able to establish collaborations and synergies with various other institutions of governance and administration, such as Panchayats and Block Development Offices. This helped them and the community to leverage multiple platforms for bringing about desired change while ensuring minimum backlash.

Finally, the paper raises critical questions about what differentiates the work of Samta Sakhis from that of last mile service delivery, something typical of most Government supported frontline workers? What are the potential and bounds of grassroots activism within an institutional framework of a Government programme?

3.16
Love and solidarity: Locating gender inside the adivasi student associations in Assam

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Abstract: The paper examines the notions of love and solidarity inside the adivasi student associations. The idea of love and solidarity becomes important to this paper because it also scrutinises the issue of gender in relation to love for and within the associations. The paper is based on yearlong ethnographical research with the student activists and there are several stories of love and solidarity within the adivasi student politics. Most of the activists have characterised and seen love and solidarity as a political act. The paper questions how love can be looked at regarding its revolutionary potential during the adivasi student movements in Assam. Such acts become the catalysts to reshape one's relationship with what

could be a chauvinist and ethno-nationalistic political history of the region and carve out new possibilities. In Assam, All Assam Students' Union have captured and dominated the space of student politics, and the Assam Movement (1979-85) is a project of those privileged by caste, class, and gender within the 'Assamese' society.

The love and solidarity within the marginalised student associations of adivasi communities may be perceived as reclaiming of rights, esteem, and dignity. Hence, the project of love and solidarity within the adivasi student association is a recognition of scorned ethnicities and languages and an assertion of self-worth in the face of such exclusion and rejection. To examine love and solidarity in the paper has helped me to explore the resonance of activism within All Tea Tribe Student Association (ATTSA) and how it engages with bonding and solidarity. The paper also critically analyses the solidarity and bonding between the male activists who effectively excluded women within the organisation and as esteemed persons worthy of being 'loved'. Such domain of politics helps me to reconsider the concept of love for and within the adivasi student associations. The paper tries to think through love and solidarity from an ethnographic perspective with the narratives about love and through ethnographic observations. It is important to note that, a newly formed adivasi women's wing All Adivasi Women's Association of Assam (AAWAA) provides a different and more complicated image of the adivasi student association politics. The paper studies how AAWAA as an organisation is reworking the political questions of work, labour and identity from the perspective of gender discrimination.

3.17
Perspective of the Bhaujan Women on education and Women Movement in India

Vishakha

We are living in 'modern society' perhaps the women's education level and struggle at the same level as earlier particularly for the women who belong to rural areas and who are first generation learners. Even though we are standing in the 21st century where India is independently able to launch the satellite on the Moon, whereas issues of women are still lagging behind exclusively for Bahujan women. There are few women who are able to come forward and share their

experiences but the majority of the women still live the same life; the life which compels an individual to live for others. Women rarely connect their education with dignity, freedom, liberty, or other kind of right which they supposedly do after taking the education since the main objective of the education is to conscious individuals against exploitation. The influence of western on India during 1910 to 1920, a number of social organizations started to take shape like Mahila sanitize, women's clubs, Ladies societies etc. Forbes,G,(1984). Interestingly it spread to big cities and explicitly where Britisher was present. Later, two additional all-India organizations were established in relation to women, the National Council of women in India (1925) and the All-India women's conference (1926). This happened in the heart of India. Simultaneously, at the ground the rise of few marginalized woman like Bahinabai (1628-1700) who wrote the book of Atmamanivedena*. Gives something to which has never been talked to anybody else earlier. In 1848 Savitribai Phule, she was the first Indian feminist who founded the first women's school in Pune. In the Indian context the women's movement played a vital role in the Britain era. In the first decade following independence, the legal status of women was to change after the implementation of the constitution which recognised sex equality and gave other legislations act The Hindu Marriage act (1955), The Succession act (1956) and most importantly brought Hindu Code Bill which makes women's life more easier that earlier. Women's studies in the Indian university system began in (1975), similarly 1st National conference on women's studies was held in (1981) and it stressed the need for establishment of women studies at Universities. My point is even after so much milestone work in the field of women there is not enough effect on the ground particularly in the life of Bahujan women. Women have to fight with their own parents for education. The peculiar thing is that education has become a tool to get a perfect groom for marriage. In India's patriarchal society, thinking is still narrow minded where women's careers depend upon several factors such as nature of work, time, duration of work, salary, commitment towards family, marriage, etc. As per my way of thinking, education changes our perspective particularly to raise against the wrong. After spending time with education somewhere I feel the problem of quality of education which we are lacking behind. Education is mainly seen as a medium of income instead of cultivation of mind. Lastly, but not the least Bhaujan women have limited access to resources which are making their struggle more difficult than others. Therefore as a Bahujan woman I want to at the beginning note the narration of the Bahujan women and want to speak about their hurdles of the path. Therefore, we will be able to arrange something to tackle with.

3.18
Janamma Amma:
A Philosophical Tradition and
Historical Movement of Prathyaksha Raksha
Daiva Sabha (PRDS)1939-1985

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The planned study examines how communities in the PRDS have fared under Janamma Amma's direction after the death of Appachan, who oversaw the movement from 1939 until 1985. It will examine how the Dalits in Kerala left their subservient lifestyles and how the social environment eventually grew. The mother was widely known as the "Blessed Mother". The main concerns to solve included financial matters and hereditary claims. To solve the financial crisis, the mother did not accept a single penny from someone outside the Sabha•. Instead, she accepted small sums of money, rice, and other things from the members of the Sabha, and convinced the members of the exact amount of money she made in the meetings she made each month. "The circulars were born out of the conviction that history should be written with knowledge. Moreover, it prioritized education and envisioned success in the field of education, trade, and other fields. Overcoming all obstacles, she took the lead and succeeded. A society emerging from slavery is gaining wealth, power, and politics by paving its path because of the land they have worked for and the wealth they have amassed, and the strong leadership of Janamma Amma has led them to do so. The growth of PRDS can be divided into two periods, one till 1939 and the other from 1939 after. This period was also a time of strong growth and educational development of the sabha. Her leadership paved the growth of sabha in all areas of development and education. The sabha that was diverging into numerous streams was unified and the growth to 2 lakh disciples is because of her leadership strategy and success. It investigated the cultural, economic, and social progress of eradicating that spiritual slave past, which served as the philosophical foundation for PRDS Sabha.

3.19

Shouting "AAZADI!" on Campuses: Mobilization, Empowerment, and Experiences of Women Student Activists in Indian Higher Educational Institutions

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Public Universities and Higher Educational Institutions have proved to be critical spaces where women and other marginalized sections have achieved a certain level of mobility both spatially and socially. The university campuses have served not only the educational purposes of Indian women but have also provided them avenues to mobilize themselves politically, both as women and as students. This has led to the creation of various student organizations on university campuses dedicated specifically to women's issues and has massively enhanced the participation of female students in the existing student wings of various political parties. The students' movement has democratized itself as a result of such enhanced participation of women and diversification of its leaders and cadres, while the women activists through such everyday engagement with politics and activism in university campuses have found an escape from their social world and have achieved a sense of personhood for themselves which was hitherto denied to them. This paper aims at capturing the lived experiences of women student activists in three of India's Premier Public Universities: Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), University of Delhi (DU), and Jamia Milia Islamia (JMI). By relying on in-depth interviews of women activists coming from different student groups and ideologies, the paper attempts to bring into relief the mechanisms through which student activism inside university campuses has helped them craft their own self-image and achieve a certain level of emancipation from the restrictive imaginaries of their social milieu. Apart from interviews, the movement's slogans, posters, and other mobilizing tools are also analyzed to delve deeper into the aesthetics of the movement and how such an assertion develops a sense of empowerment among its participants and leaders. The paper is largely divided into three major thematic sections apart from an introduction that provides a concise history of women as part of the students' movement in India. The first section 'Break from the past' deals with the substantive changes in the lives of these activists enabled by their education as well as participation in student activism. The second section on 'Art and aesthetics as assertion'

throws light on how women as student leaders coin their own slogans, make their own posters, and work on the aesthetics of their movement and in what ways such a process helps them feel liberated and empowered as individuals and as a collective. Lastly, the section on 'Converging roots, diverging destinies' interrogates what remains shared and conflicted among women activists from different ideological and political backgrounds and what implications such solidarities and disagreements have for the women's movement as a whole.

3.20
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Saheli was founded in 1981 as a crisis intervention centre to address the rising violence against women. In the four decades since then, a lot has happened. New categories of violence have emerged leading to new strategies of countering it; we have learnt to negotiate with governments across the spectrum of left-centre-right; questions of caste, religion, and sexuality have ruptured the way the political agendas were set, and the way the category of 'women' had been homogeneously defined. Even though we are under no delusion that law is necessarily a tool of emancipation in itself, we haven't stopped fighting for laws and legal reforms that ensure justice, equality, and a life of dignity for all. The social history of the feminist movement(s) is long, and the political education it has imparted has been immense, and not without its challenges. However, what we have experienced as a political group and witnessed, across movements, a sense of fatigue setting in. Neoliberal capitalism has not only dispossessed the marginalised people, but it has alienated people from organised political actions and movements. The failing economy; increasing unemployment; unbridled neocolonialism, corporatisation, and militarisation; rising fascism and State repression; violence against marginalised communities and people; the alienating labour regimes that we are all part of; broken systems of health care and social security; and the pandemic, have made the fight for material safety far more critical and necessary, than the political ones. It results in a fatigue that has been difficult to understand, articulate and outdistance. In this paper, we hope to locate the changing vantage points at the different timepoints of history, we will try to reflect on how collectively the movement developed new ways of thinking and negotiating. The political spaces that autonomous voices enjoyed have totally been taken away as a result of the severe repression of dissenting voices by the

State and fascist ideologies. Autonomous feminist groups like Saheli are facing a crisis including that of getting new volunteers and the crisis of larger collective/movement of not being out there, and the incapacity of the movement to create pressure/effect change. There is a need to analyse how the state is 'engaging' with the women's question – it's silence and actions. There is also a crisis of larger comrade-networks/larger networks that have been dwindling away. At an individual level, how do we talk of the crisis of material security; care work within family and marriage and a failed critique of it; end of volunteership; etc. and a constant pressure to respond to challenges – no time to develop strategies and think through because the state is constantly throwing challenges at us. We are losing our vantage point – and that's a real crisis. This paper is an effort to articulate the challenges that the feminist movement is facing under the current disposition at the centre, and the strategies that we hope will help us meet the challenge of Fascism and political fatigue

3.21
'Seeing' as Feminist Politics: Changing Understandings of the Political in India's Autonomous Women's Movement

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How do feminists define politics and power? What consequences do these definitions have for feminist activism and practice? In this paper, I explore these questions through my research on India's Autonomous Women's Movement (AWM). Discussions of the politics of the AWM since the 2000s have largely centred on what is seen as it's depoliticisation, resulting from NGOisation and theoretical moves from 'women' to 'gender.' However, I argue that rather than depoliticisation, the movement has undergone a shift in how it's activists conceptualise politics. Over the course of AWM history, politics has moved from being seen as acts of intervention and mobilisation to being seen in terms of acts of interpretation and the cultivation of a breadth and depth of insight. I argue that while this shift has allowed AWM activists to become analytically sharper,

for example around issues of differences between women, it has also led to a sense of malaise and ineffectiveness. The movement's conceptualisation of what feminist politics entails has made it harder for it to be effective in the sense in which it defines the term: as actually bringing about change.

3.22
Cinematic Reforms Through Sorority: Women in cinema collective (WCC) as a Social Movement

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The proposed study positions itself within the revolutionary formulation of a women's collective in Malayalam cinema. The necessitating condition for the collectivisation had been the violent patriarchal framework of the film industry revealed through the sexual assault of a famous Malayalam actress in 2017. The perennial realisation about gendered precarity in cinema became so apparent in the events that followed, that a group of women actors, filmmakers and technicians mobilised together in retaliation. The collective sisterhood that is projected by WCC had and continues to pose threat to the patrifocal mechanism of Malayalam cinema which becomes evident in the everyday discussions on the ontology of women's collective- by means of trivialising women and the collective. The collective, works for gender parity amidst false narratives of utopian working structures mass-marketed by certain sections of the industry. WCC has been able to effectuate pragmatic changes in the Malayalam cinema industry, planning and seeking reasoned policy changes and holding accountable stakeholders of Malayalam film industry, including the government despite continued unfavourable conditions for women. The study would use the working mechanism of WCC as a social movement to understand the concerns of casting couch, labour movement and safe working space in a technologised framework. Further, an attempt to contextualise it in the broader history of British women's cinema movement, global women's labour collectives and #metoomovement will also be made to question the circularity and non-temporality of women's issues in a bid to theorise the revolutionary potential of women's movement in the contemporary time.

3.23
Gendering labour:
Situating 'Pembillai Orumai',
Munnar, Kerala

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The study aims to examine "Pembillai Orumai," a women's workers' movement that arose from the oppressive and exploitative structures of the production site, namely Munnar, one of the prominent tea plantation site in Kerala. This is viewed as the movement/assertions of women workers, as they have demanded a rise in wages and better conditions at work. This social fact prompts us to explore the historical context in which labour movements emerged in Kerala, particularly in plantation sectors of Western Ghats. Anna Lindberg, a Swedish labour historian who studied the historical process of class, caste, and gender among the cashew workers of Kerala noted that the labour movements in Kerala were largely viewed from a Marxist perspective. To substantiate these aspects, she further pointed out that women workers are aware of the exploitative nature of capitalism but not of patriarchy. The capitalist exploitative ideology and the restructuring of the economy have impoverished all the workers worldwide, which has paved the way for the process of feminization of labour. These aspects are well studied and documented in the history and sociology of labour. However, the experience and identity of women as workers, as well as the exploitative and oppressive patriarchal structures, have received less attention. This study is set against this backdrop to investigate the lives of women, first under patriarchy and then under capitalism. The experience and identity of the women workers of the "Pembillai Orumai" thus brought forth the sociology of the evolution of group identity and collective consciousness among the women workers of tea plantations and investigated how this labour movement/assertions enabled us to understand gender consciousness and gendered workspace evolution. In addition to secondary sources and a critical review of literature, the study used personal narratives, fieldwork, and women's testimonies to contextualize 'Pembillai Orumai' as a sign of women's struggle against the patriarchal and capitalist structures around them. The tea plantations in Munnar thus presented a curious case of feminization of the labour in the pre-structural adjustment program era, which in turn resulted in the feminization of resistance. Women in the movement attempted to transform and subvert the capitalist social relations

that subjugated them as gendered and isolated individuals performing the role of provider of social welfare and social reproduction. Though the immediate cause of this distress was an issue of economic concern, it was the manifestation of resentment of patriarchy and capitalism's centuries-long oppression of women that trapped women in emotional neo-bondage, which is catalyzed intersectional vulnerability.

3.24
The "Lal Chunar" Movement: Local Women's Activism against the "Natra Custom" in Western Madhya Pradesh

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In central India, specifically in and around the Malwa region, there is a prevalent customary practice among some caste-Hindu and tribal communities called "natra" (ukrjk), a form of remarriage performed by women. Natra may happen when a woman is widowed or left by her husband. It may also happen when a married woman herself decides to leave her legal spouse and live with another person. In either case the "new husband" has to pay a considerable amount of "jhagda" money, as termed in the local language, to the woman's former in-laws, sometimes to her natal family as well.

Rajgarh District of Madhya Pradesh is among where the natra custom is prevailingly observed. Many consider natra as a form of exploitation of women given its close connection with child marriage particularly in this area, as well as the fact that it involves money transaction – especially that disputes over "jhagda" payments often turn violent and it is mostly the women and their families who face tremendous harassment. Determined to eradicate the practice of natra, the district administration of Rajgarh, over the decade, has been carrying out campaigns to create public awareness where slogans like "daughters are not cattle for sale" were vigorously raised, whereas in recent years, legal actions have been increasingly taken when disputes over natra and jhagda occur.

In 2019, "Lal Chunar", an organisation composed of a group of young girls and women, most of which are "victims" of natra, began to catch media attention

in Rajgarh. These women dress up in red sarees, rushing to one village after another to stop panchayat meetings that are called to settle jhagda issues, and to provide legal support to women who are harassed for natra disputes. The district administration was responsive to Lal Chunar's activism; moreover, the issue of natra was for the first time brought forth at the national level in Rajya Sabha following the emergence of Lal Chunar. However, despite the thrilling energy in the beginning, Lal Chunar's activism seems to have lost momentum in the next year.

Lal Chunar's activism has interesting political implications. In the picture, there were national debates like Triple Talaq and the CAA controversies, the role of the Congress leaders at various levels, and the confrontations between the Congress and BJP. This paper, therefore, attempts to unpack the spectrum of Lal Chunar's movement by situating it in the specific context where it took place, and hopes to bring out more nuances of the public discourse on natra.

3.25

The Aftermath of Farmers' Suicides: Farm Widows and the Mapping of Power for Social Action

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The Marathwada region in Maharashtra (India) is historically prone to long periods of drought. In the face of declining water tables and the heavy dependence of agriculture on seasonal rains, the farming community in the region remains saddled with heavy indebtedness and low yields. The region is also among the epicenters of farmer suicides in the state. In this paper, we engage with a much neglected community affected by farmer suicides – the widows of the farmers, who bear the burden of the family. The paper draws upon participatory-action based research conducted with farm widows in the Latur and Osmanabad districts of Maharashtra and outlines an attempt at collectivizing the women such that they can effectively engage with the state and other stakeholders. The paper is divided into two parts. In the first part, we discuss the power structures in which

the lives of farm widows remain embedded. For exploring these structures, we make use of the framework of social power in Batliwala (2018) and the different questions of "who gets what, who does what, who decides what, and who sets the agenda". We provide for elaborate narratives from the field to showcase how the lived experiences of farm widows fit into the different questions. In the second part, we outline the efforts at empowering the women by facilitating a transition from the category of subordination and "power over" to those of "power within", "power to" and "power with". While the women do claim some agency with other stakeholders who influence their lives, they distinctly felt powerless in their interactions with the state. All the women who attempted making claims of the state for fitting into governmental welfare schemes found themselves struggling to understand and fulfil the bureaucratic requirements of documentation. Thus, they were being denied benefits officially meant for them. As an outcome of the research, we outline the formation of a collective of farm widows titled Wadarai Prakalp (or The Banyan Initiative) through the group of co-inquirers. The initiative is oriented towards collective action by the farm widows for addressing two key challenges faced by them – lack of inclusion in governmental welfare schemes and the difficulties of transition from farm-based to non-farm based incomes. This article forms the background research for Wadarai Prakalp, an initiative for supporting farm widows in the Latur and Osmanabad districts of Maharashtra (India). We are grateful to all the respondents, ASHA and anganwadi workers who participated in the study. We thank People's Archive of Rural India (PARI) and HALO Medical Foundation, Andur for making this research possible at different stages.

3.26
Fat Feminism: Evolution, Developments and Challenges

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Body has always been a central point of discussion in history. The meaning and social acceptability of bodies, especially female bodies, have kept changing through the years according to the normative boundaries set by the society. With slim and slender bodies considered ideal and acceptable, fatness is mostly perceived as

an absolute negative thing. Sofie Hafen in her book Happy Fat writes, "Fat is not an inherently negative word. Fat is, if anything, neutral. But it can be beautiful, it can be loved, it can be absolutely magnificent. You can be fat and sexy, fat and healthy, fat and happy". (3) Beyond its medical deliberations, fatness is also a gendered, cultural and social phenomenon. Fat feminism emerged as a movement incorporating body positivity and feminist theories. It challenges and critiques the societal norms surrounding body size and weight. It seeks to address and combat fatphobia and the stigmatisation of larger bodies. Fat feminists advocate for the rights and dignity of fat individuals, challenging weight-based discrimination in various areas such as healthcare, employment and media representation. They emphasise the importance of body autonomy and reject the notion that health and worth are determined solely by body size or weight. Fat feminism is closely related to the field of fat studies, which is an interdisciplinary academic field that examines the social, cultural and political aspects of fatness and body size. Fat feminism is one of the critical perspectives within fat studies, focussing specifically on the intersection of fatness and feminism. It analyses how gender, power and societal expectations intersect with body size and weight. It aims to create spaces for dialogue, research and activism that challenge weight-based discrimination and thereby promote social justice for people of all body sizes. Fat feminism thus works to promote a more inclusive and accepting society for people of all body sizes.

This paper attempts to trace the development of fat studies and fat feminism as a social movement and the circumstances that led to their formation. It also tries to locate fat feminism within the broader feminist landscape during the third wave of feminism. Focussing on the various modes of activism, latest developments in the body positivity movement and challenges faced by the movement, this paper would bring to light the need for inclusivity, acceptance and respect for all, irrespective of gender, body size and weight.

3.27

Making New Changes -
A Study of Women's Protests
Through Digital Platform

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Since the time of Seneca Falls Convention (1848) women's protests and activism gradually took shape of Feminist movements classified as First Wave, Second Wave, Third Wave. The contemporary times have captured some of the other changes in the form of waves which are termed as Fourth Wave and Fifth Wave feminist movements. Each of the waves created certain changes beginning from women's enfranchisement to their right to abortion, motherhood, divorce and many more. Globalization has brought so many changes in the lives of human beings irrespective of their genders. Within this broad framework women have achieved certain things but the list of yet to be achieved things are long enough. Feminist activist movements were not only restricted to the western culture. The Orient and the Occident both played crucial roles to claim women's rights through the form of activism and protests.

The digital revolution has initiated a new avenue for feminist protests and movements. If properly utilized, digital space can improve the accessibility of organizing women's collective steps to bring significant changes in their condition. The common structural inequalities can come up in the form of women's narratives shared through the digital platforms to make it accessible to a global audience. Feminist activism and digital platform share an inextricable link with each other. The booming use of technology has made it possible to merge the physical with the virtual, thus creating more opportunities for everyone. A woman, if harassed at a public place, can live stream it and she can thus make a platform of public protest through posting the event. Democratization of feminist movement has been widespread with the help of digital tools like blogging and social media.

The present paper attempts to focus on Indian women's use of digital spaces as a means of protest. Social media platforms have brought significant changes in women's lives. My paper will try to analyze this issue from an intersectional cyber feminist perspective. I will try to bring out the following issues in my proposed paper

i) How is digital activism affecting women's lives?

ii) Is it possible for the digital platforms to function as an independent body of online feminism in contrast to offline/ field -based women's movements?

iii) Is there any major conflict between the two?

iv) The issue of online misogyny.

3.28
Anatomy of a careful Protest: Shaheenbagh and its ethos of care

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One lasting memory that I have of Shaheenbagh movement relates to the commendable hospitality of the elderly women managing the protest site. Everyday a group of protesters would work tirelessly with other members of their community to cook food for the thousands of protestors present there. Such was their hospitality that not even visitors would go hungry if they were in the tent during the day. I recall one such incident from a late afternoon at the site when the protesters in charge of serving lunch had mistakenly served me twice. I reminded them that I had had my lunch an hour ago to which the dadi sitting next to me replied, 'have another plate, don't be shy, 'Ise apna ghar hi samjho!' (Think of this as your home).' While I couldn't help but be amused at the comment initially (who in their right minds would think of an often imagined to be a violent and volatile protest site as home?), the sentiment, in retrospect, helped me think more critically about the strong ethos of care that the women had built and enacted at the protest site. It struck me that perhaps this was the strategy that gave this protest its unique character, that of care.

The Care Collective in their Care Manifesto ask an important question, 'how do we begin to address the pervasiveness of carelessness?' The answer, they argue, is 'a progressive vision of a world that takes the idea of care as its organising principle seriously.' They suggest that to achieve that vision, care needs to be prioritised not only in the domestic sphere but in all spheres — 'from our kinship groups and communities to our States {..]; and it has to be done by building on the 'wealth of examples' of 'care-in- practice' that already exists in the society The 2019 historic

women-led protest at Shaheenbagh, I would argue, was a materialisation of that 'progressive vision' where the protesters built on their knowledge of 'care-in-practice' in the domestic sphere to address the larger issue of the 'pervasiveness of carelessness' in the governance of the country (2020, p. 19).

At Shaheenbagh, the women protesters used their experience in the devalued caring practices of parenting, nursing, and nurturing to create a novel narrative of political resistance. The protest in with its leadership (diffuse and rotational), unique curation of the site (replete with care structures like protest library, dispensary, and a lawyers tent), and character (inclusionary and non-violent) reflected the ethos of care that the protesters built to meet their care needs towards themselves, their families, their fellow protesters, and at large, their community. The protest library that gave the protesters' children a 'safe space' to learn, play and develop political awareness, the dispensary that took care of the medical needs their small children, the legal tent that protected their husbands, brothers and fathers from state repression, were all thought of and set up by these women so that they could balance perfectly their responsibilities of care alongside their participation in the movement. Through the protest, these women not only displayed astute political awareness but also compelling moral salience of attending to the needs of the community they felt responsibility for (Held, 2006). They protested to seek care with care, and in the process pointed towards the relevance and significance of and overarching politics of care in democratic polities, They fulfilled what care ethicists believe is an important function of ethics of care, 'to shift personal and moral decisions into wider socio-political context to see how care ethics can address questions of social injustice.' (Held, 2006).

My article will take into consideration feminist ethicist Joan Tronto's three part phenomenology of care (caring about, caring for and caring with) study the ethos of care built at Shaheenbagh (1993) and in the process look into how caring can be imagined as an alternative to the existing non-violent methods of staging resistance.

3.29

Women is Active or Passive in Environmental movements: A study on Athirappilly Anti dam Movement Kerala

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The economic oriented developmental projects often degrade the natural resources and community life. The global world had witnessed the various struggles and protest against these projects. The women are often seen as the forerunners for the environmental movements across the global. The deprivation and vulnerability of their situation compel them to take the leadership of this movement and fight against for their rights and access to the environmental resources. In rural live, the women's life and livelihoods are depends on the natural resources. Often the development projects neglect the rights of the women over natural resources. The deprivation of these rights and access affect the day to day life of women. From eco-feminist perspectives women are often deprived of the benefits from the developmental projects sponsored by the men and their capitalism. The researcher made exploratory mixed methodology study where the researcher collected the data from the household survey as well as from the indepth interviews with the participants and this paper is from the qualitative data of the study. In this study, the researcher tries to explores relation of women and nature in the Athirappilly and what are the factors that enables these community women,(most are dalits and tribals) to oppose development projects by the government and support environmental protection. The study shows the severe social economic and environmental impact of the project on women's livelihoods. The water crisis caused by the projects has also affected women's lives, making them to come to the come for front of the social movement against the dam. The basic livelihood of the area is hit by the project. Moreover the biodiversity of the area also disturbed. These consciousnesses among the community made them to lead the movement. The participation of the women in the movement became path of their self-reflection and which resulted in changes in their life.

3.30
The Narrative of Social Movement in India and Women's Activism: A Study of Manipur

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In the month of June the Indian Army shared a video titled " Demystifying Myth of Peaceful Blockade led by Manipuri Women" and asked people to support the humane face of army operations. The video made many incriminating allegations against Manipuri women like 'fleeing the insurgents'. The move by Indian army was debated on social media but not very vehemently protested . The incident ignited the discussion of activism of Manipuri women which has a long turbulent history. The Meira Paibis or the women torch-bearers of Manipur has long history of activism that is not always limited to women's issue. The agency of women in this activism is very strong as they protest many statist policies. But the question is how the narrative of social movement in India has dealt with this activism. Women's movement in post-independent India usually acquires a small space within the broader narrative of social movement and it is usually located within the new social movement. In this context what is the position of activism of Manipuri women becomes a crucial issue. Intersectionality is instrumental in determining this situation. In this backdrop,the present paper would like to examine the narrative of social movement in India and try to locate the position of Manipuri Women's activism in it. If it finds any marginalization It would also seek to explore the reasons behind that. As a methodology the paper would use secondary sources and analyse them using the theoretical framework of social movement.

3.31
Looking Beyond the 'Phases' of Indian Feminist Movement

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Indian Feminism and women's movement in India is not synonymous; a distinction drawn between them shows that the former if read within the (post)-colonial rhetoric, is a transitioning ideological force having its essence stemming from the cornucopia of mythical fables, folklore, tales of heroism, while the latter (Indian women's movement) is purely a 'feminist praxis' . It is this very feminist praxis that theorises Indian feminism.

Conscious-raising and emancipatory politics have been the harbingers of Indian-feminist- movement; wherein bodies with inscribed histories, likeness and proximity and "family resemblance " become the cartographies of women's movement. By tracing the roots of 'the social' through the nineteenth century, and its formation, the aim of this paper, is therefore not to provide a bibliographic account of various factions within the feminist movement in India, because in doing so contemporary feminists tend to invoke in what I call an "inter-generational ignorance." In this paper, I argue against the 'phases' of women's movement and go beyond this logic and create a critical affirmative dialogue within feminism.

It is my effort to argue against a unified 'beginning' of Indian feminism, and yet choose a "time" as it is imperative (and often a disciplinary requirement) to critically analyse and compare modes of thought, impinged by community, individual realities, and institutional and disciplinary positionalities. Time in this sense, then serves as an 'evidence' visiblising the gaps and disjuncture in the discourse. The structure of the paper will follow a relational analysis of the analytical categories imperative to the course of the Indian feminism vis-à-vis movement; a) Experience, b) Women's writing, c) Activism.

It is my contention to prove despite of the pit-falls the women's movement in India, it did open certain epistemic categories that were later (re) assessed by a next generation of feminists. A critique in this sense is a mode of (re) thinking and questioning the established hypothesis tracing it to its theoretical postulates.

3.32
Feminist organising and women from the middle class

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In India, women from the middle class are typified in media and popular culture as possessing a set of values and characteristics that strike a socially desirable balance between modernity and tradition. Middle class women are a category that has served the creation of a nationalist discourse around economic advancement circumscribed by cultural boundaries of respectability defined by men. These boundaries control women's embodiment, their behaviours and consumption and in doing so consolidate the notion of being "progressive" while averting any 'patriarchal crises' (Gilbertson, 2014). However, this kind of a rendering of middle-class women also runs the danger of essentialising women as being co-opted and conniving collaborators who are agents of their own subordination. This paper seeks to question such a rendering. Do women from the middle class largely occupy spaces of acquiescence and submission, deference and quiet acceptance to patriarchy in their marital relationship? How do they negotiate with patriarchy on an everyday basis, what meanings can be made of such negotiations? What are the contours of this journey and what navigational tools do women use in navigating this space?

This paper seeks to advance the views that it is important to acknowledge and recognise the agency embedded in both extraordinary and seemingly innocuous negotiations and actions, undertaken by middle class women, in the everyday, to challenge patriarchy embedded in intimate partner relations. Although these may not lead to structural changes, it impacts the practice of patriarchy at an everyday individual level and by doing so keeps alive the possibility of an alternative reality for women. The paper will draw from narratives of 24 middle class women from three metro and one tier three city. It will interrogate the notion of agency as conceptualised by Saba Mahmood (2005) and examine experiences of seeming acquiescence, subversion and resistance; and the range of positions women can occupy between these two ends of the continuum.

The paper will highlight that only do women exploit several positions along this continuum, but they also arrive at these positions from very different sets of motivations. Many have challenged patriarchal practices openly with a view to shift the power balance; but a vast majority have been subversive, non-confrontational and not been necessarily driven by liberatory politics or in

pursuit of an autonomous, sovereign status. Their acts of subversion are a form of agency which they have executed by mobilising internal resources in pursuit of enhanced options, alternatives/ choices and sometimes in pursuit of goals of justice and fairness. The women who were exposed to feminist organising highlights that the presence of such a political understanding offered a huge bulwark of support and enabled them to process their experiences as emanating from a larger normative system that subordinates women. But their narratives also highlight the struggles, dilemmas and predicaments that have complicated their act of assuming absolute stands and positions in terms of walking away or seeking a permanent closure to the marriage.

The underlines the need for feminist organising to engage with strategies around mobilisation of middle-class women as active allies in advancing a gender transformative agenda. This could take many forms and can emerge through active engagement with this constituency. The study also points to the need for building southern feminist theory rooted in transformational politics that move away from canonical individual liberatory frameworks.

3.33
Women in Social Movements: Understanding Women's Songmaking in the Anti-Farm Laws Protest

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Keywords: anti-farm laws movement, farmers' movement, protest music, women's songs, Haryana,

This paper explores the role of women's music-making as a form of resistance in the anti-farm laws movement in India. Drawing on a case study of the Badowal toll plaza in Haryana, the paper examines how women's music-making practices challenged dominant narratives and power structures in the protest movement. Specifically, the paper focuses on the theme of claiming authorship, which refers to the ways in which women's music-making practices challenged patriarchal norms and asserted their agency and creativity. The paper begins by situating the anti-farm laws movement within the broader context of social movements and cultural

practices. It argues that music and other cultural expressions played a crucial role in the protest movement, serving as a means of mobilization, communication, and identity formation. The paper then turns to the case study of the Badowal toll plaza, where women's music-making practices were particularly prolific and innovative. Through interviews and participant observation, the paper documents the ways in which women at the toll plaza created new songs, adapted existing ones, and performed them in public spaces. The women farmers used their histories with Satsang music as a form of participatory music making into presentational format in the protest space. The women songmakers at the Badowal toll plaza have an important contribution in democratising the performance space. The embodied performance of women transformed in orientation, gesture as well as posture; it is the transformation of individual selves which is most fascinating.

The paper records and theorises the music-making practices of women at the Badowal toll plaza through the perspective of ethnomusicology. The paper concludes by reflecting on the broader implications of women's music-making practices for social movements and feminist theory. It argues that women's music-making practices offer a powerful example of how cultural practices can be used to challenge dominant narratives and power structures. Moreover, it suggests that women's music-making practices can inform feminist theories of agency, creativity, and resistance. By claiming authorship over their music-making practices, women at the Badowal toll plaza challenged patriarchal norms and asserted their right to participate in the protest movement on their own terms.

3.34
Mission Menstruation: A Study of Contemporary Menstrual Discourses in India

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Keywords: menstruation, neoliberalism, women's movement(s), governance feminism, modernity

The Prime Minister of India, Mr. Narendra Damodardas Modi, announced a policy to provide cheap sanitary napkins in the annual national address on

Independence Day (15th August) in 2020. This mention of menstrual products was widely hailed on social media as radical, for the Prime Minister himself had said the words 'sanitary napkin', therefore, seemingly breaking a taboo around menstruation. No matter that the welfare policy in question has been in place for over two decades in the country, it was the utterance of the words 'sanitary napkin' that called for this celebratory moment. This is hardly a one-off case as public discourse recently has been marked by many such moments, each breaking the taboo and yet, has not been shattered. While the recent visibility accorded to menstruation comes at the helm of a feminist recovery intent on speaking of menstruation in order to render it irrelevant, governance discourse remains framed within broader parameters. The push for health and hygiene coming from the international development industry finds cognisance when the neoliberal state in India, in response to this global imperative releases a National Menstrual Hygiene Policy, linking it up with the Swachch Bharat Campaign in 2017. I undertake a study of the many movements in urban India around menstruation that have occurred post 2015 and a marked rise in menstrual product based activism on social media. The set of questions that emerge thereafter remain tied to understanding how the menstruating body articulates on social media and in popular discourse? How are questions of health and hygiene, articulating in neoliberal India where sanitary napkins have come to be a fetishised commodity? What happens when women take to social media to post pictures of their sanitary napkin saying 'Happy to Bleed' and when women students take to putting up sanitary napkins inside universities, marching with red stains on their clothes? Further, questions of gendered citizenship are raised when women demand entry to religious places for worship (Sabarimala) while the State remains concerned with sanitising women. Visuality emerges as a key site for study as movements employ art forms using menstrual blood, while mainstream movies, ads choose to use a sanitary napkin for an all encompassing gender revolution of sorts. I seek to understand questions of silence and speech that take on a different meaning upon encountering social media, wherein speaking of menstruation online (such as in the case of the PM) is considered a disruption of the public-private binary. For both discourses (governance feminism and popular feminist movements around menstruation) tradition is marked by a time and place where menstruation is considered a barrier to the entry of women into a modern discourse, to be fully emancipated. This material is juxtaposed with feminist and development discourses around menstruation to analyse the peculiar/particular features of the 'homogenous time'(Anderson 1983) assumed in these discourses. The study uses notions of a fluid modernity (Sangari 2015) in the Indian context rather than working with the binary of modernity and tradition, say in the characterisation as the distinctionbetween taboo and silence most often. This is crucial, for in the postcolonial setting of India, the State has always taken on the mantle of

instituting welfare policies that are 'gender-sensitive' and that seemingly weed out regressive patriarchal practices from the country. However, these steps simultaneously propagate unequal, gendered notions creating for a dichotomy that women and feminist activist have long challenged (Sangari 2015). The simultaneous push for liberalisation of the economy and the withdrawal of the welfare state (Palriwala 2011) allow for select policies to be repackaged in this manner where women become demographic subjects but not actors themselves (Barlow 2001, Menon 2009). An interesting phenomena here is the emergence of the 'knowledge economy' (Vijaykumar 2011) and the rise of the middle classes with globalised aspirations that forms one of the publics I use to read against. Are there continuities between these varied articulations? Are their elements of the ritualisation of menstruation that continue into the urban discourses? Are there discontinuities and opacities? And what might this juxtaposition tell us about the peculiarities of the New Indian Woman (Sunderajan 1993) of the neoliberal time? The paper argues that this finds articulation through the rise of new modes of entrepreneurial humanism and "gendered awareness" that come together to create these discursive practices. An example of the same was when a start up in Mumbai announced it would offer "period leaves" as part of their commitment to making workplaces more inclusive. Such an imagination remains a far cry when most of the women workforce in the country remain heavily represented in the informal, contractual labour sectors (Palriwala 2011). The paper attempts, therefore, to understand how to mount a feminist critique that is able to bypass cooption by state and market forces as it develops a politics around menstruation in the contemporary.

3. 35
The Politics of Fun: Women and Loitering in Public Spaces

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The paper attempts to give an overview of the various projects and movements within India that have worked towards claiming public spaces for women's fun and leisure. Starting with an evaluation of the nature of 'fun', the possibility

of a female flâneur, the socio-economic benefit of fun, apart from the overall well-being of women, the paper shall argue for the need to recognize leisure and loitering for women as an important aspect of the 21st century feminist discourse. The paper recognizes the fact that space is gendered, and gendered division and access to space extend beyond the public/private dichotomy of the home and the world. It also recognizes the need for women and members of other minority groups to claim public spaces to loiter and have fun. Studies have shown that women in urban India step out of their homes only if they have a 'solid reason'; whereas men seem to have a very natural claim upon public spaces. A close inspection reveals that space is gendered even at the microscale of footpaths, local tea stalls, public playgrounds, etc. Activists and policymakers have worked to ensure a more participatory involvement of women in mainstream public spaces. Despite these efforts, women's relationship with public spaces remain transactional. Women occupy these spaces as commuters. They do not consider public spaces as potential spaces for fun. The paper calls for a recognition of the potential of public spaces beyond their utilitarian value and advocates the need for feminist discourses to move beyond addressing women's issues as one of oppression and violence. Recent discourses in feminism have tried to recognize fun as an important aspect to claiming public spaces. Shilpa Phadke's Defending Frivolous Fun: Feminist Acts of Claiming Public Spaces in South Asia (2020) and Nila Kirmani's "Can Fun be Feminist?" (2020) addresses the question of the politics of fun. Feminists are divided among themselves as to whether fun is indeed a legitimate need for women. While one section has recognised having fun in public spaces as a political act, another group views fun as an extension of neo-liberalism and as frivolous; "undermining the seriousness of the feminist project" (Phadke 10). Nonetheless, campaigns and movements like the 'Why Loiter?' Movement, Take Back the Night, I Wish I May, Meet to Sleep, Gender and Space Project by PUKAR, Jameen Patheja's Blank Noise Movement, the Instagram page 'women_at_leisure' etc. testify to the need and possibility for women to claim public spaces; to occupy them without having to give a reason for being there. The paper draws from the success stories of various movements, organisations, projects, studies, and social media pages to argue the need for 21st century discourses of feminism to recognise fun as a political act.

3.36

Method in Movement: critically examining contemporary discourse on Muslim Women's Resistance by Looking at Voices of anti-CAA Protestors in Ajmer.

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Muslim women have been a subject of intense scrutiny and examination in contemporary history, especially in the context of global events like the USA's Afghan invasion to the BJP's rhetoric around saving Muslim women. However, the motives, logics, and rhetoric behind assertions of the Muslim woman remain elusive. This proposal thereby argues for a re-examination of Muslim woman's agency who argue within the framework of faith-based expressions of power, building further on the work of scholar Saba Mahmood, by looking at the assertion and rhetoric expressed by women in the nationwide anti-CAA protests of 2020, and how it was studied in response by academics and civil society. Scholars such as Lila Abu-Lughod and Michel Foucault propose treating resistance as a diagnostic of power, allowing for a deeper understanding of diverse and complex forms of resistance. Thereby, this paper is an inquiry into the methodological aspects of using the protests as a diagnostic of power to unfold the arguments Muslim women sought to articulate. Historically, imperialism and colonial states constructed narratives around Muslim women to delegitimize resistance and control indigenous cultures. From the eroticized images of Muslim women produced by European photographers in the 19th century to the instrumentalization of Muslim women's narratives during the USA's war on terror to the right wing's own devices closer to home, cultural hegemonic forces have perpetuated narratives that serve to silence, rather than reveal. This research would note the unprecedented participation by Muslim women in the anti-CAA movement signifies a historical shift, and serve the demands for a critical exploration that takes into account the 'voices', as Veena Das puts it, of the the actors involved and ask the following questions. What were Muslim women fighting? Did the hopes and demands of the unnamed 'Shaheen Bagh Daadis' fit within the discursive limits prescribed upon them by professional discursive industries of power such as media, mainstream academia, etc? What challenges do they pose to social science disciplines? This paper intends to conduct exploratory research using primary as well as secondary sources, including unstructured interviews with

research participants from Ajmer, Rajasthan, and visual and textual archives from the protest. It will use interviews and textual analysis as methods of inquiry. The research participants interviewed will be Muslim women, from ages 25-65, who participated in the anti-CAA protests. Particular care will be taken to ensure reflexivity, confidentiality, and authenticity are maintained with regard to the participants and their responses to the study. The objective of this paper would also include the attempt to evolve a comment on the methodology of movements in social science disciplines. The paper intends to keep in mind that the scope of Women's Studies as a discipline extends to incorporate an understanding of women across the spectrum of community, beliefs, and locations, while at the same time keeping its unique legacy and contemporary relevance in terms of ethics, historicity, and disciplinary perspective intact.

Keywords: Muslim women, agency, resistance, movements, marginalization, methodology, sociology of knowledge.

3.37
Reimagining Women's Collectives and Witnessing the Archive: Field Notes from an Oral History Project

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The proposed paper seeks to explore how an oral history project (funded by the Indian Council of Social Science Research, New Delhi) exposes the contingent positions that we occupy as researchers documenting and recording women's memory regarding formation of early women's collectives both within and outside of ethnic homeland movements since the early 1980s in Assam. The research project "Women and the Making of the Public Sphere in Contemporary Assam" situates the problematic of the gender question both by building on contemporary scholarships that have challenged the enduring stereotype of the 'free tribal woman' as well as by engaging with the immediate and the local registers of resistance. As women's associations such as All Bodo Women's Welfare Federation

(ABWWF) and Karbi Nimso Chinthur Asong (KNCA) continue to challenge multiple patriarchies of clans, states and political parties, often rendering these women vulnerable to public shaming and potential threats. It was as if post the signing of subsequent "peace agreements" with the incumbent government, women were expected "to relinquish their involvement in the public and political activities" and head back home and take care of the business inside the house/family. It is seen that the women were not encouraged to aspire for political positions but slide into roles of "social caregiver" and the women's organization foray more into social and cultural services rather than be a political entity. The fractions/sections which exist within larger identity groups also weakened the women's movement with women having to toe the lines of the political divide and splintering into smaller groups, thereby preventing the women of the same community from coming together and working as one. The paper also argues that situating women's collectives across ethnic movements and cross referencing their participation, while being acutely conscious of the respective customary traditions and political economies that these groups represent, allows us to reflect on serious methodological questions about limits/potential of doing oral history in our times.

3.38
The #MeToo Movement in the Thick of Patriarchy: Case Studies from Haryana

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"If you've been sexually harassed or assaulted write 'me too' as a reply to this tweet" These sixteen words changed the world when in 2006 Tarana Burke, a New York-based lawyer initiated a popular gender rights movement known now as the #MeToo Movement via a social media application called Twitter. It was

a watershed moment where gender justice, social issues and technology came together and rattled organisations, communities and institutions by exposing the frequent and widespread occurrence of cases of sexual harassment and assault amongst them. However, the impact of the movement in India has not been as successful. The cultural peculiarities of India which include toxic masculinity, male privilege and a skewed sense of morality and ethics bent in the favour of men, make it difficult for the movement to create a cultural impact of significance.

 Joseph S. Alter in his critical essay "The Body of One Color: Indian Wrestling, the Indian State, and Utopian Somatics" (1993) draws on the Foucauldian analysis of the control over the body by the state vis a vis the self-disciplined body of a male wrestler. The utopian state, he asserts, is symbolised by the body of the muscular male wrestler. However, the recent protest by the female wrestlers and allegations by a female coach ruptures the idea of the perfect nation in which power dynamics are understood from the point of view of the akhara and weakness is associated with "the level of semen loss, poor digestion, bad eyesight" (19). The fight of the sportswomen subverts Alter's narration and their interaction with power points towards the fallacies in the idea of a nation that is not gender-just. Backgrounding the two significant #MeToo allegations made by athletes against men with strong power allegiances this paper will discuss the impact of the #MeToo movement in India and its manifestation in a staunchly patriarchal society of the state of Haryana as witnessed in the earlier-mentioned instances. Along with probing the idea of "honour" as defined by the Khap Panchayats and their ironical role during the recent Wrestler's Protests addressing the unavoidable questions of whether the Khap's have had an ideological or conscientious change of heart or are still working within their oppressive boundaries? It will also discuss the problems in articulating the personal experiences, the anxiety and the consequences of going public with the incidents of sexual harassment.

3.39

'The Ground Story: Claiming Public Spaces, Building Support Network, and Breaking Taboos: Case Study of Mother Football Players from Jharkhand

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Throughout history, women have led and followed various movements aimed at claiming spaces and challenging patriarchal norms and discrimination. One such inspiring movement is "Sports for Mothers," which is gaining momentum among tribal mothers in Jharkhand, India. While sports have long been a part of Jharkhand's culture, this movement uniquely combines the power of sports with the transformative journey of motherhood.

In Jharkhand, where the child marriage rate stands at 5.8%, the highest in the country, many young girls find themselves thrust into the responsibilities of motherhood prematurely, abruptly ending their childhood. Amidst this transition, these mothers often fail to recognize the importance of claiming spaces for themselves and their peers. "Sports for Mothers" seeks to change this narrative by creating opportunities for tribal mothers in remote villages and urban slums.

Through this movement, these resilient mothers come together to play and advocate for their rights. By addressing issues like domestic violence, child marriage, menstrual hygiene, and witch hunting, they directly impact their lives and those of others in their communities. Alongside sports training, they also learn about the legal and social aspects of these pressing social agendas.

Through their collective efforts, these brave mothers are raising their voices and demanding their rights over their physical selves and physical spaces within their communities. "Sports for Mothers" serves as a catalyst for change, empowering these women to overcome societal barriers and claim the spaces they deserve.

This paper endeavours to showcase the lived experiences and challenges of Mother Football Players through their oral narratives.

3.40
"Mandali So Rahi Hai":
Feminist Labour Strategies and
Climate Change in the Little Rann of Kutch, India

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This paper examines women fishworkers' emergent labour organizing strategies to counter climate change in the Little Rann of Kutch region in India. The Little Rann of Kutch (LRK) is a region in the state of Gujarat along the Western coast of India that is usually inundated by the sea during the four months of the monsoon and is a saline desert for the rest of the year. Owing to several structural reasons like erratic and unpredictable rainfall patterns, flash floods and droughts, and intrusion of the salt-manufacturing industry in the LRK, prawn and fish produce has drastically reduced in the past decade. I focus on Swatantra Machimari Mandali,* an independent women fishworkers' cooperative that supports women's efforts in making fish-work and prawn harvesting an equitable and accessible space for women – from sanitation, health and food security at coastal fishing sites, to improving women's control over price, produce and sale. As a feminist solidarity cooperative, Swatantra uses the rights-based approach to mobilize and seek social, political and economic transformations in order to improve the material and social conditions of their members (Batliwala 2004, Jandhyala 2012). However, with prawn harvesting failing to support fishworker families over the past decade, the cooperative has also been failing to meet its members needs and interests. Members have not had a meeting in almost two years, they have stopped supporting applications for new fishing licenses and equipment, their entrepreneurial strategies such as making pickles and prawn crackers have completely stopped, and nobody is interested in taking or returning loans. Even so, the same women are organizing outside of the cooperative. They are forming labour collectives or "gangs" for agricultural and industrial daily-wage labour, to help pool resources, network and find work, negotiate their wages, and provide safety in numbers against violence and harassment. For fishworkers who have not been so intrinsically dependent on daily-wage labour, these strategies are new but necessary for their everyday survival. They are also forming village-level groups to fight the intrusion of salt-manufacturing infrastructure in the LRK without the support of the cooperative, conducting press meetings, writing letters to administrative officials, circulating videos and negotiating with middlemen.

In this context, this paper asks what emergent and necessary forms of labour organizing women fishworkers are using to counter climate change, and why the traditional feminist labour solidarity strategies in this region are failing.

3.41
Shaheenbagh -
breaking the burden of silence

Aruna Burte

The Government of India passed Citizenship Amendment Act 2019 (CAA) on 11th December 2019 linking citizenship to religion and discriminating against Muslim citizens. Shaheenbagh protest began as reaction to police brutality against students at Jamia Millia Islamia.The mothers of the students took to public space called Shaheenbagh and began their 24/7 sit in strike when Delhi's temperatures were dropping to subzero. It began on 15th December 2019 and ended on 24th March 2020 total 101 days. This sit in protest was unique in many ways.

The protest has many aspects like it was led by ordinary Muslim women breaking all the stereotypes. Women occupied public space 24/7 by taking turns. They did all the household chores and came to sit in venue. There were, mothers, mother in laws, grandmothers, daughters, children. It was supported by men at home. It was not the usual protest site in Delhi. It was Shaheenbagh Kalindi Kunj area in New Delhi, a Muslim dominated area close to Jamia Millia Islamia. The mothers felt that they were sending their children to college so that they could lead a good life. They are safe in the institute. However, they saw how they were beaten up mercilessly by police alleging that they are leading a protest against CAA. The protest also gave opportunity to Muslim citizens to express their anguish when the state is becoming increasingly majoritarian and making the life of Muslim citizens difficult. Women in leadership took the Constitution in one hand and there were pictures of Savitribai Phule-Fatima Sheikh both teachers from 19th century reform era. The nature of leadership remained secular and creative.

The movement also threw many creative expressions like drama, graffiti, songs, posters, storytelling, street performance, puppetry and much more. It also ran a corner where they set up a library to spread awareness amongst the protesters regarding the constitution, citizenship rights and also reform movement etc. It

was a site where young and old mingled with a lot of trust, joy and hope. One of the protesters, 82-year-old Bilkis was listed in Time magazine's 100 most influential people of 2020.

The protest theme spread to almost all major cities in India and there was Shaheenbagh in Pune where the author joined for the day.

With a gap of three years, what seeds of energy this has left is worth recounting. It has influenced various facets – like overcoming deep sense of alienation, establishing a positive image for the community, example of non-violent resistance, some took to hunger strike, inter-faith prayers, musical called 'Artists Against Communalism', it attracted large number of protesters, many politicians visited the venue, withstanding the negative media trial, threats and false allegations, interacting with larger issues other than family, sending good message to the next generation, setting novel paradigms. It would be of great importance to review the protest movement placing it in the context of civil society movement and enlist the challenges that it has thrown and draw lessons from it.

3.42
Indian Women and their Penetration of Public Spaces: A Study of Contemporary Feminist Movements

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&

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Patriarchal values have long dictated women's access to and enjoyment of public spaces in India. Women rarely simply exist in public spaces; the division of the private and the public have persisted strongly in the country, wherein women are at best seen in public spaces moving and in transit from one private space to another, as quickly and efficiently as possible, mostly from fear of harassment or judgment. Thus, public spaces – and their pleasures and benefits – have remained vastly hostile and unwelcoming to women.

In response, several contemporary feminist movements have made their mark,

across the length and breadth of the country. Campaigns such as Why Loiter?, I Will Go Out, Pink Chaddi, Besharmi Morcha, the Blank Noise Project, Roshan Dilli, Night Walk, and Bus Teri Meri, Chal Saheli emerged post-2010, using innovative methods to establish women's right to public spaces. From using public transport to sleeping in public spaces, these campaigns experimented with various approaches for a variety of spaces and caught the national limelight and the attention of Indian citizens.

Through a critical narrative analysis, this paper aims to analyse the above-mentioned campaigns, chosen based on their collective aim to draw attention to women's lack of access to and safety in public spaces and their impactful role in contemporary Indian feminism. It intends to extract an understanding of the primary objectives, strategies, and challenges of such contemporary movements on women's access to public spaces by discussing each campaign in detail, highlighting themes, patterns, gaps, and learnings. By doing so, the paper intends to collate and present the stories of these possibly fleeting and forgotten efforts, highlight successful strategies, and recommend solutions for common challenges, thereby suggesting takeaways to build more profuse and effective campaigns in the future.

These contemporary feminist movements which focused on newly identified challenges faced by 21st-century Indian women challenged societal norms and forced citizens to reflect on if women have truly managed to belong in the public. By continuing to study and learn from these initiatives, we shall facilitate safer and most hospitable public spaces for women in India.

Sub-theme 4

Women's Contribution
to Sustainable Ecological
Development and
Climate Solutions

4.1
Women and Climate Sustainability

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Sustainable Ecological Development and Climate solutions have become a paramount goal of the global community, and women are playing a critical role in achieving this objective. Women have made significant contributions in different sectors of sustainable development, including agriculture, energy, water, and natural resource management. They have shown a great ability to enhance food security through sustainable farming practices, promote clean energy solutions, protect water resources, and manage forests and other natural ecosystems. Women have also demonstrated leadership in climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts in their communities. Despite their significant contributions, women continue to face numerous challenges in participating in sustainable ecological development and climate solutions. These challenges include limited access to education, resources, and decision-making positions, gender-based discrimination, and lack of recognition for their work. However, with the recognition of their vital role in sustainable development and climate solutions, efforts are being made to increase women's participation and empowerment in these areas. This includes initiatives to provide women with access to education, training, and resources, as well as efforts to increase women's representation in leadership positions. Empowering women in sustainable ecological development and climate solutions can lead to more effective and equitable outcomes. It can also help to promote greater gender equality and social and economic development. Therefore, it is vital to recognize and support the pivotal role that women play in creating a sustainable future for all.

4.2
Vulnerability Assessment of Infrastructure to Climate Change

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Over several centuries, global temperatures have been rising, and the rate of rising in temperature has increased significantly in the last century. The increase in temperature and precipitation can substantially influence the performance life of pavement infrastructure because of their continuous exposure to climate. The climate parameters like temperature and precipitation are considered in the pavement design to reflect the influence of climate factors on the performance of the pavements. Currently, designers use historical weather patterns while designing pavements. Since the climate is changing, the estimated service life of the infrastructure will be reduced significantly if the historical data is used in designs. The primary purpose of the study was to identify the influence of climate change on the service life of infrastructure and identify the levels of loss in service life in the event of climate change. To understand how climate change will affect performance, a thorough review of information was conducted to identify the current state of practice and research gaps. Based on the review, the impact of climate change on the performance of infrastructure was performed using future climate models and design software. The study used twelve future climate prediction models from NARCCAP databases to develop an understanding of climatic factors. The infrastructure structure evaluation was performed (using Design software and future climate model predictions) to evaluate the influence of climate on the performance of different pavement structures, mix types, and regional variations, among others. The results of the impact were incorporated into System Dynamics Model for decision-makers. Various approaches were evaluated to mitigate the influence of climate change. An economic analysis approach was also developed to help decision-makers in selecting infrastructure designs that can withstand and resist climate change. All the selected twelve climate model simulations showed different climate predictions, and these projections vary geographically. The distress in the pavement sections increases for the future climate as compared to the historical weather data indicating premature failure of the infrastructure. The performance of the infrastructure is influenced more by the combined effects of climate change and extreme events than the individual event. To withstand changing climate adaptation methods were adopted. Either infrastructure needs to use high-performance materials or enhance layer

properties or consider both during pavement design. These adaptation strategies improve the performance of the infrastructures, thus, mitigating the impacts of the changing climate. Finally, the cost and emission analysis shows that early consideration of future weather changes in design yields long-term benefits regarding savings in user costs and emissions.

Keywords: Climate Change, Infrastructure, Adaptation, Economic Analysis

4.3
"Gender and Ecological Vulnerabilities: Bridging Gaps for Climate Adaptation and Inclusive Environmental Management"

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Ecological vulnerabilities are deeply intertwined with gender dynamics, as environmental changes often disproportionately affect women and gender minorities. This abstract presents a conceptual framework for understanding and analyzing the gendered dimensions of ecological vulnerabilities. By examining the interplay between gender, socio-economic factors, and environmental contexts, this framework aims to shed light on the specific challenges faced by women in the context of climate change, natural disasters, resource degradation, and other environmental crises. The gendering of ecological vulnerabilities involves recognizing that women and gender minorities often experience distinct risks, vulnerabilities, and adaptive capacities due to their socially constructed roles, responsibilities, and access to resources. This research highlights the need to explore the differential impacts of environmental changes on diverse groups of women, considering intersecting identities such as age, race, ethnicity, and socio-economic status. The proposed conceptual framework incorporates elements such as power relations, knowledge systems, access to resources, agency, and social norms. By examining how gender interacts with these factors, the framework aims to identify the underlying mechanisms that perpetuate gendered ecological vulnerabilities. Furthermore, it seeks to contribute to the development of gender-responsive and transformative approaches to environmental management, climate adaptation, and sustainable development. Through a comprehensive literature review and analysis of case studies, this research explores the gendered dimensions

of ecological vulnerabilities and the implications for policy and practice. This study provides guidance to policymakers, practitioners, and academics as they attempt to develop specialised interventions and strategies that promote social justice, ecological resilience, and gender equality while taking into account the various needs and experiences of women in ecological contexts.

Keywords: gender, ecological vulnerabilities, climate change, natural disasters, environmental crises, gender-responsive approaches, social norms, power relations, sustainable development.

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महिलाओं का सतत पारिस्थितिक विकास: सकारात्मक प्रभाव और सामाजिक परिवर्तन सामाजिक समृद्धि और प्रगति की दिशा में एक महत्वपूर्ण तथा निरंतर योगदान करते हुए, महिलाओं का सतत पारिस्थितिक विकास एक महत्वपूर्ण विषय बन चुका है। यह विषय बातचीत का विषय बनता है क्योंकि इसमें महिलाओं की सशक्तिकरण, समानता, उद्यमता और सामर्थ्य की बात की जाती है। महिलाओं का सतत पारिस्थितिक विकास समाज में विभिन्न क्षेत्रों में गहरा प्रभाव डालता है। उनका योगदान अर्थव्यवस्था, शिक्षा, स्वास्थ्य, विनिमय, विज्ञान, कला, साहित्य, न्यायिक प्रणाली, सामाजिक परिवर्तन और नीतियों में दिखाई देता है। महिलाओं का सतत पारिस्थितिक विकास समाज के लिए एक महत्वपूर्ण मामला है। महिलाएं समाज की थंभनीय शक्ति और उनके सदस्यता, उद्यमता और सामर्थ्य के माध्यम से ही समाज में नये और सुदिक्षतापूर्ण मार्गों को खोजा जा सकता है। महिलाओं का पहला महत्वपूर्ण योगदान अर्थव्यवस्था में होता है। क्योंकि किसी भी देश के आर्थिक विकास में महिला की अहम भूमिका होती है। यदि किसी भी विकासशील परिस्थिति पर अर्थव्यवस्था की जाये तो एक व्यावसायिक कार्य की ओर अधिकारिक, नौकरीरत, उद्यमता, और कृषि आदि क्षेत्रों में काम करने का मौका मिलना चाहिए। महिलाएं सबसे बड़े अर्थव्यवस्था में सदस्यता करने वाले सेक्टरों में अब भी अपेक्षाएं पूरी करने की स्थिति है। इसी रूप में, महिलाएं शिक्षा और स्वास्थ्य के क्षेत्र में अत्यधिक महत्वपूर्ण योगदान करती हैं। महिलाओं को शिक्षा का समान अधिकार दिया जाना चाहिए और उन्हें स्वास्थ्य सेवाओं तक पहुंचने की सुविधा मिलनी चाहिए। उच्च शिक्षा और स्वास्थ्य सेवाओं में महिलाओं की प्रतिष्ठा और प्रभाव को बढ़ाने की भी आवश्यकता है। इसलिए महिलाओं का सतत पारिस्थितिक विकास मानव समाज के लिए अत्यंत आवश्यक है। इसे जानने का तकत सर्वप्रथम यानी दिक महिला और पुरुष के बीच समानता, समान अधिकार और असमानता की गारंटी के सामान्य अधिकार और सामाजिक न्याय के मामले है। सारी तकत यानी दिक महिलाओं और पुरुषों के बीच अधिक समानता का विकास, महिलाओं और पुरुषों दोनों की आवश्यकताओं और प्राथमिकताओं को ध्यान में रखने की मांग है। यह हसर्फत सामाजिक न्याय के मामले में है नहीं, बल्कि विकास की प्रक्रियाओं को समृद्ध करने के लिए भी आवश्यक है। महिलाओं का सतत पारिस्थितिक विकास सामाजिक और आर्थिक उन्नति के लिए महत्वपूर्ण है। महिलाएं उद्यमता की सक्षमता, नए कारोबारी उद्योगों में भागीदारी, कृषि क्षेत्र में सदस्यता और नौकरी के क्षेत्र में गुरुत्तापूर्ण योगदान करती हैं। इसलिए इस आलेख में, हम देखेंगे कि महिलाओं ने समाजिक, आर्थिक, शिक्षा, और सामाजिक बिलाई में कैसे महत्वपूर्ण योगदान किया है। प्रमुख शब्द: आर्थिक विकास, सतत विकास, महिला, सामाजिक स्वहित, सशक्तिकरण

4.4
What will it take to finance feminist movement building, more effectively? An analysis of the philanthropic landscape in India.

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Keywords: Feminist funding, gender transformational agenda, resource justice

South Asia Women Foundation India (SAWF IN) is a national women's fund that supports women and trans persons-led initiatives and interventions, with financial and non-financial resources. As a women's fund that strongly believes in the leadership of women and trans persons to craft the most relevant responses to crises that impact their lives, SAWF IN undertook a scoping study to deepen the understanding of the gendered effects of COVID-19 and the ensuing needs emerging within communities (2021). It highlighted the strategic need of making resources more approachable to the groups, enabling spaces for collaborative discussions, encouraging the groups to take the lead in agenda setting, and facilitating longer-term, flexible, and inclusive funding models.

Objectives of the research:

- Evolve a feminist agenda for social justice that captures and brings attention to thematic areas and forms of institutional support needed to nurture organizations and collectives led by women and trans persons

- Identify gaps and opportunities in enhancing the flow of resources towards women and trans people-led organizations and collectives engaged in gender transformative initiatives.

This study captured insights emerging from a review of literature as well as primary research with organisations and groups working on gender justice. The desk review of 39 research studies, policy briefs, and academic papers was carried out between November 2020 and May 2021. The field research was conducted through in-depth telephonic interviews with 47 small and mid-sized grassroots women and trans persons-led organizations and collectives across different states of India.

Findings from the scoping study assert the need to:

a) Resource priority areas that facilitate gender transformative programmes that address underlying causes of women's disempowerment rather than symptoms

b)   Support more flexible funding models which are responsive to emerging and shifting programme needs

c)   Nurture institutional building including spaces for reflection and dialogue as an integral part of programme designs

The framework for resource support emerging from this study can be placed into four interlinked strands that strengthen each other.

- Flexible Funding Models: Resources and support in the form of flexible, innovative, long term and easily accessible funding models.

- Institutional Strengthening: Strengthening of rights-based work through long-term, adaptable, core support, as well as capacity building and organisational development.

- Feminist Agenda Setting: A participatory approach that informs resource flows based on the needs from the ground. It also emphasizes resourcing programmes based on collective mandates advancing the rights of marginalised women and trans persons.

- Movement Building: Investing in strengthening networks, coalitions and alliances with other groups to build cross-issue mobilisation, and work towards gender transformative change.

From the primary research, it emerged that women's and trans persons-led organizations have suggested that funding models be discussed more openly so as to suit the specific needs and contexts of the groups concerned. SAWF IN, as the financing arm of feminist movement building, aims to surface the resource gaps and opportunities in advancing women-led, rights-based, organizations and efforts. In a context where the Indian philanthropic ecosystem is vast and growing, the study aims to understand the barriers to resource access in feminist movement building.

4.5
Endemic women and Sustainable Practices in Kerala

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According to the 2011 Census, women make up 52.02% of the Kerala population. Women's roles and contributions in achieving sustainable development and addressing climate change are critical, as environmental hazards have become a major concern for all global economies, as the inability to address the effects of climate change is regarded as a serious threat. Their distinct perspectives, resilience, and resourcefulness make them vital change agents. Women have been instrumental in advancing sustainable practices, spearheading climate solutions, and advocating for a more equitable and resilient future, from local communities to global platforms. The paper tries to study the contribution of women in managing health, education, emission reduction related practices and eco-friendly activities for achieving sustainable development. The study proposes to conclude with a broad perspective for future research and to provide policymakers with valuable recommendations to increase the role of women in advancing sustainability initiatives. Key Words: Sustainable Practices, Carbon Emissions, Sustainable Communities, Gender Resilience

Women and Minor Edible Plants: Unearthing the Resilience of Traditional Food Systems of Rural Bengal

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Throughout history, and fraught with domestic chores and the drudgery in agricultural tasks, women across the world in agrarian rural and tribal societies have played leading roles as plant gatherers, gardeners, herbalists, seed collectors, plant breeders and farmers, tasks all of which require a profound insights into local plant resources. Often overlooked by scholars, this marginalized, vulnerable and underprivileged section of society are holders of traditional ecological knowledge and embody the resilience of locals food systems by skillfully employing neglected and underutilized crops, and even wild edible plants, to deal with the crisis situation, including those emanating the global climate crisis which disproportionately impacts women. This paper applies a gender lens in re-examining the role of minor edible plants in local environments of rural Bengal in ecological sustenance and adding resilience to the traditional food systems.

Keywords: Bengal, Food Systems, Gender, Neglected Crops, Resilience, Wild Edibles

4.7

Understanding the Socio-Ecological and Economic Constraints of Women Fish Vendors during the Fish Ban Period in Chennai: A Call for Gender-Inclusive Relief Measures

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This article aims to document the socio-ecological and economic constraints faced by women fish vendors in Chennai during the less studied fish ban period. While the fishing sector is often considered male-centric, fisherwomen play a crucial role in handling and marketing seafood products after harvest, bridging the gap between producers and consumers. Despite their significant impact, women in the fishing sector remain one of the most unrecognised workforces. Fishing contributes substantially to the income of the Greater Chennai Corporation and employment opportunities. Chennai is rich in ecological resources, including estuaries, rivers, wetlands, and coastal ecosystems. However, factors such as pollution, infrastructural development projects, sea-level rise, climate change, and declining biodiversity pose a severe risk to the lives and livelihoods of the fishing community, particularly women, and are increasingly at risk. As climate change exacerbates existing socio-economic disparities, women are often disproportionately affected due to existing gender inequalities, limited access to resources, and societal roles and expectations. The study focuses on the "gender inequality" prevalent in the relief schemes provided during the fish ban season and examines its impact on the livelihoods of women fish vendors. By examining the strategies these vendors employ to navigate these challenging times, we shed light on their resilience and adaptive measures. The study utilizes a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative interviews with women fish vendors and quantitative analysis of relevant data. Through this research, we aim to raise awareness about the specific challenges faced by women's fish vendors during the fish ban period, highlighting the need for gender-inclusive relief measures and sustainable strategies to support their livelihoods.

Keywords: Women fish vendors, Fish ban season, Gender inequality, Relief measures

Caught between Women's Health and Environmental degradation: Disposal concern of Menstrual Waste among adolescent School Going Girls in Tezpur town

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Abstract Development and progress in terms of infrastructure and access to basic services has implied that WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) facilities in schools today are better in comparison to ten years ago. Many schools have made an effort to make clean water accessible in their schools. WASH is a concept jointly associated with UNICEF and WHO to access basic drinking water and sanitation and hygiene facilities. It is aligned with UNSDG 6 which aims to ensure available and affordable water, sanitation, hygiene facilities to all by 2030. Government and international organizations acknowledge that inadequate WASH facilities can harm students' ability to learn. In order to improve menstrual hygiene in schools, WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) facilities are essential. The menstrual hygiene of students is impacted favorably by schools having adequate WASH facilities in a number of different ways. This paper is based on an assessment of WASH facilities in two schools of Tezpur (District: Sonitpur, State: Assam). With a small survey done among 50 adolescent girls it was seen that although almost all admitted to having safe drinking and basic sanitation and hygiene facilities in their school promises there was a huge lack in the disposal facility. There are various schemes introduced by Government which has worked towards clean drinking water and providing awareness regarding sanitation and hygiene but improvements regarding disposal are yet to be fetched. Achieving only the water component of WASH while ignoring the disposal dimension is hampering the growth of a clean and healthy environment. It emerged that practices like wearing menstrual napkins for extended periods of time, not changing soiled pads, throwing them in the same trashcan, and flushing them down the toilet can all be categorized as bad hygiene and improper disposal management

practices. Such unhealthy behaviors impact on the environment and the health of all living organisms. Though it's impacts could be seen on both men and women but mostly the vulnerable section i.e. women and girls have to suffer more because of the cultural and social taboos, norms and stigma associated to it. Sanitary napkins are covered with thin plastic sheets and are intended to be utilized just once making them environmental hazards though it is essential for menstrual hygiene. Sanitary pads are non-recyclable due to the plastic used. When put in with other waste in recycling bin, sanitary napkins would pollute the entire batch as the napkins are contaminated with blood and other body fluid. However, the two schools surveyed did not show any awareness of such environmental consequences. Most of the time, after using the sanitary napkins, the girls' disposed them directly into the toilets or open landfills and burnt them directly into the air This study therefore tries to emphasize on the waste disposal component of WASH without which women's health and environmental concerns will be pitted against each other.

Keywords – WASH, school, menstrual hygiene, disposal management, environment, climate

4.9
"Eco-Feminism in Action: Tribal Women's Contributions to Sustainable Development and Climate Change Mitigation in Teliachak Village, Jharkhand"

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In the context of global challenges such as climate change and global warming, the United Nations introduced the concept of sustainable development, encompassing 17 goals to address these issues. Although the responsibility to tackle these problems lies with the entire human race, the impacts and contributions can vary across different regions, economic groups, and genders.

This research focuses on the tribal women of Teliachak village in Dumka district, Jharkhand, who have been using natural resources to create various crafts and

products for their livelihoods. These women have not only found employment opportunities for themselves but have also provided a sustainable source of income for many others in their village.

Despite the lack of awareness about global sustainability goals, the tribal women in Dumka district have been making significant contributions to climate change mitigation and sustainable development for years. Their lifestyle and traditions embody eco-feminism, where a harmonious relationship is established between nature and women, respecting the principles of equality and sustainability.

These women rely solely on natural resources for their livelihoods, ensuring that they do not harm the environment. Their practices exemplify the principles of eco-friendly living and offer valuable lessons for sustainable development. Recognizing the importance of their contributions, it is crucial to learn from their lifestyle and traditions, and promote the eco-friendly products they create in national markets.

This research serves as an effort to highlight and acknowledge the struggle and achievements of these tribal women. By showcasing their sustainable practices and products, it aims to inspire others and contribute to the recognition and support of their endeavours.

The present research employs a qualitative approach to explore the contributions of tribal women from Teliachak village in Dumka district, Jharkhand, towards sustainable development and climate change mitigation. The study involved in-depth interviews with a purposive sample of tribal women who engage in the creation of crafts and products using natural resources.

Keywords: Eco- Feminism, Sustainable Development, Handicraft, Livelihood.

4.10
Weaving Ecological Knowledge and Gender Roles in Oral Narratives: A study on Machmoriya Folksongs of Sarania Kachachari Community of Assam

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This paper presents two arguments that highlight the relationship between labour divisions based on gender, ecological balance, and the role of oral narratives through a close study of folk narratives of the Sarania Kachari community of Assam.

The first argument of this paper brings into focus the representation of labour division in the folksongs of the Sarania Kachari Community, where we can find that specific gender roles have been assigned for women and men. These gender roles have been assigned with the purpose of ensuring smooth conduct of daily life in sync with environmental factors and they do not necessarily suggest gender bias. Rather this division of labour can be interpreted as an attempt to preserve ecological balance, inherent in the worldview of the Sarania Kachari community. Secondly, there are certain aspects of Machmoriya folksongs of Sarania Kachari community, which a technocratic regime of knowledge would be quick to dismiss as taboo or superstition or blind faith. However, on closer inspection, it can be found that their so called 'taboos' are actually aspects of traditional knowledge devoted to maintaining ecological balance. Further, traditionally, women have been assigned the roles of narrating these folksongs and transmitting them to the next generation. Hence, it can be inferred that women are the custodians of ecological knowledge through the medium of oral narratives.

4.11
Reinvigorating resilience:
Gender Justice and Violence against Women

Giby Geevarughese and Salini S

'Resilience is both the capacity of individuals to navigate their way to the psychological, social, cultural and physical resources that build and sustain their well-being, and their individual and collective capacity to negotiate for these resources to be provided in culturally meaningful ways.(Ungar 2013,)

The concept of resilience is increasingly earning attention in development and gender studies and Violence against women. Building the resilience of vulnerable groups requires strong community and government institutions that can support efforts to cope with devastating events, offering social protection and social development initiatives to support at-risk or vulnerable.

"Men and women face different constraints in their daily lives and the predominance of patriarchy typically leads to the subordination of women" Throughout human societies, gender identity dictates a woman's or man's role in the family and wider society. Although addressing gender issues and violence against women , should not theoretically exclude attention to men and masculinities, there is a tendency to focus on women and their associated status, roles and power (or lack of) because, most societies, despite their pluralities, suffer gender imbalances to the detriment of women..

Giving attention to gender issues therefore involves focusing on the (in)equalities between men and women, along with the factors that cause them, in terms of their positions, needs and roles, specifically 'the household tasks and types of employment socially assigned to women and men'Socially constructed status, roles and norms are gendered and intersect with other social identities, such as age or ethnicity, to create unequal levels of marginalisation and access to assets between women and men, and girls and boys.

No one can empower another; only the individual can empower herself or himself to make choices or to speak out. However, institutions including international cooperation agencies can support processes that can nurture self empowerment of individuals or groups.

- Changing views on women's role within the community.
- Changing views on women's role within the household.
- Changes in the activity profile of women.

The ability of countries, governments, communities and households to manage change by maintaining or transforming living standards in the face of shocks or stresses, while continuing to develop and without compromising their longterm prospects. A resilient community is a gender sensitive community.

This paper discusses the need to support women to build resilience, for their own well-being and also for the effectiveness and sustainability of the essential humanitarian and development work they do. It will advocate for the need of embracing a gender-focused approach in the study of women's resilience, and more generally, in the study and promotion of aid workers' well-being. Building Resilience in women presents strategies to help them thrive in coping with the stresses of work pressure, high achievement standards, media messages, family pressure, or family tension.

4.12

Women: The Preserver of Bio-Cultural Diversity and Traditionality in India

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Women are the managers and preservers of tradition in every civilization at their home, kitchen gardens, agricultural field, workplace, and outside world. Transmission of traditional knowledge through generation always facilitated the preservation of biological diversity. 'Bio-cultural diversity' refers to the relationship between natural resource and human culture of a region. A true human-nature relationship is based on cultural values, ritualistic performances, learning system networks and social processes which are the most vital in preservation of tradition and heritage. The role of human being in the transmission of cultural heritage as well as how they act as the preserver of bio-cultural diversity is the central theme of this developed world. Women are believed as the leading role player of this theme, as they are the care-givers in the family and also the guardians of family traditions and regional heritages.

In India, since the ancient period, a constant interaction is generated among women and their surrounding natural environment through their daily household activities. India with its diversity in physical characteristics, offers multiple possibilities to develop human-nature relationships. From mountainous region to coastal land through the plateau interiors, women play the vital role in celebrating the traditional knowledge system through their daily healing techniques applied to family members; through their cooking skills; through their techniques of plant and animal domestication and so on. Their dependency on land and water for food and nutritional security, medicines, fuel wood, and other products maintain proper working of every household at every environment. This interaction with ecology and natural resource has always encourage Indian women to acquire knowledge about their surroundings. Specific religious ritualistic performances also help in achieving their excellency in traditional knowledge acquisition and transmission among different indigenous communities in India.

This paper focuses on to identify the women's role in preservation of bio-cultural diversity based on secondary sources of information. Indigenous knowledge and

traditional practices are related to different aspects of our lives that expresses the cultural identity of any society. This paper aims to find out the role of women in preservation of local health-related traditional knowledges of the society with its historical backgrounds and also the construction of relationship between various elements of ecosystem within households and communities that is used in transmission of knowledge system through generations.

Keywords: Women, Tradition, Biological, Cultural, Diversity

4.13
Women's Participation in Ecological Social Movements: A case study of the 'Peringamala' Protest Against Waste Plants

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This study aims to shed light on the unique women's participation in the movement against the establishment of two waste plants in the same panchayat, Peringamala, in Trivandrum, Kerala. One of the plants was 'IMAGE' (The Indian Medical Association Goes Eco-friendly), led by the Indian Medical Association; it was a biomedical waste treatment plant. And the second one was a scientific waste disposal plant of the Kerala state government. 'Peringamala' is a part of the Agasthyamala Biosphere Reserve, a UNESCO-recognised region of tropical evergreen forests in the Western Ghats. It was listed as an ecologically sensitive area. It's a tribally inhabited area. One of the main features of these movements is the increased participation of women, especially from tribal communities. These plants were harmful to the rich biodiversity of the region—they would pollute the drinking water supply, harm Peringamala's rare and endangered medicinal plants, and cause diseases. This study explores how women have been actively involved in organizing these protests, raising awareness, and advocating for alternative waste management solutions. Their motivations, such as concerns for public health, environmental sustainability, and the well-being of future generations, are examined. The research will use a mixed method approach including both qualitative and quantitative methods. In-depth interviews and

surveys will be conducted to gain deeper insights into the motivations, experiences of women participate in these movements. Moreover, this study highlights the unique strategies employed by women in the movement. It discusses their use of traditional knowledge, community networks, and collective decision-making processes to challenge the establishment of the waste plants.

4.14
Vulnerabilities of women within East Kolkata Wetlands amidst Cyclone Amphan

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Disasters act as a triggering force which unravels and exacerbates the pre-existing vulnerabilities as well as introduces newer challenges. Post disaster gendered discrimination are an outcome of the inherent vulnerabilities inculcated and preserved by the social and cultural norms of the society in women's daily lives. Women experience differential vulnerabilities understood as the difference in accessing various resources and the ability to control them and make decisions which leads to amplify their susceptibility to disasters.

Women vulnerabilities are known enhanced even further with increasing anthropogenic trends of development, migration and climate change. Their least likely to contribute towards climate change yet they are worst impacted by the resulting extreme weather events. When resources are threatened during disasters, the burden on women increases tremendously. Along with disasters, impact of development trends and migration has also increased the workload of women.

The case study on women in East Kolkata Wetlands (EKW) post cyclone Amphan, explores the differential vulnerabilities and its impact on women living in the eco-sensitive zone. As EKW is an eco-sensitive region in Kolkata, maintained by women throughout generations, it highlights their contribution towards their ecological conservation essential to mitigate the impact of climate change. Growing destructive development induced by capitalism in addition to their daily challenges, which threatens the eco-sensitive region and lives of

women dependent on them. Growing climate crisis had also triggered hydro-meteorological disaster events such as the cyclone on 16th May 2020 i.e., cyclone Amphan which swapped across EKW has further added to the challenges faced by the women in these areas. In spite of the challenges, the women in EKW had undertook several initiatives before and after Cyclone Amphan amidst difficulties caused by the Covid-19 pandemic which highlighted their resilience and capacities in a situation of distress. They prioritized the wellbeing and recovery of their household and natural surroundings with which they coexist rather than themselves and the numerous challenges they face.

In the light of this argument, the research deliberates on the pre-existing vulnerabilities faced by women on a daily basis and its exacerbation by cyclone Amphan highlight the importance of women in climate change and extreme events. The research advocates for women as active decision maker in terms of the wellbeing of the region utilizing their knowledge to address climate change risk.

Keywords: Disaster, women, gender, pre-existing vulnerabilities, differential vulnerabilities, Cyclone Amphan, East Kolkata Wetlands, eco-sensitive, ecological sustainability, inclusive, gender sensitive, empower and resilience.

4.15
Reading Caste and Patriarchy through Dalit Feminist lens: A Study of Meena Kandasamy's select work

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Indian society is a conglomeration of innumerable castes which have been strengthened and legitimated by multiple norms, traditions, rituals and myths. Each caste has its own rules and features assigned by the religious scriptures, myths and cultural codes and most importantly each caste has its own model of patriarchy too, along with myths and certain signifying practices.

These different myths of Indian society regarding caste, religion, marriage and gender serve as ideological and cultural code of society. And the notion of

ideology always belongs to dominant class or ruling class. Ideology is always implemented through cultural articulation. Ideology is projected through certain stereotypes to hegemonies people.

Present research is an attempt to study Meena Kandasamy's view point about Indian society. Indian Society having different social institutions which work together. To maintains hierarchal power structure. This research is trying to study these institutions, through Dalit feminist lenses.

Keywords: Caste, Patriarchy, Dalit feminism, Brahmanical patriarchy.

4.16
Intersectional Realities of Women Prisoners in Rajasthan

**Pragnya Joshi, Mamta Nair Suman Devathia
and Reema Rathore (PUCL Rajasthan)**

Keywords: Prisoners, Gendered Norms, Intersectionality and Human Rights

Women continuously struggle to break the invisible wall of the discriminatory gendered norms of the society. It is a prison that restricts their movements, dreams and aspirations. When these women reach the actual prison enforced by the judicial system of the country, they face triple edged discrimination and violence. This paper investigates these prison realities of women prisoners in the Women's Prisons (generally referred as reformatories) Jaipur and Ajmer in Rajasthan. It is based on our work for the prison reforms in the capacity of members of PUCL (People's Union for Civil Liberties), a human rights organisation.

Rajasthan has 146 prisons out of which 7 are dedicated to women which are referred as reformatories located at the divisional headquarters namely, Ajmer, Bharatpur, Bikaner, Jaipur, Jodhpur, Kota and Udaipur having capacity of 998 prisoners with presently having 436 i.e., 43.69 per cent occupancy. Sriganganagar and Alwar district prisons have separate wards for women prisoners. Apart from having low budgets dedicated to women prisons in the name of low population in women's prison these prisons carry the moral burden of being reformatories. All Indian women prisoners in these reformatories mandatorily cover their head with pallu. They have to wear sarees with full sleeves blouses. For entertainment they are allowed to sing bhajans. Right from training and education to work

reflect gender bias. In Jaipur women prison get 3 newspapers while the Central Jail in same campus gets 200 plus newspapers. Apart from these discriminatory practices one striking feature of the women's prison is the presence of children in the age group of 0-6 years. Children of the women prisoners is pressing issue for the women prisoners as it further adds to the dynamics of their conditions within and outside the prison.

Prisons are miniature of society exists outside the prison walls caste and religion-based discrimination is rampant in prisons. One would find maximum number of women accused of theft and smuggling of liquor belonging to certain caste communities. For months they continue to reside in prison as they do not have access to either proper legal representation or sureties to fulfil the bail conditions. These women continue to work for those women prisoners having access to material resources outside prison to meet their daily requirements.

Apart from the intersectionality of caste, class, religion gender and country women prisoners deal with the nature of the offence or accusation. There was a time when the women prisons had a sizable population charged for the dowry deaths. Today, the sizable women prisoners are accused or convicted for the death of their husbands. Neither their marital family for their paternal family takes interests in their cases or lives in prison. Their past lived realities continue haunt their present lives, consciously and unconsciously.

This paper reveals these intersectional realities of the lives of women prisoners in Rajasthan.

4.17
Gender and Climate Governance: Exploring the Role of Panchayati Raj Institutions and Women Collectives in Addressing Climate Change

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Climate change is a significant threat to global sustainability, requiring strong governance institutions to counteract its effects. The purpose of this research is to investigate the intersection of gender and climate governance, with a particular

emphasis on the role of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and women collectives in addressing climate change at the local level. The aim of the research is to explore how gender-responsive approaches and women's empowerment might improve climate resilience and contribute to long-term development in the context of Kerala.

As per preliminary findings, PRIs and women collectives have the potential to play a critical role in climate governance. Women's involvement and leadership in these institutions can result in more inclusive and context-specific climate adaptation and mitigation initiatives. According to the findings, women are frequently disproportionately affected by climate change due to gendered vulnerabilities such as limited access to resources, lack of decision-making power, and limited mobility. However, it has been noticed that when women are empowered and given sufficient support, they can act as change agents in building climate resilience. It also explores the factors that facilitate or hinder women's engagement in climate governance processes within PRIs.

The research employs a mixed-methods approach, integrating qualitative and quantitative techniques to examine women's experiences, perceptions, and practices within PRIs and women collectives. Data collection methods include interviews, surveys, and focus group discussions with important stakeholders such as elected representatives, community leaders, and members of women collectives. Additionally, a review of existing literature and policy documents is undertaken to provide a comprehensive understanding of the current state of gender and climate governance within the context of PRIs.

Moreover, the research also explores how three-tiered PRIs allow for a multi-level approach to climate governance, which is vital for finding solutions to the complex and multi-dimensional nature of the problem, that is, climate change. By analysing the challenges, opportunities, and outcomes associated with the implementation of climate action through

PRIs, the study will provide insights into how a multi-level system of governance and community participation can be leveraged for effective climate governance.

Keywords: Gender, Climate Change, Climate governance, Panchayati Raj Institutions, women collectives, Women's empowerment, Climate resilience, Sustainable development.

4.18

Emerging Role of Women in Sustainable Ecological Development and Adaptation to Climate Change- An Experience of Bongaon Sub Division, West Bengal during the period 2017-2023

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In the context of intensifying impacts of climate change around the world, UN Women has observed that the dynamics of resilience and adaptation efforts are becoming crucial to ensure that communities, ecosystems and economies are able to survive. Nevertheless, in the parlance of resilience to climate change, women across the world are emerging as active and effective agents and promoters of adaptation and mitigation. Community based initiatives spearheaded by women are showing enduring results in Sustainable Ecological Development and Adaptation to Climate Change in developing countries of Africa and Asia.

The theoretical background of such community based initiatives can best be substantiated by the work of Nobel Laureate American Political Economist Elinor Ostrom on "common pool resources" which states that that local communities are the best at managing their natural resources as they are the ones that use them. Ostrom's focus on problem solving at the local level led to her 1990 book 'Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collection Action', which documents how people around the world use self-governing mechanisms to manage and sustain shared resources such as fresh water, forests and fish populations.

According to the United Nations Climate Change chapter, for a long time women have historically developed knowledge and skills conducive to Sustainable Ecological Development through judicious natural resource management including water harvesting and conservation, food preservation and rationing. In Africa, for example, old women represent wisdom pools with their inherited knowledge and expertise related to early warnings and mitigating the impacts of disasters. This knowledge and experience that has passed from one generation to another are conducive to contribute effectively to enhance local adaptive capacity and sustaining a community's livelihood. Moreover, this initiative has made women to become important agent of change and innovators.

However, access to natural resources (land, forests, water, fisheries, pastures, etc.), by the poor, especially women is essential for sustainable poverty diminution and emergence of her role in Sustainable Ecological Development and finding out Climate Solutions.

In this context the Bongaon experience of people's participation in West Bengal spearheaded by women organisations in rejuvenation of River Ichamati is a good example of sustainable community based natural resource management initiative contributing to Adaptation to Climate Change. It was the sudden breakout of pandemic of Dengue Fever during the hot and humid months July to September in 2019 that led the local people for a participatory holistic cleanliness drive by practicing Zero Waste Campaign at the household level and Community Composting -based drive for cleaning and rejuvenating a dying, water hyacinth clogged, endangered river Ichamati at the community level. This initiative for improving the quality of a riverine ecosystem to fight back a pandemic has opened up new livelihood opportunities at the local level for women in the area and has resulted in some significant changes in the household waste management and public health management scenario of the area which are emerging to be favorable for Sustainable Ecological Development of the area and for better Adaptation to the Climate Change impacts.

Keywords: Sustainable Ecological Development, Adaptation to Climate Change, Women, Natural Resource Management, Zero Waste Campaign, Community Composting, riverine ecosystem, Ichamati river, household waste management, public health management.

4.19
Gender Equality in Renewable Energy: Exploring Women's Participation and Impact

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With a limited timeframe of eight years to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, assessing the true progress achieved becomes imperative. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals prioritize gender equality (SDG 5) and affordable and clean energy (SDG 7), recognizing their significance in addressing social and environmental challenges. However, the reality of the climate crisis has surpassed mere threats. Unequal energy production, access, and consumption patterns persist due to societal gender roles assigned to men and women. Despite the universal recognition of gender equality's indispensability for development, women have been excluded from discussions on transitioning to renewable energy. Yet, women consistently prove their potential as influential change agents in sustainable energy, climate change mitigation, and environmental protection. Incorporating a gender perspective into policies, projects, and development strategies is crucial. Addressing gender imbalances in the energy sector is essential to achieve the goals of mitigating climate change impacts and establishing a sustainable future for all. This research highlights how gender equality can drive more effective clean energy practices and proposes the application of a gender lens across all levels of the sustainable energy agenda. Additionally, it aims to identify and bridge knowledge gaps, providing insights, ideas, and examples of gender-responsive renewable energy and climate change mitigation projects. Empowering and promoting women's leadership in the energy industry can facilitate the transition to a low-carbon economy by promoting clean and green energy adoption, enhancing energy efficiency, and addressing energy poverty.

Keywords: Women, Sustainable energy, SDGs, Gender Equality, Climate Change, mitigation

4.20
Is Mobile Pastoralism only for Men ?

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Keywords : Pastoralism, women's equality ,women's health , SDG's

Is mobile pastoralism only for men ? The statement may sound absurd at first glance - after all women herd animals too. They also do most of the other tasks required for raising animals such as feed, nurture and breed them. They purchase and sell stock as well as process and market livestock products . However, several pastoralist societies in India are organised in ways which do not consider women as equals or at least "equals" in the way contemporary society tries to define women's equality and empowerment . In India child marriage continues to be practiced in several pastoralist communities which means girls become mothers in their mid- teens. Bigamy continues to be practiced by men in some pastoralist societies. Social and religious practices discriminate against women denying them access to certain spaces such as temples and mosques. Women are not admitted or allowed to be members or leaders of their community councils or panchayats. Additionally , pastoral women who migrate do not have secure rights to land, property, and natural resources including grazing land and grazing permits. While on migration, they do not have access to formal health care and formal schooling. Nor do they have access to sanitation, piped water or cooking gas. Very few of these women have bank accounts in their name which they can operate confidently. Yet, these are some of the present -day indicators of gender equality and women's empowerment as written in policy including the SDG's.

(Sustainable Development Goals) . Many would say that the simplest way to make some of these services accessible for pastoral women is to settle them in a village which means they are not migratory pastoralists anymore.

This paper questions this dichotomy, drawing on the situation of Dhangar pastoral women of Western India. It asks the questions "What does it means to be a pastoral Dhangar woman today migrating for 6 or more months of the year with your animals, your family with no roof over your head and no walls to shelter you. What is the relationship with the land you walk on day after day, month after month, year after year and traces the answers through the lived experiences of a few Dhangar families, particularly the women from these families with who the author has been associated with for several years . The paper takes a look at the SDGs with their promise of leaving no one behind through the viewing lens of nomadic pastoralists. It also looks at what the women from these community

articulate and the changes they feel are needed within pastoral society as well as without to make mobile pastoralism- not just for men.

4.21
Women and Climate Crisis in India:
a feminist enquiry on the impact
on women from socio-economic locations

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Climate change tends to be a thing of the past as the multitudinous in its impact, climate crisis affects millions of women in India. Women farmers in India face -double burden of gendered roles, material aspect (the remuneration gap), access to resources etc. Women have been disproportionately impacted and the situation has drastically steepened due to transitioning global phenomenon's such as El-Nino that negatively affects India's agricultural output severing the parity of women in field work and other allied sources of livelihood such as fishing. That has brought in questions, that of food security, gendered impact and climate in one. This paper seeks to highlight and study the structural mechanisms that have aimed at addressing these issues from a feminist standpoint. seeking to bring in enquiry upon the contemporary crises revolving around women in India from a feminist perspective through observations recorded by the Respective government authorities, UNFAO and NGO'S

4.22

Understanding the Relationship Between Sustainability and Ecofeminism in an Indian Context

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This article looks closely at the relationship between gender and environment in the context of sustainability. It has been seen that without the inclusion of feminist concerns for gender equality, most environment public policy approaches will be incomplete and may even threaten to intensify women's subordination. This is illustrated in this article through a case study from Nilgiris district of Tamil Nadu, India, wherein local organizations that operate successfully for environmental sustainability and women's financial inclusion do not achieve gender equality due to the chokehold of patriarchy. The article is theoretically situated in Bina Agarwal's idea that differences in attitudes to conservation between genders can stem primarily from the gendered division of economic resources, and the gendered division of labor. The article concludes that the relationship between women and nature in the Global South is a political issue that is fraught with power relations that operate at different scales and through different modalities. This argument is placed in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of 2030 which aim at ensuring dignity to all and enabling human beings to achieve their fullest potential (United Nations, 2015, p. 5). This entails a right to a clean environment guaranteed to every human being. However, none of the SDGs that focus on the environment—forests, oceans, and climate change—mention gen- der equality specifically in their targets and indicators (Agarwal, 2017, p. 56). This is a stark gap and will be detrimental to the achievement of environmental sustainability. The SDGs have, however, mentioned the relationship between gender and environment while expanding on the fifth goal of gender equity. In a review of background papers (Adams, 2009, p. 110; United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], 2016) pub- lished by the UNDP we find case studies that illustrate the link between the goal of promoting gender equality and environmental sustainability, such as how the time spent by women collecting fuelwood or water reduces women's opportunity for revenue generation through other means and how unequal title rights over land among

women limits their bargaining power and livelihood opportunities. These case studies illustrate that the SDGs are not blind to the relationship between gender and the environment. However, to make concrete and effective public policy, we need to problematize these relationships when articulating environment goals as well. It is in this context that this article seeks to understand the relationship between sustainability and gender. We also wish to critically analyse how the perceptions that underline an understanding of the relationship between the environment and gender may colour the implementation of policies and laws on the ground.

Keywords: SDGs; Sustainability; Development; Ecofeminism; India

4.23
A Tribal Outlook: NGOs and their role in tribal development

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The paper aims to underscore the tribal people's perspective on NGO work in their respective areas. An exploratory study was conducted to unfold some of the standpoints of tribal people where we can understand the meaning of NGOs and their work in tribal areas. The paper also sheds some light on understanding the role of NGOs in development through a tribal perspective in the Gadchiroli district, Maharashtra. The present research has taken a detailed review of the projects and activities of the NGOs in the tribal area of the Gadchiroli district.

Based on some facts, NGOs are essential in developing marginalized populations in various villages. Importantly, NGOs have worked in the tribal area for two to three decades. During this period, the NGOs have implemented multiple projects based on their own assessment of issues of concern of the people concerned. The research study dwells on comprehension of the difficulties, constraints, and impediments of the NGOs working in the area on various implementations of programs and projects to develop the vulnerable sections of the population.

Certain process of development in the tribal areas has been started. Still, unfortunately, the local people, particularly the tribal communities, have not been able to distinguish the nature and extent of their development in life. When we compare tribal development with the general population, we find a huge gap. The

indicators related to health, education, and livelihoods are still poor in the tribal area. There are a few areas where we can find a positive change in development. However, this development is not equal in all the tribal areas. Therefore, it becomes important to promote or question the development agencies that are working in the tribal area. Human development is a very broad concept. It could be seen from many locations when considering the perspectives of each individual. Along with that, each stratum of the population would create different meanings of development. The same could be applied to the tribal population. Tribal development is one of the crucial issues of government. Even the constitution of India has recognized the need of reducing the vulnerabilities of tribal populations by giving them constitutional safeguards. The study highlighted the need of the tribal people in terms of development, their experiences with the NGOs, and the participation of the tribal population in the program implementation of the NGOs.

Keywords: NGOs, Tribal women, Tribal development, Tribal perspective, Cultural autonomy, Development issues.

4.24
Navigating Climate Change Impacts on the Transgender Community - Coping to Resilience

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This paper explores the trajectory of coping and adaptation of the transgender community in the face of climate change impacts. While climate change poses multifaceted challenges to societies worldwide, specific marginalised populations, such as transgender individuals, face unique vulnerabilities and experiences that intersect with the environmental crisis. Through an intersectional lens, this study investigates how the transgender community has coped with the impact of climate change and therefore carved its way to adaptation and activism in response to the environmental, social, and economic consequences of climate change. The research draws upon qualitative data gathered from secondary sources such as prior statements, news reports, and first-hand experiences published elsewhere of the members of the transgender communities across diverse geographical

locations. This study highlights the experiences and strategies employed by transgender individuals in confronting climate change challenges. The findings reveal the trajectory of how the transgender communities navigated their struggle for identity, rights and recognition in the face of climate change impact. The community of transgender people have suffered unequally in terms of the effects of climate change, and this impact has been an added, less-recognised layer of struggle for them. From being victims of sudden homelessness to not having ongoing treatments during and after disaster events triggered by climate change. This paper wishes to condense the temporal and spatial struggle of transgender communities in the face of the adverse effects of climate change. It also reveals the transgender individuals' activism for environmental justice, advocating for inclusive climate policies and equal access to resources. They establish networks, support systems, and safe spaces to navigate the compounding effects of climate change and discrimination. Moreover, transgender communities leverage their existing coping strategies and resilience gained from facing societal marginalisation to develop innovative adaptation measures and community-led initiatives. Subsequently, the strategies used by them to tackle the effects of climate change are often coupled with strategies to fight stigma against them. Hence, what may seem like an isolated event has led to the adaptation of strategies to fight multiple injustices against the community. This research also uncovers the importance of recognising the diverse experiences within the transgender community, as factors such as race, socioeconomic status, and geographical location intersect with climate change impacts. Understanding these intersecting vulnerabilities can inform the development of inclusive climate policies and interventions that address the unique needs of transgender individuals. Ultimately, this paper contributes to the emerging field of climate justice by shedding light on the apparent resilience of the transgender community and its active role in mitigating and adapting to climate change. The findings emphasise the importance of amplifying the voices of marginalised communities in climate discourse and policy-making, fostering a more inclusive and equitable approach to climate action.

4.25

Precarious Existence and Uncertain Livehoods: Narratives from women located in Human-Wildlife conflict zones

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Wildlife refers to all the non-domesticated plants, animals, and other organisms that exist in their natural habitats, typically outside of human control or influence. It encompasses a wide range of species, from microscopic organisms to large mammals, and includes diverse ecosystems such as forests, deserts, grasslands, wetlands, oceans, and more. Wildlife is essential to keeping ecosystems in balance and to the overall well-being and efficiency of our planet. It has many advantages, including plant pollination, seed distribution, nutrient cycling, and organic pest control. Wildlife attracts tourists and outdoor enthusiasts by providing aesthetic, cultural, and recreational value. However, a variety of problems and risks to wildlife exist, mostly because of human activity. The world's population is growing and, as a result, humans and wildlife are living more closely together than ever. Conflict between humans and wildlife has grown significantly in importance both internationally and nationally in recent years as both humans and wildlife are badly impacted, and many of the latter are at risk of extinction. The present study is an attempt at looking into the lives of women who reside in zones of human-animal conflict. Women have been considered to be closer to nature and hence it can be presumed that women would be interested in protecting the forest and wildlife from poaching and illegal trading in forest wood. The forests also provide fuel and fodder of the cattle in the nearby areas. The present study proposes to explore into the experiences of women who reside in close proximity to a national park and how their life experiences are affected by the growing human-animal conflict. Using in-depth interviews with 25 women residing in a village that adjoins the Manas National Park of Assam, the paper details the challenges that increasing human habitation faces in such areas. The paper is able to show that not only are humans affected by loss of lives and livelihoods but also the brutal manner in which animals lose their lives. The women interviewed informed that they participated in protecting wildlife by informing the forest officials whenever they have heard about suspected poachers. Most respondents believed that women would not be involved in such activities, thereby displaying an essentialized idea of femininity. However, the women were hardly aware of

the Forest Acts. The study also tried to find out the impact of reserved forest areas on the livelihood of women in the village. It was seen that women complained of the scarcity of grazing fields for their cattle but said that new avenues of livelihood like selling of handicraft items and handloom products has opened with the increase in tourist footfall. Some respondents also spoke about the opening of food joints that offered them new livelihood options. Women in such ecologically sensitive zones, however, had no say in the policy and planning though they saw themselves as crucial stakeholders of their ecology. The present study is significant as it explores the role that women want to play in preserving the ecology despite the vulnerability to their lives and livelihoods, especially in bio-diversity rich zones.

Key words: Wildlife, Illegal trading, Human, Animal Conflict, Wildlife Product, Women's awareness

4.26
Journey to Recognition amidst Climate Change: Tribal Women's Struggle for Claiming CFRR and Reclaiming Identities in Chhattisgarh

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While helping maintain the regional hydrological cycles and nutrient flows, forests across the world support lives and livelihoods of millions of people, and provide crucial habitats to an incredible range of fauna, that in-turn maintain the agricultural diversity and decomposition processes on earth. Forests are also one of the most important solutions to addressing the effects of climate change. They absorb approximately 2.6 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide every year. From the Amazonian forests to urban forest patches in Delhi, forested areas are crucial climate regulators and protectors of species diversity.

The indigenous tribes and forest-dependent communities, who have long manage these resources, are increasingly threatened with loss of lives and livelihoods. As forests continue to degrade and shrink due to reckless deforestation carried out in the interests of agriculture and mining, exacerbated by climate change, this

further worsens the impact of climate change. The impact hits hardest the most vulnerable communities, and especially the women, who are usually the ones to collect resources – fuel wood, fruits and berries, vegetables and herbs, tubors and medicinal barks. In India, women in forested and fringe villages spend hours collecting these resources for their families' sustenance every day. They are also the ones who know the forests the most, and can contribute immensely to effective conservation of forest Commons. However, the popular discourse on conservation does not acknowledge spaces of community-nature co-existence, and women are often considered destroyers of forests.

In India's state of Chhattisgarh, forests comprise 41% of its geographical area, and tribal communities constitute one-third of its population. Indian legislature provides substantive mechanisms for the protection of rights of these communities through the Forest Rights Act, 2006, passed with an aim to stop and reverse centuries of injustice that adivasis have faced at the hands of colonizers and the once-colonized. While CFR and IFR are more popular, the Act also provides for granting of Community Forest Resource Rights (CFRR). This provision not just gives the Gram Sabhas the rights to use the forest resources, but also confers on them the responsibility to manage, conserve, and regenerate them. e communities can officially claim 'titles' to the forest lands they have traditionally depended on, and the rights to act for their protection as per their long-practices knowledge of forest management, including protection from poaching, forest fires etc.

A strong government commitment to fully implement these provisions has paved way for CSOs to work on advancing communities' access to information for claiming CFRR with speed, while enhancing the implementation capacities of the government functionaries. The state has also shown considerable progress (claims over roughly 25% of the recorded forest area in the state have already been awarded). As communities embark of these journeys of filling claims, their women have to strive twice as hard to be recognised as capable stewards of forest conservation, let alone as climate front-liners. This paper looks at some of the pains that women in tribal areas struggling to claim rights over their shared natural resources go through while supporting the others in the community. By studying cases of hardships faced by women as impacts of climate change increasingly worsen, the research aims to further the improvement of current frameworks of CSO-government partnerships as a critical space for advancing climate action.

4.27
Climate Change and Caste
with a Focus on Migration

Dr. Suvarna More, Individual Researcher Scholar

Climate change is a huge challenge that we are facing across the world. The climate crisis debate was established from western but now all nation has facing climatic challenges. Heatwaves, droughts, floods, cyclones, and other natural disasters have impacted humans. Dalit watch reports have highlighted caste-based exclusion in disaster situation mapping since 2009 (NCDHR, 2022). They show the condition of Dalit and Adivasi communities, coping mechanisms, and the drought mitigation measures in the region where droughts are a recurrent phenomenon. In Maharashtra, the Marathwada region is the most droughted area (Tiwale and Hingmire, 2016). Caste is dominated by all marginal's forms of various structural aspects. Dalit women are already oppressed doubly because of caste and gender oppression. When we look at climate change and caste relations with a focus on migrations, various aspects are discussed by scholars and activists. urban areas and slums located in various capital cities have seen climate change migrants and their impacted children and families. Urban Mumbai rainy season has a bigger problem for the Katkari community which belongs to the agricultural community. (Rachel Gerber and Jacob Sztokman, 2022). Climate change affected the marginal community worst. Marginal women are facing difficulties on a lot of levels, they do have not a support system to sustain their conditions when disasters, droughts, cyclones, etc. happen. State support does not fulfill their livelihoods. Temporary solutions do not erase their conditions. Climate change scholars not looking at the deeply interlinkage between caste and climate change. Scholars' positionality is the most important part to give the directorial role to resolve the climate change crisis. I will discuss how climate change is linked to caste and migration dimensions. I am looking here at seasonal migration moving from rural to urban areas because of climate change factors such as droughts, floods, heat waves, etc. These seasonal migrations happen within an Indian state and from state to state as well. Through the literature, I want to examine how climate change impacted migration-gender-caste relations. specifically focused on the Maharashtra context.

Keywords: Climate Change, Caste, Gender, Migration, etc.

4.28

Women Collectives and Natural Farming: Saving Environment and Protecting Self Identity

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The present study has two-fold aims: whether group farming helps towards women empowerment, how the women organic farming groups helps in protecting the environment. Thus, the study makes the two-way links - how participation in organic and sustainable farming can empower women, also in the other possible way: how does the participation of women successfully achieve the multiple goals of organic and sustainable farming? How gendered or gender equal is organic farming compared to conventional farming is another important value addition of the study to the existing literature. The study was conducted in Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh.

The study is based on qualitative research methodology. Focus Group Discussions (FGD) were conducted with the women group members. The FGDs are conducted during October 2022 and November 2022 in Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh. The groups were contacted through the local NGOs. Total 25 women groups were interviewed including 15 in Himachal Pradesh and 10 in Gujarat.

There are mainly two types of groups: farm input making group and group of women cultivating in the common plot. However while major two types of groups are studied but according to detail activity wise they can be divided into six major types: a). making inputs collectively but farming separately, b) both farming and making inputs collectively; c) farming in common plot but not making inputs; d) making inputs collectively, collectively doing agro-food processing but farming separately; e) making inputs collectively, collectively doing agro-food processing and also farming; f) collective for exclusively agro-food processing. Groups studied in Gujarat mainly fall in the first three categories. In Himachal Pradesh the groups are mainly engaged in input making and agro-food processing than to farming in a common field. While three types of groups are found in Gujarat but in Himachal Pradesh five types are found. Women groups collectively farming in the common plot is less but women groups are engaged in agro-food processing and marketing.

The size of the group ranges from 5 to 12 people. Women are able to access land collectively, a reality that was previously beyond their reach. This is a significant and positive development for many women who have faced barriers in accessing

this important resource on their own. Women farmers are now realizing their potential as key decision makers, with greater control over the decision-making process. Access to institutional support and land resources has also played a crucial role in empowering them, paving the way for more successful and sustainable farming practices. Women have become the agent of protecting the environment by adopting natural farming as well as making effort for other to accept natural farming. There was reservation about transforming from conventional agriculture to natural farming, mainly about the quantity of production. However, keeping in mind the health impact of the use of chemical fertilizer and pesticide, with the training and support from civil society organizations, women groups made it sure to adopt natural farming. Though the initial years the production was not great but still the continue effort of women make the natural farming a success though at small scale. Collective efforts are vital for ensuring sustainable development and preserving the natural resources. However, product differentiation in market, lack of availability of local seed variety, lack of link with market are a few challenges that women face for practicing natural farming.

4.29
The gendered impact of climate change – rhetoric and action

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The exploitation of natural and other resources, rising carbon emissions, and detrimental effects of human activities have led to changing global temperatures and climate emergencies. And the adverse effects of climate change have a disproportionate impact on women. girls and other gender non-binary persons from Dalit, Adivasi and other marginalised communities.

The gendered impact of climate change is evident in the gendered division of work as women's primary role is seen as resting in areas of food production, food processing dairy, in care giving and their responsibility in managing livestock. These roles women are expected to perform places them at the fore front of climate changes which are impacting availability of water, crop production and exacerbating natural calamities. According to a UNWOMEN report (February 2022), 80% of people displaced by climate change are women. gender inequalities coupled with social norms, stigma, limited mobility, low literacy rate, lack of

financial resources, restricted rights, and a muted voice in shaping decisions make women highly vulnerable to climate change (UNDP, 2007).

Through a review of literature on the gendered impact of climate change, especially in the Indian context, this paper will highlight available evidence and insights as well as the gaps in our current understanding of the issue. The paper will also supplement the literature review with perspectives from the funder community, on the approach they are taking to resource the climate change agenda.

According to a report brought out by Prospera International Network of Women's Funds and Global Greengrants Fund (2023), while there is an increase in the understanding among grantmakers of the strategic ways in which funding at the intersection of women and the environment can yield positive results, implementation of such an agenda is often hampered by a lack of knowledge and resources. The paper will also highlight some potential ways in which intersectional and interconnected agendas can emerge for the priorities and claims women from marginalised communities, can make, on the resources around climate change.

The paper will also bring insights from a unique initiative - the Economic and Environmental Justice (EEJ) Fellowship Programme which aims to build economic resilience of women in marginalized communities through ecologically sustainable initiatives. The paper aims at building the case for the need for resources to flow towards women and trans persons-led initiatives that build empowering and sustainable solutions to the crises being driven by climate change.

Keywords: Climate Change, Gender, Resources

4. 30

Feminisation of Agriculture and its Impact on Women: Responses from the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations

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Globally, 36 per cent of working women are employed in the agri-food systems, which makes for a considerable number. As more men migrate to urban areas for employment, women's participation in agriculture and related activities has increased, leading to the feminisation of agriculture. Women are more willing to accept low-paid irregular work, are easy to hire and fire, are considered docile and hardworking, and certain jobs are typified as women's work.

Despite the importance of agri-food systems for women's livelihoods and the welfare of their families, women's roles tend to be marginalized, and their working conditions are likely to be worse than men's – irregular, informal, part-time, low-skilled, labour-intensive, and thus vulnerable. This phenomenon has multifaceted implications for women's empowerment, food security and sustainable development. Recognizing these challenges, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has taken proactive measures to address gender-specific issues arising from the feminisation of agriculture.

This study presents the FAO's responses to the feminization of agriculture and its impact on women. Drawing on extensive research, policy initiatives, and best practices, the FAO has developed a comprehensive framework to empower women in agriculture, enhance their resilience, and promote gender equality within the sector. The first aspect of the FAO's response focuses on recognizing and addressing the structural barriers that impede women's full and equal participation in agriculture. This includes advocating policy reforms that eliminate discriminatory laws and practices, improve women's access to and control over productive resources, enhance their decision-making power, and facilitate access to markets and financial services. Furthermore, FAO promotes the capacity development of women in agriculture through targeted training programs and knowledge-sharing platforms. These initiatives aim to enhance women's technical and entrepreneurial skills, improve their resilience to climate change and other shocks, and foster innovation in agricultural practice.

Recognizing the crucial role played by women in ensuring food security and nutrition, the FAO actively supports women's entrepreneurship and income-generating activities. By providing women with access to appropriate technologies, information, and market opportunities, the organization seeks to enhance their economic empowerment, reduce poverty, and strengthen their rural livelihoods. The FAO also recognizes the need for gender-responsive agricultural policies and programmes. It advocates integrating a gender lens across all stages of agricultural development, from research and planning to implementation and monitoring. This approach ensures that women's needs, perspectives, and contributions are fully integrated into policies, programmes, and investments in the agricultural sector.

The feminization of agriculture presents challenges and opportunities for women's empowerment and sustainable development. FAO has responded to this phenomenon by implementing a holistic approach that addresses structural barriers, enhances women's capacities, promotes economic empowerment, and mainstreams gender considerations in agricultural policies and programs. This study seeks to shed light on FAO's initiatives, sharing valuable insights for researchers, policymakers, and development practitioners to foster gender equality and inclusive agricultural development.

Keywords: Feminisation of Agriculture, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, FAO, women's livelihood, gender, equal pay, agriculture

4.31
Those who stay behind: Migration and Adaptability in Tales of Double Vulnerabilities among Women Traditional Resource Users from the Indian Sundarbans

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Keywords: Forced climate migration, Sundarbans, women, global pandemic, adaptation, dispossession

The COVID-19 pandemic and its socio-economic ramifications are dramatically changing the course of the Sustainable Development Goals in India and re-

modifying the adaptation discourse in the context of climate migration. Sustainable development not only includes the study of the management of threats and risks associated with climate adaptation and mitigation, but it also embraces an approach to deploying pathways to become resilient to the effects of climate change and adapt to hostile environments for mere sustenance. Environmental disasters affect men and women in different ways, and they often exhibit different migration patterns to cope with natural disasters. Gender remains a prominent analytical tool to understand migration as a livelihood strategy and delve into notions of both mobility and immobility for the migrants and the women who often 'stay behind'. Climate migration has direct consequences for the cultural dimensions of livelihoods and demonstrates the relationship between adaptation choices and the cultural ethos of a given place that continues to influence individuals' decisions to adapt to one place or migrate to lesser-risk areas. Climate changes in the Sundarbans have led to the outmigration of the younger generation from Bipradaspur village and Sagar Island to states like Kerela, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Gujarat. The combined impact of climate change-induced migration and a global crisis generated by the outbreak of COVID-19 has exacerbated the marginalisation, loss of livelihood, and already existing structural barriers to access to health, social security, and education for the women of the indigenous communities in the Sundarbans Delta, spanning across the regions of Bangladesh and India. I seek to employ the Sundarbans as a point of reference to understand the intersection of a global crisis and environmental degradation and critically evaluate migration as inherently 'gendered', which leads to shifts in gender roles and intensifies the gendered experiences of discrimination, violence, and oppression.

The case study of the Sundarbans makes a strong statement about the need to form an interactive relationship between climate change policies and socio-economic development and decode the nexus between migration, environment, and gender. The Sundarbans is a coastal delta and a major hotspot for climate change that forms the southern part of the Gangetic delta between the rivers Hooghly in the west of West Bengal and Meghna River in Bangladesh. The riverine island is a direct witness to the significant climatic and other ecological challenges caused by natural calamities that have had diverse consequences for its unique ecosystem and contributing to the exponential rise of climate migrants, constantly reshaping the political and geographical contours of a region.

This sociological study seeks to assess the socio-economic vulnerabilities of the women traditional resource users of the Sundarbans due to distress migration induced by climate change, the concomitant dispossession of economic and social capital, and a change in the nature of occupation. It is a conscious effort to focus on the dominant narrative of migration as well as capture the stories of 'immobility'

of those who remain behind through the lenses of the quotidian struggles of the women and children from marginalised backgrounds. The impact of the climate changes on the women of the households of the labour migrants is manifested among the young girls since they are married at a very early age and are 'left behind' while the men form a major section of the labour outmigration, generating a sense of fear and becoming vulnerable to trafficking. The migration journey is also contingent upon the agency and social and cultural capital of the women involved in the process, which further pave the way for a continued approach to seasonal labour outmigration, the creation of a remittance economy, and food and water scarcity caused by extraordinary environmental changes. This research draws its methodological paradigm from the community-based interviews and testimonies of the women of Sagar Island and Bipradaspur Gram Panchayat in Gosaba Municipality and reflect on the 'politics of dispossession' caused by the pandemic, translating to the susceptibilities caused by environmental degradation and a global crisis manifested in the multiple forms of gender discrimination, the decline of the social and cultural practises of indigenous communities, and rising inequalities in the labour market. Indigenous women are also more exposed to gender-based violence, culminating in higher rates of child marriage and child trafficking and a lack of access to safe sexual and reproductive health practises as a result of lockdown measures. The economic hardship resulting from COVID-19 and frequent natural disasters often also increases instances of domestic violence in families. Thus, tales of the double vulnerabilities of the Traditional Resource Users and the fishing communities of the Sundarbans often come to the forefront, as these people are mostly employed in the informal sector. I shall argue that survival for the women in the Sundarbans largely means redefining the notion of adaptation imbued with the participatory politics of the local communities in striving for sustenance. As a way forward, this project also aims to underline the central role played by the communities in building a positive response and the different entrepreneurial initiatives to strengthen the sustainability of their community.

4.32

"Traditional Santhal Architecture: Women's Role and the Impact of Modernization on Sustainability"

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The Santhal tribe is one of the major indigenous communities residing predominantly in villages, alongside other communities and castes. In small villages, 10 to 50 Santhal families from different clans reside. Their houses are typically made of mud, with thatched roofs adorned with beautiful artwork. The walls of their houses, often painted with charcoal, add to their aesthetic appeal. Women have played an active role in the construction of these houses and the artistic detailing on the walls since ancient times. Tribal women have a deep understanding and appreciation for nature, and they construct homes while considering natural elements such as mud, cow dung, thatch, and wood. Their intention is always to maintain harmony with nature, ensuring minimal harm in case of any adversity or destruction to their homes.

However, with the advent of industrialization and modernization, significant changes have been observed. Some members of the Santhal tribe have started constructing concrete houses, which pose a danger to the environment. Modern architecture, extensively utilizing concrete, gravel, and other non-sustainable materials, is being implemented on a large scale, diminishing the role of women in the construction process. Sustainable practices that were prevalent in the past are being disregarded. Nonetheless, there exists a sustainable architecture where women play a significant and often overlooked role. This form of architecture has the potential to be environmentally friendly, sustainable, and promising for the future. Unfortunately, it is being marginalized. However, if given due attention, it can be a promising field in the future, creating employment opportunities for women and establishing good and sustainable architectural practices.

This research employs a qualitative approach to explore the traditional architecture practices of the Santhal tribe and the changes brought about by modernization. The study focuses on understanding the role of women in house construction and their contributions to sustainable architecture.

The research will be conducted in the Dhatikbona and Burudih villages of the Hijla Panchayat in Dumka district, Jharkhand. Data will be collected through in-depth interviews with the selected participants.

The findings from this research will shed light on the role of women in traditional Santhal architecture and the impact of modernization on sustainable practices. The research aims to contribute to the preservation of indigenous knowledge, highlight the importance of sustainable architecture, and emphasize the significance of women's participation in the construction process.

4.33
Unheard and Unseen: Industrial Closure and its Impact on Women's lives

Borsha Borkakati and Poonam Kakoti Borah

Industrial closure refers to the shutdown of an industry or the closing of industrial establishments. Industrial closure causes not just job loss and economic difficulties but also psycho-social stress. There are many factors that are related to industrial closure such as technological advancement, corruption, globalization, economic downturns, etc. These variables can affect both male and female workers of an industry and the local economy as well. Especially the female-headed household may face more difficulties because of industrial closure or dislocation, due to their existing vulnerability. This study intends to discuss the direct and indirect impact of the closure of the Nagaon Paper mill on women. The Hindustan Paper Corporation established the Nagaon Paper mill in 1970. The mill had a daily capacity of 300 mt of paper for production and had approximately around 4000 workers who came from different parts of the country. The paper mill at Jagiroad was doing well until 2007 but it was completely shut down in 2017. With its closure, there was an immediate adverse impact on the workers as well as the local economy. Women were not just employed as workers in the mill but also were vendors in the local market that thrived while the Mill was operational. Using interviews with 14 previous employees of the paper mill, this study intends to show how the ex-workers of the mill faced extreme difficulties after the closure. They recalled their lives while the mill was functional and described the economic struggles, healthcare crisis, and educational impact of the closure. The study shows that daughters of the ex-workers either faced trouble with continuing their education and it also affected marriage proposals. As the workers had to resort to spending their savings and sustaining through their provident funds,

women in the family had to work with scant resources, thereby living a life of uncertainty and vulnerability. Women who were workers themselves said that they faced an 'identity crisis' as they were now in roles that they were not used to. Instances were reported wherein women who were heading the household committed suicide due to the unbearable economic burden and unpredictability of the future. Women vendors of the local market lamented that their income had depleted rapidly as the workforce moved away to either their native places or relocated in search of new employment facilities. By investigating into one particular case of industrial closure, this study intends to highlight the unheard voices of all women who are directly and indirectly made vulnerable due to economic decisions taken without any consideration of their presence.

Keywords – Industrial Closure, Vulnerability, Female Headed-Households, Psycho-social Stress, Hindustan Paper Corporation

4.34

Conservation and Adaptation minus Rights: Understanding the relevance of the Forest Rights Act in the trans Himalayan valley of Lahaul through a feminist lens

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Keywords: forestrights; indigenous; women; conservation, climate adaptation, development

Forest conservation in the Himalayan region has been a national and global issue since the decade of the Chipko Movement in the Western Himalaya. Ecofeminist narratives of conservation coupled with concepts of 'social forestry' and 'community forest management' started centering women's participation in programs like Joint Forest Management implemented by the State led Forest Department. However, the issue of community access and ownership of land and forest resources remained unaddressed. And women, while given the added burden of restricting forest dependence, had little role in decision making in these policies.

In the era of neoliberal development and the growing ecological destruction, land and forest based livelihoods in the Himalayan region are becoming more precarious. While women in communities exercise methods within their means to respond to newer crises, their needs and voices continue to remain on the sidelines in conservation policy, now governed by top down climate change adaptation and mitigation. In the trans-Himalayan Lahaul valley, the forest department takes credit for forest conservation attributing it to its own afforestation initiatives and state supported efforts by women's collectives around forest governance. This qualitative research conducted in the Lahaul valley interrogates this claim by collecting and analyzing local narratives, especially those of the women's collectives or Mahila Mandals around historical shifts in their relationship with forests. We also look at the impact of the changing legal and market regimes on land, labour, livelihoods and indigenous identity.

The Forest Rights Act 2006 recognizes rights of forest dependent people, especially women in decision making through legal tenure. However, the implementation of this act in the region has met with hurdles from the State. The reluctance of the State in recognizing forest rights, critical to both local livelihoods and conservation, even as it appropriates women's labour and efforts, exposes the patriarchal and colonial tendencies of State development and climate policies.

4.45
Unsafe Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) Practices And Ecological Balance: The Role Of Women

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An educated and well-informed woman can be a great contributor to sustainable development. Inaccurate or incomplete knowledge about menstruation is an impediment to Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) practices. This not only relates to the choice in terms of utilization of menstrual products but also the choice made with respect to the disposal of used menstrual products.

Environmental degradation is the result of poor management of natural resources and environmental pollution is the effect. Mismanagement of the disposal of used menstrual products is an important cause of environmental degradation. Women in India still do not seem to be well aware of the connection between improper disposal of used menstrual products and their environmental hazards. Most urban women dispose of their menstrual waste in garbage bins. However, the same is untrue with rural areas where the concept of "garbage trucks" does not even exist. All toilet facilities in India are not well equipped with a separate sanitary pad bin for disposal, therefore all this adds more to the quantity of solid waste. Women either use reusable menstrual products or disposable menstrual products. Disposable sanitary products take about a year to decompose. The perforated plastic used in sanitary napkins is not easily biodegradable and leads to the blockage of sewage. People living near the rivers dispose of sanitary napkins in the water bodies thus contaminating them. Women who use reusable menstrual products are in a better position. Reusable products if washed in a proper manner can be more conducive to the environment. This research paper focuses on two important objectives: 1. To study the preference of women for making choices for menstrual products and the disposal of the same. 2. To understand the impact of factors (education, level of awareness, independence, and level of participation in the decision-making of women) on the choices. 3. To understand the implication of these choices on the ecological balance. This will help develop a framework for shifting from unsustainable to sustainable menstrual hygiene practices. This study is largely qualitative and has been conducted in rural villages of Maharashtra in the districts of Hingoli, Jalna and Nanded. These three districts were particularly selected due to their poor performance in MHM according to the NFHS reports (2015-16 and 2019-2020). The primary data collected in terms of interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FDGs) clearly indicated how lack of knowledge and disposal facilities is not only hampering women from practising safe MHM but also has severe implications on the ecological environment of the villages. The results of the study are a testament to how lack of knowledge and awareness can in turn result in ecological degradation and harm due to lack of MHM practices. One of the villages under study - Sawar Ganga Kinar had a similar orientation. The village had a fresh river as the only source of water for all their activities. Over time, with increasing awareness about sanitary napkins but lack of complete education of MHM practices resulted in girls and women polluting the river and fields with plastic products due to improper disposal activities implying the lack of unconscious participation of women and girls in ecological activities.

Keywords: Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM), Environmental Degradation, Women, Sanitary Napkins, Ecological Balance, Awareness

4.46

Invisible circular economies of care: Foregrounding the contribution of workers in the informal economy

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Circular economy, a regenerative and transformative economic model has gained significance as a more sustainable form of economic system and as an alternative to the "take–make–use–dispose" linear economy. However, the dominant CE concept as discussed in the global North prioritises ecological and environmental sustainability outcomes implemented through technological fixes and lacks attention to social sustainability and livelihood issues (Gutberlet & Carenzo (2020). The paper calls for a shift in the paradigm of CE from a global south feminist perspective, which recognises and accounts for the contributions of the informal livelihoods to the circular economy. Drawing on qualitative exploratory case studies of six unique informal livelihoods in the city economy in Delhi, the paper argues that informal workers are vital to circular production, and sustain invisible economies of care, by contributing significantly to managing waste and closing material cycles through promoting repair, reuse and upcycling of waste.

Despite their positive contributions to the economy and the environment, these informal circular livelihoods are "invisibilised", "stigmatised" and are under constant threat because of unfavourable legislation. The paper highlights that such informal work is usually performed by socially "othered" people and their experiences are shaped by their intersectional vulnerabilities, stemming from gender, caste, class, migrant status, religion and so on. Poor migrant women from marginalised communities were found to be most vulnerable and concentrated in the lowest-paid and precarious work of waste collection, street vending and home-based work. By centring the invisible economies of care and building evidence on the valuable contribution of informal workers such as waste pickers, home-based workers and street vendors, the paper aims to place informal livelihoods in the global south at the centre of the discourse on a 'just transition' to a sustainable circular economy. The paper is based on study conducted in collaboration with WIEGO – Delhi Focal City Program

Awareness about sustainable menstrual products and its environmental impact among young girls in Goa.

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Girls and women use different types of menstrual products to manage their menstruation. Sustainable Development Goal 6 focuses on sustainable sanitation management, especially for women in vulnerable situations. On average, every woman generates 125 kg of menstrual waste in her lifetime while menstruating. Menstrual waste management has been a concern in India. Solid Waste Management Guidelines 2016, Rule 3(41), states the definition of sanitary waste and has provided instructions regarding the disposal of the same, including menstrual waste. The menstrual waste is disposed off in various manners by following unsafe disposal practices such as throwing them in open areas, burning or flushing in the toilets or keeping them at the side of toilet windows due to inadequate facilities. In cities, it is wrapped and disposed of in dry or non-biodegradable waste bins. However, one sanitary napkin takes 500-800 years to decompose, negatively impacting the environment. The landfill sites have witnessed mismanagement of menstrual waste. Corporate Social initiatives are towards installing incinerators and sanitary napkin dispensers in educational institutions. But the effective utilization of these facilities is not evaluated, especially in Goa. Sustainable menstrual products include eco-friendly reusable sanitary napkins, menstrual cups, period panties and other bio-degradable products. This study will examine the different types of menstrual products used by young college girls, awareness related to sustainable menstrual products, the environmental impact of menstrual products, their perceptions and the choice of the product. The study will also explore the sanitary waste disposal practices followed in educational institutions and the management practices at home by young girls. This study will be based in an educational institution in Goa. The data will be collected through Google Forms, and its link will be circulated in the proposed educational institution. Ethical approval will be obtained from the concerned authorities of the institute to conduct the study, and consent will be

obtained from the students participating in the study. Students can withdraw from the study at any point in time without any justification. The anonymity of the student's name will be maintained. This study will provide insights on sanitary waste management in educational institutions addressing young girls' menstrual management needs and the scope of sustainable menstrual product usage in educational institutions.

Keywords: Sustainable Menstrual Product, Awareness, Sanitary Waste

4.48

Revisited Additive Aspects of Women In Earthquake: A case study of Post-Earthquake in Nepal

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Young women are considered to be one of the most vulnerable living being in the natural calamities. But what is more important in the state of disaster, either their vulnerability should be considered or should consider their contribution despite being weak? In Nepal, where she also contributes to every aspect of daily life along with disaster like earthquake of 2015. But there is no account of the contribution of her daily life till date. Therefore, the contribution in time of disaster will not be considered, it is a big surprise. This paper works on the different additive aspect of women in earthquake in Nepal through the ecofeminist lens. Analysis of those social construct who makes them vulnerable and motivate them to contribute at the same time in Nepal earthquake. Young women in sindhupalchouk saves life, construct structures and rebuild their lives. Their contribution in creating and redirecting lives was commendable, but some cultural shackles are still have some questions about this contribution. These social seclusion question their contribution and counted it for last. While ecofeminist give breakthrough explanation to such additive aspect of those women. It is an attempt to posit new knowledge based on video interview with exploratory and ecofeminist study of social taboos responsible against women.

Keywords: young women, contribution, additive, social construct, earthquake

4.49

From Sea to Mountains, the Savoir Faire and Disaster Response: Discourses on the Agency of Women in Kerala during 2004 Tsunami and 2018 Floods

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Since the frequency and severity of natural disasters have increased in this century at a never-before-seen rate, policymakers, researchers, and practitioners have embraced novel disaster risk reduction strategies to enhance resilience. Disaster risk governance encourages inventive and responsible techniques to increase efficacy. The engagement of several stakeholders is a crucial component of disaster risk governance. According to numerous international plans and frameworks, women are the main stakeholders in disaster management efforts. The ramification of disasters persistently reflects and deepen gender inequity, which occurs because societal gender dynamics have an impact on the factors causing disaster repercussions. The startling findings unveil that women and children have 14 times higher mortality rates than men during disasters. 70 per cent of the 230,000 people who died in the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami were women. Distinctly the influential role of women at the household level in the stages of disaster response and recovery is unfathomable. However, due to percept societal conditionings, their responsibilities in organizational decision-making, particularly the catastrophe risk governance, are underestimated often resulting in equity and equality concerns among the communities. Women's agency in disaster management is crucial for effective disaster response, their impeccable role due to indigenous community knowledge, social capacity in managing environmental resources and care responsibilities often positions their stance as either detrimental or instrumental. To facilitate women's involvement in disaster management, it is necessary to promote gender equality by providing training and capacity-building opportunities, ensuring representation in decision-making processes, and addressing systemic barriers and biases that may impede their participation. The proposed paper explores the Savoir Faire or 'know how' women respond to disaster through their agency from a gender paradigm. Hence the study discusses the lived experiences of coastal community women survivors of the 2004 tsunami at Alappad. The women-centric communities' resilience to tsunami response by recognizing their potential as advocates or as confidantes

assisted them in overcoming the peril to an extent. Further, the indigenous communities' women survivors of Wayanad hills during the floods of 2018 were able to exercise their agency along with institutionalized governance. Since the intersecting vulnerabilities condition them to exercise their agency methodically irrespective of similar gender identity, the respective paper subsequently analyses how women from these natural resources depended communities perceive their positioning (agency) in society in the wake of disasters resulting in spatial marginalities. Keywords: Coastal and Indigenous women, Spatial Marginality, Agency, Disaster Response, Disaster management

Sub-theme 5

Women in STEMM
and
Building Scientific Temper

5.1
COVID-19 and the Engineering Education Pipeline in India: A Gendered Perspective

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Through this study, we aim to examine the gendered impact of COVID-19 on the engineering education pipeline in India. Historically, women have always been underrepresented in engineering1. The national averages for enrolments in other STEM and non-STEM undergraduate courses present an image of gender parity across higher education institutions in India2. However, these numbers are inconsistent with female enrolments in engineering2. Additionally, the economic and health shocks triggered by the pandemic have resulted in instances of unequal access to household resources and increased household and caregiving responsibilities for female family members3,4. Given the male-dominated context of engineering colleges in India, in conjunction with other gender-specific challenges faced by females during the pandemic, it is expected that COVID-19 has disproportionately affected the academic experience of females. To get a comprehensive view of the effect of the pandemic on a female's progress from high school to an engineering institution, we conduct a mixed methods study. We will be interviewing over 150 students across 20 engineering institutions in Delhi- and NCR on how parental and societal expectations around the choice of engineering college and discipline affects their decision to pursue engineering and the effect of the pandemic on their overall academic experience. These institutions will be differentiated by location, type of funding, NIRF rank, infrastructure, age and other institute characteristics. Our rich dataset provides

quantitative and qualitative insights into the differentiated experience of women in engineering.

Preliminary findings from our analysis indicate that there is a distinct gendered dimension to the division of household labour within families. Female members of the household not only shoulder a greater burden of household chores compared to their male counterparts, there is also a noticeable trend of restricting their mobility concerning the type of household tasks they undertake. Furthermore, a gendered pattern emerged when students were asked to evaluate their freedom to go out during and after the pandemic. Female students reported being constantly monitored and experiencing restricted freedom, whereas male students did not perceive a significant difference. Another gendered pattern emerges when students assess the adverse effects of the pandemic on various aspects of their lives. Male students predominantly expressed concern about the impact of the pandemic on their career paths, while female students were more worried about the emotional distress caused by the pandemic. This encompassed the impact of income and health shocks on their families, the effects on their social lives and mental well-being, as well as the influence of the pandemic on their careers. The insights derived from this study will be valuable for informing policy decisions and preparing for future shocks. The majority of the literature that evaluates the impact of COVID-19 on education, especially in the Indian context, focuses on the effect of school closures on primary education and questions concerning dropouts in general. This study addresses the research gap regarding the impact of COVID-19 on higher education, particularly India's engineering pipeline.

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5.2
Parallelism between Women in STEM and the Primary Sector

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Gender is a sociological construct that has been commonly misunderstood by the patriarchal society, which continues to reinforce the traditional dichotomous notion of men as strong and women as weak. Women, who constitute 49.5 percent of the global population, are often reminded that emotional individuals are incapable of rationality. Rational and objective thinking, according to patriarchy, is possible only when an individual is far from emotional vulnerability, which women are often associated with. Science, Technology, Engineering, Medicine and Mathematics (STEMM) are all fields founded on objectivity, and this is the generic argument by the employers who deny opportunities to women. According to the National Science Foundation, enrollment of women in STEMM was 52 per cent. Still, the number of women in the workforce dropped to nearly half, 27 per cent, which can be an indicator of the gender roles that inhibit women's performance by restricting their access to jobs and preventing them from reaching higher echelons in an organisation. In this paper, we aim to compare women involved in the primary (agriculture) and secondary sector (STEMM) and how women, irrespective of their academic qualifications, are subjected to gender-specific workplace roles, thus barring them from reaching their full potential thereby having a parallelism between them. It also tries to understand the COVID pandemic's effect on women bound by societal expectations of unpaid care irrespective of their profession or educational qualification. Secondary resource-based research is carried out to understand the implications of gender stereotypes on women in STEMM.

Therefore, a holistic understanding of women's issues and the way forward will also be dealt with thoroughly.

5.3
Silenced Voices, Resilient Minds: Unraveling the Pandemic's Impact on Women in Science

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The COVID-19 pandemic has swept across the world, leaving a trail of disruption in its wake. Amidst this turmoil, the effects on women in science have been particularly profound. As shattered glass ceilings meet the reality of remote laboratories, the pandemic has amplified the gender disparities that persist in academia and research. There is an urgent need to revisit the pre-existent multifactorial and intersectional effects of gender inequality on women's careers, mental well-being, and scientific contributions. This talk will discuss the challenges due to the many interconnected layers of gender disparity and will also confront the hidden consequences of the pandemic. I will delve into a few untold stories and invisible struggles that are empowering narratives.

I will also discuss the potential need for cross disciplinary methods to inspire innovative solutions to achieve parity with special reference to the systems approach that promotes holistic thinking. This starts with identification of key players that are direct and indirect stakeholders, delineating heterogenous issues, mapping relationships, network reconstruction and analysis. Such a workflow could potentially identify hubs that are influencers would be critical for the structural transformation needed to bring in equity. We foresee such integrated analysis and strategies to understand redundancies, robustness and bottlenecks. This would further allow us to explore innovative strategies to support and empower women in science and foster a more equitable and inclusive future for all.

Join me in my attempt to unravel the pandemic's impact on women in science, celebrating their silenced voices and resilient minds and exploring the potential of novel methods to ring in brighter, more equitable future. Perhaps, even a future free from almost all gender stereotypes.

5.4

Assessing the impact of COVID-19 on STEM researchers in India

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The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic and the nationally mandated lockdown resulted in facility closures, decreased laboratory activities, and shifting to remote working. The effects of the pandemic spread across all professions, including academia. We conducted a study aimed to understand the extent of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) researchers and stakeholders in India. Using a mixed method design, both quantitative (survey) and qualitative (interview) methods were used to gain a comprehensive understanding on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) early career researchers (ECRs), graduate students, Heads of Institutes, suppliers of scientific equipment, funders, and other stakeholders in India.

A total of 618 researchers completed the survey, and 24 stakeholders were interviewed for this study. Our findings highlighted the importance of institutional and social support for mental well-being and scientific productivity among researchers, especially during the pandemic. It also showed the impact of disruptions in grant disbursals on research activities of scientists. Further, the gendered impact between these relationships was also noted, all of which hint at a need for structured reform within STEM.

5.5

Shaping Aspirations in STEM: Insights from a Mentorship Programme for High School Girls at IIT Delhi

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Initiatives to improve the representation of girls in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) have become increasingly popular in recent years. Despite growing numbers of girls opting for science and allied fields, their retention in higher education and STEM professions continues to be poor. Given this fact, it would be instructive to study girls' educational and career aspirations to better understand why they continue to be underrepresented in STEM. The present study is built on in-depth discussions with high school girls participating in a mentorship programme initiated by the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi. Girls from various schools in Delhi were brought to the campus to undergo exposure in diverse aspects of science and technology research and innovation. These included lectures by IIT professors on basic science concepts, motivational talks by leading researchers, and visits to laboratories. We use the participants' experiences to understand the complex ways in which girls' aspirations are shaped and translated into appropriate higher education choices, and if and how aspiration formation is gendered. We also aim to assess how a mentorship programme at an elite institute like IIT Delhi can contribute to shaping girls' aspirations. We are employing qualitative research methods of participant observation, narratives, and semi-structured interviews and will follow the higher education choices the girls make after graduating from school. With a keen focus on the diverse socio-economic backgrounds of the girls, we wish to explore the encouraging and constraining factors that contribute to their aspirations translating into reality. It is well evidenced in existing literature that 'significant others' such as parents, siblings, teachers, and peers play an important role in girls' decisions regarding higher education. In particular, we will look into parental influence, investment, and the expectations they have of their daughters' futures. Further, we will be assessing the effectiveness of mentorship programmes and their contributions to broadening the girls' scope of interests and encouraging them to continue on in STEM. Through our findings, we hope to gain a deeper understanding of the various considerations that go into deciding girls' academic and professional futures. With a clearer picture of the

trade-offs that girls make at various stages of their academic journeys, we hope to suggest ways in which institutes can be better equipped to address the obstacles that come in the way of girls' advancement in STEM.

5.6

Promising practices in integrating gender in government health programmes: Gender integrated modules in medical education - a case study from India.

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This case study is part of a project initiated by the United Nations University's International Institute for Global Health (UNU-IIGH), School of Public Health at the University of Western Cape in South Africa and the Ramalingaswami Centre on Equity and Social Determinants of Health (RCESDH). The objective was to document cases from Africa, South East Asia and South Asia, of gender integration in government-led health programs.

CEHAT, an NGO in Maharashtra in collaboration with the Maharashtra University of Health Sciences (MUHS) and the Directorate of Medical Education and Research (DMER) undertook a unique experiment to implement gender-integrated modules in undergraduate medical education. The research identified important elements of this experiment - baseline study on gender perspectives in medical colleges, training of medical educators, co-creation of gender modules for integration in the medical curriculum in five disciplines (Obstetrics and Gynecology, Internal Medicine, Community Medicine, Forensic Medicine and Toxicology, and Psychiatry), training a larger pool of medical educators, and approval and mandate by MUHS for implementation in all medical colleges in Maharashtra. CEHAT's linkages with the women's health movement and the contribution of

women's health advocates in India was an important contributing factor.

Methodology

The research conducted by RCESDH, Bengaluru and CEHAT Mumbai, systematically documented the context which gave rise to the CEHAT- DMER - MUHS initiative to integrate gender perspectives in undergraduate medical education in Maharashtra, the enabling factors and challenges encountered and the lessons learnt.

We employed an 'insider-outsider' methodology, considering the perspectives of implementing organisations/individuals and those of independent researchers and participants. We conducted a document review and synthesis of CEHAT publications and conducted 14 interviews (with medical educators, a retired DMER, a Dean, students and CEHAT team members).

Key outcomes

Champions were created in medical colleges. They developed gender-integrated modules across 5 undergraduate medical disciplines, which were accepted by MUHS and are available in the public domain. The initiative has expanded beyond the seven original medical colleges, to other medical colleges within Maharashtra, as well as other states.

The key question raised by this case study is: How can the lessons learnt from the GME in Maharashtra be institutionalized and upscaled?

5.7
Reducing the gender gap in STEM workspace by reducing confidence gap in STEM education

Subaitha H R, Sreena S, Alumna, TCSJ-ISCOS

The gender gap in STEM still remains significant, with women making up only 28% of the STEM workforce globally in 2023. In India, according to All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2021, about 9.5M students enrolled for STEM courses, in which 43% were women. Even though women's representation in STEM education is growing, it is not getting translated into women taking up jobs in related sectors. Much research has focused on the challenges faced

by women in the STEM field and evidence shows both the psychological and environmental factors that are influencing women perceptions of STEM. In our research we focus on the Confidence gap, which is one of the challenges women face when entering the STEM field. Confidence gap is the idea that women tend to be less self-assured in their STEM abilities than their male counterparts. This research work is to come up with a feasible solution for the same through Science communication.

Our research is based on literature reviews and surveys conducted via google form questionnaires to the women in STEM workspace to know their challenges and the ways they choose to overcome to sustain in the STEM field. And Introducing Science communication as a sustainable solution for inducing confidence level that could help women to encourage and develop the capacity to persist in the STEM field.

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5.8
The GATI Pilot Project:
A critical perspective

Ravinder Kaur, Indian Institute of Technology Delhi

DST's GATI (Gender Advancement for Transforming Institutions) pilot project was initiated in late 2021, covering thirty Indian STEMM institutions. The project drew inspiration from and is closely modelled on the UK's Athena Swan Equality Charter, a novel gender equality initiative ushered in in 2005, with the goal of encouraging institutions to identify and remove barriers to women's professional advancement in STEMM higher education and careers.

The thirty institutions in the Indian pilot were expected to conduct a self-assessment on detailed gender equity criteria, identify important gaps and make action plans to address these. The institutions were quite diverse in their nature and were classified by DST into three groups - Research Institutions, Engineering and Science Institutes and Universities.

In this paper, I will present some key findings from the gender assessment at IIT Delhi and address some critical questions about the nature, potential success, scaling, and sustainability of GATI as a gender equality initiative. Athena Swan, on which the project has been modelled, has been characterised by some scholars as an example of "moderate feminism" in the context of neoliberal higher education, which can succeed in accomplishing limited gender equality goals without being radically transformative. I will discuss how the GATI initiative is similar to and different from the UK scheme in its conceptualisation and framing, with resultant implications for its potential impact. In doing so, it is also important to deconstruct the state's imaginary of gender inequality and equity, as reflected in the slew of schemes offered by DST's WISE-KIRAN division to bring and retain more women in the STEM workforce.

Analysis of quantitative data revealed sharp gender gaps in the representation of students, faculty and scientific staff in the Institute. Qualitative investigations revealed pervasive conscious and unconscious biases pertaining to women in STEM. The paper discusses how these inequalities and biases affect the educational and career experiences of women (and other minorities) on campus. An examination of Institute policies, processes, and practices pertaining to recruitment, work-life balance, gender-responsive infrastructure, ensuring dignity and safety on campus, and prospects for leadership helped identify the

gaps and barriers and propose action plans that the Institute had to commit to under the program.

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5.8

Challenging Scientific Temper:
A Gender-Based Narrative Analysis
of Indian Television Soaps

Dr. Radha Bathran, Central University of Tamil Nadu,

In the name of entertainment, upholding superstitious practices are part and parcel of several mega serials or soaps in Indian television channels. The Indian Entertainment Industry is one of the booming sectors with huge investments over the years. Prime time soaps or mega serials are part and parcel of the everyday lives of many families in India, especially women and children. Target audience-based soaps are telecasted in regional languages by the commercial television channels available in different digital platforms. Running for months and sometimes years, these popular melodramas primarily represent family relationships centered around women characters. The serial narratives are built on superstitious content as family norms situating women as victims of violence, prejudice, and discrimination. The everyday lives of the women characters are weaved upholding the traditions with stereotypical sacrifices of oneself. Aimed at increased women viewership such plots are constructed with unrealistic portrayals of 'super women' within the rigid gender norms. It is important to critically examine the narrative patterns of these serials and the challenges they pose against fostering scientific temper. When ample efforts are put to build scientific temper and women in STEM studies and research, mass entertainment programs ignoring scientific temper and glorifying superstitious practices poses a greater threat to the novel efforts. In the given context, taking the theoretical manifestations of Judith Butler, this paper tries to understand the gender performances and identity constructions of lead characters in the

recent television soaps in regional Tamil language. Using narrative analysis, it explores the nature of narrative tropes and their potential influence in reinstating gender prejudices, stereotypes challenging the building of scientific temper among women and children. The paper raises serious questions on the trends of entertainment media ignoring scientific temper.

Keywords: Mega serials, women, patriarchy, scientific temper, narrative analysis, Tamil television serials

5.9
Debunking myths associated with affirmative action: using evidence from institute(s) of eminence, India

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Women's representation in elite Indian STEM ecosystems has been a matter of concern for long. For instance, women's share has been stagnant at around 8-12% in institutes of national importance and eminence like the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs). In 2018, the supernumerary seats scheme for women was introduced across all IITs aiming to increase female representation in BTech courses to 14% in the first year of implementation (and reach the 20% mark by 2020). However, like any other affirmative action scheme, this policy is not free from scepticisms such as the notion that diversity and inclusion come at the cost of merit or academic quality.

In our study, we examine data from an IIT consisting of detailed records of all BTech students' academic performance during their engineering degree journey and provide empirical evidence to debunk some of the myths associated with affirmative action. Our preliminary findings show that a student's SGPA (Semester Grade Point Average) is positively impacted by his/her own performance in the first semester, previous semester's SGPA and peer's SGPA in the current and the previous semester. Overall, women are likely to have higher SGPAs on an average and post the introduction of the supernumerary scheme SGPA performance improved across both genders. Further, there is no significant impact of female peers and the introduction of the supernumerary scheme on the probability of semester withdrawal. Interestingly, having more female peers impacts the

probability of in-time graduation positively. We find similar results when we use CGPA (Cumulative Grade Point Average) to measure academic performance, i.e., females have significantly higher CGPAs. Our results are robust to characteristics controls like caste identities, entry ranks, batch-semester strength, performance (ability) heterogeneity and a host of fixed effects at year-semester and individual level. Conditioning on graduation status, we find that women are able to narrow gap between their entry and exit rank within their branch. Further, having more female peers contributes positively to narrowing of this gap for females with no significant impact on men's exit rank. Thus, despite entering at lower ranks women show better performance on an average after entry and have positive spillovers/peer effects.

Our study fills a much-needed gap by providing empirical evidence to refute the mismatch Hypothesis2 , fall in overall academic quality and lends support to the catch-up hypothesis3 In particular, it draws attention to the rethinking of evaluation methodology that is somewhere not able to screen academic abilities of women accurately at the time of entry. We advocate systematic investigation of gendered impact of different evaluation methods to devise strategies to level the field in the STEM ecosystem in the long run.

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"Affirmative action in higher education in India: targeting, catch up, and mismatch", Veronica

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1 Preliminary abstract. Do not cite or refer. Funding by CoImpact Gender Fund.

2 Mismatch hypothesis – "Students who do not qualify for ordinary admission would do better if they enrolled at schools and/or majors which are more in line with their credentials." (Frisancho and Krishna, 2016)

3 Catch up hypothesis- "Students admitted under preferences often start off far behind those admitted under regular admission criteria. If those admitted under preferences can catch up, even part of the way, then the case for preferences is clearly stronger than if they fall further." (Frisancho and Krishna, 2016)

5.10
Women scientists biographies:
Windows to exploring the nature
and limits of science

Aswathy Raveendran, Homi Bhabha Centre for Science Education

Biographies have the power to situate a practice like science that passes itself off as an abstract and dis-embedded activity, in the concrete lived reality of a human being and her socio-political realities. The stories of women scientists who practice anti-establishment science become especially important because an examination of their narratives help make explicit how science and gender get constructed in these settings or, in other words, what it means to own and transform a practice that was conceived of and practiced by men in colonial patriarchal institutional spaces. The paper centres around the examination of the biographical material of two women scientists, of Indian and American roots, who have engaged in specific kinds of modern biological research on plants-- Barbara McClintock and E K Janaki Ammal, both of whom were contemporaries and plant cytologists, one working on the corn plant and the other, the sugarcane plant. Evelyn Fox Keller's biographical account, Feeling for the Organism is an exploration of the relationship between the nobel prize winning cytogeneticist and the corn plant, her object of study. Through this account, which is based on interviews with McClintock, her family members, collaborators and her scientific publications, Fox Keller takes us to the intimate space between McClintock and her object of study, the corn plant. We read vivid descriptions of what she sees when she peers down at her corn chromosomes through her microscope and her idiosyncratic approach to making sense of the objects of her study, whom she calls her friends. FoxKeller offers the reader a glimpse into the unusual personal life of a gender non-conforming woman scientist who fiercely sought freedom from the clutches of patriarchal scientific and familial institutions, seeking refuge in her scientific pursuits. Even at a time when women scientists were rarely given professorships, and the nature of her practice would require her to have a laboratory space, she turned down rare offers of tenured institutional positions. The book offers a very detailed and close description of the scientific method as interpreted and practiced by a maverick woman scientist, uneasy with the institutionalized nature and practice of science. The book Chromosome Woman, Nomad Scientist, E. K. Janaki Ammal, A Life 1897–1984 is the first in-depth biography of an Asian woman scientist. Of a mixed race and lower caste heritage, E K Janaki Ammal's

story gives us a glimpse of the challenges confronting modern colonial and post-colonial science along with indigenous systems of knowledge in India. E K Janaki Ammal is simultaneously a scientist who is committed to nation building, but also strengthening ethnobotanical projects. Janaki Ammal also collaborated with the well-known cytologist CD Darlington with whom she shared a complicated relationship. Through the examination of biographies of the aforementioned women scientists, the paper attempts to discuss ways to create historical case studies of science that bring to light both the nature and limits of science. It will also discuss ways in which these historical case studies can be used in science classrooms.

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5.11
Exploring Perceptions and Experiences: An Ethnographic Inquiry into the Supernumerary Seats Scheme at IIT Delhi

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The underrepresentation of women in STEM fields has been a persistent issue worldwide. Despite recent progress in women's enrollment in STEM courses in India, gender parity remains a challenge, particularly in engineering education at prestigious institutions such as the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs). To address this issue, the IITs Council introduced the Supernumerary Seat Scheme in 2018, which allocated additional seats for women at IITs. The admission data since 2018 demonstrates that the scheme has successfully increased the number of female students admitted to IITs. However, there is a lack of comprehensive studies

examining the perceptions, everyday experiences and practical implications of this policy. This paper aims to explore the above for female students who enrolled at IIT Delhi after the introduction of the scheme in 2018. The paper also draws out the possibilities and limitations of such policy interventions to address the gender imbalance in B.Tech. programs at elite IITs. Using qualitative research methods, including narrative ethnography and interviews, the study delves into key questions such as: how do male and female students and faculty members perceive the scheme, and how has it influenced the self-perception and lived experiences of female students? Does the perception of the scheme as a "reservation/quota for girls" contribute to the imposter syndrome among female students? How does the scheme differ from caste-based reservations, and what are the experiences of girls falling into intersectional categories? Furthermore, has the scheme influenced parental attitudes towards encouraging daughters to pursue engineering education? The primary source of data are thirty-five in-depth, open-ended interviews conducted with female and male students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. Secondary data was available in the form of published student reflections on the scheme. The findings reveal the complexities of gender dynamics, stereotypes, and the imposter syndrome faced by female students in elite engineering institutes. The study emphasises the urgency of creating better communication around the nature of the scheme and removing gender biases around women taking up engineering. Future research could involve conducting comparative studies in other institutes and including the newer and more remote IITs. By addressing the multifaceted challenges female students face, this paper contributes to the literature on the potentials and pitfalls of gender equality schemes in STEM.

5.12
Confronting gender issues in Veterinary Science and practice

Nitya Ghotge and Sumi Krishna, ANTHRA

Across the world there has been a spurt in women training to be veterinarians (outnumbering men in Canada and the US). In India, a decade ago, women accounted for a fifth of enrollments in veterinary colleges, a sharp increase from the few pioneering women veterinarians in the country in the early post-

Independence years. Presently, in some States, notably Kerala, about half the practicing veterinarians are reported to be women. Yet, as in other comparable science-based disciplines, women continue to face multiple gendered challenges, extending from their training in veterinary college to their work whether in companion or domestic animal care or in wild animal conservation.

Women veterinarians also tend to be clustered in areas of animal care that do not involve cutting edge technology, marketing and finance. The government's pashu sakhi (livestock friend) scheme employs rural women for veterinary extension work in the field, and in some States women veterinarians serve in the lower rungs of the animal husbandry departments. Yet, the higher decision-making levels of veterinary science, of government and the dairy sector continue to be male-dominated and unresponsive to gender concerns. This scenario poses many challenges.

Currently, veterinary science and animal husbandry are undergoing a critical transformation of technology, organization, finance and marketing that go far beyond the 1960s' changes wrought by the Green Revolution in agriculture and the White revolution in the livestock sector. For instance, the genetically engineered 'sexed semen' technology to produce only female cattle is being rapidly introduced in India and hailed as a techno-economic feat in keeping with the Union Government's vision of remaking India's bovine population. This, however, overlooks the role and significance of livestock in the lives of rural women, the ecological, social and gendered implications, and the problems of climate change. Not to speak of the ethical questions involved.

Given this context, this paper focuses attention on some key issues of gender (cross-cutting class and caste) that we need to confront in livestock care, veterinary science and practice that have long been neglected in feminist science studies.

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5.13
Back to School:
Exploring the Gendered Experiences of Private School Teachers in Delhi

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The teaching profession is categorized as having a pink collar due to the stereotype that women dominate it. This gendered perception of the profession often influences the experiences of both male and female teachers, shaping their professional identities, career progression, and work environments. Through a qualitative research approach, this study delves into the distinct challenges and opportunities faced by male and female teachers in school settings, shedding light on the interplay of gender dynamics within the profession. The study employed a purposive sampling approach to select participants from private schools in Delhi. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to gather rich and detailed accounts of the participants' experiences. The interviews focused on topics such as career advancement opportunities, support networks, mentorship, biases, and workplace dynamics. Thematic analysis was employed to analyze the interview data, allowing for the identification of recurring patterns, themes, and perspectives related to gender inequality within the teaching profession. For female teachers, the study uncovers biases, gender stereotypes, and limited opportunities for career advancement, which contribute to the perpetuation of the pink-collar perception of the profession. The glass escalator concept further enriches the analysis by investigating the potential disparities in career advancement within the teaching profession. Despite being in the minority, male teachers may experience accelerated career growth and preferential treatment, potentially accessing higher positions and leadership roles more rapidly than their female counterparts. Both male and female teachers employ various strategies to navigate these gendered experiences. Female teachers seek to challenge the

pink-collar status, advocating for recognition, equal opportunities, and improved work conditions. On the other hand, male teachers strive to break free from traditional gender roles, emphasizing their dedication to teaching and embracing nurturing aspects of the profession. The findings of this study have important implications for educational institutions and policymakers. Recognizing male and female teachers' unique challenges and addressing the gendered challenges can contribute to a more inclusive and supportive teaching profession.

Keywords: Teaching profession, Gender, Leadership, Glass Escalator Effect

5.14
Social labelling, imposed identity and gender backlash: exploring the experiences of women bosses in STEMM

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Women bosses are often most affected by gendered dynamics in the workplace, both in terms of negotiating social expectations and handling gender-based backlash. It is even more difficult for women to lead in STEMM occupations which are traditionally male-dominated. Unconscious biases that exist in the society create gendered social roles and labels, resulting in imposed identities like "men are leaders" and "women are caregivers" (Mangen, 2021). Therefore, when a woman raises to a leadership position, she is considered as deviating from her social label causing legitimacy issues for her leadership. The lack of perception of legitimacy can result in social disdain and resistance from subordinates, colleagues, suppliers, and vendors when exerting authority and women leaders can be subjected to additional scrutiny, pushback, or resistance when compared to their male counterparts. By conducting in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 20 women leaders in STEMM we tried to understand the challenges they faced because of labelling and imposed identities, and the strategies employed by them to overcome these challenges. Thematic analysis of the data revealed common patterns of experiences and strategies which were more or less in alignment with the findings of the studies conducted in the western countries, showing that there is a universal dimension to the labels attached to women

leaders in workplaces despite cultural differences. However, the coping and reaction mechanisms employed by women leaders were found to have a cultural dimension associated with them. Rather than going against the labels imposed on them, women leaders in our study were found to leverage cultural elements to help navigate the leadership challenges. The findings provide useful insights into women's experiences of leadership in STEMM from the context of labelling and imposed identity.

Keywords: Social labelling, imposed identity, gender backlash, STEMM

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5.15
Gender gap in STEM education and STEM employment in India: A status check

Christabell P J, University of Kerala

Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education is essential for economic development, international competitiveness, and job creation. Hence "STEM" has become a hot topic in international debates about education, industry, innovation, and competition. However, in both wealthy and developing countries, there is a gender disparity in STEM education. Only 30 percent of female students pursue STEM-related higher education worldwide. Throughout elementary and high school, studies have demonstrated that female students' math and science grades are equal to or better than their male peers. However, the view of gender and STEM education is dominated by gender inequalities in three dimensions of accomplishment. These include a male edge in high school sophisticated problem-solving skills, more variability in male exam results, and a male majority among the best scorers. STEM allows women to climb the higher echelons of the corporates. Women who are good in their studies still find a disparity in the attainment of STEM jobs. The paper looks into the gender gap in education and employment in STEM-related fields. An extensive primary survey was conducted among those who currently engage in STEM jobs and tracked back from the present employment to their educational attainment and skill

acquisition. A stratified random sampling technique was followed to choose the samples from the fields. From those who engage in STEM employment, a sample size of 325 was selected by giving due representation to those who have their jobs in various STEM fields. Statistical tools such as chi-square, ANOVA, and factor analysis were used to arrive at meaningful conclusions. The study found out that the gender gap does exist in India due to poor work-life balance among women employees.

5.16
Women's Participation in STEM Education: In Search of a Framework in the Indian Context

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Economics. Dr B R Ambedkar School of Economics University, Bengaluru

This article examines a phenomenon of low participation of female students and professionals in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) disciplines in the context of Indian Higher Education. Using recent reports from the All-India Survey of Higher Education, we first observe an abysmally low representation of female students in the higher education of STEM disciplines in the last 5 years (2016-2020). Furthering upon this context, a collation of data from premier institutions of Science education and research, the IITs, TIFR, IISERs, and IISc, was taken up to observe the gender ratio among faculties and teachers in these institutes. The unequal representation is glaring and only about one fourth of the faculties are female in the STEM disciplines, in majority of the premier institutes. This dismal representation of both female students and teachers in STEM, induces one to see this staggering issue as a problem that has persisted over a long period of time. This study explores an 'intergenerationally inequitable' hypothesis to explain this phenomenon of low participation of females in STEM vis-à-vis their male counterpart. We observe, there are two sets of factors that statistically determine participation of women in STEM disciplines. We have employed a two-period binary logistic empirical analysis for the last two rounds of NSSO Household Expenditure on Education Surveys (63rd Round, 2007-08 and 73rd Round, 2017-18), to understand the decision of participation in STEM. Firstly, intra-household barriers, which include, mother's education-occupation, spending favourability towards male

children (in terms of expenditure) during early age of education, and marital age within the region (NSS-Region and NFHS districts) remains important factors. Secondly, inter-household barriers, which have become prominent in the latest years, constant cut in research and development funding, lack of scholarships, and lack of accessibility to hostels remain statistically significant across 21 states in India. These results resonate a hypothesis, where we observe that an unequal participation is often a product of historical and therefore intergenerationally inequitable attitudes towards pursuing science as a career for women in general. This is further marred with the 'gendered role' that Indian households impart towards women, and 'patriarchal values' that remain as a barrier on the road to embark a 'Scientific' outlook towards work, life and living conditions in general. Such barriers require more targeted policies, rather than blanket cash support or 'career counselling' that the private market education offers often.

Keywords: STEM, Higher Education, Inequality, India.

5.17
Women in Earth Sciences: Challenges and Representation

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Earth Sciences encompasses a broad spectrum of subjects exploring the physical, biological and chemical processes which shape the Earth, its climate and the environment. Though a relatively less populated discipline in STEMM, the evolution of Earth Sciences, how it stands apart from basic sciences, the challenges faced by the pioneers in the community and how women scientists contributed to the growth of this interdisciplinary field, all holds some interesting history. However, as in other fields, women in Earth Sciences routinely face many more challenges in field, labs and career advancement compared to their male counterparts. Throughout history, the career path women scientists had to navigate were longer and more restricted by rules and norms often put in place by a male dominated scientific community. In fact, some of the earliest scientific associations, like the British Geological Survey required that women scientists remained unmarried and childless in order to continue availing their

fellowships. We as a community has made a long way from a time when Geology and Oceanography were considered "too dangerous for women" for its exploratory nature and to today, when the representation of women in Earth Sciences is as good as or sometimes better than in other fields in STEMM. In this talk I will share with you some history of Earth Sciences, the challenges of doing research in Earth Sciences and how we witnessed a steady growth of women representation in the field both in the international and national arena.

5.18
Career Progression of Women Engineers in India: Prospects and Challenges

Anitha Kurup and Anjali Raj, National Institute of Advanced Studies

The aim of the paper is to explore the career progression of women engineers in India. Building on the data with regard to decisions about the subject choice and tracing their journey as engineers, an analysis of the challenges they face, and the strategies employed to overcome them is presented. Despite the major gains made by women in the STEM disciplines in terms of enrolment, the number of women engineers is low. Drawing from the study done on women engineers, this abstract delves into the barriers hindering their career advancement analyses the factors contributing to these challenges and highlights the initiatives and practices that support their growth and success.

The paper will outline the general gender disparities prevalent in the engineering sector in India and their impact on women engineers' career progression. Based on the case studies of women engineers, the paper will discuss about systemic biases, cultural stereotypes, and limited representation in leadership positions that hinder their advancement. Furthermore, the paper explores the challenges women engineers face at various stages of their careers. It examines barriers related to education and entry into the workforce, such as limited access to quality education, lack of awareness about engineering opportunities, and bias in recruitment processes. Delving into the mid-career challenges, including limited growth opportunities, work-life balance issues, gender bias, and the need to navigate a predominantly male-dominated work environment, the paper will discuss the complexity of the career progression of women engineers in India.

Drawing on successful case studies of women engineers who have achieved significant milestones despite their challenges, the paper will analyse their experiences, achievements, and the strategies they employed to navigate barriers, break stereotypes, and carve a path to success for themselves and the future generation.

The paper will conclude by emphasising the need for collective action to address the career progression challenges faced by women engineers in India. It calls for comprehensive efforts from educational institutions, employers, industry associations, and policymakers to create an enabling environment that promotes gender equality, diversity, and inclusion. By breaking down barriers, fostering supportive networks, and providing equal opportunities, women engineers in India can fully realise their potential and contribute to the growth and innovation of the nation.

5.19
Bridging gender to the employability debate: A Study on the Software Industry of Kerala

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The debate on employability is a salient subject in recent labour studies. Employability refers to the shifting of responsibility of upskilling, reskilling and updation from employer side to employee without sufficient guidelines, financial support, and accommodating procedure. Employability leads to the complete individualisation of employment relations, self-career building, and necessary life-long learning requirements. The proposed study attempts to include gender in the employability discussion to understand the difference between male and female work and career experiences. The study is placed in Kerala, in the context of the insights from the Kerala Knowledge Economy Mission's survey, which showed that 57% of women needed to quit their jobs owing to domestic responsibilities. The study locates in the software industry, where employability is a mandatory criterion for existence. Though there is sufficient literature on hierarchy and division of labour in the IT sector, only a few delves into the question

of employability and the gender disparity in it. So, the proposed study extends the existing literature by exploring the following questions; how do the employees learn and adapt to instantaneous technological advances, how does gender play a role in adaption, and how do the coping strategies vary between different gender? The study is conducted in two software parks in Kerala- Thiruvananthapuram and Kochi. The study follows a purposive sampling strategy, and the information is gathered from 35 software engineers through an- in-depth semi-structured interview. The study reveals considerable differences between the perceptions of employability, adapting methods and coping strategies between female and male employees.

5.20
Silencing in Science:
Analyzing Gender Gap in STEMM in India

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The paper proposes to see the gender gap prevailing in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, and Medicine (STEMM), especially in India. The study intends to analyze select TED Talks delivered by Indian scientists and researchers working in STEMM. STEMM disciplines are traditionally considered masculine in nature. In addition to that, specific demands of the career in STEMM impose additional challenges on women in this field. Moreover, the culture-specific caste system which is prevailing in India further contributes to the oppression of women in this field.

Women are often underrepresented and their contributions are unacknowledged in science. This is reflected in the lack of women authorship in Indian scientific journals, the absence of women heading institutes, and the omission of female nominations for science prizes. A strong culture of silence is pervading in Indian STEMM. Inflexible work schedule and mostly sensitive work places along with conventional caring duties further contributes to the challenges to these women. The extremely unexpected shift from offline to online mode of working during COVID-19, adversely affected women in STEMM in India as they were required to do their profession and household chores simultaneously. Hence their struggle was double-fold.

Select TED Talks which the study intends to analyze, address all these problems to a great extent. This paper attempts to investigate the invisible biases meted against women in science and tries to see how such invisible biases construct several visible challenges for women in STEMM. It also endeavors to trace the evolution of the change in perspectives and practices regarding the inclusion of women in STEMM in India.

Keywords: Women in STEMM, STEMM in India, invisible bias, culture of silence, gender gap, gender discrimination.

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5.21
Feminist Science and Technology studies curricula in the present: some reflections

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Feminist science and technology studies is a field that found some of its first moorings in India in Women's/gender studies departments. The field has moved from posing a tentative feminist critique of the sciences and thus seeking space in gender studies work, to having an active presence in it, over the past decade or a little more. In the Indian context in particular, connections may be drawn between this presence, and the turn in Women's Studies itself from being a resistant identity in academia, to staking a claim to being an epistemological and methodological resource. This has meant that parameters of knowledge validity, institutional and social contexts of knowledge production, and the community of knowledge producers – are all shared concerns between these two spaces. In the aftermath of the COVID pandemic, however, there is a worry around a presumed loss of support to evidence-based science; this has already touched feminist science studies pedagogy, and is poised to enter the field in an active sense. This is in addition to an already expressed fear of majoritarian framings of indigeneity taking over the space of experiential critiques of science.

This paper seeks to trace some of the moments and shifts in this journey, drawing partly from my experience of teaching Feminist Science and Technology studies (FSTS) in a Women's Studies classroom in an urban metropolitan university space for about ten years. The paper will begin with some thoughts on teaching FSTS in a time of a renewed faith in science, and a reflection on the changed political and societal contexts within which feminist debates around experience as a ground of knowledge and a feminist reclaiming of indigenous knowledges are now placed.

The second part of the paper will attempt to engage this set of contexts with one of the early preoccupations of FSTS, namely a focus on how normative ideas around gender-sexuality are consolidated in the biomedical sciences. It will go on to a set of reflections on how the language of movements as well as shifts in law-policy during this past decade have impacted the ways in which gender-sexuality categories are spoken in gender studies departments; on how the shadow of institutionalized discrimination and violence have informed perspectives in the classroom, and on how pedagogy in a time of mediatized politics has responded. I hope, through this exploration, to arrive at a partial picture of the shifting grounds of FSTS in the contemporary gender studies classroom in Indian universities.

5.22
Empowering Silence, Awakening Brilliance: Women's Exploration of Spaces in Kerala's Homoeopathy

Anjana Menon, PhD, Research Scholar, Department of History, Maharaja's College Ernakulam, Kerala,

Science, technology, engineering, medicine, and mathematics (STEMM), despite proclaiming their rationality, are intricately woven within the tapestry of social power structures that shape their conceptualization and practice. While various social science disciplines in the Indian context have initiated critical examinations of prevalent trends, such as the prominence of casteism within esteemed scientific institutions or the gendered narratives entrenched in science textbooks, the endeavour to develop an intersectional critique remains an ongoing pursuit. This paper highlights a significant obstacle hindering this endeavour - the rigid

framework within which social sciences approach STEMM subjects. Although years of meticulous social science research have succeeded in situating these subjects within a broader societal framework and deconstructing their claims of objectivity, they often confine themselves to the prescribed vocabulary and definitions of the scientific realm, thereby limiting the boundless possibilities for research. To forge a path towards comprehensive and profound analysis, Women's Studies must diligently deconstruct the conventions that STEMM disciplines have imposed upon themselves.

Questioning the confinement of STEMM discussions solely to traditional spaces such as laboratories and textbooks, this paper explores the multifaceted dimensions through which knowledge and scientific practices that transcend conventional boundaries are often dismissed as trivial "care work." By delving into the historical trajectory of homoeopathy, the present study proposes a compelling contribution to the discourse, unveiling the diverse spaces and methodologies through which women have meaningfully engaged with the knowledge system of medicine.

Keywords: Intersectionality, Kerala, Homoeopathy, social spaces, Knowledge creation

5.23
Towards a Different Science: An Outline of a Pedagogy of Teaching Natural Sciences in Women's Studies

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Over the past few centuries, natural science and the humanities disciplines have both witnessed immense developments in their respective fields, but owing to their highly different approaches, an increasing gap between the two fields remains as the underside of these developments. The current predicament of Women's Studies students in terms of their scant engagement with STEMM emanates from this 'two cultures' schism. While addressing the lack of exposure remains an urgent task for Women's Studies in India, the question remains as to what it would mean to incorporate and teach STEMM issues in Women's Studies

programs. What should be the approach to teaching STEMM texts? Would it function as an additive to existing Women's Studies curricula? Would it be aimed at producing a group of future intellectuals and activists merely conversant with STEMM issues? Or, Is there a possibility of thinking and doing science differently? Building on the frameworks generated by various Feminist Science and Technology Studies scholars, this paper would argue that instead of merely including scientific texts, which would inevitably reproduce the objectivist-positivist paradigm of natural sciences, the task of breaking down the 'two cultures' requires a somewhat different approach. Proceeding towards charting its roadmap, the first segment of this paper would briefly outline different modes of engaging with natural sciences in the history of feminist studies. The second segment would put into question the epistemic superiority of STEMM by critically interpreting it as a field of knowledge production forged within the exclusionary grids of gender, class, race, and colony and operating through various material, literary, and social technologies such that any reference to a pure nature proves to be an (im)possible task. Building on these two sections and engaging with specific STEMM texts, the concluding section would hint at how this critical approach can lead towards actual alterations in the content of STEMM projects.

5.24
The Un/Verifiability of Feminine Body in Feminist Science Projects: An Ethical Epistemology

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Feminist science studies have undergone massive epistemic transformation ever since two events had transpired in the past. (1) the 1987 publication of "Can there be a Feminist Science?" by the revered feminist philosopher of science, Helen Longino; and (2) the emergence of third generation cognitive science through the frameworks of embodied knowledges in the decade of 1990s. What I aim to show in this paper is that these two events in history and philosophy of science are actually connected to each other. We know that the ethical practice of doing science as a feminist, should not be based upon the valorisation of a

detached impersonal nature of scientific objectivity that reinforces masculine or androcentric bias in the corresponding science's cognitive frameworks. Rather, precisifying, in other words, the true theoretical treatment of science, according to feminist philosophers should not be the explication of the idea that there is an integrated, coherent, consistent cognitive framework which will scientifically unify all observable phenomena and events in science. And, this is where I argue that this very idea of the transgression of unification of science through indeterminacy, is the principal tenet of my paper which, I think, is to be reiterated in all ethical-epistemological discourses of feminist science. Establishing how lived experience of feminine body is something whose ontology should be written in science differently from the testable interpretations of logical empirical data, we have argued that this feminine body, having been traditionally derogated and devalued in normative disciplinary scientific-technological practices, due to several exclusionary forces of sexism, misogyny, homophobia and "male mathematical superiority", ought to be ethically seen as a non-homogeneous 'discursive formation'. In this fashion, arguing along these qualitative lines of non-homogenization, and along with showing how feminine body evades and eludes empirical verifiability of medico-cognitivism, we would end the paper on the basis of the Foucauldian thought on body. [Keywords: feminist epistemology; history and philosophy of science; embodied cognition; ethics]

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5.25

Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) and Women's Health: Unraveling the Impact of Individualisation in the Digital Age

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Tata Institute of Social Sciences

"In the past, women's movements have highlighted the gendered nature of biomedicine, where a woman's body is considered a sick body. The feminist movement argued that the entire biomedical model is based on value neutrality and that women are not seen as the ideal subjects of health research. Their bodies are seen as uncontrollable bodies, bodies that require medical intervention in order to be controlled, which eventually leads to the over-medicalization of women's bodies. Feminist groups have fought against over-medicalization to gain more bodily autonomy. Over time, the notion of health has changed from 'sickness as deviance from normalcy' to a human being constantly 'at risk' of being sick. Healthiness is no longer a normal state; rather, it has become something that we constantly strive for. Feminist engagement with this new paradigm of health has been limited. One reason for that could be that the health promotion approach is an extension of neoliberal policies where individuals are asked to take charge of their health. On the surface, it can give the impression that a new paradigm of health can be beneficial for women as they can come out of the over-medicalization of the body and take control of their bodies. However, that is not entirely true. The paper argues that the new paradigm of health further leads to the individualisation of health, and the paper aims to show this by taking the case of Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS)—one of the most common metabolic and endocrine disorders that affect women in their reproductive age.

PCOS is a complex condition that goes well beyond the ovaries and affects every aspect of a woman's life. Due to the ambiguity in its aetiology, a vast body of research has highlighted women's dissatisfaction with the diagnostic process and also with the clinicians in providing them support, early diagnosis, and a better explanation of the condition. Most women develop their own mechanisms to deal with PCOS, such as relying on the internet for information regarding PCOS. Social media platforms come to the rescue because of the enormous and accessible information available. Many women join online support groups where they not only feel supported but also validated by health professionals. There is a clear mismatch between what women need from public health services and what they actually get.

The paper aims to understand this move vis-à-vis women's health. Can this transition be translated as a step towards more liberation and agency that women can have over their own bodies? Or will this transition further strengthen the neoliberal idea of the individualisation of health? Through this individualisation, the onus of the illness and treatment lies on the sufferer itself. As a result, healthism detaches the illness from the larger socioeconomic and political environment that may also have its linkage with illness. By looking into the existing body of work around women's experience of PCOS and the diagnostic process, the paper aims to understand the workings of these transitions and what they connote for women's health."

5.26
Fiscal Allocations for Women in STEM Sectors: A Review of Kerala Gender Budgets

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Gender budgeting is a relatively new area in fiscal policy, which aims to gender-sensitize fiscal policies for gender mainstreaming. This fiscal innovation has the potential to reduce gender inequality in our society, and India is a forerunner in the same. Kerala has a dedicated gender budgeting policy beginning from the year 2017-18. Gender budgeting is now getting momentum although it is a relatively novel area in public finance and development. The primary discourse in and around gendering fiscal policy is the share of public finance for women, which the entire 'gender blind' past of budgeting ignored. Therefore, the magnitude of gender budget allocations is always getting attention whereas the composition and intended outcomes are often overlooked.

The gender budgets of Kerala are specifically interesting in this line since the magnitude has attained public appeal already. However, a closer look into the same reveals how manipulated the figures are and how regressive they are in reinforcing gender stereotypes in society. For instance, inclusion of women in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) is a long-debated topic in gender mainstreaming deliberations. Kerala's gender budgeting, however,

appears to only barely address these lines of gender concerns. 'Welfare Oriented' allocations such as Welfare of Vulnerable Groups, Health, Education, etc. that treat women as mere beneficiaries still constitute the lion's share of gender budgets. Allocations under departments like Science, Technology and Environment, Scientific Services and Research, IT Mission, etc. have minimal earmarking of funds towards gender budgets. These modern and conventionally scientific areas continue to exclude women systematically.

This paper critically evaluates the gender budget allocations in the state and finds that the composition of gender budgets remains stereotypical and systematically excludes women from STEM sectors. Thus gender mainstreaming may remain a distant dream for the policy for now.

5.27
Lessons from feminist theory for the discourse of science

Pooja Sancheti,
IISER Pune

Drawing on the subtheme of the conference, "Interaction and bidirectional learning between women's movement and women's studies focussing on science, rationality and technology development", in this talk I will begin with some key insights from literary studies, specifically the arguments made by Elaine Showalter. Showalter coined the term "gynocriticism", and though her theory has its problems, the model she creates for women (as) writers is vital to feminism in literary studies. Showalter argues that women have had their own history which needs to be written in order to provide a legacy that aspiring women writers can turn to, and posits a canon of women writers that has as much legitimacy as a male canon does. In many ways, she poses questions about the legitimacy and prestige of conventional 'high' literature. I will try to connect gynocriticism to answer why a women's history of/in science matters.

In the second and shorter part of the talk, I will touch upon a few instances from my teaching to show why we must bring hitherto unknown women scientists' life stories and contributions into the fold of popular knowledge about scientists. Coupled with a few reflective exercises, such an exercise can potentially have a

deep impact on students of all genders about their own place in science and stretch the commonplace understanding of scientific achievements, and challenge the stereotype of the lone genius (male) scientist.

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5.28
Lab Hopping:
A Journey to Find Indian Women in Science

Nandita Jayaraj,
Aashima Dogra, Independent science journalist

Lab Hopping is a book authored by Nandita Jayaraj and Aashima Dogra and published by Penguin in 2023. It is the story of the gender gap in Indian science based on seven years of journalistic reportage by the authors and collaborators of the independent science media collective TheLifeofScience.com. The findings and perspectives present in the book are derived from the life experiences of over 200 women scientists interviewed in laboratories situated across the country, from Aligarh to Aluva, from Bhopal to Bhubaneswar, from Ajmer to Kalimpong.

The book takes the reader through the several shared experiences of women and other marginalised people such as the queen bee phenomenon, the two-body problem, imposter syndrome, the complicated and contradictory effect of marriage on scientific careers, the culture of silence, the leaky pipeline, the significance of rebellion, the hypocrisy of attitudes towards reservation, due process in sexual harassment, implicit and explicit bias, and the notorious old boys' clubs.

Anecdotes from women scientists representing different disciplines, geographies, and professional levels are sewn together with existing data and analyses on the gender gap, and the resulting narrative is placed in the context of the current policy scenario (GATI charter, STIP 2020, women in science schemes etc). The data gathered might be statistically significant but even more revealing are the

stories of the invisible Indian women scientist. The face of STEM in India remains upper-caste/class and male-dominated, which is contradictory to the essence of science being diverse and open.

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5.29
Writing the lives of women in science

Asha Gopinathan,
Innovation Hub,
 Kerala State Science and Technology Museum Trivandrum, Kerala

E.K Janaki Ammal once said that she would be survived by her work ie her scientific papers. In this talk, I will discuss my current work on writing the biographies of the Indian physicist Anna Mani and biologist E.K Janaki Ammal.

How does one write the life of a scientist – is it just confined to their scientific work or does it also involve other matters too ? What led them to choosing their scientific discipline, their education, the encouragement or discouragement from family and friends. The ability to find jobs, their progress in their careers and the role played by mentors. Their choice of what to study if they did have a choice in that. Can all these questions be answered by merely a scientific review ? Clearly the answer is 'no'.

The women I have chosen were all born prior to Independence. They were to a large extent shaped by the national movement for freedom around them. This spilled over into the work arena too. They wanted and strived hard to contribute to the new nation's development.

Locating primary sources can often prove to be difficult as there are virtually no archives where the personal and professional documents are neatly filed. Often the most unlikely of persons or places leads to materials in the form of photographs, letters. Some individuals who have worked with them also have contributed significantly by their narration of events. With persistence and luck, things do fall into place and a story evolves.

I plan to discuss the lives of both E.K Janaki Ammal and Anna Mani starting with their early education, college days, their doctoral and postdoctoral years and

finally return to India and the initial stages of their career here. I will touch upon the tragic life of Sunanda Bai briefly.

Keywords : Biographical writing, women scientists, E.K Janaki Ammal, Anna Mani, Sunanda Bai

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5.30
The projection of male gaze in medicine: A feminist study of PCOS

Ayeshna Dutta, PhD, Research Scholar,
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It has been very well established by the Women's Health Movement of the 1960's that women and all bodies that identify as feminine have been marginalized and exclude from health care practices. This paper looks at the construction and projection of the male gaze in medicine. The paper aims at understanding the ways in which biomedicine excludes women's lived experiences in the treatment of PCOS. PCOS (Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome) is a complex hormonal condition found in women belonging to the reproductive age. Using a Feminist Science Studies framework, the paper establishes a critique of the bio medical models of treating PCOS that completely overlooks and ignores women's idea of their own bodies. It attempts to highlight how women's bodies become site of construction of the male gaze that is projected through medicine and technology. While medicine is assumed to be the only way of treating bodily conditions, the paper explores the interconnectedness between the male gaze and the medical gaze.

Keywords: PCOS, Bodies, Male gaze, Feminist Science Studies, Biomedicine, Technology

5.31
Recognising the solitary woman scientist (in a film called Ammonite)

Dr. Manasee Palshikar, Independent Writer

Sunday nights, she does her laundry. A small pile, for she is alone. Or she is adding a tomato, in an attempt at nutritional self-care, to Maggie noodles. Post-Covid research spoke of women's 'disproportionate share of increased household work. But she always done her housework on her own! Homeschooling, and cooking for children were indeed a burden on women in the pandemic. Her burden is being the chosen one in the lab for late hours and work on holidays. Because she does not have children. In the silence of lockdown, the biological clock ticked louder. This paper seeks one figure that has been overlooked by most enquiries into the domestic situation faced by women scientists during COVID –The single woman scientist, living on her own. Overlooked. Even by the Leaky Pipeline metaphor that emphasizes life events of childbirth, marriage. The search for her depiction in fiction lead to Ammonite (2020). A pioneer scientist isolated from scientific society. An isolation; like a Lockdown? To learn from the beauty that the language of film has to offer, beyond checking the representation, checking for objectification; generally ticking checklists. Laura Mulvey's essay Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema reinforces heterosexuality for she writes of a time when a woman character was a passive spectacle seen in relation to a man. This paper chooses a film whose protagonist is anything but a passive non-doer; where the 'gaze' is between two women. Mary Anning, a paleontologist in the 1800s scoured the rocky rugged Dorset shoreline, which because of a geological quirk, is home to fossilized animals. Anning discovered and reconstructed the skeleton of what we know as Pterodactyl or flying dinosaur. Uncredited and inadequately compensated by the museum that reappropriates her work, and erases her name. Ammonite depicts two parallel plots – a scientific career, and possibility of personal fulfillment for a repressed lesbian. A typically protective-condescending-patriarchal geologist husband brings the melancholic beauty Charlotte, into Anning's world. At a time when a same-sex relationship would be shrouded in secrecy and shame, Mary and Charlotte swim together, dare to touch. Moved as we are by this well-deserved love, we focus on the film's depiction of 19th century single woman scientist's work life. Will we find resonance in the imagery of Mary Anning's tough and solitary journey as a paleontologist? Her intelligent, weathered face focused on cleaving off bits of matrix from a fragile plane of rock. Her palms darkened by digging into wet sand; wounds accidentally self-inflicted by her questing chisel.

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5.32
From "Women in STEM" to "Gender in STEM": beyond nominal change

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The feminist movement in India is in a particularly strong position to counter trans exclusionary feminist politics that largely emerge from colonial influence. In India, a particularly strong history of trans feminine organization and counter-stigmatization has led to a very visible street level public perception of the struggles of trans feminine persons. This widespread public perception means that it would be difficult for any grassroots feminist to occupy the typical ground of trans exclusionary appropriators of feminism, involving the dehumanization of trans feminine persons, a denial of their marginalization and ignorance of the shared oppression between cis and trans feminine persons. Many grassroots feminist and other activist traditions have, in their interactions with trans persons, found it imperative to be inclusive of the participation of trans people and our politics.

The academic and elite feminist communities, however, derive much of their discourse in English from a colonial framework. This leads to a certain kind of trans exclusionary politics as the default framework from which trans persosn have to wrest a departure. An example is the framework of "Women in Science" - which reduces the question of gender in academia to a binary framework that is rarely challenged to be trans inclusive, given the widespread exclusion of trans persons in academia. In our presentation, we illustrate some experiences of engagement of the Indian feminist movement from the transgender perspective. We also encourage feminist academics to engage with transfeminism and interrogate how they conceptualize gender and it's manifestations in various walks of life including STEM.

Sub-theme 6

Local Self-Governance
and Women:
Prospects and Challenges

6.1
Unseated Women? -
Women in Local Self-Governance.

Arushi Jha Thakur

Women in India face what we term as "imperfect citizenship" that impinges on their ability to participate in public spaces in various ways. Furthermore, with multi-layered barriers to women's participation in the Indian patriarchal society, public spaces, especially political ones, are highly gendered making it inaccessible to the majority of Indian women. India has a female population of around 662.9 million, but this does not translate into a higher parliamentary representation in political spaces. The 73rd Constitutional Amendment bill of 1992 provided a 33% reservation for women in the local Panchayati system bringing women into the forefront of grassroot governance but this unfortunately has not translated into political emancipation of women. Due to the entrenched patriarchal and caste structure in India, it was seen that women that were elected to the reserved seats were filled with proxy female gram Pradhans with de-facto representatives being men of their households. Thus, the policy prescription of 33% reservation has not translated "deliberative participation" into local politics and has to an extent strengthened the pre-existing caste, class and gender inequalities. The paper seeks to analyse the challenges women face to get elected to Panchayati Raj institutions with closer focus on their ability to exercise their power as well as understanding the impact of reservations in local self-governance on women's emancipation - that is - has political power translated into a change in power dynamics and social relations in their everyday lives. The paper will employ a qualitative secondary analysis of the existing literature and data available in the form of newspaper articles, research papers and government data available.

6.2
Role of Kudumbashree in enhancing Mainstreaming and participation of women in Local Self Governance: A Kerala model

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"*I measure the progress of a community by the degree of progress which women have received*" -Dr B. R. Ambedkar

India stands at its 76th year of Independence from the colonial power. Ever since the dawn of independence, the nation has come up with various policies and measures from time to time in order to ensure effective development. It was in such an instance to ensure decentralisation of policies and good governance that the 73rd constitutional amendment came up and the Local Self Government formally came into existence. The aim of bringing up local self-governance was not just decentralisation of governance, but to ensure equity and equality as well. The main concern in it was to enhance the participation of women especially in the political scenario. In order to ensure the proper representation and participation of women, the 73rd constitutional amendment mandated all state governments to reserve one third of the seats for women in Panchayati Raj institutions and one third of the offices of the chairperson at all levels of PRIs and in urban local bodies respectively. Within these seats, one third is made reserved for SC & ST women. This being the case of action taken at the central level, many states especially Kerala made legal provision to ensure 50% reservation for women in local bodies.

However mere policy formulations as well as mandates from government were insufficient for ensuring gender equality and mainstreaming of women at the grass root level. The inequality faced by women is layered and has been into existence from ancient period onwards. With the passage of time, the intensity and impacts of inequality varied. However, the basic cause of inequality lies in the deep-rooted patriarchy. The discrimination and inequality faced by women

has a deep connection with the levels of poverty as well. It was keeping this in mind that on May 17, 1998 that the State of Kerala came up with "Kudumbashree", which was the Kerala State Poverty Eradication Mission which came up as a result of people's participatory development (Janakiyasoothranam) in order to alleviate poverty through women empowerment. The first phase emphasised on socio-economic development of women and self-sufficiency. Kudumbashree consists of a three level or tier system of governance, which helps it to ensure the participation of women. The three tiers include the Neighbourhood groups (NHGs), Area Development Societies (ADS) and the Community Development Societies (CDS). These function within the jurisdictions of concerned local bodies in Kerala.

Even though the Kudumbashree mission began as a poverty alleviation measure, later it turned out as a major initiative in bringing forward women into the local self-governance. The Gender Resource Centre of Kudumbashree were able to implement various programmes in order to promote leadership of women, enhance their decision-making capabilities and to ensure gender equality in governance. In the elections to Local Self Government in Kerala (2020) approximately 15000 members of Kudumbashree had contested. Among them 7058 won and they are active members of Kudumbashree making it to 32.30% of total representatives in local self-government. In 2010 and 2015, 11,773 women and 13,000 women from Kudumbashree had participated in local self-government elections and among them 41% and 56% won the election in 2010 and 2015 respectively. This increasing rate of women participation in local body election and their success is a clear example of Kerala Model of ensuring equal participation of women in LSG. Many factors such as organised grassroot level training, decentralised contact of women in neighbourhood, economic self-sufficiency all of which is created as a result of Kudumbashree mission are the reasons for these massive changes in representation of women. However, many more changes in administration capabilities as well as individual and societal mindset are need of the hour.

This paper thus focuses on the Role of Kudumbashree in enhancing the participation of women in LSG, measures adopted by them and the way forward.

Keywords: Kudumbashree, Local Self Governance, Gender Mainstreaming, Political leadership, Gender equality, Kerala model of development.

6.3

'Examining the Political Empowerment of Scheduled tribe women in Local Governance: A case study of Dumka district'

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Effective functioning of decentralized governance at the grassroots level holds the key to women's empowerment. By addressing poverty eradication, empowering tribal communities, and providing equal and productive employment opportunities, particularly for tribal women, decentralization offers a solution to historically marginalized and discriminated groups, including Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), and women. This approach is advocated by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment as a means to promote inclusive development and equal rights for all.

Tribe women in India have long faced socio-economic marginalization and political underrepresentation, posing significant challenges to their effective participation in governance processes. This study focuses on examining the political empowerment of Scheduled Tribe (S.T.) women in the context of local governance, with a specific case study conducted in Dumka District.

This research delves into the extent to which S.T. women have been able to access and exercise power in local governance structures, analysing the barriers they encounter and the strategies they employ to overcome them. Through qualitative research methods such as interviews, surveys, and observations, data is collected to understand the experiences, perspectives, and contributions of S.T. women in Dumka District's local governance. The findings of this study shed light on the nuanced dynamics that shape the political empowerment of S.T. women in the district.

The study also seeks to document the perspectives and voices of women at the grassroots level, contributing to the development of feminist literature. By amplifying the experiences and narratives of women, the research aims to enrich the existing body of feminist literature and foster a deeper understanding of gender dynamics within local governance and community empowerment.

Keywords: S.T Women, Political Empowerment, Local- Governance, Dumka District

6.4
Factors affecting women's participation in Gram Sabha: A case study of Jharkhand

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Gram Sabha plays a vital role in the rural governance of Jharkhand, India. As a grassroots-level democratic institution, it serves as the foundation of the Panchayati Raj system, enabling local self-governance and community-led development. This study aims to examine the significance and functions of Gram Sabha in Jharkhand's rural governance.

Women's participation in Gram Sabha, a village-level organization, is crucial for promoting inclusive and effective governance. However, numerous factors hinder women's active involvement in these community decision-making processes. This study aims to explore and analyse the factors influencing women's participation in Gram Sabha meetings in rural areas.

Through qualitative research methods, including interviews and focus group discussions, this research delves into the challenges faced by women in exercising their right to participate freely and contribute to developmental initiatives. Some of the identified factors include societal stereotypes about women's roles, limited access to education and information, traditional gender norms, lack of confidence, and cultural barriers.

By shedding light on these factors, the study seeks to pave the way for informed interventions and policies that can enhance women's participation in Gram Sabha. Empowering women at the grassroots level can lead to more equitable decision-making processes, fostering inclusive and sustainable development in rural communities. Ultimately, the findings of this research can contribute to creating a more gender-inclusive and participatory democratic framework, enabling women to actively engage in shaping their villages' progress and well-being.

6.5
Enabling Women's leadership in Nagaland: A path to Sustainable Development

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The paper discusses the crucial aspect of enabling leadership and opportunities for women in decision-making in the context of Nagaland in line with the vision of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Particularly SDG 5 talks about achieving gender equality and empowering all girls and women emphasizing the full participation of women in leadership and decision-making processes besides achieving other targets such as ending all forms of discrimination against women and girls, eliminate harmful practices like child, early and forced marriages and female genital mutilation, ensure access to universal reproductive rights and health, etc.

While the 73rd and 74th Amendment Act of the government of India has been instrumental in enabling the participation of lakhs of women in local governance structures and decision making processes by providing 33 per cent women reservation policy in Panchayati Raj institutions and urban local bodies, it is a paradox that in the state of Nagaland, a predominantly tribal state continues to face a lack of consensus among the different tribal groups over the State's decision to implement 33 percent reservation of seats for women in local bodies, for instance, the Urban Local Bodies (ULBs). At the forefront are the various tribal Hohos (tribal organizations) challenging such affirmative action of reservation policy asserting that the reservation policy will infringe upon the customary law or traditional rights of the Naga society. The argument opposing reservation for women is transpired around tradition and age-old customs and practices, and hence references to Article 371A of the Indian Constitution is often made in the name of safeguarding Naga customary law and practices. When communities at various levels, states and nations at large are determined to take sincere efforts towards the process of promoting an agenda for women empowerment and gender justice in different ways, such arguments deliberately prevent the legitimate participation of women in local governance systems contravening constitutional provision. Such a situation has been going on for a while in Nagaland.

In this context, the paper argues that it may be a long-foregone opportunity for the Naga society if affirmative policies for women are denied in the name of tradition. The fact that Nagaland did not have a woman legislator until 2023, gives a clarion call for fair representation and an urgency to create an enabling environment for women to participate in politics and public life out of choice, without fear, and to consciously evolve a mechanism that support pathways to women's leadership and decision-making opportunities. As is the nature of tribal societies, where concept of egalitarianism runs deep across its ways of life and culture, yet a dimension where women in leadership roles is seldom highlighted, affirmative policies to enable women's participation in decision making will prove to be a sustainable outcome to the ethos of the tribal way of life is emphasized. It also calls attention for a deeper analysis of its traditional institutions and customary law which has a direct bearing on Naga women in terms of deprivation or empowerment, and which also impacts the State's path to an inclusive and sustainable development in the long run.

Keywords: Naga women, political participation, customary law, sustainable development, Nagaland

6.6
Panchayati Raj and tribal women in Dhahod district of Gujarat: Prospects and challenges

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Panchayati Raj is a system of rural self-government. It is three stature laid by the Indian administration for Rural development, this refers to the process of empowering local communities. Social scientists always tried to understand the distribution of power. C. Wrights Mills (1956), Robert Dahel (1961), Nelson Pollsby (1962), etc. argue about the distribution of power, status and wealth. Political power is important for this.

India is a country where women have prospects and challenges. After the 73rd and 74th constitution amendments in 1992, women get 33% reservation in local self-governance. That provides an important platform for the weaker section and

women also.

Research Methodology

This is an empirical study of PhD scholar under my guidance, which studied 194 scheduled tribe women of Dahod district of Gujarat. Among these 124 (sarpanch) 56 (Taluka panchayat members) and 14 (District level) women are selected for this study.

The main objectives

1. To know the socio-economic profile of the selected women.

2. To know their political socialization.

3. To know their prospects and challenges.

4. To know the impacts of participation in local governance on their lives.

Interview schedules and focus group interviews are used for fieldwork. Their socio-economic background, public activities, political socialization, prospects and challenges, adjustment in their life and the impact of local self-government on their life etc points are covered in this study.

Main findings

• Most of them are young, married and coming from a middle-class joint family.

• They are doing household, agricultural and animal husbandry work.

• 73% of respondents are given training in political socialization by their husband and their relatives.

Prospects

According to 67% per cent respondents, local self-governance provides an opportunity to take design making process. It also allows them to participate in shaping policies of rural development and their community.

72% per cent respondents said that they can increase empowerment and leadership. They can gain confidence, skills and experience in rural development.

They are also able to know the gender-specific issues in their rural-tribal area more effectively. They can advocate for improvement in health, education, water management of the village, etc.

On the other side, they faced some challenges, i.e. social and cultural barriers, limited access to political networks, inadequate financial resources and support systems, etc.

They also faced the problem of not knowing new schemes, bureaucratic structures, laws, etc.

The study says that government should promote gender-responsive policies for this and more and more capacity-building training programmes should be organized, which can focus on leadership development, communication, etc. Efforts should be made to raise awareness about the importance of women's participation in local self-governance and to provide a support system for aspiring women leaders who are equitable for inclusive community development.

Key Words: Panchayati Raj, Women, Prospects, Challenges.

6.6
Political participation of Adivasi Women: Implications of effective education

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Education plays a significant role in the empowerment of an individual. It is the major component in order to attain overall development by giving them greater access to awareness, provide them a better comprehension of their social, political, and cultural environment and facilitating in the improvement of their socio-economic conditions. Though India's education system has made significant progress over the past few decades, but even after so many years of Independence the literacy of the Scheduled Tribes and other marginalized groups has been a matter of concern. Even despite so many programmes has been launched for the tribal education development, yet the number of Adivasi children going to school and finishing at least primary school is low. And in case of female literacy which is even lower. Therefore, on the backdrop of this, the paper limns the role of education in stimulating the participation of Adivasi women in the process of democratic decentralisation and further captures the impacts on their leadership and representative role at the local decision-making bodies.

Keywords: Adivasi women, education, political participation, awareness, leadership

6.7
Women in decision making in rural Local Governance in West Bengal: Achievements, prospects and challenges.

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Political decision-making role of women remains critical worldwide. The issue of gender inequality as one of the major concerns of human development did highlight the importance of women's decision-making role as essential for governance. Beginning in the 1990's the overall idea of security brought to the fore, the idea of human development as part of human security. The 1995 Beijing Conference, highlighted that women's equal participation in decision making is not only a demand for social justice but also a necessity for adequate recognition of women's role. The Millennium Development Goals as well as the Sustainable Development Goals continue to emphasize on the advancement of women's role in society as well as in exercising their decision-making power in governance. The discourses on women's political decision-making role primarily focus on the idea of governance for the overall development at any level.

In one of the regional meetings organized by UNIFEM in the year 2000, there was a continued concern over women's decision-making role where it was mentioned that '' continuing invisibility of women in higher levels of governance, political leadership and civil service and the continuing resistance of mainstream political parties to provide space for women in politics is a reality''. It further added '' sharing of experiences of affirmative actions at grass root level as well as at national level, studying of different electoral systems and creation of a shared political agenda for women is a necessity''. Significantly as part of the strategies for capacity building through the empowerment exercise, the MDG indicated the idea of democratic decentralization of governance can lead to the enhancement of human development not excluding women's development. These developments indicate how the role of women in decision making is significant to the issues of empowerment, governance and development.

In case of India, the Act of 1993 called for the promotion of women's decision-making role, particularly in rural governance. It was pointed out that without approving their role in rural governance to start with, they would lose the opportunity of strengthening their role in governance. The State of West Bengal

is one of the important states where rural governance has been an important segment of development. It has also had a long history of local government in the villages beginning before independence and has also witnessed implementation of land reforms. Under these circumstances, the state becomes important where the role of women in rural local governance can be taken note of.

This paper would focus on the role of women in rural political decision making and governance in West Bengal both before and after the implementation of the 73rd Amendment act. It would also analyse the achievements, prospects and challenges faced by women in this path.

Keywords: Decision making, governance, empowerment, development.

6.8

Performance and challenges of Women Panchayat Presidents in the Anthanallur block of Tiruchirappalli District of Tamil Nadu– A case study

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India is perhaps the first country to recognise the social fact emphasised by Lenin on International Working Women's Day in 1921, and to have taken concrete measures to draw Women into leadership positions, and thus into politics, by granting them one-third reservation in what is now known as the third tier of governance--the Panchayati raj. Article 243D (3) of the Constitution (Seventy-third Amendment) Act, 1992 states: Not less than one-third (including the number of seats designated for women from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes) of the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in each Panchayat.

As a result, in 1993, all Indian states agreed to support rural government and rural development via community engagement, and the reservation of women seats in the 11th schedule was inserted into the Indian Constitution, which covers 29 topics.

As that particular panchayat is reserved for females, there are certain push and pull aspects to become a contestant especially who is encouraged by her husband

or family. This legislation promotes good governance via citizen involvement, and people are actively involved in rural government decision-making with the assistance of the most disadvantaged populations, such as women and Scheduled Castes. Because Scheduled Castes and women are among the most disadvantaged populations in India in terms of education and access to commons, and they are also denied fundamental rights.

According to the Election Report 2021, women now make up 50% of those running for Panchayat elections in Tamil Nadu. However, because our society is patriarchal, women running for office must rely on their spouses or the society. The goal of this study is to take a look at the following issues and experiences, as well as to determine the performance of women running for government based on their educational knowledge, work, family impact, societal contribution, and people's cooperation. Strategies are discussed.

This information was chosen for Anthanallur Panchayat Union, one of four blocks in Tiruchirappalli District. The Union contains a total of 25 Panchayats, 11 of which are led by women. Data is gathered through questioning them, observing them, and analysing FDG. The purpose of this study is to look into the 1. Effectiveness of women Panchayat presidents. 2. Difficulties 3. Educational and Awareness Knowledge 4. Approaching People Need System, and 5. Their achievements in their field.

Key Words: Women Panchayat Presidents, Prospect and Challenges

6.9
Panchayati Raj system in Kathua
and delusion of Women Empowerment

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Women's struggle covers a wide spectrum of issues. Activist for women's rights believe that women's participation in the political process is not only central for the functioning and strengthening of democratic institutions but their participation give strength to struggle against oppression and their ability to challenge the ideologies and hierarchies which keep them subordinate. The 73rd Constitutional Amendment of 1992 provisions for the reservation of not less than one third of the total number of seats for women including the number of seats reserved for SCs and STs at all the three tiers of Panchayati Raj institutions (Gram Panchayat, Intermediate Panchayat and District Panchayat). In Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), initiative for local self-government was taken in 1935 by Maharaja Hari Singh. The provisions of the 73rd amendment was not executed to union territory of Jammu and Kashmir due to the special status granted to the erstwhile state. With the passage of time, new features were added to it in order to make Panchayati raj institutions a self-sufficient body. The present study is an attempt to examine the participation of women in the Panchayati raj Institutions in J&K. The women reservation was introduced keeping in mind the fair participation of women in the process of decision making in the Panchayati raj System. Considering the patriarchy in society, it is probable that the introduction of mere reservation policy in Panchayati Raj system might be an important instrumental step to strengthening the participation of women in the political system but it does not ensure their freedom, empowerment and decision making. Only 2.46% women were elected in the panchayat election held in Jammu and Kashmir in 2002. Thus, out of total 22,700 panchs and sarpanches only 28 panch and 2 sarpanch women were elected. However, in Jammu and Kashmir it was in 2011 that a law made a provision for one third reservation of the seat for women. Further the provision was made to appoint a women sarpanch over five panchs in every panchayat. According to the official data, although women were successful in obtaining one third of panch seats in 2011, but female sarpanches are still rare. Out of 4,113 sarpanch posts in the 22 districts of the state, only 28 women managed to win the election. The success rate of women sarpanch is 0.68. The data revealed that neither the reservation for women nor their actual presence in the Panchayat have become representative and empowering. In fact, it has been observed that

in India although women are elected in panchayat but they hardly get the chance to participate in the decision-making process at village level. Recently it has been seen that in Jammu and Kashmir not only in village self-government bodies, but even in the district development councils. The newly elected women members are hardly involved in any decision-making processes rather dependent on the male family member. The stereotypes and lack of education become big hurdle for the women who are elected. Majority of the women representatives' contest for only one term in the election because the seats on which they were elected is de-reserved in the next round. The present paper will collect the data from the women representatives of Basohli, Bani and Mahanpur Panchayat of Kathua district of UT Jammu and Kashmir through the questionnaire and interview method. The researcher will try to make a moderate attempt to explore the ground realities of women in panchayat and its participation through women reservation in Panchayat Raj System.

Keywords: Empowerment, Decision making, Panchayati Raj, Participation, Women representation, Basohli, Bani, Mahanpur, Kathua, Jammu and Kashmir, Male dominance.

6.10
Role of Education in stimulating participation of Women in Local Self-Governance

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Historically, Women in India have had limited access to education, which has hindered their political participation. While recent improvements have occurred, many women still need the necessary educational skills to hold office. Education plays a crucial role in empowering women politically at the grassroots level. Within local communities, the literacy rate among women is significantly low, resulting in a lack of understanding of their constitutional rights. The need for knowledge about local governance renders them invisible as citizens. Often, women struggle to comprehend government policies, programs, and their political rights. During elections, many women defer their voting decisions to their male family heads

rather than exercising their own independent choice. However, if women are educated, they can select candidates based on their preferences and challenge misguided decisions made by local authorities. Due to a limited understanding of political policies, women often need to be more open to local politics and rely on the decisions of their male counterparts.

Conversely, educated women can actively engage in local politics, advocating for gender equality, discussing local issues with candidates, and challenging male dominance in local governance. As leaders in local governance, educated women can make independent decisions and work towards gender equality at the grassroots level. Education enables women to uplift marginalized communities and empowers them to lead in local governance confidently. Based on the above discussion, the present study explores the relationship between education and the participation of women in local governments in Rajasthan.

Key Words: Education, Gender Equality, marginalized, women empowerment, local self-governance

6.11
Substantive representation of Elected Women Representatives: Exploring the contours of grass root Governance In Local Self-Government in Kerala

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Local self-government stands as a significant arena for women to be a part of the administrative process and decision-making. Political participation and representation of women is substantial for the leadership and gender-sensitive policy making. The present study explores the grass root level activism of elected women representatives in Local Self Government in Kerala and their experience as a women legislator while shouldering the responsibilities among the layman. In Kerala, out of the 1200 local self-government institutions across 14 districts, elections were held in 2020 on 1199 local bodies which included 15,962 wards in

941 grama panchayats, 2080 seats in 152 block panchayats, 331 seats in 14 district panchayats, 3078 wards in 86 municipalities and 414 wards in 6 corporations (sec.kerala.gov.in). This included 36,305 women candidates; however, statistics is in contrast to the 38,268 women candidates in the local body election held in 2015 and more than 50000 candidates in 2010 local elections. But despite to this numbers, in the local body election 2020, a trend thus emerged showing greater 'win' of women candidates indicating more representation. Even though women are given descriptive representation in the legislative bodies, most of the scenarios they are treated subordinate to men and hence lacks equal chance of decision-making. From a mixed method research paradigm, the paper further deliberates into the substantive representation of women in administrative decision-making using the theoretical contribution of Hannah Fenichel Pitkin in her seminal work 'The Concept of Representation'. A representation is only substantive when the elected representative acts for the interests and welfare of the group they represent. In this paper, author addresses the issue of representation and activism of the elected women representatives seeking how much functional women representatives are, in exercising their duties and responsibilities. The paper submits the argument that the path to empowerment of women can only be envisioned by bringing participatory, inclusive and equitable governing mechanisms.

Keywords: Women in Local Self-Government, Substantive Representation, Gender sensitive decision-making, Inclusivity, Participatory governance

6.12
Youth in Governance: Empowering Young Women Leaders in Kerala Politics

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Women have always been multitaskers but at the same time pampered and put aside by others. It's a trend nowadays in the case of the local administrative system to bring young and educated women to the forefront of governance and ruling. This abstract is to shed light on the trend of escalating young women to experience the authoritative space provided in light of politics and local self-governing systems. Due to the 33% reservation for the candidate vacancy in

elections, the leading political parties have been chasing young educated women to fill the seats especially if they have a 'teacher' tag on the garment.

The new generation of women who are independent and bold are pushed and brought forth by leading political parties to promote the policies and practices by the government which might have been opposed by the older generation. The younger women feel the need and urge to reform the existing socio-cultural practices which are predominantly in favour of people with privileges. They are in unison with the new trends implemented by the government, especially the new policies that digitalise government services. These young women are also beneficiaries of the government policies and practices implemented from the 1990s. Young women in their twenties have witnessed and perceived the essence of both older and younger generations and are capable to deal with the traditional and modern changes with ease. They get to implement and suggest new changes while retaining the useful older policies.

The space they receive is a two-way track since the women are also getting an authoritative medium to showcase their talent through the public sphere. They are given opportunities to face the huge crowd and eventually get trained in the art of public speaking and dealing with problematic issues. One of the challenges of being a woman of the younger generation is that they have to compete with the experienced leaders of the political parties they represent. They might not get the respect and status which the men leaders get when it comes to dealing with the problems of the civilians. But this challenge is untangled by education which always played a huge part in uplifting the social condition of women. The status and respect which educated women get can replace the and familiarity enjoyed by politicians for a long time. Education has been a trump card in the political sphere. People started showing faith in young people because of their educational achievements. Their ability to handle digital media has proved to be fruitful when they started to deal with local issues using updated technologies and easier methods. Usage of social media and collective communication mediums like WhatsApp and Facebook helped them to reach common people and to give awareness about the various facilities and provisions they can apply to.

Keywords: Local governance, Women in power, Young women politicians, New political trend, Kerala politics.

6.13

Gendered citizenship and clientification of gender: Investigations on the interconnections between 'Public-Private' in the lived experiences of women self help group members

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The concept of citizenship brings in an intersectionality perspective to locate political, legal, social, cultural and historical contexts to examine the lived experiences of citizenship. There is a need for complex analyses of differential subjects, sites, acts, responsibilities and answerabilities in relation to gender equitable citizenship. The present research employs the conceptual framework of Contracts Versus Charity (Fraser and Gordon,1994), the 'gap' and 'trap' of invisible women labour (Lister,2011) to examine the lived experiences of women members of Self-Help Groups in Kerala. The study was carried out among women SHGs sponsored by different organisational framework like Kudumbashree, Janasree, Community based and Non-Governmental agencies. The major finding of the study is an indication towards increased expectancies on women members to strike a balance between 'private' and 'public' life, thus compromising the potential of civil activism.

Keywords: Gendered citizenship, Private-public dichotomy, Self Help Groups

6.14

Women's Political Participation In Rural Government: Constitutional Provisions And Challenges In Odisha

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Women play a significant role in society, but due to patriarchy, they possess a lower status in society. Participation in politics is the democratic right of every citizen. But in the rural area, half of the population cannot enjoy their democratic right transparently because they belong to the category of "women". The historic 73rd constitutional amendment act facilitated women's role, especially in local governance. This article discusses the impact of introducing 73rd amendment and gender-responsive budgeting at the local level in Odisha. The data on which the article relies relate collected from secondary sources of the annual plans, budgets, govt. report, books, journals, articles. The paper provides a simple analysis of government programmes and scheme which introduce for women in Odisha. Although Odisha was one of the pinners states that accept the Panchayati raj activities very after independence till now in rural areas women are far away from empowerment. It is important to acknowledge that the implementation of these constitutional provisions has had a positive impact on the level of political participation of rural women across the state. Achieving gender equity and equality involves acknowledging and addressing the diverse needs, preferences, and interests that influence how men and women benefit from policies and budget allocations. The Gender Budget Statement was initially introduced in the Budget for 2005-06. Odisha, the Government introduced the Gender Budget Statement as an integral component of their annual budgeting process starting from the fiscal year 2012-13. Throughout this period, the Government of Odisha has consistently demonstrated its dedication to promoting gender equality and has directed political will and leadership towards its achievement. In the concluding part this article tries to eradicate the factors contributing to the inhabiting situation among rural women in the area of political participation and suggest a solution for their empowerment.

Key words: Women participation, 73rd amendment, Gender budget, Local Governance

6.15
Women and invisible boundaries:
A case of slippage in sanitation in
two Gram Panchayats, Shravasti, UP, India

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Sustainable management of water and sanitation is inextricably linked with women's health and wellbeing. To ensure this by way of full toilet coverage, the Government of India launched Swachh Bharat Mission – Rural in 2014 (SBM-R, henceforth). The program aimed to end open defecation in India by 2nd October 2019, ensuring cleanliness in rural areas by declaring Gram Panchayats Open Defecation Free. The objective of this paper is to understand slippage in rural sanitation through a social justice lens as informed by women and their experience with sanitation in rural Shravasti, Uttar Pradesh, India. Slippage is understood as the reversal of performance of sanitation services, where individuals go back to open defecation despite having access to toilets (Reddy et al. 2010). The Sanitation Wellbeing framework has been used to analyse the findings (Khare & Suresh 2021). The framework theoretically draws from Sen's conception of social justice that proposes realisation-focused perspective, in which he explains that not only setting up of institution (Niti) is important, but the resulting impacts these institutions have on society are also equally important (Nyay). Sen identifies the capability approach as a moral normative framework (Alkire 2008) that offers a set of attributes to focus on, while evaluating justice.

The paper focuses on Nyaya aspect of Sen's justice that evaluates what actually emerges in society or what women are able to do and be, once the sanitation resources are made available to them. It becomes essential to study gender and sanitation because in the case of women, the process of making a choice itself is constrained and that impacts their general wellbeing. In a patriarchal society, the choice about a woman's bodily functions like defecation, menstruation and movement, a woman's options are highly restricted, and that, in turn, affects their opportunity to create, choose and act on those outcomes that they value (Sen 2001; Kabeer 1999). In this paper, I look at both- the opportunity and agency aspects of the capability of women to experience overall sanitation wellbeing post the implementation of SBM-R program.

The paper reviews literature across three themes: (i) the importance of adequate sanitation in women's lives (ii) gender provisions in SBM-R guidelines – the original as well as revised and (iii) chastity and association with the family's honour that informs the state's understanding and adoption of development programs.

The paper presents the findings from the fieldwork conducted from 1st September 2021 to 31st October 2021, in Kanjadwa and Madh Nagar Manoharpur Gram Panchayats (GP). A total of 135 individuals were interviewed from 49 households out of which 90 were women. As per the findings, there are 12% to 50% of women still practiced open defecation despite possessing toilets. The women are subjected to direct and indirect control asserted by the male members in natal as well as marital families. It is made sure that the compliance is secured by coercion, character assassination, verbal and physical abuse, and use of moral force that creates the burden of guilt and shame. The underlying reason behind making women go through these constraints is to regulate women's sexuality through everyday control and surveillance by three agencies: religion, family, and the state. This eventually leads to the creation of an environment of systemic oppression that impairs agency leading to acute capability failure among women. Sanitation Well-being framework is deployed to study slippage and its linkage with women's agency. Personal, cultural, and structural factors that lead to the impaired agency among women are child marriage, denial of education and employment opportunities, slut shaming, victim blaming, domestic violence, and character assassination. These are made worse by the state-sanctioned adoption of misogynistic Information Education and Communication messages that reinforces cultural stereotypes and worsen women's condition. Hence, it is neglect and denial of the removal of prevailing sexism in the family and religion and its deliberate adoption by the state in implementing the SBM-R program that prevents women from experiencing sanitation well-being. Through the empirical findings, this paper appeals for a correction of focus from a resource-led definition of sanitation progress towards a 'more just' definition that captures positionality and circumstances (Sen 2009, p. 6). Consequently, we understand that open defecation among women is an outcome of the basic unfreedoms rather than a volitional choice that prevents them from experiencing sanitation wellbeing.

Keywords: Open defecation, Sanitation Well-being Framework, slippage, Swachh Bharat Mission-Rural, women.

6.16

Role of media in promoting women's participation in Local Self-Governance.

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This paper will be based on secondary data and literature to understand 'the role of media in promoting women's participation in local self-governance'. This paper will be focusing on the importance of media as a tool to encourage women to be part of the politics. To understand the importance of media, this paper will be looking at different literature, data which mainly focuses on the women local leaders.

Local self-governance expands the process of democratization in India. It aims to give power in the hands of local people to make policies and govern themselves. Representation of women in local governance is an important aspect of inclusion of marginalized groups in decision-making. Local governance got constitutional recognition with the 73rd and 74th constitutional amendment and it made provision for one-third reservation of seats for women in local governance. Local governance in India is important for grassroot democracy; it helps local people to connect directly to the system of policy-making and governance. With the reservation for women in local governance, the male dominance of local governance gave space to women leaders. Women were seen as less interested in politics in comparison to men but women's representation after reserving seats showed that institutional barriers and patriarchal structure pushed women to private sphere. Their presence in local governance mark that women are interested in politics if they are given proper opportunities.

Media is part of democracy and considered as the fourth pillar of democracy. Media (New and Old) is important tool in communication, transforming and sharing the information from ground to leaders and vice-versa. Media with the sharing of information play an important role in socializing the people. It also, builds perception for people about the information. Portrayal of women in media affect the image of women on ground. How media show women, affects and build the popular image of women in society. Presence of women in media also becomes important aspect to shape the content in media about women.

This paper will be looking at the role of media and how women leaders in local governance can empower themselves with the help of media. In modern world when social media platforms have become the source of information and misinformation, how women leaders can use it for their benefit. It will try to understand how women leaders can educate themselves from the information about people, policies, government etc. It will also focus on some cinematic representation of local women leaders through Sanshodhan and Panchayats (season one and two) web series. This paper aims to explain that how portrayal of women leaders can motivate and encourage women leaders to participate in politics.

Key Words: Media, Local Governance, Women Leaders, Decentralization, Political Participation.

6.17
Kudumbashree: A strategy for women empowerment - analysing the impact of Kudumbashree on its members

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Gender equality being a fundamental human right, is deprived for women. Though India is a country which considers women as goddesses, it still restricts them to have a voice of their own. Globalisation expanding and stretching its wings farther and wider in India rarely considers working women as a means of economic growth. Women are limited to domestic chores; few have means to financial independence. The idea of working women is a rare phenomenon. The imbalances of this deprived class in our economy are numerous. In classical economics, full employment of resources gives rise to optimum levels of output and profits. Ignoring the potential of 8 million unemployed women according to CMIE Dec 2021, will create a huge opportunity cost. If women are to fully utilise their potential, then it is important to give them the opportunity to do so. Kerala's

State Poverty Eradication Mission- Kudumbashree has cogitated to make women arise from the traditional gender inequality, re-emphasize and find a way to live life independently and to take care of their family whilst being economically productive. This research focuses on finding the success rate of this mission in empowering women involved in it. To empirically prove the above, statistical measures have been used to analyse data, collected mainly through survey forms. The results of our study show that Kudumbashree has certainly led to women empowerment both at a personal and collective level in the society, by providing training in enterprise development, microfinance credit, raising awareness on rights, health and nutrition requirements successfully, irrespective of their background (age, educational qualifications, caste, family type, marital status). This intervention strategy used by the Kerala Government is a universal strategy which could be followed in other states and countries and thereby reflect a ray of hope for a society to be built on the foundations of gender equality.

Keywords: Gender Equality, Financial Independence, Women Empowerment, Microfinance Credit, Intervention strategy, Enterprise Development.

6.18
Women in rural Local Self Government Bodies – Potentials and challenges in the assertion of politics of presence

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When the 72nd & 73rd Constitutional Amendments were passed in 1992 it ushered in an era of enhancing the numerical representation of women in local self-government bodies, first capped at 33% and in states like Maharashtra, later enhanced to 50%. Grassroots democracy paves the way for leadership development and it was envisioned that this historical milestone would create opportunities for 'a million Indiras in the making' and bring women's voices to the fore through their 'politics of presence'. The ground reality brings out a mixed picture of potentials, achievements, challenges and tokenism in representation while also showing there are definite indications of change. At the same time the triple axis of class, caste and patriarchy and the entrenched 'maleness' in political processes coupled with rural cultural norms also create obstructions and challenges to participation and restrict the strong contributions that reflect empowerment. The

present paper is based on the author's doctoral work, where the field study was carried out in 2017-18 and looked at all three tiers of rural local self-government bodies in Pune district. It covered 12 villages, one panchayat samiti and the Pune Zilla Parishad. The study used multiple tools accessing primary as well as secondary sources and attempted to explore intersectionality that influence participation and perceptions. The study looks at the changing composition of post-amendment panchayats, the charged aspirations of a substantial number of elected women representatives (EWRs), the social and political dynamics in decision making of which women should contest elections, particularly in village panchayats and how elected male and women representatives and constituents assess performance of EWRs. Field observations and detailed interviews highlight the intersections which influence EWRs participation and perceptions. These issues are reflected upon analytically through the use of rich anecdotal narratives and case studies.

The paper raises questions about how 'successful' women representatives use strategies to become effective while still being entrenched in the masculine nature of political dynamics and how first-time elected women grapple with the challenges imposed by caste position, the patriarchal family and political system. The study feeds into the debate on quotas for political reservation for women and makes a case for the need of active engagement of feminist groups and civil society organisations not only with elected women representatives but also with other significant influencing systems so that the use of agency by EWRs truly renders visible their politics of presence.

6.19
Reservation of seats for Women In Local Governance: Precursor to women empowerment, or development myth?

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'Empowered' at the Grassroots? A comparative study of women's participation in local government in India, South Africa and Brazil

Feminist comparative politics scholars have examined the various pathways through which women gain access to political participation globally. While most studies have focused on the macro level of executive power across countries, there have been fewer attempts to comparatively study the impact of the presence of women at the micro level of local government. This paper will address the question of whether quotas for women in local governance structures has furthered the agenda of women's empowerment or whether it is just another tool for co-opting women into decentralized development without much relevance to strategic gender interests. This paper analyses local government in India, South Africa and Brazil in order to draw out the factors that determine the nature and extent of women's participation through quotas, and to evaluate the impact of their interventions on gendering the political discourse.

The relevance of this comparative matrix flows from the fact that India, South Africa and Brazil are three postcolonial democracies from the Global South, with deeply entrenched patterns of social and political exclusion. Local government structures have been institutionalized through constitutional provisions and gender quotas at the grassroots level have been introduced in all three countries with the stated intent to enhance the political participation of women. While in India, quotas for women in local government has been implemented through reservation of 33.3% of seats in the panchayats and urban local bodies, South Africa and Brazil have legislated candidate quotas in place whereby political parties are mandated by electoral law to nominate a certain number of women as candidates. In South Africa, the Local Government Municipal Structures Act, 1998 stipulates that every party must seek to ensure that 50% of candidates on party lists are women who are evenly distributed, with no penalty attracted in the case of non-compliance. Additionally, the African National Congress (ANC) has adopted a voluntary 50% quota for women in local elections. In the case of Brazil, the 1996 Lei de Cota's (quota law) mandated that parties should field a minimum of 20% women candidates in the Camara de Vereadores (municipal government) elections for city councillor. Subsequently, the quota was raised to 25% in 1998 and 30% in 2000.

Furthering the feminist institutionalist perspective, the central argument of this paper is that the design of the quota policy for women is more significant than the number of women brought into local government. Mere descriptive representation cannot make inroads into the entrenched patriarchal power structures of local government bodies; instead, it is the extent to which elected women members advocate the substantive representation of women's interests that is crucial. This paper will explore the impact of institutional factors such as political parties, electoral systems, accountability mechanisms and gender regimes on the effectiveness of elected women representatives at the local level

in India, South Africa and Brazil. It will also examine whether women's presence in local government becomes a pathway for more female representation at the provincial/State and national levels of government.

Key Words: Feminist Institutionalism; Gender Quotas; Women's Political Participation; Gender and local government; Comparative Politics of Gender; India; South Africa; Brazil

6.20
Access to participation in Local Self-Governance for tribal women in non-Pesa areas: A case study in Ahmednagar district

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Indian society is characterized by diverse intersectionality involving caste, class, gender, religion, and region, which give rise to various levels of discrimination and creation of marginalised communities. Tribal communities have been historically marginalized and kept away from the mainstream society and its politics. Tribal women, in particular, face significant socio-political marginalization and deprivation in the patriarchal and casteist society. Despite constitutional amendments providing 33% reservation for women in local self-governance, factors like gender, caste, class, and religion continue to influence access to participation. As oppose to the PESA act which applies to the local government bodies that are formed in a tribal area which are structure by constitution. the non-PESA bodies govern a diverse population. Thus, tribal communities, that are marginalised in this setup, face discrimination and atrocities at the hands of economic, social as well as political hegemonies. This paper aims to investigate the challenges faced by Adivasi women in accessing participation in local self-governance in non-PESA (Panchayats Extension to Scheduled Areas) regions. The study will employ a case study approach, analysing two PESA Gram Panchayats in Ahmednagar district. The researcher, belonging to this district, possesses an in-depth understanding of the field is being researched / field upon which this research is based.

By exploring the specific circumstances of tribal women's participation in local self-governance, this study seeks to shed light on the barriers they encounter, the impact of existing reservations, and the influence of social, economic, and political factors. The findings of this research will contribute to a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by tribal women in non-PESA areas and provide insights to policymakers and stakeholders for creating more inclusive and equitable governance structures.

Key Words: Intersectional diversity, caste, class, gender, religion, region, discrimination, marginalization, political marginalization, tribal women, local self-governance, access to participation, non-PESA areas.

6.21
Harnessing the power of Pris for better pregnancy outcomes: Lessons learnt from select areas of Assam

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Background

With Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) of 215 per 100,000 live births (REF), Assam is the worst performer for SDG 3 Maternal health related target among India's states. Low ANC registration (64%) during the first trimester, low proportion of women receiving four or more antenatal check-ups (51%), low institutional deliveries (84%) are some of the factors responsible for high MMR. Together with IDEA NE and its district level field partners, SAHAJ is facilitating evidence-based civil society action for improving pregnancy outcomes for women in selected districts of Assam. Community engagement and social accountability are the key strategies of this endeavour. The activities were focused on capacitating the members of Village Health Sanitation and Nutrition Committees (VHSNC) including the Panchayat members to facilitate improved service delivery through well organised Village Health Sanitation and Nutrition Days (VHSNDs).

Methods

SAHAJ conducted a series of training programmes for partner organisations' staff in two districts - Darrang and Dhemaji - on the topics of maternal health, VHSNC functioning and effective use of data from the routine health system statistics. Subsequently, each partner conducted meetings with service providers (ANMs and ASHAs), Panchayat members and Self-Help Group (SHG) members who constitute the VHSNC in the selected villages for the intervention. Local language material on maternal health and VHSNC functioning was produced for effective communication with the VHNSC members.

Learnings

Training for knowledge and skills enhancement deepened the participants' understanding of the importance of strengthening the implementation of government schemes through social accountability efforts. Managing the power dynamics within the VHSNCs and getting them to a common understanding was challenging but the local organisations could unite the village stakeholders and make the VHSNCs functional.

For VHSNC members to monitor the maternal health-related services and outcomes, they needed knowledge about maternal health. The training sessions for all the VHSNC members on maternal health, high-risk pregnancies and government schemes for improving the maternal health status has improved their understanding.

According to the Panchayat members, VHSNCs are more functional now with regular monthly meetings. According to ASHAs and ANMs, the participation of Panchayat members in the VHSNC meetings has increased in the past 1.5 years. Formal and informal interactions with the Panchayat members showed that they have gained fair knowledge on VHSNC functioning now as compared to the beginning of the project. Support and handholding by the partner organisations have enabled the VHSNCs in these areas to monitor the provision of maternal health services.

Conclusion

With regular skill-based training and handholding support, local government structures like VHSNCs can be effectively used to build social accountability to improve access to maternal health services.

Keywords: Panchayat members, Community engagement, Social accountability, Maternal health services

6.22
Gender budgeting in Local Bodies:
A tool for inclusive Local Economic Development

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The concept of gender budgeting recognizes that budgets are not gender-neutral and that they can have differential impacts across gender. It aims to ensure that public resources are allocated in such a way to address gender disparities and promotes gender equality. Gender budgeting is indeed a valuable tool for promoting inclusive local economic development. By integrating a gender perspective into budgetary processes, policymakers can address gender inequalities and promote economic opportunities for all. Along with this through a gender responsive local budget, governments can work towards achieving gender equality, promoting social inclusion, and addressing the specific needs and priorities of women, girls and other gender minorities within their jurisdictions. Here we are using gender responsive budgeting in local bodies as a specific tool to achieve Local Economic Development (LED). LED refers to the initiatives and strategies implemented by local governments to promote economic growth and development in the specific geographical location. LED through gender responsive budgeting will surely focus on improving the economic conditions by attracting investments, creating jobs, and enhancing the overall quality of life for residents at the local level.

Local governments play a crucial role in driving economic development because they have the authority and responsibility to make decisions and implement policies that directly impact their jurisdictions. By implementing gender budgeting in local governments, policymakers can assess the gender-differentiated needs and priorities across gender in the local community, analyse how existing budgetary policies and allocations affect gender equality, identify gender gaps and inequalities in resource allocation, redirect resources to address the specific needs of marginalized groups, including women and other gender minorities, and monitor and evaluate the impact of budgetary decisions on gender equality outcomes. That is, gender budgeting practices in local level will directly lead to local economic development and it is inclusive also. So, the present paper is an attempt to investigate the practices of gender budgeting in local bodies of Kerala and to explore the various channels of local economic development.

Reservation of seats for women in Local Governance: Precursor to Women Empowerment or development myth

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The 73rd Amendment provided constitutional status to village councils with an emphasis on empowering marginalized communities and women through the reservation of seats in panchayats. However, most literature published on the functioning of decentralized institutions neglects that the 73rd Amendment primarily constituted devolution rather than decentralization of power. Such devolution may have deprived the necessary forum to realize the primary objectives of the Amendment. During the 30-year passage since the adoption of the 73rd Amendment, albeit a handful of success stories of women's leadership in local governance, Elected Women Representatives (EWRs) continue to fight this development myth due to their inequitable participation in the Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs), lack of control on financial resources, lack of support from political parties, and lack of critical sponsorship and mentorship.

The study examines systemic realignments, shifts in power centers, and institutional barriers impeding the effective adoption of the 73rd Amendment. Although Maharashtra expanded the reservation from 33% to 50%, the continued absence of gender budgeting, increase in gender-based crimes, and dismal participation of women at Tahsil, District, and State government levels suggest that even 50% reservation has not resulted in equitable participation of EWRs. This paper explores ways to achieve equitable partnership status for the EWRs in village councils' decision-making process and to provide them necessary control over panchayats' financial resources. The study further discusses how the implementation of effective policies such as Community Development Societies (CDSs) of women serving as the community wing of the local governing bodies in Kerala has played a key role in equitable participation of EWRs in local governance and ways to adopt that model in Maharashtra.

The study further suggests that where a Dalit or a woman is elected as Sarpanch, control over financial resources is shifted towards informal bodies like Mandir Committee, Yatra Committee, Khap Panchayats, etc., which upper-class/caste men often head. In Maharashtra, the newly imposed direct election method for

Sarpanch has shown 'unintended' consequences of unanimous Sarpanch elections where 'unopposed winners' bid crores of rupees as a return favour in support of the informal bodies/committees. Thus, the spirit and the legislative intent of the 73rd Amendment are further defeated. The influence of informal committees/ bodies can be contained through the adoption of the women CDSs and Area Development Societies (ADSs) working at ward levels. A joint programme by the State government and PRIs similar to the Kudumbashree model in Kerala may further the spirit and the legislative intent of the 73rd Amendment in Maharashtra.

This paper examines legislative documents, PRI budget reports, field reports from PRIs across Maharashtra prepared by two NGOs engaged by the Central/ State governments, and notes from discussions with the EWRs. Finally, it proposes systemic realignment that needs to be adopted through policy changes to empower EWRs with the necessary control over financial resources and equitable participation in panchayats' decision-making process through the effective implementation of program like Kudumbashree through the ADSs and CDSs.

Keywords: Development, Myth, Mandir Committee, Yatra Committee, Kudumbashree in Maharashtra

6.24
The daily dilemmas of communication and self-presentation: A study on the communicational challenges and subduing practices of elected women leadership of Local Bodies in Kerala

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The 25 years of practicing democratic decentralization in Kerala and the participation of women in the panchayath Raj institutions as people's representatives are conspicuous in their role as decision-makers of development.

The leadership roles demand formal and informal communicative actions for political existence in this age of mounted responsibilities of local self-government. The communicative ecology with divergent platforms and mediums expects content with contextual presentations. Everyday experiences of a leader engage hybrid possibilities of interactions with the public at large, the intimate group, official meet-ups, and to the self, which requires a communicational aptitude. The interpersonal interactions of a woman in a leadership role are often received from a gender perspective. Irrespective of the content and clarity, the mode of communication, the context, the medium, and the presentation of the self were collaborating in its reception. The verbal and nonverbal gestures, including the appearance in terms of dress, accessories, and style, take roles in presenting the self in a communicational context of the person, especially the woman. The study observes the communication practices and explores the crisis and challenges of Presidents of panchayaths in Kerala in expression and presentation of self in day-to-day public relations activities. It attempts to discover how gender plays in the choice of medium, time, space, and personal appearance of a woman leader with political responsibilities. The communicational efforts of the local women leadership for participation and interaction in the activities to sustain their roles and responsibilities define the gender alternatives of communicative action. The study analyses the conscious attempts of verbal and nonverbal expressions of thought as well as the appearance and presentation of public interactions of women leaders. The study explores the role of communication habits in defining the gender and social roles of women in leadership.

Key words: Communicational dilemma, Women Leaders of local Bodies in Kerala, Self-presentation, Communicative actions, Communication Crisis, Gender roles in communication

6.25
Gender gap in Local Planning:
A review of women component plan
projects in three Grama Panchayats in Kerala

The 73rd, 74th Amendment of the Panchayati Raj Act in 1992 was a milestone of the Indian democracy. Through this amendment, the decentralisation process in governance started and the devolution of functions, funds and functionaries (3Fs) became a reality. The Kerala Panchayati Raj Act came into force in 1994 and thereafter in 1996 the Peoples Plan Campaign started by the then State

Government to transform the three tier Panchayati Raj Institutions to real local governments. The changed situation in local planning leveraged the idea of women empowerment and gender equality and these became common in the general discourse of development in Kerala. 33% reservation of seats for women in the local body election (later changed to 50% and in standing committee chairpersonship also), separate working group on women and development, separate chapter on women and development in the development report of local governments, mandatory women component plan fund, Kudumbashree, Jagratha samithi for dealing violence against women etc. are some of the positive discriminations towards women empowerment at local self-government level. Among which, 10% mandatory allocation (in the beginning it was 5%) for women called Women Component Plan (WCP) is unique and so potential to ensure gender equality. WCP projects are supposed to be projects which cater the strategic gender needs. But the project documents of many Panchayats show that this fund is allocated without proper planning. Therefore, a study of WCP projects would be helpful for local governments in effective use of funds earmarked for WCP projects. This paper analyses the different aspects of WCP projects including allocation of fund, the projects planned and utilization of WCP funds in three Grama Panchayats in Kerala between the years 2015-16 and 2021-22.

Key words: Local self-governance, Gender gap, Women Component Plan, Strategic gender needs.

6.26
Women in Local Self Governance and Self-Help Groups

Dr. Rita Rakshit

The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act was passed in 1992 and became an integral part of the Indian Constitution on 24th April 1993. It provided for positive affirmation (reservation) of thirty- three per cent of the total seats for women in all the three tiers of local government. Later, twenty states increased the reservation to 50 per cent. This provision has helped millions of women to get elected in local bodies at the all-India level. The entry of such a large number of women in the political sphere has changed the dynamics of governance at the local level.

The entry of a large number of women at the Local Self Government level was expected to give an impetus to the economic empowerment of women. However, the results have been mixed. The government on its part has been promoting rural women Self-Help Groups (SHGs). A Self-Help Groups is defined as a voluntary group valuing personal interaction and mutual aid as a means of improving the economic and the social status of the members of the group. The government has extended loans to SHG's through National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) on liberal terms. As on 31 March 2022, a total of 67 lakh SHGs have availed loans amounting to R1,51,051.30 crore at the all-India level. Women Self-Help Groups aim to:

- Assist the rural women in organizing and operating SHG's owned and managed by the women themselves at the village level.
- Help the SHG's to increase awareness, knowledge and skill of the rural women and enable them to take active participation in village activities.
- Guide the rural women in the field of income generating activities that contribute to higher family income.
- Involve the women population in all activities from the very beginning of the planning process and
- Provide the local women group credit facilities for establishing and developing economic activities.

Women SHGs help in economic empowerment of women, which enables women to secure economic gain on an on-going and sustained basis. Participation in group activities leads women to changed self-image, enhanced access to new information and skills, broad knowledge about resource availability, organizational and collective action, negotiation with government staff and development of network with other institutions. Leadership qualities and active participation in group culture leads to improvement in political acumen which in turn strengthen and sustain the overall process of rural development. The women SHG's ensures that works important to women are in the forefront in the formulation of project planning and implementation rather than projects developed in the headquarters of the development agencies.

This paper will study Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in Bansur Block of Alwar district in Rajasthan. It will investigate the extent of support provided to them by the local self-government. The paper will also identify the sectors in which the Self-Help Groups are involved and their overall contribution to economic empowerment of women in the block.

Key words: NABARD, SHGs', Local Self Government, Economic Empowerment

6.27

Navigating Women Voter's Political Agency at the intersections of caste and gender: A case study from rural Haryana

Ritika Chauhan

Political empowerment and representation have emerged as crucial avenues in addressing the systemic exclusion of women across diverse social identities at all levels of governance. While reservations for women candidates have played a pivotal role in enhancing their political representation, particularly at grassroots levels, the prospects of their political participation despite the efforts often deny them agency and render them as proxies.

In an effort to address the gender disparity in the historically male-dominated political landscape of Haryana, the state government in 2022 proposed to allocate 50% of seats to women in panchayat bodies, instead of 33% with an aim to increase the political participation of women in local governance. However, it is essential to recognize that political participation extends beyond holding positions of power and encompasses informed voting and decision-making.

Drawing from fieldwork conducted during the 2022 Panchayat elections in the Yamuna Nagar district in Haryana, this research delves into the complex intersectionality of caste, gender, and rural geography, investigating their impact on women voters' political agency. Utilizing semi-structured in-depth interviews and ethnographic observations, this study aims to uncover how women are often relegated to passive voting roles due to limited access to information and resources, hindering their ability to make informed decisions and exercise their agency in choosing who to vote for.

Findings indicate that women in the district face significant constraints in making informed decisions and often rely on the opinions and choices of male relatives or conform to their caste's preferences. Furthermore, the candidates tend to primarily cater to male voters, perpetuating the notion that "a woman's vote is her husband's vote" and leaving the concerns and interests of women largely unaddressed. Gender and caste biases also skew access to crucial information about political candidates and campaigns, further impeding women voters' full participation in the electoral process. More so, women from upper-caste backgrounds enjoy greater access to information compared to their lower-caste counterparts, exacerbating the marginalization of women voters from

disadvantaged strata.

This research endeavours to comprehensively explore the lived experiences of women voters, aiming to unravel the intricate dynamics of caste and gender and their interconnectedness with the political agency in grassroots electoral processes. By shedding light on the intersectional nature of women's political participation in rural Haryana, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by women in political empowerment. Moreover, it emphasizes the necessity of adopting an intersectional lens when formulating policy changes aimed at women's emancipation.

Keywords: Political agency, intersectionality, caste, gender, women voters, panchayat

6.28
Gender Stereotyping and Women's Leadership in Local Self – Governance

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"Good local governance cannot work if due attention is not given to gender equality and women's empowerment." - Anna Tibaijuka – Tanzanian Politician and UN Official (Executive Director and Under-Secretary-General).

Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation stone for a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable world. Gender Equality is important to make the world understand the value of gender. Women around the world are often considered to be weak, emotional, indecisive, and are often doubted of their capabilities but have today, they have proved to be better role models by challenging the mainstream stereotyping mindset.

Indian governance is divided into three vertical levels: the national government, the state government, and the local government. Local self-government is regarded as a grass-root institution that upholds the rule of law and justice in the cities and villages. The Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in the rural areas and the Municipal and Metropolitan Councils in the cities are examples of local governance. Local self-governance, which was adopted in both rural and urban India, has expanded its purview, thanks to the 73rd and 74th Constitutional

Amendments.

As per the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act (1992), all states are required to implement reservations for SCs, STs, OBCs, and women in PRIs. Most of the time, the female panchayat members act as the male family members' proxies. However, it has increased women's self-confidence, sense of responsibility and accountability and in certain cases, they are also effectively leading the PRIs. They have also helped in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), by way of collaboration with the locals and poorer segments of society in various development initiatives/ programmes.

It is essential that both men and women participate equally in local government decision-making in order to guarantee that decisions taken, and budgets allocated are relevant to the living conditions and needs of local women and men; there is equity in service provision and planning; and municipal funds are not only spent effectively and efficiently but also allocated to those who are needy and are the poorest.

At Present, Reservation of seats for women has been made mandatory in all LSG elections. This has resulted in Women taking part in municipal government in significant numbers. It is also inspiring to note that some of the states like West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh were encouraging women to participate in the local authorities even before the 73rd Amendment was brought in.

On analysis of women participation on LSG, it is revealed that even while the proportion of women in local bodies has increased, the real authority remains in the hands of male leaders. It is also observed that in terms of education, communication skills, and experience, the female members fell well short of the male members. This is a critical situation where awareness of women power and role play needs to be improved in addition to aggressive initiatives of women education at the school and college level. Only educated women can demonstrate 'women power' or 'Nari Shakti' in the true sense.

Gender mainstreaming in governance entails the implementation of a fundamental gender sensitive policy, an equal distribution of power, resources, responsibilities, and opportunities, as well as an increase in the participation of women in decisions that influence their choices and life chances on both a personal and a collective level.

Through this paper, I want to delve more into the topic of gender stereotypes surrounding the role of women in local self-governance, the policies in place, the advancement made over time, and practical solutions to the problems that arise.

6.29

Inclusive Governance and Growth: A comprehensive study of empirical experiences in empowering Women

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The lack of financial inclusivity, digital illiteracy, and women's disengagement in governments are the underlying factors causing stunted growth. Unfortunately, men consistently receive higher wages compared to women, due to the mere factor of gender. Women can only achieve mental and physical independence by breaking through this deeply ingrained generational taboo and attaining economic stability.

Passionate to work in the space of social impact, initiatives to organise Self-Help Groups for women in marginalised communities and rural areas were undertaken. Developing scalable finance models to encourage women to save, invest, and obtain insurance coverage boosted their confidence. Through public-speaking sessions, advocacy for women's empowerment, gender equity, and financial independence was given heavy emphasis, thereby opening doors to opportunities that previously did not exist to these women. Collaborating with local banks and rural corporations, micro-credit was made available, enabling women to realise their potential and earn a living on their own. Extensive research on insurance and employment schemes and partnerships with LIC insurance agents, allowed these women to access policy benefits at subsidised costs.

Recognizing that today's youth is the future, projects that laid heavy emphasis on the importance of addressing generational trauma starting from the grassroots level were carried out in rural areas. In collaboration with schools, incentives were offered to promote girl child education. Working closely with teachers to develop curricula aimed at fostering digital literacy and eliminating gender biases in these educational institutions, was an experience that was humbling and rewarding, as realisation of the privilege that many have was made aware, and also led to understanding of the significant social impact that can be made by positively influencing women's lives. An internship with Himayat, a digital benefits fintech start-up, focused on creating financial solutions for domestic workers, aided in exposure to the harsh realities of limited growth opportunities, primarily benefiting the privileged class, and men in that. Women in rural areas tend to take a double-hit. Through conversations with various domestic workers,

incidents of routine abuse they endured, the lack of employment security, and the absence of financial stability endured by them was brought to light.

This research paper seeks to comprehensively explore first-hand experience from studying the multifaceted role of women in government. Incorporating case studies and interviews with SHGs and women-led local political parties, the paper aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the much-needed prominence of women in the larger picture. Furthermore, the research endeavours to evaluate the growth trajectory of women's participation in government and the potential implications it holds for the future. The paper aims to shed light on the current status, challenges, and future prospects of women's role in government and proposes sustainable methods to measure women's empowerment and facilitate inclusive growth through personal and empirical experiences.

Keywords: Financial inclusivity, gender equity, women in government, Self-Help Groups, sustainable growth, girl-child education, digital illiteracy, women empowerment

6.30
Women in Local Governance and Leadership – A study in North Karnataka Urban Local Governance

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Karnataka state is one of the other states in India. But this state has a unique feature for Women's Development and Empowerment perspective. This is the first state in India for women's reservations in the local governance. From the earlier period, Women were participating in governance. But in the formal political system, women have been participating in local governance since 1985. From 1993 the government gave the reservation 33% and presently reservation is 50%in the local governance. In the rural and urban areas, women have the reservation to participate in the local governance. Many studies show women are participating in the traditional women or they are acting as a rubber stamp. But education and women leadership are interrelated. They contribute to each other for their development.

India is a country where women have historically faced discrimination and marginalization. In Karnataka, there is a difference between the North part of Karnataka and South Karnataka because of its culture and lifestyle. The north part of the Karnataka state shows people are working hard but they are not recognised much because of cultural politics. This paper tries to analyse the relationship between women in local governance and whether their leadership graph is increasing or decreasing in the background of cultural politics of men and women. and how women counsellors are addressing women's issues.

Keywords: Women, Cultural Politics, Empowerment, Women reservation.

6.32
The power of change: Promoting gender equality and Women's Leadership in Local Self-Governance in Kerala

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This research paper examines the power of change in promoting gender equality and women's leadership in local self-governance in the state of Kerala, India. Kerala has long been recognised for its progressive social indicators and high levels of female literacy. The 73rd and 74th Amendment Acts to the Constitution of India bring great changes and promote gender equality and women's leadership in Local Self-government. The Kerala government guarantees 50% reservations to ensure women's participation in Local Self-government. The paper explores the importance of education and various capacity-building programmes and Training that led to increased opportunities for women to participate in decision-making processes at the grassroots level.

The paper employs both quantitative and qualitative methods, combining qualitative interviews and survey data to gather insights from key stakeholders and community members. It uses primary and secondary data. It employs a comparative analysis with other Indian states to identify the unique factors contributing to Kerala's success and draw lessons for replication and adaptation in other contexts. The research findings indicate that improvements in education, health, livelihoods, and social welfare lead to gender equality and

women's participation in local self-government. Today, women are aware of the importance of equality, political participation, and economic independence. But still, there are things that need to change. In conclusion, the findings highlight the development of Gender Equality and Women's Leadership in Local Self-government through changes and provide valuable insights for policymakers and researchers to improve gender equality, participation, and leadership of women in Local Self-government.

Keywords: Gender Equality, Local Self-government, leadership, women, Kerala

6.33
Women's Participation in Local Self Governance and addressing unpaid care

Sneha Sharma, Mahima Sharda, Jayamani Yadav, Sharmishtha Nanda

Women's collectives and self-help groups have been a medium to achieve several socio-economic goals for women in India. Women's collectives play a critical role in women's empowerment by fostering a shared purpose. Women's participation in such groups helps to amplify their voices, enhances agency and decision-making. Through a rapid review of the evidence, we attempt to highlight the critical role of the collectives and SHGs in augmenting their role in local governance and taking up spaces to voice their concerns about unpaid care work. We conducted a comprehensive review of literature from open sources that looked at the role of collectives in improving women's participation in local decision-making, governance and accountability with a focus on provisioning of services that address the burden of unpaid care and household work. We synthesized data from the review with the help of an extraction sheet into key themes and then further analysed them to tease out learnings and gaps. Our analysis focused on the understanding the role of collectives in addressing participation in local governance and decision-making, and any experiences of using their collective agency to innovate or demand better provisioning that directly or indirectly influences the burden of unpaid care work. We used measures outlined the Care Policy Scorecard 3 to guide this analysis.

Through our review, we find that SHGs and collectives have been a source of solidarity and provide an environment where women share their experiences,

challenges, and render emotional support to one another in a situation of economic and social precarity. There have been recorded cases of women forming informal creches to address lack of childcare in communities. Such informal measures by SHGs notably helped ease the unpaid care burden on women, in turn allowing them to dedicate more for employment activities. Additionally, evidence points to the collective agency of women in demanding accountability for various social protection measures, such as childcare support, mid-day meals, minimum wages, negotiations on working conditions. This could be attributed to the fact that collectivization empowers women, and this is especially true for women in low-income households. Pooling resources, sharing risks, and using their collective strength and bargaining power to negotiate the deep-rooted social and cultural barriers, and playing an active role in social accountability mechanisms are some ways in which this empowerment is manifested. Our review suggests that unpaid care burden remains a major barrier for achieving transformative goals for women. While collectives utilize informal measures to ease the burden of unpaid care work, formal measures around this remain an untapped potential. Collectivization and social support also present opportunities for implementing low cost social provisioning models to offer community-based services routed through collectives. Based on our review we propose a future programmatic and research agenda that highlights the role of women's collectives to address one of the root causes of gender inequality in Indian context, and its potential in increasing women's participation in local governance systems.

6.34
Political empowerment of Haryana's female legislators: A Study From 1966 to 2008

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Women is half population of the world. She gives her contribution in every sphere of life. Indian constitution also provides equal rights to every citizen despite it, women political participation is very less in Indian politics. Haryana is one of the Indian states where sex ratio is very less since the formation of State. Haryana is economically forward state but socially backward. In Haryana, so many custom and system that pulled women backside. The aim of the research

paper is analysis the political participation of women, their under representation in decision making process and ministerial position. Women empowerment is a process and achievement towards gender equality. Empowerment enable women to make decision about their private and public life. Political empowerment is part of overall empowerment. Participation in in all levels politics is also a major way towards empowerment of women and gender equality.

Keywords: Political participation, under representation, women empowerment, gender equality

6.35

Women Panchayat Presidents creating women centric spaces in Alanganallur Panchayat Union of Madurai District - A review of case studies

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"*For me, a better democracy is a democracy where women do not only have the right to vote and to elect but to be elected.*" - Michele Bachelet

Women's political participation is a fundamental component for gender equality and genuine democracy. Women's political participation is a necessary step in achieving global gender equality and democratic governance. Citing an example of women political leaders, the former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, J. Jayalalitha, her contributions in creating Women Centric Spaces such as the Cradle Baby welfare scheme, Amma Health Check-up for Women, Free bicycles for high school girls, Laptops for women students, 50% subsidy to buy scooters for working women, among others were targeted at promoting Women's mobility, education and wellbeing for economic independence. It has increased women's decision making in their homes and in the public sphere. In Madurai district, out of 420 Village panchayats, 208 seats were hailed for women, which are 49.5%; UN data says as of January 2023, Women held 35.4% seats in deliberative bodies, up from 33.9% in 2020 at the local level towards the indicator 5.5.1 "Proportion of seats held by Women in (a) National Parliaments and (b) Local Governments". This paper attempts to examine through 5 Case Studies, the achievements, and barriers faced by the Women Panchayat Presidents in Alanganallur Panchayat

Union of Madurai District while creating and sustaining the Women Centric Spaces in their Panchayat and the necessary frameworks towards Target 5.5– "Ensure Women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in Political, Economic and Public life" of Sustainable Development Goal 5 "Achieve Gender Equality and Empower all women and girls". Creating a Women Centric Spaces will nurture the community in building a gender equal society and it eventually shows outcomes in Sustainable Developmental Goals.

Keywords: Women, Panchayat Presidents, Gender Equality, Sustainable Development Goals, Women Centric Spaces.

6.36
Review of Women Component Plan on Women Empowerment of Angadipuram Grama Panchayat: Analysis of the time period 2019-2023.

Shyni E.

Women comprise around 50% of India's population, and a bulk of them stays economically dependent on their male counterparts without employment. In the age of feminism, a small portion of women in India are freed and can employ their free will and are permitted to carve out their lives the way they want. But there is a considerable division of the women in this nation who require optimistic support. The 9th and 10th Five Year Plan of Government of India, had important objectives for women; it envisaged gender mainstreaming and also had a new component Women Component Plan (WCP), the objective of which being women empowerment by improving the status of women in society.

Kerala introduced Women's Component Plan (WCP) at the Local Self Government (LSG) level. In Kerala, during the 9th Five Year Plan, it was instructed that allocation of minimum 10 percent of Plan outlays for all departments should be mandatorily earmarked for women-specific projects. The key objective of WCP is to make sure that the basic needs of women got acknowledged, the focus was on increasing the activities that improved the income of women and also on

activities that will ensure improvement in status of women, thus there was a conscious effort to mainstream gender in local planning process. This proposal aims to evaluate the impact of Women Component Plan on the empowerment of women in Angadippuram Gram Panchayat over the last five years. The research adopts a qualitative approach, utilizing both primary and secondary data sources. The study begins by providing a comprehensive review of relevant literature on gender development, women empowerment, and the Women Component Plan. Primary data is collected through structured interviews and surveys conducted with women beneficiaries of the Women Component Plan schemes in Angadippuram Gram Panchayat. The survey questionnaire covers various dimensions of women's development, including education, health, livelihood, and political participation. Secondary data is obtained from government reports, official documents, and statistical sources.

The findings of the study reveal significant both positive and negative outcomes resulting from the Women Component Plan implementation All the projects so far have been address the practical gender needs of women in the panchayath such as agriculture, animal husbandry and financial assistance to the marriage of SC women. The panchayath is currently planning projects to address strategic gender needs of women. The study concludes by emphasizing the importance of gender-responsive policies and interventions for women's development. It highlights the Women Component Plan as an effective strategy for addressing gender disparities and fostering women's empowerment in rural areas. The research provides valuable insights and recommendations for policymakers, emphasizing the need for sustained investment in women-centric programs to ensure long-term development outcomes.

Sub-theme 7

Intersectional Vulnerabilities:
Caste, Religion, Trans
and Sexual minorities,
Adivasis/ Tribes, and disabilities

7.1

Disability, kinship and Care networks in the case of Autism spectrum: Towards a South Asian theorization of autism advocacy

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Within disability studies, there is increasing recognition of the multiple intersectionalities that shape disability advocacy, particularly in the Global South. In South Asian contexts such as India, disability advocacy is further complicated by the multiple meanings that the category of 'disability' occupies for different persons. Autism advocacy in India is characterized by this diversity, where questions of care, (in)dependence, and kinship are determined more by people's social location than any by Western theorizations of inclusion and care. This paper draws on narratives of family caregivers of people on the autism spectrum to explore how care has been reconfigured and rearticulated by these actors in the context of the Covid19 pandemic. Engaging with the question of care necessitates thinking about gender and intersectionality, as feminist articulations that question the assumption of women as the 'natural caregivers' in the normative familial setup have shown. Following the feminist philosophical framework of care, we ask: firstly, how do these narratives challenge the normative articulation of care that frame disabled bodies as care-seekers while presenting non-disabled

bodies as care agents? Secondly, how are care relationships conceptualized as interdependent thereby invoking the concept of community in care relations?

Keywords: Care, Autism, kinship, advocacy, South Asia

7.2
Resistance from Within:
Narratives of Everyday Resistance
of Disabled Mothers

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Disabled women occupy a precarious position in society. This precarity exists due to the invisibilisation of their experiences and existence that renders them in a place of jeopardy and marginality. Marriage is considered a rite of passage for all women to live a fulfilled and complete life. Disabled women, too, strive for this ideal. However, marriage comes with many layers of subtle and overt forms of oppression. For disabled women, the struggle is against both ableism and patriarchy, including their own complicated internalised versions.

Thus, for disabled women striving to gain access to inclusion as full members of society, motherhood becomes both a status symbol and a personal desire, as well as an affirmation that they have overcome their disability. However, while motherhood has conventionally been associated with caregiving, disability has stereotypically implied that a woman needs care for herself and, therefore, is unfit to care for another. In this paper, I argue that disabled women negotiate a delicate balancing act: they constantly work at proving their ability even as they push the boundaries of normative femininity. For, in the context of urban middle- and upper-class India, it is often within normative frameworks that women are best positioned to make changes in their lives. Moreover, this balancing act comprises negotiations with ableist discourses, structures, and spaces in the most intimate ways. This paper offers insights into this complicated experience riddled with narratives of resistance and negotiations to exert agency and autonomy. Thus, it tries to understand the implications of these negotiations in terms of everyday experiences. It intends to question and reimagine the existing paradigms of ideal motherhood and the right to it along with notions of interdependence and care.

The aim is to comprehensively gauge and analyse the forms of overt and covert resistance that emerge from their narratives as it allows for rethinking the meaning and significance of resistance and advocacy in the case of disabled mothers.

Keywords: Resistance, Negotiations, Motherhood, Disability, Advocacy.

7.3
Queering Care: Mothering and Caring among Queer Men outside Heteronormative, Patriarchal Frameworks

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This paper is a part of my master's thesis titled 'Queering Care: Mothering and Caring among Gay/Queer Men outside Heteronormative, Patriarchal Frameworks.' For this paper presentation, I will look at how queer men learn and perform the notions of caring and mothering. The presentation will locate if there is also carrying over the heteronormative and patriarchal vestiges during the transaction of caring practise. Or conversely, if it can be 'queered' by placing the practice outside these rigid, normative frameworks. The broader areas around 'caring' will be understanding of care-work, care ethics, care-reception, care-giving, and fostering care practices within friends and intimate partners among gay and queer men from New Delhi (India) as participants.

When linked in this way and in the context of being marginalized as a way of being, the ideas of 'caring' and 'mothering' exist within the limits of gender specificity, within the shackles of the cis-heteronormative patriarchal structure. This paper presentation attempts to place and explore these notions outside the violence of heteronormativity and patriarchy – outside the 'gender specificity.' It aims to interrogate the ideas of caring and mothering within relationships among queer men while also looking at the formation of these notions, mainly through intergenerational dialogues with one's mother or a mother-like figure(s). I will also try to understand if caring as a knowledge model differs from care as a practice.

The notion of gendered differences while caring or mothering (parenting) one's partner is invisible in heterosexual relationships as they are stereotyped and

normalized. Using queer theory and psychoanalysis, I would interrogate these dynamics within same-sex relationships. My broader aim is to create a potential point of departure from the gender specificity of the knowledge production of 'caring' and 'mothering.' I also aim to problematise the patriarchal and the violence of heteronormativity within the essential feminine notion of caring, while also looking at notions of masculinity, media representation and stereotypes, homonormativity, and stigmatization. There is collaborative witnessing since this would provide a platform for the participants to reflect upon their understanding of 'caring' and contribute to the existing research.

The paper presentation is based on a study that is a critical research inquiry conceptualized within a qualitative research paradigm. It employs a mixed methodology of autoethnography and reflexive dyadic interviewing supplemented by the tenets of life course theory, narrative method and in-depth interviewing. The experiences of growing up through childhood, adolescence, and adulthood of gay men within their social and institutional context of family and relationship are the core spaces for interrogation. I will also look at alternative ways of caring developed during the pandemic and the spaces other than intimate relationships where such notions exist and the concerned power dynamics within the space. In the context of lives that are regularly invisibilized, I expect the understandings emerging from my study to help validate experiences and emotions of care in a world where certain norms of masculinity dominate and invalidate alternative ways of being.

Keywords: care, care work, queer, mothering, gender.

7.4
Intersectional Precarity of Transgenders in India and Politics of Care

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Deploying Alex Forti and Isabel Lorey's conceptualization of precarity as my frame, I examine the manner in which the condition of the Hijras is extremely precarious in one of the largest democracies of the world that ostensibly promises equality, fraternity and liberty to all. Falling at the utmost periphery of "the charmed

circle" (Gayle Rubin's term) in the cis-hetero-patriarchal society as it were, the lives of Transgendered population, especially of Hijras are marked by a series of rejections, oppressions and humiliations. The paper begins by underscoring the complexity, multiplicity and fluidity of the concept of the margins itself as some parts of margins have not only challenged and disrupted the center but they also threaten to subsume 'Other' margins. Having won the right to vote and contest elections for local political office, I wish to take a closer look at this group that now aligns itself with the global gay rights movement, but at the same time also seeks to assert their 'localized' identity that is highly 'performative'(read both literally and metaphorically). I analyse the manner in which the insecurities and anxieties that exist within these gender variant bodies are further exacerbated by the policy decisions and economic measures such as the Trans Bill 2016 that are introduced by the government.

I also examine two books by Hijra writer and activist A. Revathi in order to explore how literature reflects on these insecurities. Using Pramod K Nayar's approach to study Dalit autobiographies, I read these texts as "testimonio" that give voice to the pain of an entire community in addition to serving as tools of resistance that seek to dismantle the master narrative and stereotypes about sexual minorities. The paper further traces how the protagonist counters and overcomes her social, economic, physical, sexual and cultural limitations. The paper examines how Revathi could be seen as "Precariat" in Forti and "Precarious" in Loreys's terms as she displays revolutionary potential by working for the rights of non-English speaking working class Hijras and Trans men. Like Lorey's "precaaris," Revathi "promotes logic of care" by adopting trans men too and providing them intellectual, emotional and economic support. Secondly, like Forti's precariat she aims to achieve "transformative, progressive and reformist ends" and in order to give voice to the pains of the trans men whose lives are marked by erasures and invisibility, Revathi displaying proximity to Lorey's precaris conducted "militant research" and interviews with Trans men thereby generating "knowledge forms for self organising." Since Literature not only reflects on the insecurities of this sexual minority and offers strategies of resistance, in the third part of the paper I argue that literature then could be read as an alternate kind of care community especially when the traditional ones such as Health Care sector, law and family disown or exploit Hijras. I conclude by probing the manner in which Hijras grapple the vicious circle of poverty, prostitution, criminality, fear of HIV especially after Covid-19 which has made their position more deplorable.

7.5
Disabled Child and the 'Sacrificial Mother': Constituting Tragic Frames of Disability

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Vulnerability is a construct of systemic inequities and injustices. It is the product of processes involving alienation, estrangement and exile of corporeal bodies on the basis of their race, caste, class, gender, sexuality, 'able-bodiedness', geopolitical location, etc. The intersectionalities of identities determine 'who is vulnerable' and 'who is not', in a society. Vulnerability also implies the imminent presence of a violent event, often posed as a threat. The Kasargod-Endosulfan episode is an instance of the state's violence in which the government ordered the aerial spraying of the insecticide Endosulfan on the state owned cashew plantations to ensure food security. The decades-long spraying of Endosulfan resulted in the acquisition of impairment and in some cases, deaths, among the population. However, the impact of the insecticide on the populations has a gendered dimension. The female caretakers of Endosulfan affected children with disabilities form one of the most affected groups of Kasargod due to the cultural expectations around caregiving. which is perceived as a woman's duty. Sandwiched between the socially expected moral and cultural obligations of a woman towards her household and family and the media-generated stereotypes of a 'sacrificial mother', the women of the affected villages of Kasargod remain as a metaphor. When the media reported the Kasargod-Endosulfan episode, the photographs of Endosulfan affected children with disabilities along with their mothers, emerged as a genre since they were imagined to convey an emotional excess. Primarily presented as a tragedy, the photographs of Endosulfan affected children with disabilities along with their female caregivers, mostly mothers, were used by the media to invoke pity and fear among the reading public. The paper examines the modalities in which the disability images and caregiving narratives are deployed as a tool by the regional media to frame the incident as 'tragic' and thereby organise the public against the state's violence. The study also aims at discussing different visualisations of disability and caregiving and how they form and negotiate the media perpetuation, meaning construction and the public perceptions of disability in the particular global south context.

Keywords: Disability images, Caregiving, Gendered care, 'Sacrificial mother'

7.6
Exploring the Lived Experiences of Mothers of Children with Disability in Assam

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Family is the most crucial unit of analysis, providing a safe and secure social setup for everyone, including newborns. When a family member has a disability, families often adjust roles, leading to stress, frustration, and conflict. Mothers with disabled children face compatibility issues, challenges in dealing with developmental problems, and stereotype prejudices. They face community attitudes, cultural beliefs, and institutional challenges, leading to guilt and increased risk of depression, physical health problems, and decreased quality of life. The study was carried out in nongovernmental organizations providing health care and rehabilitative services for disabled children in Assam. In order to analyze the life experiences of mothers of disabled children in light of their caregiving experiences, this study used a qualitative research technique design with a hermeneutic approach.

Results: An inductive, hermeneutical, and phenomenological investigation was employed.

Impact, care management, stigma, uncertainty, relations, search for meaning, "behavioral and emotional well-being," "negative social experience," "interpersonal," "intrapersonal relationships" "financial issues "and "family life adjustment" were found to be the relevant categories. However, almost all mothers taking care of a special child suffer considerable changes in their familial and social ties as well as worries about the future. Despite these challenges, mothers of disabled children also report positive experiences, including a sense of purpose and fulfillment from caring for their child, and a deepening of their relationships with family and friends. They may also find strength and resilience through their experiences, and may develop a sense of advocacy and activism in support of their child.

Keywords: Psycho-social determinants, mothers, disabled children, quality of life, resilience

7.7

Care sociality: Revisiting the affective strength of collective grieving post Covid-19 pandemic

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Campus

April 2021 saw the peak of the horrific second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic in India when people died not only because of virulent infections but because of the structural conditions that disproportionately impacted communities already facing higher burdens of poverty and discrimination. Since the circumstances for the spread of the disease during this time were partly created by negligent government actors, the state chose to hide and erase infrastructural shortages and the number of deaths. In addition to obscuring the statistics and refusing to acknowledge the lack of medical infrastructure, the state machinery ironically promoted a discourse of positivity. The positivity discourse was contested by several civil society groups, labour unions and other individuals who urged the government to strengthen medical facilities and extend social security programs for sections of society whose marginalisation had become exacerbated. What was sought was a demonstration of care, not the individuated care that is benevolent but structural care (Woodly 2022) that a state owes its citizens. According to Michelle Murphy, care, besides other things, is "To be troubled, to be worried, to be uneasy, to be unsettled by something."

A partly online and partly offline campaign called Count Every Death (CED), to memorialise the deaths of people from oppressed communities was launched by an informal network of activists and civil society members from across Karnataka in May 2021. The mandate of mutual aid (Spade 2020) not only recognised the unjust conditions within which people with intersectional vulnerabilities live but also created a space for the expression of collective care and the potential of "access intimacies" (Mingus 2011) that challenge the hostile systems within which we operate. In the proposed paper, we discuss how the CED platform enabled communities to articulate their marginalisation based on access to citizenship and community membership through acts of public mourning for lives that had not been officially counted. In particular, we discuss two sessions

where ASHA workers and a community of Mangalmukhis take the lead to express their anger and frustration while simultaneously demanding their rights as Indian citizens. We draw on recent scholarship in queer studies, gender studies and disability studies to theorise care sociality as a phenomenon that emerged among civil society groups oriented towards social justice during the pandemic. Developing the concept of radical care, we invoke Miriam Ticktin's idea that care is not necessarily a prescribed set of practices but instead a form of political imagination with the potential to fuel hope and desire for transformative action (2019, 2021). Building on the work of Audre Lorde (1984) and Sara Ahmed (2010), who recognise the political potential of emotions, we read the grief enmeshed with rage expressed in the CED meetings by marginalised women as articulations of dissent, a show of strength and, significantly, as generative of forms of care sociality.

Keywords: care sociality; COVID-19; intersectional vulnerability; collective resistance, Emotion

7.8
Media Representation of women from marginal communities

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The media is seen as an important factor, influencing the human mind and its thought-provoking system. On the one hand, the media created a new nationalism by taking an anti-colonial stance during the British era, while on the other hand, it discussed social, political, economic, educational, religious and women's issues at the same time. Such media, which has power to change power, were referred to as the fourth pillar of democracy in the post-independence era. While the media can influence the power, it is used in favour of dominant castes to keep their power safe in society. A critical study of media's journey from British times to modern times shows that Indian caste, class and patriarchal social structure seem to have restricted the participation of marginal women. Indian society has been highly influenced by caste, patriarchy and capitalism. It even influenced everything from social institutions like marriage, family to media. Since almost all the media in Indian society are influenced by above factors, the marginal representation in

these media has been minimal. None of India's 315 prominent officials in print and electronic media are Dalit or Adivasi women. Among journalists and editors in mainstream media in India, the main focus is on the upper castes, which do not include Dalits, Adivasis, nomadic castes and tribes and AGBT. In a 2006 survey conducted by the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, 86 per cent of the journalists and editors who were placed at the core of 27 different media organizations came mainly from upper castes. All journalists who have been noted on social media or by Wikipedia are from this upper caste. Marginal women who have fought long and joined the media will face discrimination. Women journalists from Dalits, adivasis, nomadic castes and tribes faced many problems as caste. When studying marginal female representation in caste, class, and patriarchal social structures, the following issues are important to address.

1) Indian society was a caste-systemic society from the revolution of the castes to the advent of colonialism. The colonialists established capitalist relations in India. Since then, Indian society has been woven by vertical and horizontal threads of caste and class. Although today's Indian society is influenced by capitalism, urban life in India is influenced by the complex interrelationship of castes and classes as it could not destroy the caste system of the past. As a result, caste patriarchy influenced the medium factor in Indian society.

2) The media's behavior has been racist and patriarchal as it is influenced by caste, class and patriarchy.

3) Caste-patriarchal society has divided labour and labour. Intellectual labour was divided into upper castes and physical labour to lower castes. As a result, intellectual labor was given dignity while physical labor was considered inferior. The division of labor and labor also had an impact in the media. In the media, key positions remained with upper-caste women, while junior, second-tier positions or workplaces remained with marginal women.

4) While the consumer was creating a market for profit, he tried to instill upper caste culture and values through advertisements, films, serials, reality shows and other entertainment programs, etc. It rejected the culture, values and symbols of Dalits, Adivasis, nomadic castes and tribes and third genders.

5) Marginal women face social problems while representing them in the media

7.9
In Search of Travelling Female Performers: Exploring the Question of Representation in Mobile Theatre of Assam

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Mobile theatre, known as 'bhramyamaan' theatre in local parlance, serves as a popular source of entertainment, social awareness, and community building. Although women have been a part of the mobile theatre stage in Assam since the 1930s, there has been a huge gap as their voices, contributions and gendered experiences have largely remained undocumented. This paper will foreground the voices of female performers (actors and dancers) associated with this performance art. As the name 'mobile' suggests, they are travelling theatre groups – each one comprising of around 100-150 members. Bridging the gap between rural and urban spaces, 'bhramyamaan' theatre consists of theatre troupes that keep moving across the state for nine months at a stretch to stage their plays. It becomes significant to understand the processes of inclusion and exclusion that take place in a performance space that is widely considered community driven. I will, therefore, attempt to address three main questions:

What are the experiences of travelling female performers regarding agency, power dynamics and mobility within the night-time economy? Do the identities on stage reinforce stereotypes regarding caste, class, religion, gender, sexuality, ability or do they subvert these notions? What are their articulations of passion and precarity in creative work as livelihood, especially during the pandemic and post-pandemic scenario?

Using feminist ethnography, I have conducted in-depth interviews with the members of the theatre groups along with a performance analysis of selected plays staged during the latest theatre season of 2022-23 (which concluded mid-April this year). I gained some new insights regarding the workings and the organizational structure of the theatre groups. Along with exploring the question of representation on stage, the off-stage experiences of the performers become quite significant to understand and unpack the internal hierarchies. In turn, contestations regarding ethnic/indigenous identity and community came to fore which highlighted how 'marginality' is articulated in such spaces.

Key words: Representation, Theatre, Female Performers, Assam

7.10

मख्यधारा की पत्रकाररता मेंदलति महिींओ से संबंधधत खबरों का प्रस्ततुतकरण

वशिेष संदर्भः ईंक्ट्रॉतकि मीडिया।

प्रया

शोधार्थी स्त्री अध्ययन प्रभिाग

महात्मा गांधी अंतरराष्ट्रीय हहांदी प्रशि्प्रिदियालय,धिा

भारतीय समाज की मुख्यधारा में दलति महिलाएं हाशिए पर नजर आती है। इसके प्रमुख कारणों में पतिृसत्ता,मनुवाद व ब्राह्मणवाद की मानसकिता स्थापति है। वर्तमान में देश का चौथा स्तंभ कहलाने वाला मुख्यधारा का मीडिया भी दलति महिलाओं के शोषण व बलात्कार की खबरों को जगह नहीं देता हैं उदाहरण के तौर पर हम हाथरस की घटना को ले सकते है जसिमें उच्च वर्ण के पुरूषों ने दलति महिला का बलात्कार किया था। इस खबर को मुख्यधारा की मीडिया दो सप्ताह के बाद कवर करती है। इससे पहले यह घटना सोशल मीडिया के द्वारा लोगों तक पहुंचती है। अगर किसी कारण इस तरह की खबरों को जगह मलि भी जाती है तो कथति मुख्यधारा का मीडिया ज्यादातर आरोपियों के बचाव में नजर आता है। मुंबई में पायल तडवी ने अपने साथ के सहपाठी एवं दोस्तों के जातसिूचक शब्दों और आरक्षण के तानों से परेशान होकर आत्महत्या कर ली थी। इस घटना पर किसी मीडिया चैनल ने सामाजकि बुराई बताकर इसके खलिाफ कोई कार्यक्रम नहीं चलाया। सरकारें भी पीड़िता के परिवार को मुआवजा देने का एलान कर अपनी जिम्मेदारियों से मुक्त हो जाती हैं। इस कारण दलति महिलाएं अपनी खबरें लोगों के बीच व सरकार तक पहुंचाने के लिए अलग-अलग माध्यमों का सहारा ले रही हैं – जैसे यूट्यूब, फेसबुक लेकनि यहां भी भ्रामक व फेक खबरें फैलने का डर ज्यादा रहता है। ऐसे में मुख्यधारा की मीडिया का दायित्व और बढ़ जाता है कि वे दलति महिलाओं की खबरों को अधिक से अधिक स्थान दे। जसिसे समाज में सही खबर लोगों तक पहुंचे व आरोपियों को जल्द से जल्द सजा मलि।

अतः इस शोध पत्र के माध्यम से लोकतत्र के चौथे स्तंभ के रूप में स्थापति मीडिया की भूमिका पर चर्चा दलति नारीवादी दृष्टिकोण से की जाएगी। इसमें आज तक, इंडिया टी.वी, जी न्यूज, रपिब्लकि भारत टीवी चैनलों के अंतर्गत दलति महिलाओं से सम्बधति खबरों की प्रस्तुतकिरण की प्रकिया पर बात की जाएगी।

मुख्य शब्दः मुख्यधारा की पत्रकारिता, दलति महिलाएं,खबरों का प्रस्तुतकिरण,इलेक्ट्रॉनकि मीडिया,सोशल मीडिया, दलति नारीवाद

7.11
Voicing out the Violence of Silence: A Study of Lesbian Erasure from the Digital Spaces in India

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Merlyn Frye, in his book Politics of Reality: Essays in Feminist Theory, has expressed that heterosexuality and gay liberation are both unified in their love for men and hatred for women, which has led to the marginalisation of lesbians to a greater extent within the gamut of the queer movement. This patriarchal homonormativity of the entire queer movement has led to the silencing of lesbians as a homosexual identity in the discourse surrounding queer. It is not that there has been erasure, but the voices of female homosexuals are always at the bottom of the hierarchy, with the cis-gender gay man at the top. In India, as well, the conditions for lesbians have not been very conducive. In spite of the fact that the first ever reaction concerning queer identity in India happened around a movie depicting lesbian bonding (Deepa Mehta's Fire), lesbians have always been invisible in the wider movement of queer identity assertion in the country. Ashwini Shukthankar, in the introduction of his book Facing the Mirror: Lesbian Writings from India, points out that lesbians live "between the lines" of the draconian Section 377, as it used to criminalise homosexual penetration, but in the case of lesbians, there is no such penetrative sexual act evident. Thus, from law to history to resilience discourse, lesbians have been silenced, which, according to Bina Fernandez and N.B. Gomothy, is no less than violence. This violence is perpetuated against them in the socio-political sphere as well as on social media. This paper will try to discuss this 'silence' as a weapon of violence against lesbians from the selected urban spaces of India through their representation, participation, and indulgence in the social media support groups run by major Queer support groups in India. The paper proposes to employ the spiral of silence theory along with the prism of sexual subalterns in the digital space to bring out the marginalization of lesbians in the form of silencing.

Key words: Silence, Lesbians, Indian Queer, Sexual Subaltern, Violence

Amplifying Voices: Unveiling the Ways of Media Representation for Women with Disabilities

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Despite today's advancements, the depressing statistics from the media environment shows that women with disabilities continue to be misrepresented and underrepresented, which hinders their empowerment and feeds prejudices. Women with disabilities are frequently misrepresented in news stories, television programs, movies, commercials, and internet platforms, which feeds preconceptions and prevents them from achieving empowerment. This research paper will look into how women with disabilities are portrayed in various media platforms. It will try to evaluate representation of women with disabilities in movies and other media critically, noting the negative stereotypes and constrained narratives frequently connected to their representation. To examine the difficulties of representation, the study will take the help of theoretical frameworks such feminist theory, intersectionality, and disability theory. It will question the existing damaging stereotypes by highlighting the necessity of inclusive and empowering depictions, and will investigate how media may affect the ways the public views certain issues. The research work will also examine previous research on the topic, noting stereotypes' pervasiveness, significance of intersectionality, and media's propensity to both reinforce and dispel preconceptions. Additionally, it will offer a historical perspective of how women with disabilities have been portrayed, highlighting both past advancements and current problems. Feminist theory will be used in the paper to look at power relationships, the masculine gaze, and the underrepresentation of women with disabilities in the media. It will make use of feminist disability theory to disprove ableist beliefs and advance inclusion. Finally, the paper will investigate the idea of intersectionality to comprehend how many identities interact and affect the experiences of women with disabilities. The study further will try to promote more accurate, diverse, and empowering depictions of women with disabilities in media platforms by relying on these frameworks.

Keywords: Disability, Feminism, Identity, Media, Politics of Representation.

Negotiating Gender and Modernity: Through the lens of contemporary Bengali Television Serials

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Watching television serials is really one of the popular sources of recreation among the middle and lower middle classes. The upper middle classes also are not totally disinterested to watch the serials. Therefore, the impact of television serials upon the psyche of its viewers who 'creates its identities through the consumption and reception of cultural artefacts' (Pramod K. Nayar) cutting across the intersection of the society is huge. As Suniti Namjoshi defines identity not only as a matter of self-definition but also as what other people attribute to one, it would be interesting to explore what identity is being attributed to the female protagonist by the television serials and the shaping of gendered identity and the nature of code of femininity imposed upon her. This paper seeks to explore the multi- faceted, multi-textured and multi-layered social conversations on the issue of femininity through the lens of Bengali television serials. The paper would intend to explore various trajectories of the politics of gender under the guise of so-called modernity. The critical approach would like to highlight how the ambiguity of tradition and modernity in the 19th century Bengal have been still a thriving factor so far as the issue of femininity is concerned. Thus, the question remains to be seen how far it would be justified to claim the celebration of female agency in the portrayal of women in the Bengali serials. If this is not the case then the question is how this veiled progressive identity attributed to female protagonists could be explained in the context of maintaining a balance between the normative assumptions regarding the gendered identity and the newer values and roles in response to changing circumstances and forces at play.

Keywords: Negotiating, Modernity, Gendered identity, Politics of gender, Code of femininity, Female Agency

7.14
Medically Aware Indian Women in
Urdu Magazines of the early twentieth century

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British Colonial Rule is linked to the histories of domination and subordination. The authority and power of the state were consolidated through several institutions- political, educational and medical- which aimed to reform the so-called weak and unmasculine Indias. The paper aims to highlight this dichotomy through the medical hierarchy and how we can link it to gender discourses. The paper's first section will focus on establishing a state-sponsored female medical discourse that provides diverse opportunities to treat the Indian female body as a free ground for experimentation, extensive research and investigation. This rubric will focus on the construction of the health and hygiene narrative as a Western prerogative which provided British colonists with unquestionable authority, legitimacy, and control. Why did the female body become essential in the colonial medical discourse? The state-sponsored Bio-medicine during this period intended to eradicate unconventional decorum, hygiene, dress and sexuality. The British state attempted to regulate the female body and emancipate the so-called suffering and helpless Indian women, and the indigenous female health practices were severely criticised in the state-sponsored Public Health Scheme.

The female body also became important in the indigenous reformist agenda; for example, Unani Tibb, during the high noon of national struggle, was propagated as being suitable to the Indian Mizaaj and a medical system for the Hindustani Girroh. As the national movement swelled, the private space- inhabited by indigenous females- was labelled the only space free of colonial rule. Thus, the Indian female emerged as the harbinger of preserving the spirituality of the private space, and her body became a metaphor for an un-violated, chaste space, the ultimate site of virtue and the last refuge of freedom. Hence, gender played a pivotal role in consolidating both the colonial and indigenous medical discourse; This reformed, and new medical knowledge was popularised through print media. However, instead of focusing on the professional medical texts in the subsequent section of the paper, I intend to highlight popular vernacular literature, which gives a deeper understanding of the private sphere and the twentieth-century meaning of medically-aware Indian women. The early twentieth century's women-specific

Urdu journals refashioned traditional knowledge within the modern framework; Subjects like domestic hygiene, child care, childbirth, pregnancy, and infertility were actively discussed in Urdu journals. Therefore, can we justify this category of vernacular literature as 'New Hygiene Literature' for Indian women? How the female body became essential to the nation's future health, and what was the new definition of sharafat (respectability)?

Keywords: Biomedicine, Unani Tibb, Indian female body, Nationalist Discourse, Urdu Journals, print media.

7.15
The Impact of Literacy on Health Outcomes: A Mixed-Methods Study of Muslim Women in Nuh, Haryana

Kiran Jangra

This study investigates the relationship between literacy and health outcomes among Muslim women in the Nuh district of Haryana, India. Nuh, formerly known as Mewat, is the most backward district in India as per the 2018 Aspirational District Programme, NITI Aayog. According to a report by NITI Aayog, 101 districts were evaluated based on 49 indicators of development such as health, education, agriculture, financial inclusion, skill development, and basic infrastructure, the Nuh district had the lowest score of 26 percent among all the districts assessed. In this study, I use a mixed-methods approach, collecting both qualitative and quantitative data from Punhana, one of the major tehsils in Nuh district. The qualitative component consists of in-depth interviews with Muslim women in Punhana, Haryana, and healthcare providers in the region. The quantitative component includes a household survey to collect data on the health status, socio-economic determinants, and literacy levels of Muslim women in Punhana tahsil. The study finds that literacy is a significant predictor of health outcomes for Muslim women in Nuh. Women with higher levels of literacy, even literacy achieved from Madrasas, are more likely to have access to healthcare, to be aware of health risks, and to make healthy lifestyle choices. The study also finds that socio-economic factors, such as poverty and social exclusion, play a role in determining health outcomes for Muslim women in Nuh. The study's findings

have important implications for policy and practice. The findings suggest that interventions that aim to improve literacy and reduce social exclusion can have a positive impact on the health of Muslim women in Nuh. The study also suggests that healthcare providers need to be aware of the challenges faced by Muslim women in accessing healthcare and make efforts to provide culturally sensitive care.

Keywords: Literacy, health outcomes, Muslim women, Nuh, Haryana, Madrasa Education

7.16
Understanding Adolescents
health issues and realities of young India

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According to the World Health Organization, health is not merely the absence of disease but a state of physical, mental, social, and spiritual balance and Good health is the availability of adequate, nutritious food; clean shelter; a clean environment; clean drinking water; health education, adequate and good quality health care, employment, education for every person. Health has been discussed in many ways. Health is not just living, but it is necessary to think about mental health along with physical health. A positive relationship with one's body means living life and at the same time, the culture of the geographical area in which a person belongs, their identity, their caste, class, gender, social, political, and social position in the area they live in also determines the health of the people or social groups in that area. Therefore, the factor of health in our lives has a great influence on human survival and we always discuss health in terms of the body and it is also important to think that health and mind are related and the mental health of any human being is a result of their environment and It is not taken for granted that it can affect our health for good or bad. In this background we have to think about the adolescents health issues, India's total population of adolescent is almost 1/5 th , therefore, India is also known as the youngest country in the world. For the future of the country to be healthy, their health needs to be healthy, so that their activities have a strong health dimensions and at the same time, this younger generation can actively contribute to the socio-

economic development of the country. Children's in this teenage stage have many questions and there are constant changes in their physical growth and mental state, therefore, their doubts, questions, and curiosity may not get answers from their families, schools and colleges, so if their questions are not answered at the right time, they may get the wrong information and their future journey in life may go in the wrong direction. The government has taken up the National Adolescent Health Program to solve physical and mental health problems among boys and girls. This programme is implemented at the National level and this will surely lead the emotional, social, and intellectual direction of the children in this age group in the right way and alternatively, along with the physical health of children of this age, their mental health will also be taken care of. In this paper, a field study of the implementation of such an important scheme as the National Adolescent Health Programme will be discussed and analysis from feminist perspective.

Keywords: Caste, Class, Gender, Adolescent, Health, Mental health and physical health.

7.17
पारधी समुदाय की संस्कृति और नारी स्वास्थ्य

Rajeshri Waghmare

पी. एचडी. छात्रा ताराबाई शिंदे, स्त्री अध्यासन केंद्र, डा. बाबासाहेब अंबेडकर मराठवाडा विश्ववविद्यालय

भारतीय समुदाय यह जात वर्गीय पितृसत्ताक समुदाय हैं । जिनमें कुल मिलाकर सभी महिलांओं को पिडीत और शोषति समझा गया हैं । ईस तरह के शोषण के लिए विभिन्न धर्मशास्त्र और उनमेसे आए हुए प्रथा परंपरा और संस्कृति के नाम पर सभी महिला अधिक से अधिक शोषति दिखाई देती है। संस्कृति के नाम आज भी यह नारियों को स्वतंत्रता के कोसो दूर रखा गया है। प्रख्यात पर्यावरणवादी स्त्रीवादी लेखिका वंदना शिवा यह सभी नारियां संस्कृती के आदी रहणा चाहिए इसके लिए पितृसत्ताक समुदाय अपने स्तर पर काम करते हैं और आज भी वो कर रहे हैं । तो निश्चिति स्वरूप से प्रकृती और नारी इसका सह संबंध नारीओं के साथ जोडा जाता हैं , इसलीए नारी और प्रकृती यह दोनो का नाता बहोत ही निकट का माना जाता हैं । तो दुसरी तरफ धर्म शास्त्र यह सभी नारियों को अच्छुत और गुलामी के नजरिया से उनकी तरफ देखा जाता हैं । यह दोनों भी हिसाब से सभी नारिओं का उनके जीवन का संदर्भ यह आगे चलाने वाली संस्कृती के हीसाब से संस्कृती चालक मानी जाती हैं । यह सभी समस्याओं का निवारण करणे के लिए नारीवादी चकित्सा बहुत ही महत्वपूर्ण होती हैं । इसी पार्श्वभूमी पर भारतीय जाती व्यवस्थाओं में से जो समुदाय अतिशूद्र माना जाने वाला पारधी समुदाय , यह ब्रिटिशि काल मे 1871 के दशक मे यह समुदायों के ऊपर गुन्हेगार की मोहर लगायी गयी थी , उसी के कारण आज भी यह समुदाय के लोगों को देखने का नजरिया एक चोर , डकैती की नजरिया से उन सभी को देखा जाता हैं । इसी के कारण बाकी सब लोगो का नजरिया एक अलग सा हो गया हैं, इस लिए प्रतिष्ठति लोगो की नजर से बचने के लिये यह समुदाय गाँव के बाहर छोटी - छोटी झोपडीयों मे गुजारा करते हुए दिखते हैं।आज भी यह समुदाय मुख्य प्रवाह मे नहीं हैं । ईसलिए यह समुदाय में हृदय विदारक जैसी रूढी ,प्रथा, परंपरा और गुलामीयों के दल - दल में फंसा हुआ दिखाई देता हैं, और उसका परिनाम सभी नारीओं के स्वास्थ्य के उपर होता हुआ दिखाई

देता हैं। धर्मशास्त्र के अनुसार नारी और पुरुष इनको अलग नियम ,अलग काम,अलग श्रम, ऐसें अलग - अलग स्तर पर यह जाती के आधार पर लींगभाव ,भेद भाव की व्यवस्था आज भी डटकर काम कर रही हैं। नारी के जन्म से लेकर उनकी मृत्यू तक समाज की यह शोषण व्यवस्था संस्कृती के नाम पर बीज बोने का काम करती हैं। डॉ.बाबासाहब आंबेडकर जी ने " महिला यह जाती व्यवस्था का प्रवेश द्वार हैं " । यह महत्व पूर्ण विधान उनका किया गया हैं । देखा जाये तो नारी का सामाजिक स्थान अलग - अलग जाती की (पूनरूत्पादन) नवनिर्मिती करती हैं , और ईसी तरह यह अलग - अलग जाती में महिला संस्कृती के वाहक माने जाते हैं ,बल्की उनकी इच्छा के बगैर उनपर यह सब थोंपा जाता हैं । यह सभी परिसीमाओं को देखकर मैं महाराष्ट्र में से पारधी समुदाय की जनसंख्या को देखकर उनका सामाजिक स्तर,संस्कृती ,प्रथा परंपराओं का अध्ययन में मैं प्रमुखता से मराठवाडा में से ज्यादा से ज्यादा शोषित वर्ग और (ऊसतोड कामगार) याने की गन्ना श्रमिक वाले श्रमिक वर्ग की पेहचान रखनेवाला जिला इनमेसे पारधी समुदाय की जातपंचायत के माध्यम से नारी को दी जाणे वाली शिक्षा का मैं चिकित्सिक परीक्षण करणे का प्रयास करणे वाली हुं। यह संस्कृती नीरंतर काल टीकनेवाली और चलने वाली यह प्रक्रिया है ,जीसे किसी भी अभ्यासक वर्गो ने व्याख्यात रूप से बंधे हुये नहीं । इसलिये यह प्रक्रिया आगे - आगे नरिंतर चलनेवाली प्रक्रिया हैं...

Keywords: जातीय संस्था, जमाती, लिंगभाव, संस्कृती, परंपरा , स्वाथ्य, पितृसत्ता , जातपंचायत, वर्णभेद

7.18
Structural exclusion of marginal women: health

Swati Gade

In April 2014, the Supreme Court of India, recognized transgender people as the third gender. This group faces major discrimination in healthcare. The above results show that it took the government 67 years after independence to take note of the healthcare of the transgender community. The plight of dalits, nomadic castes and tribes has the same terrible problems as the condition of transgender in Indian caste society and gender inequality society. Since these marginal women are under-represented, they are not given social and political importance. Thus, their lives have become full of struggle because of caste and male-dominated culture. As a result, they are economically and socially vulnerable. These marginal women face the dual exploitation of caste inequality and gender discrimination. Even though untouchability has been constitutionally abolished, these marginal women face discrimination. The nutritional status of marginal women directly exposes their cultural customs and economic status. Marginal women are more likely to have higher dietary needs because of this patriarchy and caste system, including domestic work, manual labour, employment, pregnancy, childbirth and child care. These needs are not met thus the necessary food diet is not provided to women, especially among working women, due to poverty and patriarchy that come from the caste system. Therefore, the prevalence of malnutrition is higher in women than in men. Despite schemes like cheap food grains, anganwadi food,

mid-day meal, etc., the problem of adequate calories of marginal women cannot be solved. Since the above provision does not include fruits, vegetables, milk, the deficiency of some key nutrients continues. As per the Indian constitutional law system, anyone being refused to be admitted at Government Hospitals will be considered as punishable offence. In year 2016, a nursing staff at Puranpur community heath centre in UP allegedly refused to admit a pregnant dalit woman who later delivered the baby unassisted by any medical staff which resulted in the death of new born infant just after a few hours of birth.

India has 8.6% tribal population which is widely spread all over India in Rajsthan, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Odisha. Most tribal people live in remote hills, wild and desert, where access to education, diet, basic health care becomes difficult. This also makes it difficult to get immediate health care. E.g. Most tribal women give birth at home due to lack of health care facilities. At the same time, culture preferences such as child marriage, the desire to have a male child, refuse allopathic treatment and seek treatment from local physicians, and rising fertility levels are responsible for their deterioration in their physical status. The two million transgender people are living in India. Even though government runs a massive campaign against the discrimination of transgender, doctors neglects transgender, as a result, they are unable to take advantage of medical services. Thus, they suffer from serious illnesses. In other words, the health of marginal women is associated with poverty, illiteracy, malnutrition, lack of clean water and sanitation, inadequate nutrition, etc. All these problems are related to the caste system and gender inequality. The policies should be made to eliminate discrimination against marginal women and the schemes should be made and implemented about their health awareness.

7.19

Does Structural Exclusion Exist in the Slums of Telangana? Assessment through Education, Fertility and Health Conditions of Women

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Development benefits have tended to be concentrated among certain groups of relatively better-off persons, while progress has often bypassed the worst-off groups. Does a question arise whether people living in the same environment and at the shallow rim of development also experiencing structural inequalities? The current research examines differences in educational level and health status by religious status or majority and minority status. Data for this study is from the baseline survey of an intervention project of UNICEF known as Tele- Swabhimann in the slums of Sangareddy district of Telangana. Tele Swabhimaan in Telangana has been formulated to establish a continuum of care on essential health and nutrition elements layered with mental health and gender transformation components, crucial for urban communities, particularly the slum dwellers, through a blend of technology and physical modes of delivery. In the baseline survey, interviewed 4152 mothers under two age child and out of this, 2390 (57.6%) were Hindus, 1487(35.8) were Muslims, 263(6.3%) were Christian, and 12 were from other religious groups. As a significant number of cases of different religious groups are in the sample, hence we attempted to carry out this work.

In all three groups of religion, similar ages at marriage and age at starting childbearing are found for women of under two children. All those women who had attended school had completed secondary education, and years of education were more or less the same for all religious groups (Hindus 12.18, Muslims 11.80 and Christians & others 12.13 years of education). There are marginal differences in number of pregnancies, live births and pregnancy wastage. However, differences by religious groups in body mass index (BMI) are significant. Hindus and Muslims face the double burden of malnutrition (underweight and overweight). Christian and other groups of women have higher levels of underweight and lower levels of overweight. Moreover, it may be noted that BMI depends upon food habits and physical activities. From this study, we can conclude that overall structural

exclusion at the same level of economic development does not exist by religious groups, particularly when it comes to worse-off groups.

7.20
Sexual Health and Reproductive Rights of Individuals with Disabilities in India – A Critical Analysis

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The label of disability across all societies strips individuals off their basic human rights in multiple spheres such as employment, education, political, financial, social, and emotional aspects of life. However, the disability discourse has gained optimistic attention internationally and nationally in terms of policymaking. Research states that Individuals with

Disabilities continue to live as marginalized group both socially and economically. The burden is triple when women with disabilities (WWD) are concerned. In terms of education and employment opportunities the shift is visible. However, sexual and reproductive health needs have largely been neglected (Seema Sharma, 2019). Individuals with Disabilities experience higher rate of mental, physical, sexual, and emotional abuse compared to people without disabilities (Abernathy, 2022). Sexual and reproductive health are an integral part of human experience yet neglected, especially, among individuals with disabilities. In a traditionalistic country like India, sex is a taboo in general, hence making it difficult for many women to access sexual and reproductive healthcare services. The situation is much more severe for people with disabilities. If we trace back in history, people with disabilities (PWD) have been for long "desexed" and "infantilized" developing a narrative that does not prioritize sexual and reproductive health services. The limited scope of interaction, constant surveillance, tags like 'incapable', 'flawed' often restricts a PwD to explore and understand sexual health and rights. Women with Disabilities in India are at a periphery of triple

stigmatization and marginalization. In addition, the lack of information on sexual and reproductive health ignites the cases of abuse and victimization of WWD in India. The situation of men with disabilities is also not free from stigma and marginalization. In a country like India when gendered roles play a vital role in determining sexual rights men with disabilities are often at the edge compared to men without disabilities. The perspective that men with disabilities have a hierarchical benefit compared to women with disabilities in a patriarchal society like India in not denied. Nevertheless, the constant discrimination of individuals with disabilities does impact their sexual and reproductive rights and privileges. The whole idea of masculine and feminine identities that are embedded in the Indian society and its impact on sexual and reproductive health and rights are the primary objective of this paper. This paper also wants to explore the relationship between gender roles and its relationship with sexual and reproductive rights and privileges of individuals with disabilities in an ableist society like India. Primary research for this paper is interviews conducted with 4 women and men with disabilities which are transcribed and based on existing literature.

7.21
Access to Community Toilet:
A Study on Challenges of Dalit Women
in Arumbavur Town Panchayat, Tamil Nadu

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The caste system in India has a profound impact on access to resources, perpetuating inequalities and creating barriers for individuals belonging to lower castes. It has historically relegated certain castes, particularly Dalits (formerly known as untouchables), to the lowest social status. Dalits have faced severe

discrimination and social stigma, leading to their exclusion from mainstream society. This exclusion extends to access to toilets, as Dalits have often been denied the right to use public or shared toilets due to their lower caste status. Dalits, as a marginalized community, have historically and continue to face discrimination across all aspects of society, both in the past and present. The social exclusion faced by the Dalits made them marginalized in the access to provision of the sanitation facilities. The denial of right to sanitation infrastructures compelling them to prefer open defecation practices within Dalit localities and it has created the associated health and environmental consequences. The SDG Goal 6 aims to ensure universal access to safe and affordable drinking water, improve sanitation facilities and hygiene practices, address water scarcity and pollution. According to the Census of India 2011, it was found that 53% of Indian households do not have toilets, whereas the figure rises to 66% for Scheduled Caste (SC) households. In rural areas, 76.3% of Dalit households lack latrine facility. Access to sanitation facilities, including toilets, is a crucial aspect of ensuring the dignity, health, and well-being of individuals and communities. Adequate access to safe and hygienic sanitation facilities is a fundamental human right and a crucial aspect of public health. It is closely linked to other rights, such as the right to water, the right to health, and the right to a clean environment. The right to sanitation includes various elements, such as availability, accessibility, acceptability, and quality. However, many individuals worldwide lack access to individual toilets, relying instead on shared community facilities. In India, community toilets are public sanitation facilities provided for individuals and households who do not have access to owned toilets. These facilities are typically constructed and managed by local governing bodies such as municipalities, Corporation and Town Panchayats to address the sanitation needs of densely populated urban areas, slums, or areas where individual household toilets may be challenging to build. This paper examines the challenges and concerns of women in Dalit households in access to community toilets in Arumbavur Town Panchayat. The researcher has selected 100 Dalit households through purposive sampling method for collecting the data by adopting baseline survey, in-depth interview, Focus Group Discussion and observation. The collected data have been analyzed more qualitatively to explore the need of collaborative efforts from government, civil society, and local communities to ensure that Dalit households have equal access to dignified and safe sanitation facilities, thereby promoting social inclusion and improved quality of life.

7.22
Inhabiting the in-between: Conceiving in-betweenness through 'Gender Creativity'

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The opposition to a monolithic concept of woman was the pivotal juncture at the end of the 20th century in feminism that led to development of post-structural feminism (Donovan, 1992). The post-structural feminist movement was partly borne out of the inability of radical feminism to take into account the difference in 'woman' or the intersectional identities of women which cannot be homogenised under 'woman' as an over-arching category. In post structural feminism the aim is to bring about multiple voices of 'many feminisms' such as black-feminism, dalit-feminism, lesbian-feminism and transfeminism. The existence of trans- individuals pose a threat to patriarchal essentialism of sex and also to the understanding and position of trans-excluding radical feminists (TERF). When a trans-person performs certain gendered activities with a body that is not socially assigned to perform them in a hetero-patriarchal society, patriarchy becomes confused. This 'confusion' is a post structural tool of warfare against patriarchy (Butler, 1999). This paper taking shape from my doctoral thesis have tried to understand this confusion through conceiving the 'in-between' locations of the trans-individuals expanding the binary, going beyond it and rendering the binarised loci lose its static grounding. The lived experiences of the trans-persons becomes significant for problematising the sex-gender unilinearity and aims at broadening up the iron clad binarised gender categories creating a spectrum of multiple positionalities, creating an ever evolving, ever expanding in-between space.

Judith Butler talks about gender performativity and following Butler, we try to understand gender as an array of stylised repetition of acts. Performativity constructs a subject; performance of a role creates a subject. There are radical possibilities in one hand but on the other hand it is limiting because of the limitation of available boxes of identities. Even when gender as a social construct is challenged by the transgender experience, it is influenced by the existing binary frame of reference and the constructed notions of beauty and aesthetics that are associated in the two available genders that the transgender individual has to choose from. So the transgender narratives of subversion resisting patriarchal

gender constructs are becoming limited, restricted by the patriarchal frame of reference.

Though 'performativity' talks about following the binarised gendered acts still this performativity can also become subversive by confusing patriarchy through what has surfaced in my PhD thesis as 'gender creativity'. In this paper I have tried to conceptualise 'gender creativity' the very act of creating one's own gender identity in one's own way, with one's own understanding of who they are patriarchy is not only confused but also destabilised by a whole spectrum of identities and expressions with no fixed extremities but an open, ever changing and ever evolving space where the gender identities and expressions interact, interweave, inter align, interface with each other creating spectrums without any fixed poles, the act of 'creativity' interplays in between and also go beyond any fixed locations understood as the two extreme points of a linear spectrum..

Keywords: Transgender, Sex, Gender, Sexuality, Gender Performativity, In-betweenness, Gender Creativity.

7.23
Performativity as Resistance: An Analysis of the Gender Identity and Survival Strategies of the Hijras

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"Gender performativity does not just characterize what we do, but how discourse and institutional power affect us, constraining and moving us in relation to what we come to call our "own" action." (Butler, 2014). The Hijras who have created an existence within the male-female binary (Hall, 1995) have been subjected to discrimination and consequently, marginalisation since the time of British occupation of India. The Britishers, unable to fathom their identity, considered them as bodies that are difficult to be governed as a result of which they were categorised as criminal tribes with the intent of making the hijra population extinct. Since then, resisting the system has become a part of their lives which has become tightly woven to their gender identity. In this paper, I would like to analyse how the Hijras have used the performative aspects of their gender

identity as modes of resistance against the oppressive system and how these are helping them to be more and more visible in systems that wilfully ignore their existence. In order to understand this, I would be looking into the concept of performativity by Judith Butler and how performativity goes beyond expression to be a more of resistance against the systems of oppression.

Keywords: Performativity, Resistance, Hijras, gender identity, oppression

7.24
The Visual Engaging of Trauma with Fashion, Colours and Performance

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The idea of fashion bears the invisible yet incessant potential to construct and initiate meanings in the cultural dictionary of a society. The age-old traditional idea of a costume bears in them a crate of cultural meanings with regard to the existence of an individual. By breaking it down, the contemporary scenario of Desi fashion perceives costume and fashion as an active agent for articulating the repressed individual and collective trauma of a section of society otherwise sidelined as the 'other'. The three magnificent fashion projects titled The Almirah, 18 Shades of Black and Mazhavillu were introduced into the public realm by the Kochi based Indian saree designer Sharmila Nair. The paper tries to analyze the shift in meaning of sarees and colours from a traditional culture to a much more radical one. This reinterpret saree as an activating costume to initiate a change among the marginalized sections of the society. It also attempts to explore fashion as a new way of pronouncing the multiple personal and collective issues of women and queer, thereby re-evaluating the role of fashion and ornamentation in relieving trauma and stress. By analyzing the three works, the paper also tries to analyze Desi fashion as engaging in a visual dialogue with trauma, body, costume and gender. Alongside, it also attempts to unravel the active role of fashion in shattering the accepted western notion of trauma and queer identity.

Keywords: trauma, activating costume, queer identity, fashion, gender

7.25

The Clothed Bodies in a Smart City:
A study on transgender peoples' experience
of negotiating cloth and market space and
its impact on their sense of citizenship
in the smart city of Bhubaneswar.

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The meaning of cloth/clothing as a phenomenon has transcended beyond its understanding as only a "basic human need". As it can be seen through the tracing of clothing histories the differentiation of clothing behaviour is shaped by many categories e.g. class, caste, gender, race, ethnicity, geography and culture etc. Market spaces, whether it is the daily market or the shopping mall and big market complex, are integral to the imagination of a city. Market spaces are inevitably related to accessing clothes. To enter into any kind of market arena or cloth store to buy cloth is essential not only to be the citizen of a city but also to have a sense of belongingness to the cities we live in. Cloth is not only the embodiment of gender but also becomes a means of control of human mobility and access to various public spaces.

In the discourse of democratic rights which also entails the right to basic needs i.e. food, shelter and cloth, the debates centre right to clothing only to provide a critique to patriarchal defense of gender based violence against women or to understand the socio-cultural construct of masculinity or femininity. Apart from this the "simple" act of buying clothes, or to be able to enter into a space to buy clothes is not linked to the question of a comfortable citizenship in a city more often unlike the right to housing or right to food. More or less the right based discourse which solely focuses on the issues of transgender community is also no different.

In this context, this paper aims to explore the question of accessing cloth as well as accessing spaces (market) by the transgender community who have migrated to developing urban city spaces for various reasons for whom neither gender nor clothing is a fixative idea i.e. practices of clothing by them, that is dressing in the clothes of "the other" gender, shows how it is for some a mark of a sense of "having been born in the wrong body", allowing them to appear in the world as the gender they feel themselves to be. For others, by contrast, it is a refusal of

the gender attributed to one's biological sex; one feels oneself perfectly at home in a male body, but refuses the characteristics, instantiated by clothing, of what it means to be a gendered being. This paper also seeks to study the affective relationship of access to cloth and spaces i.e. the ease with which clothed bodies move across spaces to access cloth as well as the extent to which these spaces impact the clothing behaviours of transgender people and its collective impact on the imagination of citizenship and sense of belongingness of transgender community in rapidly urbanizing geography.

Keywords:clothing, citizenship, transgender experience, market

7.26
Queer Women at Workplaces and Well-being: Navigating through the Daily Lived Experiences

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It is evident from years of research exploring many aspects of well-being and satisfaction at work that an employee's "well-being" is a multifaceted component that is crucially relevant to both individuals and organisations. But, the term "employee" itself becomes heterogeneous rather than homogeneous due to a variety of characteristics, including the individual employee's socioeconomic identification, designation at work, power dynamics, and hierarchical workplace practises. One such crucial factor is the employee's gender identity and sexual orientation. When it comes to 'Queer Women' employees, there is the wrath of double marginalisation – one for being women or being assigned with female sex at birth and on top of that for being a sexually non-normative community. This study aims to explore and navigate through the daily lived experiences of queer women at workplaces and their perceived sense of well-being. A qualitative methodology has been adopted and based on the personal narratives of 13 queer women; a thematic analysis has been done in an inductive manner. The crux of the findings shows how queer women experience the double layer of patriarchy and marginalisation which results in different forms of emotional

turmoil, discrimination, and harassment at the workplace on a daily basis which affects their well-being. This paper explores how the binary understanding of sex and gender hinders not only daily life activities but also obstacles the growth and well-being in the long run in case of the queer women individuals. The key implication of this study and further studies on this issue may be used in bridging the gaps between research findings and policy-making and improving diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

7.27
Towards Closing the Gap:
Gender, Sexuality and All That's In-Between- Notes from a Festival

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This paper draws on the trip that the author took to Koovagam, home to one of the world's biggest Transgender festivals. In the course of the time spent at Koovagam, which is a sleepy hamlet in Ulundurpettai in the Kallakurichi district of Tamil Nadu, the author observed the practices and customs that prevail there and also traced the way that the festival became a place of convergence and piety for transpeople. The performances of gendered roles, sexualized bodies and their spectacular value was closely observed. The paper looks at the ways that the festival has grown in the years and has become a place where vital policies regarding transgender welfare as well the challenges facing the community can be discussed. Also, conspicuous by their absence are the transmen who are not part of the mythos of the festival and hence not a part of the social concessions that the transpeople receive at the festival. The paper looks at the questions of faith, economy, inclusion and gatekeeping. What does the government do at these festival sites where the people believe there is a higher power in charge of destinies. The paper discusses the sights and sounds of the festival in the brilliance of which many slip into the shadows of clandestine meetings. Modernity has impacted the community and has made some of the rituals into mere performances. One

must not assume that the festival grounds or the festival premises are welcoming spaces all the time. There is, after the festival, an attempt to limp back to the way things were. But like how each edition of the same festival is different, each year, the people are also growing, and evolving. Hence no two festivals are alike. Koovagam in the month of Chitra Pournami is an event that embodies the traditional and the modern and studying the festival will throw valuable light onto the way that the idea of diversity and inclusivity is answered.

7.29
MSM, Homosexual and the Lesbian: Category Formation and Politics of Privacy

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I will track the figure of the lesbian and transgender in the supposedly radical new visibilisation of queer subjects and politics since the Delhi High Court judgement of 2009. The key judgements which decriminalize homosexuality in India in the time from 2009-2018, are based primarily on a notion of privacy, which is circumscribed by neoliberal values. I argue that these figures of the lesbian and transgender do not really exist, are brought out now and then as a cipher to make a gendered point and that the spaces for these categories remain non-existent and notional when existent. What would the lesbian and transgender do if she really intervened in this neoliberal landscape? In this paper, I will be looking at the shifting trajectories of category formation around sexual minority groups in India, particularly in the period from 1991 to 2018. I aim to study the formation and transformation of the discourse around sexuality and queerness in the Indian context, focusing on the trajectory of the legal movement against section 377 of the Indian Penal Code, and also looking at other texts available to us in the form of posters, leaflets and reports of various organizations which have worked around the lives of people belonging to the LGBTQ community. Several categories have emerged from different discursive fields, including the medical community, the legal institutional framework as well as community groups, to describe sexual minorities, while the use of these categories has also been a contested terrain as is evident from the literature produced within the movement. I wish to interrogate the exclusions which accompany these processes of category

formations, primarily looking at two key categories of MSM (Men who have Sex with Men) and the homosexual, as they have emerged in these different fields.

Read alongside developments in the socio-political domain as well as the law, these shifting terrains of understanding sexuality are useful in explaining the changing conceptualizations of sexuality and debates on gender in a radically transformed neoliberal landscape in India. Importantly, different kinds of demands and issues have emerged around these categories, particularly with respect to claims for recognition and inclusion made vis-à-vis the state. These differences are indicative of the process of erasure accompanying the process of category formation. Queer and feminist theorists studying the queer movement and community in India have argued for a fluidity in sexual behaviors in the subcontinent, which has a historical continuity from pre-colonial times to the present context. However, the formation of identities and communities around these behaviors can be seen as a decidedly modern phenomenon. What kinds of behaviors get left out of the purview of state recognition? What role does the state act in solidifying these categories while engaging with sexual minority groups? How are the various categories describing people broadly belonging to the LGBT community being operationalized in legal texts and reports of NGOs and other organizations, and what are the implications of the shifts in categories for a queer politics in India? These are some of the questions that my research aims to address.

7.30
Bhajiwali bai (Vegetable Selling Woman) toplyat kai (What you have in the basket?): Caste, Gender and Phallic Pleasure

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YouTube video songs for visual and phallic pleasures globally emerged on an unprecedented scale since 2015. It now encompasses almost every regional music production in contemporary India. Sadly, the algorithms informing such

productions have not challenged caste, gender, class, and other discriminatory practices: Instead, they have reinforced such institutions in subtle and not-so-subtle ways. Through a Marathi video song sexualizing vegetable-selling women, this paper attempts to discuss the violent aestheticization of low-caste women as an "erotic object" for male visual and phallic pleasure. By doing this, the video not only hides the labor involved in procuring, managing slow spoilage, and steady and continual seating while selling the vegetables and the domestic labor of these women but also reduces them as 'public and available women.' These women are sellers in the street, and their continual presence (in streets) contrasts them with upper-caste/class women who may constitute buyers who would visit such places for a limited time and purpose. What is more egregious and brazen is that the low-caste young men are made instrumental to this objectification; they dance in video using vegetables as phallic material in teasing and flirting with vegetable-selling women creating a seductive ambiance to target male viewers. The men consuming these songs are from all classes, including the upper castes. The onscreen scenic and performatives apparently (cleverly) exclude the presence of upper-caste males. As per the norm, upper caste-class men and women are not usually expected in the rather de-gentrified lower caste streets (Banarjee 1992) and bastis (slums), at least for entertaining themselves. A variety of video songs in eroticizing and sexualizing lower-caste women's bodies in streets and slums erases these social and physical boundaries that previously restricted the upper-caste men's open entry to lower caste settlements. YouTube videos are now effortlessly accessible to all, including the privileged caste-class men. Upper-caste men are now consuming the "erotic material" available in degraded and depraved surroundings without risk of losing their gentlemanliness. How does one read the active participation of lower caste men and their ironic performative flirtation sexualizing and proffering their women for public viewership? In the history of the Dalit movement, where the instituted sexual violence against Dalit and low caste women in traditional caste structure became a major mobilizing issue, how can one understand the onscreen flirtation of these men in sexualizing their women in the public sphere? Does this ironic performativity of low-caste men resonate with the balutedari (patron-client) system, where low-caste patriarchy interacted with upper-caste patriarchy in keeping certain women as entertainers of the privileged (read men) in villages (Rege 1995). Is this sexualization of low caste women similar to the hypersexualization and disposableness of black women's body as 'erotic material' (Miller-Young, 2010)?

Keywords:phallic, caste, objectification, erotic, patriarchy

7.31

Marginalized Desires and Identities: The Politics of Representing 'the Lesbian Subject' by Contemporary Media in Kerala

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This study investigates the portrayal of lesbian women as a marginalized sexual subject in print and visual media in Kerala and its consumption and circulation in the heteronormative society. Previous works demonstrated the stereotyped and prejudiced attitude towards lesbian women cultivated in Kerala's public sphere (Mokkil, Vasudevan, Gopinath, Ghosh). These studies explored the invisibility of the lesbian subject, and how those women were treated as a threat to social morality, as they ruptured the heteronormative codes of sexuality. Contemporary media discourses involving sexual orientation, sexual subjectivity, and desire in Kerala continue to look at lesbian women as problematic subjects. I critically examine three cases in this research, a short film Anu- Story of a Lesbian Girl (2018), a TV show celebrity Jasmin M Moosa who identifies as a lesbian woman, and the case of a lesbian couple in Kerala- Fathima and Noora- whose wedding invited wide media coverage and debates. Unlike the oft-discussed theme of invisibility, these cases are presented by the media as a progressive attempt to bypass marginalization. My effort in this research is to critically engage with the media narratives formed in the backdrop of the lesbian subject when it is circulated through print and visual media and society's reaction towards this. By close reading this response, I try to understand whether there is a possible shift in perceiving the marginalized lesbian subject and its representation through media in Kerala's public sphere.

Keywords: Invisibility; Lesbian Women; Marginality; Media Representation; Queer Activism in Kerala

7.32

A Feminist Reading of the Representation of Female Masturbation in Select Bollywood Films

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It is a popular belief in the Indian subcontinent that women's bodies and sexuality are bench markers of family honor, community pride, and the nation's morality. It is well evident from the epics such as Ramayana, where the morally upright Ram abandoned Sita doubting her chastity, and Mahabharatha, where Kunti had to desert her first-born son Karna fearing slut-shaming and ostracization. Although Indian culture celebrates erotica in the form of old Hindu temple sculptures and widely discussed treatises such as Kamasutra, these discourses are criticized for their man-centric perspective. The colonial rule made the angel-monster dichotomy more dominant by standardizing Western Victorian morality: a woman who deviates from the societal structures of heterosexual marriage, motherhood, and familial responsibilities will be identified as a monster or a witch. A woman's body is always marked as a man's object of desire and is disciplined and maintained to meet the beauty standards that men envisage.

Exploring one's own body, sexuality and pleasure is still unimaginable to many women. Owing to this age-old patriarchal conditioning, a huge sect of women still considers their bodies as a site for reproduction, motherhood, and man's sexual pleasure. Attaining orgasm or having pleasure during sexual intercourse, or the least, communicating one's preferences or difficulties with the partner is unsanctioned in most marriages. University of Florida professor Laurie Mintz, in her book titled "Becoming Cliterate: Why Orgasm Equality Matters — And How to Get It," talks about the Orgasm gap or Pleasure Gap. The orgasm gap, or pleasure gap, is a social phenomenon referring to the general disparity between heterosexual men and women in terms of sexual satisfaction—more specifically, the unequal frequency in achievement of orgasm during sexual encounters. Mintz argues that this orgasm problem is a cultural problem. So, in such a rigid structure, a woman's desire for pleasure and exploring their body via masturbation is nothing but taboo. The popular narratives and representations in media, films, literature, and other cultural discourses in India fail to portray a woman with desire. Rather they present a false image of a woman with desire as nasty, wicked, vile, and vulgar. This research paper attempts to make a close reading of the female masturbation scenes in Karan Johar's short film in the anthology titled

Lust Stories (2018), Alankrita Shrivastava's Lipstick under my Burkha (2016), Shashanka Ghosh's Veere Di Wedding(2018) and, Shonali Bose's Margarita with a Straw(2014) through the lens of Sandra Lee Bartky's and Foucault's theories on sexuality and body.

Keywords: Female Masturbation, Orgasm, Sexuality, Bollywood

7.34
Representations of Queer Women at the Margins in the Age of Streaming Platforms: A Case Study of Two Films

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What happens when queer women from the margins fall in love? Representations of heterosexual romantic relations have long been given preference over queer ones. While representations of queer women have been few and far between, those with privileged markers of social stratification have been predominant. This paper will seek to analyse a short film and a web series which not only visibilise the representation of queer women from the margins, but also illuminate on a queer marginal discourse. Queer marginality questions the legitimacy of hegemonic assumptions about bodies and sexuality, highlighting instead a porous discourse on queerness. This article maps the realm of the women from different walks of life falling in love and what their romantic depictions mean for an emerging, progressive and mediatized representation of various women from heterogeneously marginalised queer locations. 'Geeli Puchhi' explores the interlocking structures of caste, femininity and class that oppress the romantic relationships of two women who are colleagues at their workplace at an industrial outfit. 'The Married Woman' highlights the markers of religion and class between a middle-class woman from a conservative family, complete with a regressively traditional household and a misogynistic husband, and a privileged, urban woman situated in the context of the 1992 Babri Masjid demolitions. Shifting notions of gender and sexuality, and their consequent marginalisation vis-à-vis glorification feature as the common link between both stories. Queer marginality is centred in both stories which I would argue, are compared and contrasted

in the contextual embeddedness of skewed power dynamics and interpersonal/familial violence.

The specific object of inquiry that will guide the paper is the representation of a mediatised depiction of queer romantic experiences. Locating this depiction, I would argue, enables one to address the nature of structural oppressions involved in such experiences. It further helps us to show how queer marginalisations co-exist in layers of identity. This article will seek to pose the question: How do these representations, in the backdrop of a growing mediatized economy and a shrinking attention economy, speak to the burgeoning popularity of streaming platforms? Does this conversation transcend the internet and speak to national self-identity in an India where her Supreme Court debates on same-sex marriages presently? I would like to argue that the common thread of marginality appears integral to a mediatized discourse of representations of queer women in the wake of heteronormative violence.

7.35
Love and Yearning:
The social boundaries of love and fulfilment of women in Missing films

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One recurring question that indigenous/tribal women engages in, is the question of traditions within the tribal community. The institute of culture is rooted in patriarchy, and has impacted core discourses of life choices, like career/livelihood, the conditions of love, the boundaries of dreams all of which are bounded by how women see themselves represented and what the society deems permissible through these filmic narratives. The question here of permissibility is often ambiguous as women are obligated by expectations to preserve traditions while being bounded by the same traditions of seemingly free choices. Mising films primarily centres around the Mising concept of love and kinship, where men is directly the centre of the Mising world, or indirectly through the men in the women's life. Through different enunciations of love and kinship, a complicated web of choices and consequences are available to women with

conditions infringing the sense of fulfilment which are negotiated through fantasy and sometimes imagination of escape through the medium of cinema. The community largely within its traditional structures draws out certain moral grounds of narratives while integrating the modern with the traditions. These interpretations of the structures of modernity stems from a very patriarchal view which is primarily centred on the antagonistic narratives of duality, scientific knowledge vs indigenous epistemology rather than accommodate diversity as a modern narrative and critical framework of feminist indigeneity.

While scientific knowledge often does not validate experiential knowledge of indigenous knowledge system, Indigenous women experience becomes an old wife's tale in Indigenous traditions resulting in often dismissive rhetoric within the Indigenous narratives. It is this ambiguity, that film produces and enables a space for indigenous women experience where all these contradictions are played out and negotiated in the everydayness. Evidently, it is crucial to recognize these layers of claimed self-determination in Mising feature films. As films are about bringing together a public space, where movies screened in mobile vans (in Mising Villages) becomes a space to re-enunciate the collective sense of love and yearnings where boundaries of aspirations and permissibility becomes solidified.

This paper attempts to analyse the underlying creation, reproduction and resistance of everyday gendered experiences through the filmic canvas. It also includes interviews of Mising women viewers/audience, where women have expressed their obligation to watch films and also use filmic medium to reflect their own aspirations both through materiality and longingness in love. These interviews and discussions from certain villages with women audience, directors and artists involved in Mising film production provides a space for critical analysis of the filmic medium where indigenous feminism has a place of discourse on the contestations of the traditional narratives within the community. The purpose of the study, hereby is to contribute to the feminist literature through the Mising tribal women location with cinema as a space where all these reiterations, negotiations and social boundaries are drawn and redrawn.

Keywords: patriarchy, indigenous feminism, Mising films, Mising culture, Mising traditions

7.36

Dating, Relationships and Challenges of LGBTQIA+ Community from an Intersectional Perspective: A Study from Kerala

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The paper explores the dating, relationships and challenges of the LGBTQIA+ community from an intersectional perspective. The LGBTQIA+ community in Kerala faces a range of challenges and obstacles that hinder their well-being and social integration. Discrimination and stigma continue to be prevalent, leading to marginalization and exclusion from various aspects of life. Many individuals within the LGBTQIA+ community experience verbal and physical abuse, harassment, and bullying, both in public spaces and within their own families and communities. Limited legal protections and societal acceptance further compound these issues, making it difficult for individuals to openly express their gender identity or sexual orientation. Additionally, access to healthcare services, mental health support, and inclusive educational resources remain inadequate, leaving many LGBTQIA+ individuals without the necessary support systems. The author uses qualitative data for this study.

In this research paper, the author highlighted the socio-demographic profile of the LGBTQIA+ community. Firstly, understanding the socio-demographic profile of this community is crucial for recognizing the diversity within the LGBTQIA+ community. Furthermore, the author explained the dating and relationships among the LGBTQIA+ community and sheds light on their experiences of love, companionship, and intimacy. This knowledge can help understand societal stereotypes and diverse forms of relationships. Finally, the author described the everyday problems and challenges faced by the LGBTQIA+ community in a thematic way from an intersectional perspective. By examining the everyday problems from an intersectional perspective helps in understanding the multiple dimensions of discrimination and marginalization, they may experience based on factors such as gender, race, class, caste, and religion. This research questions and scrutinize some of the traditional social institutions in the Indian society. The research tries to redefine the concept of family and relationships for the queer community.

Keywords: LGBTQIA+, Queer, Intersectionality, Dating, Relationships, Kerala.

7.37
'A Dance School of Their Own':
Examining Resistance and Community Action
through Jogappa Nruthya from North Karnataka.

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This paper examines the Jogappa Nruthya-a dance form performed by members of the Jogappa community from North Karnataka-as a counternarrative that complicates the facile axis of marginality and exploitation with regard to this transgender community. Utilizing findings from the ICSSR-IMPRESS project titled "Women in the Intellectual and Historical Traditions of North Karnataka: A Digital Archive" (2020-2021) the paper unearths how the Jogappas draw validation from religious and mythical records, to not only perform their sexuality through this dance-form, but also, increasingly, to reclaim a space of their own as artists and citizens today. Analysing semi-structured interviews and fieldwork data from the Project the paper focuses on the ways in which Jogappa Nruthya is (a) being adapted/stylised through contemporary stage performances (by Jogappa artists like Manjamma Jogathi), bringing visibility for this community at large, and (b) being employed as articulations of sexuality as part of the community's larger quest for gender inclusiveness. Overall, the Jogappa Nruthya (now recognised as an established folk art within Karnataka), appears to be emerging as a liminal space that captures the community's status in transition. The Jogappas have been traditionally considered as the 'chosen medium; between the deity Renuka or Yellamma and society, obtaining, over generations, a religious identity as priests of Yellamma temples. Jogappa men marry Goddess Yellamma to become women by undergoing 'deekshe' an oath, and by tying 'mangalsutra'. Over the years, this cultural shelter offered by the goddess -who had herself been a victim of structural violence in recorded myths-has gradually transformed into a liminal space for gender minorities. With changing social practices and values however, the cult of Yellamma and associated rituals have seen a decline, resulting in privately-controlled temples and gradual ousting of these transgender women from sacred duties.

Historically, the Jogappas have thrived upon performances of myths and songs of

Yellamma. The Jogappa Nruthya where the deity is placed on a pot on the head of the performer, has traditionally been a part of Yellamma worship and performed on auspicious days of the festive season. The performance is also a display of 'femininity' of the Jogappas who would dress up in resplendent sarees, wearing bangles and sindoor. "I loved wearing 'langa davnni' (Skirt and Dupatta or Half Saree) and dancing in it like a girl. That day I felt so good"- says Padma Shri Manjamma Jogathi, recalling how a young boy Manjunath 'found' himself and his calling through this dance form, becoming Manjamma (now appointed as President of Karnataka Folklore Academy). The present paper draws upon contributions of such flag- bearers who are reviving the Jogappa Nruthya today, adapting it to a changing socio-cultural environment. By studying the trajectory of this folk art, the paper would establish how Jogappa Nruthya is increasingly transforming into a medium for reclamation of cultural space and dignity. Conceptualised today as staged individual as well as troupe performances, the Nruthya is being reconceptualised for urban audiences, youth, and art connoisseurs, as well as the State at large, as a platform for collective action for this transgender community.

Keywords:: Folk art, Jogappa Nruthya, Trasngender communities, Resistance.

7.38
Mapping the Journey of First-Generation Learner Women from the Marginalised Community and their Struggle in Higher Education: A study across changing times.

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Throughout historical periods, women's lives have been very difficult as many restrictions were imposed on women by traditional customs and caste practices, curbing their freedom. The fight and demand for women's education was a revolutionary step in the context of India. Savitribai Phule laid the foundation of women's education in India by taking positive action. Many women started their struggle to enter the public space during the colonial period under the leadership of Dr. Ambedkar. After the first conference on women's education women from

the marginalised community started coming out in the mainstream. But coming and staying in the mainstream is a huge struggle for women from the marginalised community women. Keeping in mind of Savitribai Phule's legacy, marginalised community women are leaping into the higher education system. For example, Urmila Pawar and Kumud Pawade continue to carry on Savitribai Phule's legacy by writing on experience-based narratives as well as on caste and social structure. Through their writings of we get to see up close their lives through their struggles and their journeys. Unfortunately, their struggle continued to from generation to generation for women from marginalised community. But we see that the struggle of each era is different. In contemporary period first generation learner women from the marginalised community are also facing a different struggle. We have to see and acknowledge the struggle of women in the changing context. Struggle during the Ambedkar era was different, but they brought to light the struggle and a pathway for marginalised community women to go forward. That is why women could have speak about their rights and started coming out to mainstream. My objective for this research is to understand and highlight how caste plays a role in these issues and how women from marginalised community handle them in to stay public spaces. Historically, Ambedkar highlights the linkage between caste and the subordination of women. He always maintained that women were gateways of the caste system and the caste system lay down a structure for the subordination of women and it had to be uprooted. Caste is a big obstacle in women's lives. Therefore, the struggle in everyday life remains the same in marginalised women's lives. I want to write down the struggle from my narratives and the women from marginalised community with whom I studied. I will take interviews of four women and narrate the challenges and their journey of struggle.

7.38

Gendered Analysis of Policies related to Education of Girl Children with Disabilities

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Since independence, the legal and policy framework that cater to persons with disabilities in India have travelled a long way. The Constitution of India forbids discrimination on the basis of several axes of marginality but does not explicitly mention disability. However, over the years, various rights related to persons with disabilities have been read into the Constitution through the case laws. The first comprehensive legal framework was introduced in the year 1995 with the Persons with Disabilities Act and the year 2006 witnessed the introduction of a National Disability Policy. This was followed by deliberations since the second decade of the new millennium in drafting a new legal framework to comply with the provisions of United Nations Convention on Persons with Disabilities 2006 which heralds the rights approach towards persons with disabilities (ratified by India). The efforts of the disability sector ultimately saw fruition in the form of Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 after more than half a decade of deliberations. Recently, the Ministry of the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has put out a draft National Policy (in July 2022) for comments and suggestions.

In the given context this paper critically examines the present legal framework and policies related to access to education for persons with disabilities with specific focus on provisions for women and girls with disabilities. The provisions for access to education under Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPD) Act 2016, Right to Education Act (RTE) 2006, National Education Policy 2020 and the Draft National Policy for Persons with Disabilities 2022 are discussed to flag the gaps in ensuring equal access to education. First, we argue that the legal framework is ill-equipped to facilitate the integration of children with disabilities, specifically girls with disabilities, at early childhood level. Second, we look at the provisions for education once the girl child enters the school, and assess whether the mandated mainstream schools, special schools and home schools are able to deliver on the RTE. Thirdly, while the Constitutional right to education is guaranteed till

14 years of age, for the children, including girls, with benchmark disability this right is recognized till the age of 18 under RPD. We explore whether there is adequate support at this critical stage, to ensure their reach to higher education. In conclusion, we suggest policy changes that should be incorporated in the National Policy to ensure a meaningful right to education for girl children with disabilities.

7.39
Kollam Tribe: Challenges and Struggles of unwed mothers with special reference to Yavatmal district of Maharashtra

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Kolam is a Scheduled Tribe found in the Indian states of Maharashtra followed by Telangana. This tribe is commonly found in Yavatmal, Chandrapur and Nanded districts of Maharashtra. Yavatmal has the largest number of Kolam tribe. Kolam is speaking Kolami dialect and its script is not available in written form. The Kolams are predominantly Dravidians. The Kolam belongs to Proto Australidae lineage. Formerly they were inhabited in the Kolammal hills of South India but later migrated to Vidarbha and Marathwada regions of Maharashtra and other adjacent states of present Telangana. Hajra (1983). In Maharashtra, based on parameters like culture, language, indigenous knowledge, population etc, they are listed in particularly vulnerable tribal groups (PVTG). As per 2001 census, Kolam population in Maharashtra was 1, 73,646, which was increased to 1, 94,671 in 2011. The study conducted at Yavatmal district in Maharashtra. The work focused on gender perspective in Kolam tribe. Due to acculturation and assimilation several changes seen in Kolam's socio-cultural, economical, and political status. Kolam tribe is a patriarchal society but power relation of gender is flexible. The phenomenon of 'Kumari Mata' (unwed mother) in Kolam tribe shows how they are affected with mainstream society's value of gender. However, with new value of gender an unwed mother suffers lot. In this paper we discuss about struggles of unwed mother and changes among kolam tribe.

Keywords: - Kolam Tribe, Patriarchy, Unwed Mother (Kumari Mata)

7.40
Hindu-Muslim marriage and Public Debate regarding women's freedom in Bombay Presidency:
A case study of Khan-Pandikar marriage circa 1927

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Incidents of politics of hate and violence are an unavoidable part of contemporary public life and the women often bear the brunt of it. There are many popular and manufactured narratives of Inter-religious marriage being blamed as love jihad but the historical reality is different. The aim of this paper is to trace the process and the politics of inter- religious marriage and women's freedom through the case study of Khan-Panandikar marriage that took place in 1927 in Pune. The proposed research paper follows historical method and is based on Marathi vernacular sources such as newspapers, magazines, and biographies. The decades of 1920-30 shaped the politics of Maharashtra. These decades were remarkable because of the emergence of women's movement complemented by women's magazines that belonged to various ideological schools and political organizations. Khan-Panandikar marriage took place in the highly contested and competitive time of Maharashtra. There were many comments and criticisms from various ideological and political shades such as the Hindu Mahasabha, Brahman Sabha, Untouchable movement, non –Brahman movement etc.

The paper will document the story of this inter-religious marriage in Urban Maharashtra and the ripples it sent in the various social strata of the colonial society as it was trying to negotiate a via media between religious polarization and the need for National Unity.

7.41

Lives Made Filthy? Gendering Education, Labour and Violence in a Working Class Locality in Contemporary Delhi

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This study aims to examine how gender affects the working class, particularly those who live in slum areas. The paper aims to understand how patriarchy has adverse effects on education and work. These areas are mainly constituted by lower caste and class people. Paper attempts to understand the experience of gender, education, and labour in the socio- cultural context of an urban Indian working-class area located in Delhi named Golden Basti. It will explain the nature of women's workforce participation and attempts to identify key factors influencing women's decision to work, the type of work they do, the constraints they face, and the perceived benefits and costs of engaging in paid work outside the home, how masculinity functions in slum areas, educational participation of girl child and the gendered reasons behind the dropout of children. This research will explore how they get stigmatized because of their involvement in particular work. The stigmatization of their work affects their social life, how they face violence while going out on the street, and how they face violence in school from their fellow members and teachers. Further research will look at how the life of slum women is not just difficult but is more precarious than upper caste, class women. The urban educated middle class frequently views their profession as not even deserving of being touched. Their different social position affects them differently in their distinct aspects of life.

In this paper, the researcher wants to critically analyze the different social locations of waste-picking women in terms of their caste, class, and gender. The paper will look at the different reasons for the dropout of girls and boys. As school dropouts are not the same for both male and female children. We find different reasons for the dropout of girls and boys. The paper will explore how their multiple identities intersect with each other. For the marginalized section, education is one of the emancipatory tools to uplift them or brings them equal to other caste and class. So, the paper will further question how despite many schemes and reservation policies set up for marginalized castes, they still lag in education and skilled jobs.

In the stratified society, Dalit women are at the bottom of the social hierarchy, they face triple discrimination on the bases of their caste, class, and gender. As they are socially excluded from the basic needs of their survival, thus education was always far away from the reach of this section. Therefore it is necessary to look at their education in terms of intersecting identity. As, Indian educational system, does not analyze the intersectionality of structural variables, such as caste, class, gender, and ethnicity, whereas it homogenizes into one single category. Homogenization of these categories simply distorts the complex reality of the differentiated educational system and unequal society. Education is one of the vital necessities of life, which seemed to be largely absent among Dalits, especially among Dalit girls. Hence paper will largely be focused on the life of waste picker women in terms of their education, labor, and violence through the lens of caste, class, and gender intersectionality.

Keywords: Slum area, Women Waste Pickers, Intersectionality, Caste, Class and Gender, Education, Violence, labour, Discrimination, Exclusion, Dalit Women.

7.42

Locating Khatun in Indian socio-political dynamics: A magazine giving insight on the hopes, aspirations and anxieties of Muslim women in 20th century India

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The educational reform movement of the 19th and early 20th century had far reaching impact in terms of impact on different groups of society. The support for English education which started with the Bengal Renaissance was carried forward by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan at Aligarh. The reformer however was not able to address the issue of female education which was eventually addressed by Shaikh Abdullah. The efforts of Shaikh Abdullah and his wife, Waheed Jahan, led to the establishment of Women's School and College at Aligarh. There was an important moment in the efforts towards changing the mindset towards female education in the form of the magazine Khatun. The Urdu language magazine was published from 1904 onwards to 1914. The magazine clearly highlighted its

purpose of creating awareness regarding the importance of education amongst the women, yet the focus of the magazine was still limited to home schooling, tutoring and educating women so that they could raise good children. The aspirations of the editors and the writers of the Magazine were progressive for their time and the eventual aim was to normalize the English education of women. The magazine's introduction clearly mentions the purpose of the magazine was to spread education amongst women and to develop knowledge and literary content among educated women. It also stated that the education of women is important so that they would consider it bad/immoral to keep their children away from the satisfaction (lutf) which is achieved through gaining knowledge. Thus the narrative of educating women in order to educate a generation was clearly marked in the Muslim intellectual space of the 20th century. The paper seeks to locate the socio-political impact of Khatun in the changing world of 20th century north India. The embedded aspirations and insecurities of the women and men associated with progressive movement of educating women would be analysed through the reading of the Urdu Magazine's archived issues. The topics of articles mentioned in different issues of the Magazine and the book reviews along with reading recommendations mentioned therein would provide important points of analysing the Muslim intelligentsia's changing thought process in the beginning of the 20th century.

Keywords: Muslim women, education

7.43
Being a Mother to a Disabled Child: Unmasking the Experiences

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Motherhood is to an extent a social construct. The identity of a woman who is the mother of a disabled child cannot be dissociated from the intersectional formations. Women who are mothers of children with disabilities deserve more spaces in the mainstream academic discourses, social conversations and public policies. Although the socio political ecosystems have been becoming more sensitive to

the problems of the disabled and addressing the challenges with legislations and supportive measures the voices and experiences of women who are mothers of people with disabilities are either unheard or ignored. The journey into and through motherhood has been shown to have certain impact on the way a woman thinks about herself, the world in which she lives and her place in it. Women who are mothers of disabled children have to steer through the preconceived notions and assumptions designed by the socio cultural systems and half-baked public consciousness. In that voyage they often lose their capabilities to identify their own self. This paper is a humble attempt to position their own experiences as mothers of disabled children, using a phenomenological approach and listening to their voices. The focus is on their sense of self. A qualitative framework has been adopted with due consideration of the theoretical bases offered by the sociology of personal life and experiences and motherhood studies. The individual personhood has been relied upon for this basic objective. Consistent with the nature of enquiry, the conversations with 10 women who are mothers of disabled children have been used to understand analyse their perceptions and experiences. The real experiences are distinct from the attributed magical power, the idealised mother images, the good mother scripts and the sympathetic assessments devoid of empathy. Although the experiences have common shades, there are individual differences reflecting both subjectivity and relationality. The analysis brings out prevalent forms of hidden oppression as well as the emerging agency power. It is expected that further studies in this direction would make their voices heard and serve to reimagine the usual societal conceptions.

7.45
Through the Lens of Caste - Dalit Women in Indian Cinema

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Women from marginalised communities have been victims of "two distinct, if overlapping patriarchal structures". The popular discourse, however, remains passive on the politics of gender and its intersection with other marginalities, ranging from class, caste, race, place of birth, etc. Cinema is the mirror of society. It is inspired from us, and inspires us. Operating under the guise of providing

entertainment, cinema shapes viewer psychology, projecting the cultural self-perceptions of the producers and directors. This makes it all the more important to deconstruct cinematic representations. Indian Cinema usually does not involve dalit discourse; if it does, it often perpetuates casteism; stereotypical representation, through innovative techniques in visuals, sound, music, and cinematography. This paper seeks to learn about the portrayal of Dalit women in Indian cinema, in terms of characters, dialogues, music and screenplay. It is a critical reading of the cinema as an institution and a site of ideological production. We shall also try to interpret if this representation has evolved in a dynamic socio-economic and political environment. Towards the end there is an attempt to assess the alignment of these representations with stereotypes prevalent in society related to Dalit women in films; does it reinstate the stereotypes? Or challenges them?

Keywords: women, marginalised, patriarchy, intersection, Indian cinema, dalit, representation, stereotypes, ideology, evolution, alignment.

7.46
Understanding the Representation of Women with Psychosocial Disabilities in Malayalam Cinema

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Madness has frequently been experimented on within films. This paper aims to understand the varied representations of mental illness through notable female protagonists of Malayalam cinema. It scrutinises the spaces of captivity– both benevolent and malevolent– as seen in the movies: Ulladakkam (The Content 1991), Manichithrathazhu (The Ornate Lock 1993), Makalkku (For the Daughter 2005) and Athiran (Boundless 2019). The madness attributed to these women disables them psychosocially within patriarchal structures and becomes an excuse to control the dominant woman in the narrative, failing to capture its nuances. The paper also inspects the unnecessarily romanticised, aesthetic nstitutionalisations of the madwoman in Malayalam cinema, which obscure the

systematic marginalisation of women. The paper will draw assistance from the ideas of scholars like Freud, Lacan and Jung to understand the subconscious minds, symbolisms and coping mechanisms associated with forceful confinements. Meanwhile, the theories of Laura Mulvey, Judith Butler and Fanon facilitate the comprehension of constructing captive spaces and the subsequent representation and objectification of women with madness in Malayalam cinema. Despite the gritty edges of representing madness, the male writers also rely on the innocence, likeability and stardom of the actresses amongst the audience to romanticise their characters. The absence of visible differences renders the category of psychosocial disability easily exploitable by makers. Here, madness becomes a device to explore the possibilities of disability as a narrative technique without compromising the conventional aesthetics of the female protagonist. Thus, the madwoman becomes an object of desire with an eventual promise of rehabilitation and redemption through the male protagonist. Incidentally, the women serve as an object to evince the greatness and brilliance of the male protagonist (doctors) who cures them. These twisted representations relegate women with psychosocial disabilities as social threats in needing monitoring.

Keywords: Malayalam cinema, women's studies, representation, madness, psychosocial disability, double marginality

7.47

Caste and Gender: Studying the Patriarchal Subconscious and the Portrayal of Lower Caste Female characters in the Marathi Films by Nagraj Manjule

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Key word- Caste, Gender, films, Brahamanical Patriarchy, agency, aspirations

Films in India have mostly been dominated by the upper caste and the Brahmni patriarchal ideology. The narration of the films and the portrayal of protagonist and other characters in the Marathi films too reflect the Brahamani Patriarchal

ideology. This upper caste dominance rarely represents the dalit or lower caste as the central character in the films and the characters from the lower castes always appear in the subsidiary roles that too portrayed either as helping hands to the protagonist or helpless submissive victims. The core of the plot and story of the films also do evolve around the Hindu mythological ideology portraying Brahamin as the knowledgeable, religious and ethical being whereas kshetriya and vasiya are portrayed as the exploiters in the form of ruling and trading persons. The Shudra or dalit rarely gets the centre stage. Hence most of the times the main protagonist appears to be the Maratha Patil and the Brahamin Guruji as knowledgeable path seeker.

The grand box office success, critical acclaim and winning of several national-international awards by Nagraj Manjule's films like Pistulya (2009), Fandry (2013) and Sairat (2016) brought a new critical acclaim and caste paradigm in the world of films especially Marathi films. The plunging of a small lower caste boy into stealing by devastating his dream to study in Pistulya, pelting of stone by lower caste teen, Jabya in fandry, and the brutal killing of lovers Archie and Parsya at the end by her brother in Sairat numbs the audience and really makes to rethink the caste structure and society from the dalit/lower caste perspective. This attempt to bring the lower caste, his dreams and exploitation by the caste structure is said to be a rebellion against the upper caste dominance and Brahamanical aesthetics on the screen. But despite Nagraj Manjule's attempts in bringing this lower caste anguish, fears and dreams at the centre stage on the screen the portrayal of the male and female characters by him in the films is seen to be caught in the stereotyped patriarchal ideology. All the protagonists in the films of Nagraj Manjule seem to be lower caste male characters, the dreams, fears and anguish are elaborated from the lower caste male perspective. On the contrary the female characters are seem to be portrayed in a stereotyped way as voiceless, without having any dreams or aspirations. Thus in the present paper an attempt will be made to take a brief review of the Marathi films from caste-gender perspective and attempt will also be made to understand the difference in the portrayal of male and female characters of lower caste deliberating on the issues of agency, aspirations, anguish and alienation.

P K Rosy(s) and the continuing 'present' of othering in Malayalam Cinema. Positioning women from marginal communities in Malayalam Cinema

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Differentiating between the idea of representation and presence when talking about marginalized women and visual media is challenging. In Malayalam cinema, which is widely discussed internationally for its craft and content, women from marginalized communities still struggle to participate in the cinema-making process. They still are represented in a stereotypical way. From KP Rosy- a Dalit Christian woman and the heroine of the first Malayalam cinema who was attacked and driven away for playing an upper caste Nair woman, to many other women from marginalized sections who are typecast and struggling to pursue their careers in cinema, Malayalam cinema still creates a challenging environment for them to survive. The way women from marginalized sections are being represented in popular media is also affected by the social cultural and political forces that shape the representations. This leads to the discussion on the discourse of representation and the importance of their actual presence in the space which would otherwise bring narratives derived from the dominant narratives, prejudices, and stereotypes. Hence this paper intends to analyze this lack of presence in the field and the way they are represented in Malayalam cinema. It raises questions like, what preconceived set of features do the Malayalam films demand for a heroine? How Malayalam cinema has, not a violent casteist 'past' but a continuing casteist 'present'? What roles are being given to women from marginalized communities in Malayalam films? And tries to formulate answers to these questions by analyzing Malayalam films from different periods and practices and occurrences inside the industry.

Keywords: Malayalam Cinema, marginalized women, Dalit, representation, stereotypes, casteist

Unmasking Prejudices: Challenging the Misrepresentation of Female Tribal Characters in Malayalam Cinema

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This paper presents an in-depth analysis of the construction and representation of female tribal characters in Malayalam cinema, with a specific focus on the problematic tropes of sexualization, eroticization, infantilization, and their implications for gender oppression. Through a systematic examination grounded in an intersectional feminist perspective, the study aims to uncover the complex issues surrounding power dynamics, representation, and marginalization within mainstream media. By critically scrutinizing the portrayal of female tribal characters in selected Malayalam films, such as Chithram (1988), Adharvam (1989), Kerala Varma Pazhassi Raja (2009), Ezhamathe Varavu (2013), and Ayyapanum Kosiyum (2020), this research seeks to unveil the multi-faceted nature of gender tyranny in cinematic spaces. Malayalam cinema, as a prominent cultural artifact, reflects and shapes societal attitudes and norms. However, the representation of female tribal characters has long been a subject of concern, as it often perpetuates harmful stereotypes and reinforces gender inequalities. One recurring issue is the tendency to sexualize and eroticize the bodies and spaces of these characters, reducing them to objects of male desire and reinforcing a dominant narrative that objectifies and commodifies tribal women. By portraying them primarily through a sexualized gaze, these depictions not only perpetuate gender inequality but also contribute to the marginalization and exclusion of tribal women from mainstream narratives.

In addition to sexualization, another troubling trope is the infantilization of female tribal characters, portraying them as helpless and incapable of making informed decisions. This infantilization disempowers tribal women and perpetuates harmful narratives that undermine their agency, intelligence, and autonomy. By portraying them as passive and dependent on male counterparts, these depictions reinforce traditional gender roles and reinforce power dynamics that subordinate women. Furthermore, the paper delves into the colonial legacy and the notion of the "civilizing mission," which continues to influence the representation of female tribal characters in Malayalam cinema. These characters are often presented as objects of rescue, depicting them as "damsels in distress" awaiting salvation

by the so-called "civilized man." This narrative reinforces a power imbalance, reinforcing the idea that tribal women need to be rescued and civilized, eroding their agency and perpetuating a hierarchy that further marginalizes them. To conduct a thorough analysis, this research utilizes a high standard of academic vocabulary and methodology. Drawing upon critical theories and concepts from intersectional feminism, the study deconstructs the problematic tropes within the selected films, examining the ways in which these representations contribute to the larger framework of gender oppression in Malayalam cinema. By unraveling the complexities of the representation of female tribal characters, this paper aims to highlight the need for a more nuanced and inclusive approach to filmmaking.

Keywords: Malayalam cinema, female tribal characters, intersectional feminism, power dynamics, representation, marginalization, stereotypes

7.50
Portrayal of Women Facing Religious and Psycho-social Conflicts in the Films Raazi (2018) and Mulk (2018)

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Mainstream Hindi cinema has long been a medium for representation of nationalism, and its several discourses. It features an array of narratives from representation of minorities through tokenism, to propagandistic hyper-nationalism, to some scanty realistic depictions. The year 2018 saw two films that questioned the ideas of patriotism, and what it means to call a place, a family, or a country one's home - especially, for women. The films Raazi (2018) and Mulk (2018) brought forth two courageous female characters in a three-fold structure- as an Indian, as a Muslim/Hindu, and most importantly, as a woman. Against this backdrop, this paper aims to discuss the journeys of 'Sehmat', an Indian Muslim undercover agent 'Sehmat', married to a Pakistani political family (Raazi) and 'Aarti', a Hindu girl defending her Muslim in-laws in a court trial

(Mulk). The study will expound the emotional, social, and political conflicts they face.The juggling of the 'personal' and 'political', and what 'home' stands for the two females, will be inquired and analyzed in the study. The process of 'othering' within and outside the family, and the question of 'choice' will be discussed in this study as well.

This study chooses these two films because even though their settings are on either sides of the Indo-Pak borders, both the films are in fact about internalized borders. Both the narratives not only display a quest for identity for Muslims in India and their otherization, but also about women who made a choice to marry into this otherization and be even more socially excluded. These films cut through the majority of nationalistic films that have no place for female sensitivities or communal tolerance. The inflection of both these concepts on off-screen and on-screen beliefs and behaviors have been studied and voiced boldly by Shakuntala Banaji (Banaji, 2006). This paper aims to analyze these experiences faced by the female leads in the two films, with respect to the socio-political climate of the nation in recent times. Through a qualitative approach, this study aims to examine the representation in the films by juxtaposing them with real events and political discourse of India.

Bryan Stone in his paper 'Interfaith Encounters in Popular Culture' discussed how the media becomes an important space for exploring the domain of interfaith relationships and how it shapes the public attitude through strategy (Stone, 2013). Inspired by this, a comprehensive analysis of the films will help shed light on the important questions pertaining to the representations of women in interfaith relationships, their choices and consequences.

Women's subjectivities in interfaith relationships often are ignored in the socio-political discourses. The study aims to bring forth these psycho-social subjectivities of this category of marginalized women, for better media representation ahead, and for creating new narratives that haven't been spoken about.

Keywords: Interfaith marriage, Cinema and Representation, Otherisation, Women's Subjectivities

7.51
Representation of Intimate Partner Violence and its Trauma impact on Victim's Memory through the Select Movie of Bollywood

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Trauma being the most personal experience in an individual's life contributes to the meaning of life prior and later to a traumatic incident. This paper deals with a Bollywood movie Thappad where an individual comes across domestic violence and her sense of life changes moving towards an unexpected future. Domestic violence has always been a major contributor of trauma of women in the society. Trauma and traumatic memory of an incident pushes an individual especially women to make decisions either backwardly or futuristic because of the trauma reaction to that incident. This paper analyses the traumatic memory of a victim and its impact on her life and the family. The role of socio-cultural factors and its impact on trauma reaction, coping mechanism etc is discussed. This paper talks about the trauma of an individual, family and their acceptance and moving towards future. This paper intends to discuss about individual trauma at physical and emotional level and vicarious trauma of a family at all levels. Trauma at social level is always under-discussed. Using Content analysis as methodology, this paper talks about how certain factors pushes a woman to a vulnerable position paving way to worst traumatic experiences and her resilience to make a future.

Keywords: Physical and Emotional Trauma, Domestic Violence, Vulnerability, Resistance.

7.52
Intersectional Vulnerabilities of Tribal Women as bonded laborers – A study on Irula Women in Tamilnadu

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The present study exposes the intersectional vulnerability of young women belonged to Irula tribe in Chengalpattu District of Tamilnadu who were entangled in bonded labor system. 10 men and 10 women were rescued by the district administration in April 2023 from a timber merchant who exploited them for a period of four years. Due to abject poverty, they were lured by local contractors promising higher wages with basic amenities and exploited them in all possible ways. The rescued workers both men and women were interviewed and their revelations were shocking. The male members of the family would be paid a minimal amount as advance and their entire family would be taken and engaged in felling trees and transporting them. Women are subjected to all types of exploitation on the basis of class, caste and gender. Though women work for 15 hours a day, they won't be paid any wages. A paltry sum towards wages will be paid to their husbands alone. They were made to stay in a shed without providing any basic amenities and privacy. They had to fetch drinking water from the nearby villages. Their children were denied education and they were also engaged in manual labor. When their husbands travel outside for transporting wood logs, the women were subjected to all types of sexual violence ranging from fondling to sexual assaults under threat and intimidation. Sometimes, their children also were sexually abused. The laborers and their families were continuously monitored by the henchmen of the employer. When they attempted to escape from the place, they were caught and assaulted in a fiendish manner. They were not allowed to leave the work place even if they are willing to pay back the advance amount. The study also revealed that only men and women belonged to Irula tribe alone were engaged as bonded laborers in these districts and exploited because of their intersectional vulnerabilities. Even after they were rescued, some of them were again kidnapped and threatened by the employer to withdraw the case. The women fearing for their lives approached the All-India Democratic Women's Association. A joint platform was created to protect those men and women and help them to take legal recourse. The unholy alliance between the local police and these employers poses myriad challenges in accessing justice.

The study depicts the pathetic state of affairs in law enforcement in spite of special legislations like Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act 1989 and the Bonded Labor Abolition Act 1976. Caste and cultural bias and the rape myths acceptance of the law enforcement agency as well as judiciary also act as an obstacle in getting justice. The study has got ample evidence to indicate that intersectional vulnerabilities of tribal women as bonded laborers have exposed them to multi-layered discrimination which could be fought by women's movements and democratic organizations.

Keywords: Inter-sectional, vulnerability, exploitation, bonded labor, cultural bias, rape myths acceptance, law enforcement

7.53

Beyond Boundaries: Interrogating the Intersectionality of Caste and Gender on Labor Practices- A Critical Study of the Kaikkola Community

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The study examines the acknowledgement of women as laborers within the community of Kaikkola using oral history methods. Kaikkola are the migrated Tamil caste weaving community forced to leave their traditional occupation due to the modernization and technological advancements. The main objectives of the present study is to understand to the intersection of gender and caste on labor of women in the kaikkola community and also tried to analyze the community's unique rituals and religious practices, such as 'Valakapp', 'cheeru' , and 'pattini choru', which are directly connected to women's reproductive roles and the implications of development of policies and programs that address the needs of Kaikkola women. The sample consists of ten case studies from different parts of Palakkad as they have settled mostly on the particular area. The findings of the study reveals that Kaikkola women were the most contributors in the production which used to take place inside the house but they remained invisible laborers in the community. While the house itself became part of the handloom production Kaikkola women were not only recognized as laborers but also forced to carry out household chores too.

7.54

Livelihood Status of Schedule Tribe Women in Agriculture Sector of Khunti District of Jharkhand

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This research study focuses on assessing the livelihood status of Schedule Tribe (ST) women in the agriculture sector of Khunti District, Jharkhand. The livelihoods of ST communities, particularly women, are crucial for sustainable development and poverty reduction in India. However, their participation in the agriculture sector has been underexplored, leading to limited knowledge about their socio-economic conditions and the challenges they face. The research employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. A representative sample of ST women engaged in agriculture has been selected from eight villages of Khunti District. The quantitative phase involves administering structured questionnaires to gather information on various dimensions of livelihoods, such as income, access to resources, agricultural practices, and market participation. The qualitative phase has involved in-depth interviews and focus group discussions to explore the lived experiences, perceptions, and barriers faced by ST women in agriculture. The findings of this study will provide valuable insights into the livelihood status of ST women in the agriculture sector of Khunti District. The research aims to identify the key factors influencing their participation, constraints faced, and opportunities for improving their livelihoods. The study will also examine the role of government policies, institutional support, and community initiatives in promoting sustainable agricultural practices and empowering ST women. The research outcomes has contributed to the existing literature on gender, agriculture, and tribal development by filling the knowledge gaps regarding the livelihood status of ST women in Khunti District. The findings will help inform policymakers, development practitioners, and relevant stakeholders in designing and implementing targeted interventions to enhance the livelihood opportunities of ST women in agriculture, fostering their socio-economic empowerment and

contributing to overall sustainable development in the region.

Keywords: Schedule Tribe women; Agriculture sector; Livelihood status; Women empowerment; Socio-economic conditions.

7.55
Attapady tribal development: challenges in public system delivery and tribal women's impoverishment

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Implementation of National Rural Livelihood Mission "Comprehensive tribal and particularly vulnerable tribal development programme" during the unprecedented escalation of Infant mortality rate in 2013 in Attappady, tribal block in Palakad, Kerala led to several blatant eye-opening lessons in understanding structural barriers in public system delivery. Attappady, eco-sensitive with 9 climatic zones is located on the Western Ghats in between the Silent Valley and the Nilgiris. Madhan Gadgil report acclaims that the and is blessed with the richest flora and fauna. As opposed to Kerala's dependence on rice as food crops and tubers, in Attapady, tribals practice Panchakrishi, which comprises of a mix of tubers, vegetables, millets, edible leaves enriching diversity and food sufficiency for a period of six to eight months.In 2013, Attapady was in the news for wrong reasons. Infant mortality rate had escalated to 54, higher than the national average and pregnant women were at high risk. This was an alarming situation for Kerala with unprecedented IMR rates and in contrast to the Human Development Indices of Kerala. (Iqbal Report,2013) As per the demand of Kerala government, a comprehensive project was specifically designed and implemented by National Rural livelihood Mission, Ministry of Rural Development. This is one of the series of projects implemented in Attapady. Beginning with Integrated tribal development programme in 1950, a plethora of schemes including the Jaica project, Area Hill development authority focussing on eco-restoration have been implemented. The project designed and implemented by NRLM focussed exclusively on the development of tribal communities as opposed to the precussors. An analysis of issues revealed that the tribal population who were 90% of the population had dwindled to 10% in 1990's. Indiscriminate land alienation through illicit transfers of land in village office, losing fertile lands to powerful settlers, waged

income and getting addicted to alcoholic brewing and consumption impacted on the culture and social fabric and health of the communities.

Tribal communities used to diversity in food consumption gave up cultivation after being pushed away by settlers, forcibly alienating their lands on to top of the hills which were unsuitable for cultivation and faced huge attacks by wild animals including elephants, which were their natural corridors. In addition to this were child marriages, poor standards of education, biased and exclusive practices in educational institutions, children crammed in hostels, impacted on health and well-being. A witness to the condition, in 2013 January, I saw the emaciated women with severe loss of self-esteem, diminished in status, eating polished rice from the PDS and tomatoes. From the richest and diverse cuisine, their consumption depended on PDS. Further probing clearly revealed the gap in implementation of all public systems and services. Controlled by elite communities, the schemes were diverted to the benefit of all the settlers. Till date, the land alienation stands at- acres. The NRLM, MORD project with an understanding and critical enquiry was designed with the support of tribal women and local organisation, Thaikula Sangha, led by Maruthi Mari and Bhagvati, women from the Irula tribal communities. Beginning with community kitchen, managed by the neighbourhood groups of women, the project developed community-based institutions of tribal women – NHG, oorusamithi(village organisation) and panchayatsamithi(panchayat level Federation) of tribal women to prevent elite capture of schemes. Community kitchen was managed by tribal NHG's with revival of traditional ragi kalli (mix of ragi and rice) and catering to pregnant and lactating women, children, elderly women, people with disabilities and mental challenges, etc. This was followed up with mobilisation of pregnant and lactating women to hospitals and tracked through Jatak, community-based monitoring mechanism managed by NHM. Bridge school with residential facilities were developed to mainstream drop-out children and bridge courses were managed in all hamlets for preventing drop-out and mainstreaming children in education. Producer groups were initiated with women engaged in farming, goat-rearing and non-timber forest produce. Attempts at aggregation and procurement was initiated. Through a mill for processing and packaging of millets, agricultural products were sold with brand name. Vegetables produced locally were brought and consumed for community kitchens. Social development awareness was undertaken with support of Thaikula sangha, tribal women's organisation, The beverage shop with large turnover was closed as a result of concerted two months long protest orchestrated struggle by tribal women. Financial inclusion of institutions was achieved with disbursement and management by institutions of tribal women. These differing funds were for a variety of purposes like meeting exigencies, food, nutrition, health needs and addressing livelihood needs.

Livelihood enhancement was undertaken through regeneration of panchakrishi, goat-rearing and NTFP collection, aggregation, and marketing by PLF's of tribal women. Block level federation of tribal women was formed which worked on par with the project management unit designed to render technical support. Decision making and financial powers were delegated to the Block Federation with technical support of PMU. The project suffered a severe setback and back lash from the existing elite and vested interests who critiqued the direct flow of benefits to the community, the capacitation knowledge and information of the community. This suffered a severe back lash with murder of Madhu, a mentally unstable young tribal man by 14 accused and the mass mobilisation of tribal communities for justice. The project faced severe attack by the state for institution building and organisation of tribal communities. This project digressed form its earlier mission mode to a departmental mode with entire control and decision making the PMU. The block Samithi has been dispelled and the panchayat Samithi reduced to rubber stamps. The political will for effectively improving the quality-of-life index is missing. This is a paper which would delve into the state's role in preserving interests of privileged and entrenched interests in sabotaging development of most impoverished communities.

Keywords: Development of tribal communities, federations, elite capture, public system delivery

7.56
Understanding the experiences of social injustice in the lives of dhuku women

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The kind of violence meted out on dhuku women needs to be understood within the nature of social relations in their social setting, that prompts us to initiate a discussion on the intersectional nature of vulnerability of dhuku women, ostracised for cohabitating under dhuku, and their experience of subjugation, social exclusion in both covert and overt forms, violence that perhaps remain symbolic or subsumed in the banality of everydayness. Dhuku is a cohabitation practice among the Munda and Oraon tribes in Jharkhand, where young cohabiters begins to live together outside any official conjugal arrangement. More precisely,

it is the women in dhuku who is said to intrude in her partners's house in order to cohabit together. Historically and as per the field evidence, dhuku is increasingly practiced by the OBC community and subjected to absolute ignominy among the Hindu dominated villages, wherein women who choose dhuku over marriage are discredited. These instances of social exclusion from the community which are blatant face of discrimination constitute as a form of violence on dhuku women. This form of social exclusion can be exercised through both coercive, non-coercive measures, alongside the trivialisation of intra familial violence that invariably extends to the community space. This phenomena further triggers political and economical exclusion which can deteriorate the living condition of these women, further an infringement upon their rights, marginalising them and unfair treatment that amounts to social injustice. The intersectional nature of their vulnerability and marginality leads to constraints on access to resources and making choices.

The theoretical understanding of social exclusion suggest that it puts partial or absolute restriction on people from certain social groups from accessing rights and entitlements, and therefore becomes a tool of social injustice. It deprives dhuku women of social recognition and a dignified stature in and outside the family. This paper enquires into the violence perpetrated on dhuku women through the framework of social exclusion. The observations are based on primary data is based on the action research conducted in Gumla during 2018-2019. Dhuku remains an impression of shame on women who does dhuku, pronounced as Dhukua. Since dhuku lacks any legal and social recognition, it puts women at extreme vulnerable position. Another significant objective is to understand their experiences of marginality and violence contribute in the feminist epistemology. Towards the conclusion, the study would look into the ways a positive and affirmative awareness on the relevant issue can help in understanding the unseen and unrecognised social injustice on dhuku women.

Keywords: social injustice, social exclusion, marginality, tribal cohabitation, dhuku, Jharkhand

Single Women in India and Right to Dignity: A Psycho-social Study

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There are 74.1 million single women in India as per the Census data. They constitute 12 percent of the total female population of the country. There has been an increase of 39 percent in their number in 2011 over 2001 (Census of India, 2011). If the trend has increased at the same rate the number of single women will touch 80 million in the next census of India. 74 million might appear microscopic minority, but these women are entitled to the right to dignity under the provisions of our Constitution. Widows, divorced, unmarried and married but separated women come under the category of single women. According to the 2011 census, 56 million widows are there in India. The group also includes 13 million single mothers. These single women are not a homogenous category. Research studies, though a few, have stated that the lives and experiences of single women vary dramatically depending on their socio-economic status and where they live. Life is much more difficult for the 44 million single women who live in rural areas. Widows are abandoned. Single women experience sexual abuse, financial hardship and are frequently denied property rights in rural India. A stigma is attached to the widows and the unmarried in our patriarchal society. Widowhood In many families is a very insubstantial period in the life of a woman underlined by impoverishment, lack of social support and a prominent risk of mortality. In many communities, the widow is compelled to marry the brother-in-law so that family property can be controlled. Never-married women have little agency in rural households in India. In contrast to this, the problems experienced by urban single women are distinctly different. Some of them are also exploited in a distinctly different way. All these women are deprived of their right to dignity.

Women's rights are Human rights. The right to dignity is a human right under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Constitution of India. The right to live with dignity is a Fundamental Right under Article 21 of our Constitution. It implies that every person has the inalienable right to live with dignity which means without discrimination. In other words, single women are entitled to have respect from others as well as from the State. This right was reinforced by the apex court of India in Maneka Gandhi vs. the Union of India.

This right constitutes the core base of some other human rights like Freedom from torture and inhuman punishment, the right to choose one's profession, freedom from slavery or servitude and adequate access to food and shelter. This paper examines how the right to dignity of single women is affected in India while interacting with the state and society to get recognition from the administration as citizens. The study has adopted a qualitative research design and the universe for the research is Odisha. The reason for selecting Odisha is that the state has a very traditional society though many women from lower to higher classes have accepted a working life. The study has tried to arrive at a conclusion through the narratives of women. Narratives contain the life struggle of a woman, her experiences in negotiating with the administration as a citizen and the barriers to getting the entitlements. Therefore, the research has tried to explore the socio-economic conditions of single women in India through a psycho-social study.

Keywords: Single women, Right to dignity, Patriarchy, India

7.58
Status of Khanjar Bhat Tribe Women

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This is a proposed study on the health status of women of Khanjar Bhat tribe, a nomadic tribe, said to have migrated to Karnataka from Rajasthan. This tribe is notified under Backward Class Category by the Karnataka State government which should have been classified under the nomadic tribe category. Denotified and Nomadic Communities are the most neglected and marginalized sections of Indian society. They are victims of stigma, social neglect and exploitation for centuries. Even after so many decades of Independence, they lack even the most basic amenities of life. Women among them suffer the most. Their literacy rate is very low. Most of them don't have access to health care facilities. They suffer from a number of atrocities not only by people of other communities but within their own families. One of the major problems faced by policy makers has been the lack of relevant data and information about various socio-economic issues concerning these communities. Since this section of society has been on the margins for centuries, not many research studies have been conducted on their problems, which make the task of policy makers difficult for developing adequate

welfare policies and schemes for them. Therefore, we hope this present study will be able to bridge this gap and will provide an insight in the problems faced by women of these social groups. This study is a humble effort to understand the problems of women of Khanjar Bhat tribe in Karnataka, which involves frequent visits to various settlements of these communities, holding meetings with women, and conducting focused consultations with community leaders and other stakeholders. The study aimed at having an objective assessment of the effectiveness of various welfare programmes and interventions undertaken by the government to help these women enjoy a full and decent life with dignity and achieve the greatest degree of self-reliance and social integration. It looked into the qualitative as well as quantitative changes taking place as a result of their interaction with other communities in an effort to improve their standard of living, and to remove the barriers for their full and effective participation in social and economic development. The study also examines the needs of special care focusing on the most vulnerable women belonging to this tribe. The present study would adopt an exploratory-cum-descriptive design to gather the relevant information and data. The exploratory design would be chosen in order to collect basic statistical data to have an in-depth knowledge of the socio-economic status of women of this tribe as well as the impact of various laws on their livelihood and their relationship with other communities. The descriptive design would be helpful in getting to know the inner most feelings, views and attitudes of the respondents. The study also tries to critically evaluate the impact of various welfare programme and schemes meant for their development, and identify other influencing factors, and make necessary recommendations for the effective alternative strategies.

Keywords: Khanjar Bhat, tribe, women, health, criminal tribe, stigma, denotified tribe, social and economic issues, government schemes,

7.59

Negotiating the (Extra) Ordinariness of Religious Violence: Agency and Meaning-Making for Muslim Women in Delhi

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With a right-wing, majoritarian Hindu party coming to power in 2014, India has turned into an "ethnic democracy" (Jaffrelot, 2019) with mob lynchings, hate crimes, islamophobia and incidents of religious violence rising exponentially against the Muslim minority (Chatterji, Hansen, & Jaffrelot, 2019 ; Mehta, 2018). Building on Das (2006) and Arif (2016), I use the everyday as an analytic to understand how incidents and one-time events of religious violence become iterative, structural and a dimension of life for Muslim women in Delhi. I qualify this dialectical relationship between the event and the everyday, wherein the everyday is always attached to/ shaped by the event, as the "(extra)ordinariness of religious violence". My framework helps to underscore the falsity of the temporal binary between the event and the everyday when it comes to religious violence. In the aftermath of the religious violence in Delhi in February 2020 1 and the large-scale public protest against the discriminatory Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) in 2019, my paper uses gender as a vantage point to understand the articulations of oppression and resistance in the context of religious violence through narratives of Muslim women in Delhi.

Instead of framing Muslim women as "passive receivers of suffering" (Aretxaga, 1997), my paper argues that their everyday acts of remembrance and emotional and economic labor towards community building acquire and embody political meaning and agency. I use Mahmood's (2012) concept of "agency", to explore how the everyday practices of (un)making the self and the community in the face of and in the aftermath of religious violence are not simply politics of resistance but ways of exercising freedom, imagining a different life, finding and creating meaning and building sociality all while negotiating the hauntings (Gordon, 2008) of religious violence and the enduring presence of loss. I qualify these everyday practices, shaped by religion and emotions, as "beautiful experiments" wherein minoritarian lives "make living an art" (Hartman, 2019, p. xiv). By analyzing how everyday lives of Muslim women embody a political import through the juxtaposition of trauma and hope, suffering and aspiration, oppression and dissent, my paper nonessentializes Muslim communities as "damaged objects of

research" (Tuck, 2009). Instead, I focus on the cultural politics of emotions (Ahmed, 2004) that manifest as affective, material and religious practices of rebuilding oneself and the community in the (extra)ordinariness of religious violence. My paper therefore investigates and reveals the possibilities of resistance when one occupies position of marginality and demonstrates vulnerability not as a sign of oppression but as a portal and expression of agency (Butler, 2016) , which is not unbridled.

The narratives, memories, and stories of Muslim women that I present in my paper are important because Muslim women are often relegated as forgotten subjects in the public imagination of an authoritarian Indian state. Therefore, while my paper is an inquiry into the everyday life-worlds of Muslim women, it raises important questions of how the registers of gender, religion and the nation-state rework structures of power and oppression.

Keywords: Religious Violence, Muslim Women, Marginality, Vulnerability, Agency

7.60
A case study on caste discrimination with Dalit women journalists

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Information age is a characteristic of the 20 th Century. Indian Media underwent enormous development, although Dalits and various marginalized groups have received a very limited space and their voices are lacking in many journals as well as electronic media. The first Dalit voice was introduced in an essay titled "Mahar Mangachya dukhavishayi"which was authored by Mukta Salve and published in the journal "Dnyanodaya" in 1855. Mukta was Savitribai Phule's student. Raise a question regarding inequality in society. Since 1920, Dr. Ambedkar has led the social justice movement that Mahatma Phule and Shahu Maharaj started in Maharashtra. Dr. Ambedkar recognized the significance of newspapers and on January 31, 1920, he introduced the Marathi front nightly 'Mooknayak' to address the issues of oppressed community. Mooknayak's efforts to provide the voiceless

a forum has motivated many Dalits to work as journalists. Dalit journalists taking efforts to educate society and propagate the ideology of Phule-Shahu-Ambedkar. Advocating for equality in every aspect of life therefore highlighting the issues regarding marginalized community. By teaching people how to eradicate caste-based discrimination, the media can play a significant role in shaping society. Unfortunately, due to the supremacy of the upper castes, it does not. On the other side, they are unwilling to make room for Dalits in the media industry. Little to no space for Dalits Whereas Dalit women has negligible space in the media. The proposed case study on Dalit women journalists explores the issue of caste-based inequalities and discrimination in the media.

Keywords: Dalit women, Media, Caste discrimination, Representation

7.61
Investigating the Nature of Exploitation of Dalit Women in a State with a Predominantly Adivasi Population

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This study investigates the nature and extent of exploitation experienced by Dalit women in a state with a majority Adivasi population. Dalit women often endure multiple layers of discrimination stemming from their caste and gender identities, leaving them susceptible to various forms of exploitation. Despite facing unique challenges within an Adivasi majority context, their struggles are often overshadowed by the focus on Adivasi community issues by development practitioners. This research aims to delve into the specific challenges and experiences of Dalit women as they navigate complex social, economic, and political structures. Furthermore, it sheds light on their significant representation among migrants and domestic workers, which has received limited attention in previous studies. By highlighting the plight of Dalit women in this context, the study seeks to bring attention to their marginalized status and foster a better understanding of their distinct issues. Ultimately, the research intends to contribute to the formulation of targeted interventions and policies that can empower and protect the rights of Dalit women, thus addressing their exploitation

and promoting social justice in the Adivasi dominant state. The present study will be conducted in Jamtara District of Jharkhand by using qualitative method of research. Oral Narratives will be used as the primary source of information.

Keywords: Dalit Women, Exploitation, Jharkhand

7.62
Shrinking Spaces for Adivasi Women's Property rights: A Study of 'Ghar-Jawae' Marriages Among Santals

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SKMU DUMKA

The customary laws of Santals offer very limited property rights to the women. She has no claims on either her ancestral land or her husband's property. As a widow she only gets usufructuary rights over her husband's land. And when divorced, she cannot even claim any maintenance from her husband. However, there is one small space in the customary laws where a daughter can get proprietary rights over her father's land. When a daughter is married in 'ghar-jawae' form, the husband becomes a 'house son-in-law'. Since the 'house husband' leaves his own village and permanently stays with the girl, therefore the customary laws allow the daughter proprietary rights over her ancestral lands. This paper attempts to study this practice among the Santals. It is based on a field work of three villages in Dumka, a district in Jharkhand and it has involved focused group discussion with the Santal women and men. The field work reveals that in past one decade the prevalence of this practice has reduced a lot. The villagers do not allow such marriages to happen and offer severe objections to parents who are willing to marry their single daughters in 'ghar-jawae' form. As a result, these marriages have become rare. Thus, the space of property rights for Santal women, that was already very limited, has shrunk greatly in recent times. This makes the Santal women economically helpless and more and more dependent on the men.

Intersectional Vulnerabilities in Bengali Dalit Women Writing

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Feminists have argued for long that Dalit women are oppressed not just on basis of their caste but also on basis of their class and gender. (Chakraborty: 2003) The intertwined issues of caste, class and gender has since then been recognized and studied at length. In this context, in my paper I will look at Bengali Dalit women writing in order to study how intersectional oppression of caste, class and gender lead to further marginalization of Dalit women. Through their own experiences of poverty, Dalit women writers have been able to capture the experiences of poor Dalit women. Their writings have highlighted the daily struggles of poor Dalit women. This paper will refer to short stories and plays written by 3 prominent Dalit women writers from Bengal: Kalyani Thakur, Manju Bala and Namita Das. Kalyani Thakur is a leading Dalit feminist and social activist who describes herself as Dalit womanist 1 who believes that 'writing is an act of resistance'. She is a poet, essayist and short story writer. Manju Bala is contemporary of Kalyani Thakur. She is one of the most powerful voices among Dalit women writers in Bengal.

1   The concept of womanism was formulated by the black feminists and it focuses on race, class, and gender. Womanism is a social theory based on the history and everyday experiences of women of colour, especially black women. Writer Alice Walker coined the term 'womanist' in a short story, 'Coming Apart' in 1979. Walker defined a 'womanist' as a black feminist or feminist of colour. She sees womanism as a theory/movement for the survival of the black race; a theory that takes into consideration the experiences of black women, black culture, black myths, spiritual life, and orality.

2   She is often described as an activist and short story writer. Both Kalyani Thakur and Manju Bala have been widely translated in the recent years. Namita Das is a Dalit dramatist and writer who have performed in numerous plays over the last 45 years. Namita Das is primarily known as a playwright but she has also written short stories and poems.

This paper will analyze short stories and drama by these writers in order to study

intersectional vulnerabilities of poor Dalit women. For this purpose, I will look at short stories by Kalyani Thakur and Manju Bala and one drama by Namita Das, which highlights the intersectional oppression of caste, gender and class. Through an analysis of their writings this paper will argue that for them education is crucial in order to interrogate the caste and class hierarchy. Their hope for social change and being free from the daily struggles for livelihood is only through education. Following Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, their only hope for emancipation lied in education. The education is recurring theme in the writings of Dalit women in Bengal. Thus this paper will argue how education is crucial for marginalised women to fight issues of livelihood which arise from their social location of being Dalit as well as poor women.

7.64
Locating Intersectional vulnerabilities among the teen-age girls during conflict: narratives from the field

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Conflict affects people at large and women specifically. The most visible effect of conflict is displacement which quite often leads to injuries and death. While women in most of the communities are seen as the honor of the community making them subject to many conflicts related crime. As, inflicting violence against them signifies inflicting violence against their entire community. Thus, putting gendered control over them is seen as means to "protect" the honour women and the honour of their community. Although this holds true for all women but unmarried teenage girls comprise the most vulnerable group among the women. They are under the threat of abduction and other war related crime and apart from other gendered control put upon them marring them off is considered as a way to ensure their safety. The present study informed by all these aspects would also try to examine what is the gendered control put on the teenage girls of the two-study village in Chirang district of Assam. Along with that locating the intentionality among the teenage girls of the study villages that formed their experience of conflict is also under the purview of the paper.

Methodology: The present research used qualitative research strategy. Two villages selected for the study are inhibited by two communities namely Bodo's and Bengali Muslims, situated next to each other in Chirang district of Assam. A semi structured interview schedule was used for data collection. Teen age girls from both the villages who were present during the time of the ethnic conflict of 2012 were purposively selected for the study.

Findings: The study tries to find out what are the consequences of conflict for teenage girls from both the villages. How their experiences are different from teenage boys from their villages. What types of gendered controlled they were subjected to. Along with that how ethnicity plays its part in making the difference in experiencing the ethnic conflict for the girls. Further the study also tries to find out the intersectionality specific to them.

Keywords: ethnic conflict, teen age girls, intersectionality, Assam.

7.65
An exploratory study on Honour Killing Case Study from Tamil Nadu

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In India, the caste system is a rigid social structure maintained by the practice of both endogamy and exogamy. Patriarchy and gender play vital roles in the sustainability of the caste system. Therefore, it is inevitable to address gender discrimination in our society by analysing the intersectionality of caste and gender in marriage institutions. These days the increased number or reporting number of honour killings, caste-based sexual violence and casted based violence creates a dreadful threat to the younger generation. After the social justice and legal reforms, citizens of India without caste discrimination access education and economic status. Therefore, the chances of inter-caste marriage are increasing. Individual, to an extent wants to exercise their autonomy with constitutional rights were facing threats of honour killing and non-acceptance by family, tend to grow alienated from society. Thus, accepting inter-caste marriage by family and society is a big question. They were supposed to live in constant fear of murder

and casteist violence, which might put them in a grave situation to lead their life. Therefore, it is necessary to address their issues for long run in transforming the discriminatory caste system. This paper analyses the trends and detailed mapping of how and why honour killings happen; through using both primary and secondary data; using qualitative and case study method.

Many scholars and social reformers like Periyar and Ambedkar were suggesting inter-caste marriage as a tool to eradicate discriminatory caste system. Therefore, from Ambedkar and to other social reformer's works gives the history of caste, religion and discrimination; which in the matter of caste and gender play a vital role in oppressing humans in the name of differences. One of its primary rules was controlling sexuality of women and prohibiting exogamous therefore, the endogamy was being the primary cause of these honour killings and sustainability of caste system. Ambedkar in his book Annihilation of Caste says that Caste system sustaining for a longer period of time due to which imbibes the patron of constructing male and female sexual accessibility; by the way caste system hold the power of controlling male-female ratio. Therefore it has the need to keep the safe ratio of male and female and to stop exogamy to maintain the caste hierarchy. Albeena Shakil, (2012) critically analysis the NCRB report 2012 in order to explore the loop holes of our judicial system which preys democracy in a huge context and leaving gender behind the screen. There is no specific data on inter-caste marriage is available. There are studies and surveys conducted by the Indian Statistical Institute, Delhi in 2017 and the Indian Human Development Survey 2011-12 to examine the impact of education on one of India's most resilient caste-based practices. According to the study, inter-caste marriages are more frequent in Rural areas (5.2%) than in Urban areas (4.9%). According to the National Council of Applied Economic Research in 2016, about 5% of marriages are inter-caste marriages. But even before legalising self-respect marriage, society accepted inter-caste marriage from 1928 onwards in a great number. We should focus on social and cultural changes, not just legal changes, to address dreadful threats like honour killing and discriminatory social institutions.

Keywords: caste, honour killing, intersectionality, social structure, marriage institution

7.66
Indian woman, 'veil'- (a loose end of Saree), and politics of Caste-capitalist aesthetics

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In the Indian social system clothing has various cultural and social aspects. Clothes have to represent the cultural role. A person's clothing has been influenced by unequal relations of caste, gender, religion, region, and class. The Saree is an important cloth in Indian clothes. The practice of wearing a saree or a similar garment in Indian attire has been present since ancient times in the Indian subcontinent. As the culture began to develop during the Shishunaga and Nanda dynasties (642–320 BCE), women's different methods and styles of wearing sarees emerged according to the aesthetic sense. A woman embraces the design of the clothes from the social and cultural position she comes from. In a patriarchal culture like India, men have been given the right over women's body, their dresses, and their ornaments, so women's bodies and dresses have been seen in terms of men's sense of beauty. Saree is a form of clothing that remains central to women's clothing. The 'veil'- a loose end of saree is given more importance in terms of beauty. Casteist aesthetics ascribes grace and prestige to the veil. A veil on a woman's head is considered to be a symbol of her modesty and humility. Taking a veil over the head is a symbol of respect for the other person and also a symbol of one's own limitations. Upper-caste women wearing a veil up to the eyes or over the head are considered noble and upholding caste dignity. The more a woman's head is covered with veil, the more noble and beautiful she is according to established Casteist aesthetics. These restrictions have been imposed on women to strengthen the caste system through the medium of the establishment of the idea of Streedharma (woman's duty), Streecharitra (women's character), and streeswabhav (women's nature). The criteria for wearing a veil have been set differently for the women of the Dalit-Bahujan and upper caste women. Upper caste woman wears veil on their head, working Dalit-Bahujan woman on their waist and Dalit-Bahujan women who are forced to work as entertainer or sex worker are not allowed to wear veil or forced to throw their veil on the demand of upper caste men.

Women have been resisting these Casteist and patriarchal aesthetics from time to time. The Bahujan woman saint Janabais takes the position of throwing veil-which is a symbol of patriarchal restrictions for her, in the public space. She said, "Removing veil from the head and putting it on my shoulders, I will go to the bazaars, I will take up the veena on my shoulders, now I have someone else's in my mind- "Through this, she resists established notions of woman's duty, beauty, and modesty." In this paper we use the research method of historical analysis, also we will take interviews with 15 women from different castes and backgrounds. Taking veil as a symbol of aesthetics. Using Pierre Bourdieu's concept of symbolic violence and symbolic capital this research paper will discuss how women's bodies are being politicized by established Casteist aesthetics. And hence what is the role of caste-class-patriarchy in the commodification of the female body? How Indian women from different castes have been resisting this commodification. Examine the correlation and politics between caste-patriarchy-capitalism and the Symbol of veil.

Keywords: Indian women, caste, capitalism, gender, intersectionality, cultural production, feminist anthropology, symbolic capital, symbolic violence, socio-cultural politics, aesthetics

7.67
Social and cultural injustices experienced by the woman of Maharashtra

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Violation of human rights based on gender and the need to prioritize the explanation of human rights information are essential. Basic human rights include food and clothing, which are protected and preserved under the Indian Constitution. Discrimination and differential treatment based on gender in society constitute a form of social injustice. It is crucial to prioritize social justice for a meaningful life.

Gender-based inequalities are evident in Indian society due to the influence of religion. This inequality means that the violation of human rights occurs for

every individual, and it is necessary to promote respect and fearlessness in every person as part of human rights. This right is essential for the development and happiness of individuals, and creating a situation in which every individual in society is respected is the main goal of human rights protection and promotion.

Human rights are inherent in every individual by nature, and they are acquired without any discrimination, providing each person with a minimum quality of life. Protecting and encouraging human rights is the primary responsibility of the state when the government recognizes an agreement. They bear the responsibility to take action and be accountable for the protection and integrity of it. The first step is to take action and hold the responsible parties accountable when violations occur. This is the role of the government. The research is necessary to understand the gender-based discrimination and who is affected by it. For example, a girl is sold as a commodity in various forms of economic transactions, and her worth is measured by poverty and money. The women in the family are treated as slaves. What does a woman get in return for being a part of the family? It should be seen what benefits women receive. Her daily routine is like that of a servant in the family. Women have no say in any decision made within the family. They are not even considered in any decision-making process.

Therefore, women in the family are constantly reminded of their servitude. This behavior is a clear violation of their human rights and is considered an illegal act. In conclusion, such behavior is unacceptable, and society and the government need to take action against such violations of human rights.

7.68
Care or Control? Therapeutic Interventions Around Multiply-Marginalized Girls in India's Juvenile Justice System

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Independent Researcher

How do institutions established for the care and protection of girls become institutions of confinement and punishment for multiply-marginalized girls? Existing conceptualizations of India's juvenile justice system have largely neglected an examination of how concepts of childhood, care, and protection

are structured by caste, class, gender, sexuality, and religion. My paper studies the juvenile justice system of India, focusing on the policies and practices of children's homes which house girls who are designated as Children in Need of Care and Protection by the Indian state. Drawing on critical analyses of the policy documents and ethnographic research at a juvenile institution in Delhi, I examine how India's juvenile justice system conceptualizes and enacts the care and protection of girls, particularly girls who belong to marginalized caste, class and religious backgrounds. I argue that the juvenile justice system's policies and practices of care and protection punish multiply-marginalized girls through systems of confinement and control.

My paper's focus will be on therapeutic interventions which are framed as a key technique through which the care and protection of girls in enacted within juvenile institutions. There has been an increasing involvement of various therapeutic experts within juvenile institutions in India who provide care in the form of counseling, psychiatric support, and vocational education. I argue in this chapter that far from enacting care in the lives of girls, therapeutic interventions in India's juvenile justice system entrench Brahmanical patriarchal constructions of multiply-marginalized girls as incapable, unreliable, and hypersexual. I argue that therapeutic care interventions inside juvenile institutions, rather than healing girls, lead to girls feeling isolated and experiencing a shrinking of liberatory possibilities in their lives, both inside and outside juvenile institutions. My paper draws on and contributes to research in the fields of feminist critiques of Brahmanical patriarchy, feminist perspectives on justice, and feminist critiques of the state. The paper specifically engages with the following questions raised in the concept note of subtheme 7 of the IAWS 2023 conference— "How have such socially excluded women encountered the collective entities of the State, civil society, market and law?" and "the experiences of social and cultural injustice within communities".

7.69

Women Kirtankars: A critical study of a well known practice in Maharashtra via lenses of Gender and Sexuality

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I grew up in Marathwada region of Maharashtra. In this region many people are devotees of deity 'Vithhal' of the town Pandharpur in Solapur district. In most of the families the devotion towards has been carried out through generations. Our family is one of them. Fasting on 'Ekadashi', performing 'Bhajans' on the night of ekadashi, going to listen 'Kirtans', performing kirtans, walking to Pandharpur from their hometown for Ashadhi Ekadashi (a main ekadashi of the year), on the second day of ekadashi performing a food donation, etc. Such activities are very normal in their day-to-day life. This following of people is known as Varkari Sampraday. Among all different practices, Kirtan plays an important part in Varkari Sampraday. 'Kirtan' is a semi musical form where a person narrates Abhangas to common people. Abhang is a hymn of praise to lord Vitthal. These Abhangas are written by renowned saints of Bhakti Movement. Initially Saint Namdev, who was a Shudra, translated the Bhagwad Geeta into Marathi. He led the foundation of Bhakti Movement in Maharashtra. He was the one who founded the Kirtans, a melodious form to praise the god. The practice of Kirtan included women, shudras and outcastes in listening and learning about Geeta. Which was initially forbidden to them by Brahmanism.

A person who narrates these Abhangas to commoners is called 'Kirtankar'. A kirtankar takes professional lessons to learn these Abhangas and different Vedas. Then articulate them in the local language, and spread knowledge and awareness. My paternal uncle was a professional Kirtankar. He learnt about performing Kirtan. He used to travel to different villages to perform Kirtan. Because of being in a joint family, we grew up seeing that culture in our household. My father is also a one of the followers of Vithhal, in between his schedule he and my mother used to make time to visit Pandharpur at least once a year. My father and his friends gather together on Ekadashi and they sing Bhajans at night. It is their monthly tradition. In the month of Diwali, my father used to go to an event called Kakada Aarti at dawn. Where men used to gather together and sing different kinds of bhajans. He used to take me with him. I sat there and sang amongst them. At that time, I was the only girl between those men. Some of his

friends were not totally happy with my presence there, they used to ignore me. Our family members used to go to listen to Kirtan. My father and mother used to take me with them to listen to such kirtans. Mostly I preferred sitting with my father, because all the men used to sit in a big pandal close to Kirtan performers and women were seated at some distance. So when I went with my father I was able to sit very close to kirtankar maharaj. I liked that type of seating arrangement and that spotlight. At that time, I measured this experience only in the sense of comfort- discomfort, like- dislike. I never wondered why my mother used to sit at a distance from the pandal, without any cloth on the floor and in the dark. But after the Women's Studies education, I understood the social hierarchies in such public settings. Earlier, only men used to perform Kirtan, nowadays women do it too. So from being a part of this setting, I started wondering how women who used to sit at a distance started to talk about god, and spread their knowledge on the topic.

There is a whole conversation in some areas on how these kirtankar women dress, talk, behave and overall convey themselves. There are some who dress as men, who are questioned for their boldness. Some perform in a very masculine manner, who are questioned for their ability. Some who wear saree are appreciated for their decent attire. Some who speak calmly, in a very feminine way, are praised for being real women. There is one-woman kirtankar Shivleela Patil in Maharashtra, she dresses in an attire which is considered as men's attire. Her nature of delivering the kirtan is very masculine. Recently she has become very famous in Maharashtra for her way of speaking. But at the same time, I have seen some of the men criticizing her for how she carries herself around men. When they talk about Shivleela most of them talk about her dressing, way of talking, way she carries herself, etc. When the woman who dresses in saree performs, her chastity is celebrated. Here, it will also be interesting to look at married women who perform Kirtan. Is there any difference between how married and unmarried women are treated? Are they only accepted by their performance or their social acceptance depends on their marital status. Also, what are the different factors affecting these women's respectability? How does masculinity and femininity affect their kirtan performance? Is there some kind of sexual politics there? Or is there some other kind of power dynamics present here? And to study how sexuality of these women kirtankars plays an important role in building their identity. These are some of the questions I want to explore in this paper.

7.70

The Socio-Economic Determinants of Women's Experiences in Polygynous Marriages in Kerala: An Intersectional Perspective

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Polygamy, the hotly contested and widely debated marital practice prevalent globally, is a marriage system in which a spouse of either sex may have more than one mate at the same time. However, in contemporary practice, polygamy predominantly takes the form of polygyny, where a man has multiple wives simultaneously, which is the specific focus of this study. Even though the practice of polygamy became illegal in India uniformly for all of its citizens, under section 494 of Indian Penal Code in 1956, Muslim men are exempted from this prohibition, and are permitted to have four wives. However, as per the National Family Health Survey report of 2019-20, 0.8% of the total population in Kerala are polygamous, out of which 1.5% Muslims, 0.5% Hindus; 0.3% others are practicing polygyny in the state. It is in this specific context that this study is looking into the experiences of women in polygynous marriages in Kerala, specifically focusing on the Muslim community, to explore the intersection of various socio-economic determinants that shape their experiences as wives within the practice. The study is looking specifically into Muslim polygyny in the state since it is the only legally approved practice. The main objectives of this study are to document the general socioeconomic background of the women in polygyny and to explore how the different socioeconomic statuses intersect to shape the experiences of these women as the wives within the practice. The study will take a sample of 100 women in polygyny in Kerala, by adopting a purposive sampling technique. The study will use a mixed method approach by collecting both qualitative and quantitative data through an extensive field work. The qualitative data will be collected by conducting in-depth face-to-face interviews with the participants, and the quantitative data through a survey, by administering an interview schedule prepared by the researcher. Later, the quantitative data will be analysed using the statistical software SPSS, and qualitative data using a thematic analysis. The study will be adopting a triangulation design and the quantitative and qualitative data will be integrated to get a general picture.

Keywords: Women, Polygamy, Polygyny, Experiences, Socio-economic Status,

Intersectionality

7.71
Nature's Proximity, Resources' Scarcity: Unveiling the Everyday Struggles and Survival of women of Parahaiya Community (PVTG) in Nawa Bazar Block, Daltongunj District

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The Parahaiya community in Nawabazar Block, Daltongunj District, lives in close proximity to nature, yet grapples with the scarcity of essential resources. This study seeks to explore the daily struggles and survival strategies employed by the Parahaiya community as they navigate the challenges posed by their natural environment and limited access to resources. The Parahaiya community is one of the most vulnerable communities among PVTGs (Perticularly Vulnurable Tribal groups) in Jharkhand. The community's unique geographic location near forests and mountains brings both benefits and hardships. On one hand, the proximity to nature provides opportunities for sustenance and cultural practices deeply rooted in their ancestral traditions. On the other hand, the scarcity of vital resources poses significant obstacles to their well-being and development. Through in-depth interviews, ethnographic observations, and community engagement, this research aims to unveil the multifaceted realities faced by the Parahaiya community. It investigates their efforts to secure food, water, shelter, and other essential resources for their daily lives. Additionally, the study examines the community's resilience, adaptive strategies, and reliance on traditional knowledge systems to mitigate the challenges posed by resource scarcity.

The findings of this research shed light on the intricate relationship between the Parahaiya community, their surrounding natural environment, and the socio-economic factors that contribute to their struggles. By understanding their experiences and identifying potential avenues for support and development, this study aims to inform policies and interventions that promote the well-being and empowerment of the Parahaiya community. It also highlights the need for sustainable resource management practices and equitable distribution of resources

to ensure the community's long-term resilience and prosperity. This study endeavours to comprehensively chronicle and illuminate the myriad challenges that women encounter, magnifying their voices with unwavering clarity, while delving into the depths of their resilience through the powerful medium of photo and video documentation.

7.72
नथुली (Nathuli, nose ring): Changing meanings of Nathuli in and outside of marriage in Gadhwal community

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The existing knowledge produced in association of marriage, family, kinship in South Asia though helpful to be an entry point, is insufficient to analyse different cultural practices of marriage and their complexities. Hence, the need for an extensive study and production of knowledge of different cultures, community, ethnic group characterised by women and marginalised voices which can talk across unequal worlds. Accompanying to this, my keen interest in studying marriage, gender and sexuality has prompted me to choose 'Nath' as site to study the construction of different identities in Gadhwal region. Beauty of married women in contemporary world is an amalgamation of modernity and culture. Many social scholars like Smitha Radhakrishnan (2011), Meenakshi Thapan (2004) and Wajihah Hamid (2015) have interrogated cultural practices, customs formulating beauty and femininity. The idea of beauty is constructed in heteronormative terms through the interplay of desire, region, caste, class and sexuality. Different communal and cultural identities have marked women's embodiment and also the idea of women's beauty and gender roles. Thus, consolidating auspicious bride and women. This paper interrogates how Nath/Nathuli (Nose ring) consolidates identity of heterosexual Hindu upper caste married women in Gadhwal region.

In the Gadhwal region, the social equilibrium is tilted towards upper castes, Brahmins and Thakurs who are in large proportion compared to other regions in India. And as culture though a social structure is not rigid, it changes, therefore meanings of its tools also change.

The study also focuses on the changing meanings of Nath. Connotations of Nathuli changes when it intersects with region, caste and varied sexual orientation. The study will further investigate that in Indian context and particularly in Gadhwal region ideas of beauty do not have linear meanings, it is attached with different aspects such as auspiciousness, aspiration, uniqueness to region, caste/class, sexual identity, a marriage marker (Suhag ki Nishani). In contemporary arena, this idea of beauty is co-constitutive to the ideas of modernity and traditions. This study uses mixed-methods to investigate obscured cultural, social, political and gendered ideas of 'Suhag ki Nishani' (marker of a married woman) – 'Nathuli'/'Nath' in contemporary times. The study is characterized by the following data collection methods: Unstructured interviews, visual data including vlogs and popular songs on YouTube and social media and folk songs. The interviews with married/unmarried women were conducted to gather women's articulation of Nath. Their everyday of Nath, their meanings of Nath, their voices around Nath came to be examined. The visual data includes YouTube videos of people from Uttarakhand and Gadhwal producing content rich in culture for audience across India,

Instagram reels by pages dedicated to bring out Gadhwali culture for the Indian audience. As a part of my secondary data along with visual data I have investigated folk songs of Gadhwal to analyse Images of women, how women have been interpreted, how their beauty has been spoken about.

Keywords: Gender, sexuality, marriage, region, patriarchy, beauty, women's embodiment, Uttarkhand, Nathuli, culture, Gadhwal community

7.73
Matang Women's Perspectives on broom making as an occupation in the global market

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In the era of the global market, many traditional occupations in India drastically changed. Some of them are strongly associated with the castes. For instance, the Matang community is the second-largest population caste in the scheduled caste (SC). This caste is traditionally recognised as the broom maker. In the old

days, this community was also believed to be associated with village security or professions such as musician, rope and broom making, cattle castration, leather curing, midwifery, hangmen, and undertaking, but nowadays, all the occupations nature is changed in modern context or industrialisation. The same could be applied to the Matang women engaged in broom-making as their occupation.

Methods: In this study, the researcher has explored the patterns and manifestations of social exclusion at the intersection of gendered livelihood patterns of Broom maker Matang women in the Kolhapur District of Maharashtra. The researcher has looked at the transformation of Matang women's livelihoods and how it impacts their social condition. Matang community is Maharashtra's second largest SC population and has its own culture. This exploratory study has attempted to understand Matang women's livelihood and social, economic, and development phenomena in the contemporary context and in the global market. Research has been carried out using the Qualitative research method. To understand the context or settings in which participants in a study address a problem or an issue. It is also conducted to have a detailed understanding of the livelihoods of Matang women. The research as such involves comprehending feelings, perceptions, emotions and observations, which can be better addressed through qualitative research methods where the insertion of numbers has restricted its naturalness. The research is based on naturalistic inquiry. Where the researcher has studied the real-world situation as they unfold naturally, which has been non-manipulative and non-controllable, openness to whatever emerges. Therefore, qualitative research was appropriate for the study. An explorative study was conducted on 26 women of the Matang community. In-depth interviews were conducted by preparing the semi-structured interview schedule. Collected data was transcribed, translated and then analysed by using thematic analysis.

Results: From the analysis, it could be said that matang women are away from education even today. Because of low education and early marriage, they have engaged in low-income-generating activities such as land labour, maids, and broom-making. The existing broom-making occupation of the matang women is not able to bring occupational stability. It is because, like many other traditional occupations, even broom-making is affected by the globalisation of the market. Important to note that there is no state interference to uplift these vulnerable people even though they are heading to become more and more vulnerable because of occupation instability.

Keywords: Matang/ Mang women, Scheduled caste, Occupation, Education, Broom making.

Intersectional Vulnerabilities of Tribal Women Street Vendors: A Struggle for Existential Space

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Street vending is a way out of poverty for the economically marginalized community and great example of a self-help initiatives. It is through vending women support and sustains their family basic needs. But the biggest challenge for street vendors is securing space for vending. Tribal women street vendors are very hardworking and from their tiny profit, they make their living out of it carrying their responsibilities as a wife, a mother in the home, and a vendor on the streets. This research article aimed to study the struggles for existential space for street vending. It has applied R software to analyse the frequency of words used and the word associations to see the correlation from reviews carried out. The lack of urban planning vending space is one major crisis and studies have shown that pavements are packed full of uncertainties. Despite the vulnerabilities tribal women street vendors are resilient. This present study proposes social work intervention to bridge the gaps and balance the situations as their survival and development is an imitate need.

Keywords: Street vending, existential space, livelihood, tribal women, vulnerabilities

Women's work and networks: A case study on women belonging to specific occupations in Kolkata, India

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The role and functioning of different forms of kin and non-kin networks, i.e. family and kinship ties, networks created through neighbours, friends, religious or caste groups, political organisations, NGOs and self-help groups, are crucial for everyday survival and livelihood strategies, especially in a poor developing country like India. While the mobilisation of specific networks is dependent on women's unpaid contribution, the gender homophily of network structure ensures that information regarding upward mobility is free-flowing in men's networks, which may not be the case for the ties that women possess. In India, women's workforce participation has been subject to much debate, and several supply and demand side factors have been highlighted in determining women's livelihood strategies and marginalisation in the labour market. However, the role of the network remains underexplored. Considering this lacuna of literature, the study will examine whether and how networks impact women's paid work. Further, it draws on the social capital framework to probe why and how specific types of networks may enable or disable women's access to paid work, how women form networks outside kin, and what uses they put these networks to through case studies of women workers in Kolkata, engaged in domestic work, driving and sex- work.

In-depth interviews reveal that domestic workers seek their job through kin and family networks, drivers or trainees majorly depend upon non-kin ties, and the interviewed sex workers entered the profession either with the help of a relative or were trafficked by previous partners. The association between urban employers and domestic workers is based on mutual dependency and embedded power dynamics. Although occupational mobility or diversity can be achieved through non-kin ties, the embedded power structures are prominent in the case of the drivers. Family members of the women trainee drivers majorly disapprove of women working with non-kin men in public spaces, which might hinder women's aspiration of upward occupational mobility. The account of sex workers reveals that the negative experience of the 'outside world' hinders their occupational mobility. Women workers with the double burden of productive and reproductive work suffer from a lack of time, hindering the expansion of their

social sphere and interaction beyond family and kin ties. In a restricted social sphere, most domestic workers and drivers remain dependent upon their family and kin for support in care work or monetary help. The workers' lack of trust towards neighbours further restricts them from seeking help beyond 'family'. In contrast, sex workers lacking the support of kin ties consider work acquaintances or neighbouring women 'friends' and receive support during financial, monetary, and health- related crises or in the face of violence. A social capital framework brings out the nuances, complexities and conflict between networks impacting women's marginalisation in the public and private spaces and their collective and individual strategies for survival and agency.

Keywords: women, work, networks, social capital, India

7.76

Reverse Migration of Informal Safai Karamcharis- From Ulhasnagar (Maharashtra) to Ghaziabad, Meerut and Bulandshahr (Uttar Pradesh)

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The focus of this study is to understand the implications of COVID-19 and the subsequent lockdown on the lives of the informal safai karamcharis Valmiki women in Ulhasnagar, Maharashtra. During a pandemic, there were restrictions on mobility, which adversely affected the safai karamcharis capacity to do work, they were unable to earn wages and were not able to pay the rent for the accommodation in the city, which also became a factor for their return to their native homes in Uttar Pradesh. In rural areas-caste based practices are embedded in everyday life. In many cases, Dalits are treated as less than human, and relatedly, caste-based atrocities cases are persistent. The study also attempted to show the various challenges the Valmiki women faced after returning to their native homes. While the pursuit of emotional, social and financial security triggered this reverse migration, their lives in the rural areas were also entangled in various forms of complications that emerged on account of staying with joint families, lack of proper redressal for domestic violence, specific forms of labor relations that were shaped by the caste dynamics in their villages. There was always

romanticisation of womanhood and motherhood, these ideas get weaponized to glorify the role of women without actually addressing their needs or concerns. The study was conducted using feminist research methodology and standpoint location. It is a qualitative research inquiry of the life history method through an in- depth narrative to understand the lived experience of Valmiki women who were part of distressed migration. The different narratives indicate how the women were able to get the support systems that they were unable to access in the cities, also complicate the idea of life after migration and bring out instances in which women had to reconcile with many forms of systemic violence that they encountered after coming back. The main objective is to study the relationship between labor and its intersections of caste, class, gender and stigmatization of Valmiki women's sexuality. I explored through the study how the intersection of caste, class, and gender continued to shape the lives of Informal Safai Karamchari Valmiki women during a pandemic. It further comprehends life before COVID-19, during the pandemic, and the distressed migration that followed it. When they return to their native towns and villages, they were made to do caste-based work which was often considered 'impure'. The caste hierarchies played out in significant ways in both urban and rural areas. The gender- based power play also shapes the Valmiki women's experiences within the family, as they attempt to find sources of support in instances where they are on the receiving end of violence from their male counterparts. In conclusion, it is quite visible how despite the promise of social security in the native villages, many women are also waiting to go back to the city to resume their lives there. This gravitation towards the city was also understood through various factors like better opportunities for work and education, as well as the space to be able to practice agency outside of the constant surveillance of the family. It also tried to bring out the desire to go back to the city as it promised a life with more opportunities.

7.77

Fear and Anxiety in Livelihood: Uncovering the Everyday Language and Vulnerabilities of Adivasi Women in Farming and Fishing Activities in Sundarbans, West Bengal

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This paper aims to explore the essence of fear and anxiety hidden in the language used by 'adivasi' women to articulate their everyday marginality around issues of livelihood in the hamlet of Sonagaon in Gosaba administrative block in Sundarbans in West Bengal. For methodological convenience, the space, 'Sonagaon' is understood not just as a location for mapping the social geography, but as a 'Being' (Heidegger, 1962) that encompasses the totality of existence and engenders spatial inequality (Thatra, 2020). The relation between 'being there' and the everyday patterns of activity signified a language of spatial uncertainty which revealed what it meant to be an adivasi woman in this place. Space, in opening up disclosed an anonymous field whose configuration (Agamben, 2009) described not just the relational dimension of vulnerability of adivasi women but also how this everyday marginality particularly, in the domain of livelihood produced a language of fear and anxiety and fear in them. Based on the life stories of adivasi women, I have tried to show how language, as the fundamental truth of all communication communicates the essence of fear and anxiety that are intertwined with their everyday work practices here. These experiences also shed light on their marginalized position in this specific location. I have employed a qualitative research design, with semi-structured interviews with 24 women for this study.

The topographical structure of Sundarbans can be best described as "ever-changing" (Bose, 2004). After the cyclone Aila and Amphan, the temporal character implicit in the fragile ecosystem of the Sundarbans has furthered the ontological uncertainty of the settlers. During the field-work, I realised that the temporal character of the space formed a fundamental truth of their existence. However, this spatial unpredictability was often described in the light of livelihood issues confronted by adivasi women to express their everyday experiences of marginality in the hamlet. For example, the language of adivasi women often reflected how spatial challenges impacted their everyday practices of livelihood around

agriculture and fishing. On one hand, it showed how the constitutive role of the space contributed to the re(production) and consolidation of gender division of labour by limiting adivasi women to small-scale fishing. The frequent occurrence of floods and cyclones made fishing in waist- deep saltwater for hours difficult. Further, the frequent encounters with snakes, crocodiles, and tigers roaming in the tidal delta posed a constant threat to their lives in the present time.

On the other hand, it revealed how saline water intrusion limited adivasi women's agricultural-based employment opportunities and pushed them towards domestic work at a meager wages in the households of non-adivasis. Such a way of life not just left adivasi women exposed to a wide range of health risks, but it also impacted their life directly. While this existential reality gave me a clue to grasp adivasi women's mood of fear and anxiety as a fundamental state of being, it also showed how the everyday issues of livelihood created this condition of vulnerability and marginalization that generated a language characterized by anxiety and fear. Thus, language serves as a means to capture their experiences of marginality and the nature of existence at present.

7.78
Understanding Livelihood of Khasi Single Mothers in Meghalaya: Challenges and Pathways

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The Khasis are a matrilineal tribe inhabiting the Khasi and Jaintia Hills of Meghalaya located in the North-East Region (NER) of India and represent one of the few remaining matrilineal societies worldwide. In this unique social structure, maternal lineage determines inheritance, with husbands relocating to their wives' households, and youngest daughters inheriting ancestral property. The Khasi tribe believes in the 'Long jait na ka kynthei' ideology, which means "From the woman sprang the clan". However, several factors, including evolving family structures have led to the emergence of single mother families among the Khasis, necessitating a comprehensive exploration of the specific challenges they

face in sustaining their livelihoods. Fidelia Toi, the Chairperson of the Meghalaya State Commission for Women (MSCW), reports that single mothers constitute 13.5 percent of the population in Meghalaya. The livelihoods of single mothers have emerged as a critical area of research and concern in various societies worldwide. The livelihoods of Khasi single mothers have gained attention due to their unique challenges in sustaining their economic well-being. Single mothers play a significant role in society, raising children and managing households independently. The experiences of Khasi single mothers in Meghalaya are influenced by a complex interplay of cultural, social, and economic factors. Cultural norms and societal expectations shape their educational opportunities, employment prospects, and financial independence. Moreover, social support systems, particularly extended family networks, play a crucial role in determining the level of assistance and available resources for these women. Economic constraints, including limited access to credit, employment opportunities, and social protection programs, further compound their challenges in achieving economic stability. This paper aims to explore the challenges faced by Khasi single and identifies potential pathways for improving their livelihood. The study adopts a qualitative approach, conducting in-depth interviews with Khasi single mothers residing in Shillong, Meghalaya to explore the socio-economic factors influencing their livelihoods, including income generation, access to education, healthcare, social support networks, and cultural norms. By understanding their lived experiences, this study aims to shed light on the livelihood struggles of Khasi single mothers and contribute to the existing knowledge on this topic within this cultural context.

Keywords: Khasi, Meghalaya, single mothers, livelihoods, economic vulnerability, socio-economic empowerment.

7.79
Impact of Inaccessibility on the Skill of Women with Disabilities to obtain Employment and Empowerment

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In general intersectional social exclusion of women from various social

backgrounds occurs in social, civil, commercial, environmental, and biophysical structures. Gender complicates marginal and devalued identities based on status, religious conviction, race, sexual orientation and disability which limit access to opportunities, freedom of choice, and capacity development. Despite numerous legal protections and some conspicuous loopholes, societal structures, processes, and systems discern women, those who are already discriminated by nature in multiple ways and on numerous levels due to their marginal character indicators, thus preventing them from gaining access to various forms of power and privilege. In India, by and large women with disabilities have very limited access to the provisions and facilities offered by the government at both the central and state level to improve the status of persons with disabilities, including women, since they lack the knowledge and opportunity to do so on their own. Despite the abundance of programmes and plans aimed at their empowerment, this image still prevails. The situation isn't much better under social protection because there isn't as much money available and mobility is restricted, making it harder for women with disabilities to access services.

Due to poor accessibility, which restricts their movement, women and girls with disabilities are not able to advance in education to higher levels and drop out of the mainstream programme once they reach menstrual age. Marginalised from opportunities to earn a living, structural and transportation constraints, lack of accessibility, probabilities of sexual harassment and assault in the workplace further limit their inclusion. Due to their high level of dependency on others, women with disabilities face numerous obstacles in the social structure that make it difficult for them to use their abilities and skills to obtain employment and a stable source of income. As a result, girls with disabilities have no choice but to remain confined to their homes in order to protect them from further trauma. Accessibility is a crucial component of empowerment for everyone, especially for disabled women, thus it is imperative to put forth honest and more determined effort to establish the necessary synchronicity and synergy to improve their quality of life. In India, accessibility is a neglected topic, and the available secondary data has confirmed the reality of the situation. As a result, the research paper's primary goal was to highlight the development-related accessibility problems experienced by women with disabilities. The researcher has made sincere efforts to trace the narratives of struggle, resistance, and quest for dignity and justice, both flaccid and active, experienced by women with disabilities to live an independent life by highlighting their journey across the prototype and overcoming issues of inaccessibility to resources and opportunities in order to become empowered and make sure that they lead an improved life similar to their other able-bodied counterparts across the nation.

Keywords: Women with disabilities, Accessibility, Livelihood, Empowerment

7.80
Whither o woman! Examining everyday negotiations of Muslim women in the Public Space

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The public space is ever evolving and undergoing new forms every day. While the social norms and structures are determinant factors of how public space is perceived, gendered experiences further the demand for achieving spatial justice. In particular, the female veiled body when out in public space, receives tremendous attention. While the public space may play a significant role in social engagement and identity formation, it may also impose limitations on daily societal participation. In light of the Hijab controversy in Karnataka, the paper attempts to analyze the ways in which veiled Muslim womens' bodies interact with the public space. In January, 2022, some Muslim students were denied access to classes while wearing the hijab. As per the college, wearing a hijab went against the dress prescribed as per the norms of the institution. In view of these developments, the paper seeks to understand Muslim women's access to education and the everyday negotiations they make with the State. Drawing on Muslim women's experiences, the paper aims to understand the challenges faced by them in the current socio-political public realm. Lastly, the paper attempts to critically analyze the hyper-nationalist gaze and fixations on the invisible and veiled Muslim female body vis a vis everyday resistance and belonging.

7.81
Belonging to the Cosmopolitan:
Mobilities, Muslim Women and Urban Public Space

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The study looks at the everyday spatial mobility of Indian Muslim women and examines the multiple ways in which women from the community experience exclusions and belongingness to the city and its cosmopolitanism. The research is placed within the larger scholarship on women's accessibility (and lack thereof) to urban public space. Delving deeper, it seeks to mainstream the narrative of the 'other' in analysing women's lived experiences. The work is situated in the metropolis of Hyderabad which has not yet gained mainstream prominence in studying Indian urban spaces. Hyderabad, with its high proportion of Muslim population, is also seeing growing instances of spatial segregations and rising communalisation. Additionally, it is undergoing a rapid neoliberal development process which continues to impact access to the city's spaces based on class and caste locations. Hence, using tools of shadowing and in-depth interviews of Muslim women across socio-economic strata, the ethnographic study looks at the ways in which religious-cultural values play out among Muslim groups in the backdrop of their increased marginalisation (spatial and otherwise). This is complicated by analysing the role of class and caste norms in influencing the values associated with Muslim femininities and women's mobilities in the city. Here, the class differentiations within Muslims and growing scholarship on the three-tier caste system in the community is taken into account, while also keeping gender and religion as central factors of analysis. Lastly, given my own situatedness and encounters as a migrant Muslim middle class upper caste woman, self reflexivity is employed which holds potential for an autoethnographic outlook adding to the various viewpoints in the study. The diverse and even contradictory narratives go on to discard a homogenous perspective on Muslim women's experiences. This recontextualizes understandings of the right to the urban and public space, what constitutes 'risk' and the right to it for vulnerable groups, and the category of 'Muslim women' itself.

7.82
Rethinking Margins: Feminist Articulations of an Autonomous Muslim Women's Group in Kerala.

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Following the rise of second-wave feminism in the developing world, there have been a number of responses to the marginalization of women of colour and devout women from mainstream feminist movements. Islamic feminism is one such response that has evolved within and has been shaped by diverse regional and political contexts. This paper is a case study of NISA, an autonomous Muslim women's organization in the South Indian state of Kerala that self-identifies as an Islamic feminist group. It contextualizes the emergence of NISA and their trajectory of activism in the wider socio-political context of the country, which depicts Muslim women as the sole victims of their religion. The paper elaborates on the modes of activism, community engagements, and the womanhood model that NISA embraces, in contrast or alignment with the dominant gender construction within the community. NISA proactively seeks out the institutional mechanisms of the state as well as evokes and appeals to Islamic visions of justice to ensure that the women they represent have their rights protected. It strategically articulate both secular and religious aspects and seek larger feminist solidarity. However, as a strong minority feminist articulation, NISA has not received enough reception within the Muslim community. By exploring the nuanced expressions of feminism by NISA, the paper expands the theoretical discourses on the contested nature of feminism and religion, unravelling the complex dynamics of religion and political activism in Muslim women's lives from the global South. In conclusion, the paper critically engages with the question of 'margin' and explores the possibility of multiple locations, agency, and modalities of resistance in the marginal spaces.

7.83
Soolé (Devadasi) Women and
Sex Trade - an Analysis

Divya K
Resource Person (Gender), the Gender Park

The soolé women are constantly challenged for being soolé and practicing sex trade for livelihood which is accepted as part of the dedication culture. The challenge is also due to the agency that comes along with being a soolé. Soolé women use their agency or are made to use their body, for earning money and provide means of livelihood for the natal families. Once identified as soolé, the girl's body is made accessible to all. Soolé women's subversive attempt to locate and use sex as central to earn livelihood by means of either their vulnerability or assertion constantly puts them in painful duality. The dilemma at the micro level can be constructed within the notion of female body which is considered as chaste within the monogamous institution of marriage. At the macro level the discourse can be seen within the nationalist construction of Indian womanhood. The body of soolé women is available in the market which makes it different from the practice of marriage where women's body is available only within the realm of the marriage. The material linkage of the institution of marriage is contested in social science literature widely and thus this soolé culture makes this argument complex. The soolé culture is driven by its economics rather than the religious aspect of dedication culture. The soolé culture is therefore, can be represented by its economic connotation. The culture by making or allowing the soolé women to sell their body and feminity makes it as a work which is market driven. This proves to the existing argument on considering selling body and sex as an occupation and not a moral condition. Providing sexual pleasure for economic benefit becomes soolé women's survival strategy. According to them violence and coercion is part of the context that they are part of which could occur in other contexts like marriage. Soolé culture thus ensures soolé women's economic value. This chapter therefore, investigates how sole women of the village use their sexuality against the popular notion of female sexuality, female body and sexual culture. The paper tries to explain why and how the soolé women are made to use their body to earn money and. It also tries to elucidate how and in what state of vulnerability, (Caste, Class, and Gender) the soolé women fall into this trap to use her body to earn money. Finally, it brings out the consequences and challenges of using the body, sex as work as against the popular notion of womanhood by making them a soolé to get the means of livelihood.

7.84

Interrogating Emotional Labour in Journalism Through the Lens of Gender, Caste and Intersectionality:
A Study of Bahujan Women Journalists from Malayalam Multimedia News Platforms

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Program Assistant, CREA.

This research highlights the significance of a gender and caste lens in transforming and reimagining discourses on media as a workspace by analysing the emotional labour of Bahujan women journalists in Malayalam multimedia platforms. This study looks into whether journalism evokes a sense of emotionality, which leads to an element of emotional management. Secondly, the research inquires, if such an element is present, whether the gender and caste identities of Bahujan women journalists have any implications on their emotional labour and whether there is an emergence of a distinctive 'emotional labour' at the juncture of doing journalism with intersectional identities of marginalised caste and gender. By juxtaposing Marx's argument of the working day as a 'variable quantity' (Marx 1906) with Arlie Hochschild's conceptualisation of emotional labour (Hochschild 2012), this paper develops the idea of emotional labour in journalism as a default meta-discourse as part of work, distinctive from that of the service industries focusing on the required performative display. With snowball sampling, the study conducted in-depth interviews with five journalists who identified as Bahujan women who worked on different Malayalam multimedia platforms in January 2023. 'Bahujan' is an umbrella term used in this research broadly referring to non-upper-caste, non-brahmin communities. This research is placed in the larger discourses initiated by Sandra Harding that considers 'women's experiences as scientific resources' (Harding 1987) and as an intersectional feminist ethnography owing to Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Kalpana Kannabiran and Kimberley Crenshaw. The paper argues that the caste and gender identities of Bahujan women, coupled with journalistic work, create a separate emotional realm, which needs management, which in turn leads to the creation of unique emotional labour. This is entirely different from the emotional labour which requires the worker to put on a particular desired emotional state. The study also proposes the idea of reverse emotional labour, referring to emotionality produced

as part of work, which eases the nature of work by positively affecting its different levels of navigation, originating from the intersectional marginalised identities. However, it is essential to note that this study is limited, as it was part of a Master's dissertation within a limited time frame. Nevertheless, the paper highlights the importance of ascriptive identities in shaping the nature of emotional labour. Focusing on intersectionality in discourses on work in general and emotional labour, in particular, can make policy-level changes in organisational structure at workplaces and also provide a critique of capitalist workspaces.

7.85
Situating the Idea of Otherness and Intersectional Identities; A Study on Muslim Women Writers in Kerala

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An Intersectional analysis of the experiential realm of Muslim women demands, exploring a wide range of socio-political standpoints in the modern era of feminist movements. Historically, females who write have always been an outstanding, extraordinary phenomenon in considering the male dominant social practices, directly or passively prevalent in the public sphere of Kerala. This paper tries to analyse the experienced realities of Muslim Women Writers in Kerala, who majorly deals with Malayalam fiction and whose works have been considerably read in print media in the very recent decade starting from 2013 to 2023. In the history of Kerala, Muslim women appeared in print media for the first time through Arabi Malayalam literature. During a time when Muslim women were largely listed as illiterates and tagged as unenlightened, they have produced a considerable amount of fiction writings in Arabi Malayalam, mainly in the form of poetry and songs. With a historical understanding of Muslim women writers of the Indian post-colonial period in Kerala, the study tries to understand feminist narratives; firstly within the religion, secondly in the secular and post-secular public spheres. Looking beyond the notions of the conservative secular-religious feminist dichotomy, the paper tries to understand a much wider and vivid intersectional idea of Muslim women beyond a singular cultural category.

A major research question that the study proposes is whether the Muslim women writers of Kerala encounters with conflicts of otherness in their social/public lives as a writer. The research proposes a qualitative analysis of the concurrent socio-political scenarios, through secondary data research and focused interviews. Another question; How do the popular narratives of the land perceive these writers, is central to understanding 'alienation and othering of minority cultures as a historical phenomenon'.

The idea of 'antithetical other' is used in the analysis to see the 'public sphere' as part of a dominant culture, contrary to 'the other'. In analysing the Muslim women's position and agency in literature, the research tries to explore possibilities of applying perspectives such as 'female literary tradition', 'literary subcultures' and 'literature of their own'; in terms of experienced realities pertaining to the community. Here, a major point of view adapted in studying the cultural-political conception of Muslim women writers and their dissent is of the 'Critical insiders'. This way, the term Muslim women refers not only to the practicing and non-practicing religious intersectional identities but leaves much scope for a wider understanding of diverse political and cultural scenarios. In Indian context and not much differently in the context of Kerala, the post-colonial nationalist narratives of the mainstream culture regarding 'Indian women', were far alienated from the realities of Muslim women. Moreover, the internalised popular images and symbols of 'a female writer' in Kerala wasn't necessarily aligning with the realities of religious and caste minorities of the land; which adds up to the multiple layers of this historical process of othering.

Keywords: : Muslim women writer, Malayalam fiction, Intersections, Otherness, public sphere, Critical insider, Antithetical other

Living Conditions of PuthiraiVannarWomen in Tamil Nadu an Intersectional Analysis

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India is the caste based society in which the social stratification is well structured and executed through rigid religious customs and practices. According to Anderson and Parker "Caste is that extreme form of social class organization in which the position of individuals in the status hierarchy is determined by descent and birth".Individuals in a caste system characteristically accept their status, whether high or low as appropriate and the hierarchy of caste system is supported by the institutions of the society – the political, occupational, religious and familial and other structures. Caste corresponds to 'Jati' while 'Varna' refers to one of the four categories into which the Hindu society is traditionally divided – the Brahmanas, the Kshatryas, the Vaisyahs and the Sudras.(M.N.Srinivas 1962). Four Varna is the core concept of Indian caste system which is having hierarchical division based on the Occupation. However the caste group identified in the name of their occupation. According to Dr. Ambedkar caste system is graded inequality. Hence the socio economic condition of each caste group has been intertwined with their occupation and caste. Caste system is sustained through Practicing of Untouchability and endogamous marriage system. There are various forms of Untouchability practices such as Residential separation, denial of enter in to the temple, denial of public participation, separate burial ground etc.PuthiraiVannar is a specific caste group which is identified in their caste name and also their nature of occupation.

In Tamil Nadu "Vannar" is which is primarily engaged by the caste society washing clothes and other related work. There are various sub-castes within Vannar community. One such is the "PuthiraiVannar".Vannar (Washer) generally wash the clothes of other dominant caste groups, but "PuthiraiVannar" isdeputed to wash the clothes of Dalit community like Parayar and Pallar. They are treated as untouchables among untouchables. The condition of dalit women is more vulnerable and marginalized as they are facing triple form of violence in terms of caste, religion and patriarchy in general. However, in particular the living

condition of puthiraivannar women is most vulnerable than the dalit women. The paper analyses the living conditions of PuthiraiVannarWomen with the objective of to find out the interconnections of caste class gender and living status of PuthiraiVannar women. The design of the study is exploratory, Hundred PuthiraiVannar women are chosen for this research from the four districts of Tamil Nadu through purposive sampling method. In-depth interviews and observation techniques areused to collect the primary data and collected data have been analysed by qualitative analysis.

Key words:PuthiraiVannar Women, Caste Discrimination, Caste Untouchability

Sub-theme 8

Human Rights Violations:
Gender-Based Violence
and Resistance

8.1

Confluence of Alcoholism and Domestic Violence: Insights from the Khasi Matrilineal Society of Meghalaya

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This research paper examines the issue of domestic violence against women in matrilineal society of the Khasi tribe in Meghalaya, with a specific focus on the role of alcoholism. Despite the privileged status enjoyed by women in Khasi society, the prevalence of domestic violence remains a persistent concern. In addition, the paper examines the prevalence of alcohol abuse among Khasi men and its intricate connection to violence against women. To ensure a comprehensive understanding, this paper provides clear definitions of violence, domestic violence, and alcoholism, encompassing legal and general perspectives. It sheds light on the gravity of the issue by highlighting the incidence of domestic violence and the detrimental effects inflicted upon families, with a particular emphasis on the well-being of women and children. By analysing various contributing factors to alcoholism in Khasi society, including the availability and accessibility of alcohol, the frustration resulting from perceived deprived status, peer pressure, and parental influences, this paper offers a comprehensive analysis. Ultimately, it emphasises the urgent need for professional intervention and an in-depth understanding of the multifaceted factors that shape alcoholism and its complex relationship with domestic violence in Khasi society.

Keywords: Domestic violence, Matrilineal society, Khasi tribe, peer pressure, and Alcoholism

8.2

Examining the Impact of Kanyashree Prakalpa on Empowering Girls, Delaying Early Marriage, and Resisting Gender-based Violence in India

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Early marriage and the pressure to bear children at a young age are clear violations of human rights, particularly for girls from impoverished backgrounds who often have no say in such matters as family decisions prevail. This denies them a precious childhood and exposes them to exploitation of their health and emotions. These practices flagrantly violate their human rights. However, with the introduction of Kanyashree Prakalpa, a gender-based conditional cash transfer program aimed at supporting girls' education and delaying their marriage until the legal age of 18, a positive shift has been observed. This study aims to investigate whether the financial incentives provided through Kanyashree Prakalpa which uplifts girls' education, also have a significant impact on their ability to resist gender-based violence within their families and broader society. It seeks to understand whether the increased confidence and sense of self-worth gained from defying prevailing patriarchal norms in our country enable recipients of Kanyashree Prakalpa to effectively combat gender-based violence. The study will involve exploring the experiences and narratives of girls who have received monetary incentives through Kanyashree Prakalpa. It will investigate how their enhanced education opportunities empower them to challenge patriarchal structures and resist gender-based violence. Additionally, the research will examine the broader social and familial dynamics that contribute to or hinder their ability to combat gender-based violence. By examining the interplay between education, financial empowerment and resistance to gender-based violence, this study aims to shed light on the transformative potential of Kanyashree Prakalpa in promoting girls' rights and dismantling patriarchal norms. The findings will provide valuable insights for policymakers, organisations, and communities to further strengthen efforts towards gender equality and human rights for girls in India.

Keywords: Patriarchy, Violence, Education, Financial empowerment, and Policymaker

8.3

The Impact of COVID: Sexual Violence Faced by Married Women and State Response Mechanisms

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The worldwide spread of coronavirus (COVID) impacted women's lives, both home-makers and working women in paid employment. This paper will highlight the plight of domestic violence victims and survivors during the pandemic. Inherently, domestic violence is sanctioned and practiced in society as seen in Assam. It has been assumed that women must obey and honour men. Domestic violence is beyond marital relationships. It includes all domestic relationships that exist within the household. It might be violence from husband to wife, mother-in-law to daughter-in-law, brother-in-law to sister-in-law, father-in-law to daughter-in-law, etc. In the pandemic, most of the women faced physical, mental, financial, verbal and similar abuse at home, and also forceful sex from their own husbands. In these situations, the perpetrators were their husbands. When women voice their opinion in relationships, refuse physical intimacy and do not act according to what men want, they remain vulnerable to physical and sexual violence.

Though forceful sex by the husband, which is marital rape, is a form of violence against women, there is no legal help for marital rape. There will be criminal proceedings only if the wife is below 18 years of age; such a case is then registered under the POCSO Act. Therefore, during the pandemic, even when marital rapes occurred, the legal system continued to remark, 'It is your husband, and you cannot refuse'. Many aggrieved women felt they could not tolerate the violence and wanted to stay separate from their husbands. They wanted to file cases against the husbands at the police station, but due to closures, they were not able to approach the police station. Protection Officers and social workers were unable to offer effective assistance in such cases. Women refuse to have physical intimacy for several reasons such as demands for multiple sexual intercourse in a day. Other reasons could be skepticism towards the husband's past relationships and breach of trust or even lack of interest in sexual intimacy, etc. The law refuses to acknowledge that women face sexual violence committed by their husbands. It is expected that free legal aid services and social workers have an important role to play by making people aware of such the endemic nature of gender-based

violence against women. The Social Welfare Department's "Child Development Project Officers (CDPO)" is designated as Protection Officers to handle domestic violence cases in Assam. Most of the Protection Officers respond to women and advice to file for divorce and also suggest ways for women to save the relationships for the sake of children. This paper will show the aggrieved women's struggle to get a protection order with the help of Protection Officers and other similar mechanisms.

Keywords:: Sexual violence, Marriage, Stakeholder responses, Pandemic, and State

8.4
25 years since the Vishakha Guidelines: Some Reflections

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Images of the brave battle fought out by women wrestlers in the capital have filled our television screens and newspapers. Even though the nature of the harassment reported was blatant and was experienced by several women, the response against the complaints was shocking and points to the way that despite 25 years of Vishakha Guidelines on sexual harassment in the workplace, complaints of sexual harassment such as this one can still be made to appear illegitimate. For a long time, cases were often sought to be hushed up, silenced, dismissed and pushed under the carpet. Women were told not to complain because it would bring a 'bad name to the college or workplace'. The case of the wrestlers indicates the way a case against a powerful person can bring on the accusation of being anti-national! Not only this, scant attention has been paid to the central principals laid down in the Vishakha guidelines and in sexual harassment policy across the country, especially with regard to the investigation being independent of those who have authority in the institution. In this presentation, I will draw from the history of struggles against sexual harassment in the work place and the ideas central to Vishakha and policies of sexual harassment in Universities to reflect on both our gains and the limitations and the way violence against women in some work places like sports, in spite of a long history of struggle internationally remains normalised and impunity enables a culture in which sexual harassment

is assumed to be a condition for women's participation and employment.

Keywords: Sexual harassment, Sports, Impunity, Employment, and University

8.4
The limits and harms of criminalisation in addressing violence against women

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The law reform campaigns against different forms of GBV against women (and girls) have largely framed gender justice through deterrence and criminalisation. What do the law reform debates within the feminist movements say about our imagination of gender justice, social change, and indeed, the very understanding of the law and the state in relation to violence, women and marginalisation along intersections of class, and caste, among others?

Partners for Law in Development (PLD) has carried out socio-legal studies, both through case law and participatory action research on different thematic areas, broadly categorised as violations and violence against women, that raise the above concerns. These studies reveal the limits of punitive approaches, and their harms, asking us to revisit our engagement with and imagination of law reforms.

Socio-legal studies, being distinct in methodology, are more likely to have outcomes different from that of law research. This presentation will dwell on three thematic areas that PLD has studied to explore, among others, the following questions:

For whom and under what conditions is criminal law most accessible for redress; against whom and under what conditions is the law most effective for prosecuting; and further, what does a comparative look at what the victim needs versus what the law can deliver tell us about the possibilities of reimagining legal justice. The presentation will discuss how these questions relate to the themes of rape trials, the targeting of women as witches and child marriage. It will also dwell on research methods, which are necessary means for evidence collection and making sense of how the law operates in society.

Given the persistence of violence against women, the law reform debates on these themes are ongoing – rape, witch hunting and child marriage laws. The appeal of punitive and deterrence approaches remains undiminished in spite of the emerging evidence on the harms and limits of criminalisation approaches. In relation to rape law, the benchmark for stringent sentencing and the death penalty has only increased since 2013, with little attention to other holistic aspects of justice. With several states enacting special laws on witch hunting, the goal post has shifted to national law without dwelling sufficiently on evidence of how the law works within the states which have enacted these or an exploration of alternative legal regimes to address this practice. With child marriage becoming the subject of renewed state attention in the last few years, the proposals for declaring marriages void, increasing the minimum marriage age (including through the proposed Uniform Civil Code), and the use of POCSO to prosecute underage marriages has gained ground. The terrain for punitive responses continues to expand and take on new meanings. The conversations on limits and harms of criminalisation are relevant to the past law reform debates as they are of the contemporary movement. Unpacking evidence of how the law works across these themes allows making linkages between vulnerability to violations alongside the harm of criminalisation for women and girls situated at the intersections of poverty, caste and other axes of marginalisation – forcing us to look at the political economy within which vulnerability to violations is constituted and the law operates.

*Keywords:*Law, Criminalisation, Violence, Research, and Gender justice

8.5

Interrogating Sexual Violence in Indian Universities: Analysing the role of peer support groups, and evaluating survivor's recourses

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'It is no exaggeration to say that sexual assault is endemic to college campuses and, despite a long overdue, recent uptick in visibility and public discourse, it is a scourge that remains unabated" (Sexual Assault Prevention on College

Campuses, Routledge 2017). Indian Universities were built with a promise to provide education built on the lines of equality. However, growing cases of sexual harassment within these university premises have caused growing concern among faculties, students and activists who concern themselves with issues of gender justice. Despite sexual harassment cases occuring like an epidemic, the administration of these universities is least bothered with the problem and hardly takes up adequate measures to prevent such incidents from happening or for that matter even sensitise the campus on such issues. Even though the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC/) have been established, they are hardly functional. Survivors of such sexual assault are left with no recourse from the administration. Rather they are left on their own to deal with the psycho-social damage. During the investigative procedure, the questions asked to them by various parties are highly discriminatory which further aggravate their trauma. Perpetrators of such violence are often let off the hook citing their excellent academic records or connections to higher authorities. Legal resources are often not available readily to university students as these are not only expensive but also cause shame and trauma to the survivor due to societal and cultural factors. The legal and institutional process, often called "due process" might ask extremely derogatory questions to the survivor. In India, sexual assault is still seen as a woman's liability and questions her character gravely. Most survivors choose not to enter into the legal process due to these reasons and are often forced to live with their pain and agony in a secluded manner which causes further recurrence of their trauma. The objective of my paper would be to analyse how the politics around sexual harassment in these Indian institutions of higher education revolve around male privilege and leave the survivor to their fate. Here, I want to highlight the relevance of the peer justice system in these Indian universities. An ideal peer justice model would include members who would deal with incidents of violence and harassment within the campus premises in a sensitised manner which does not include questioning or doubting the survivor. A peer justice model must be organised in such a manner that it must include individuals who have proper training in order to deal with the situation. This will not only ensure the curtailment of further humiliation of the survivor but will also deal with harassment cases in a manner that is bound to provide a certain extent of closure to the survivor. It is also my aim to explore whether the peer justice model can bring a sense of relief to the survivor and provide a space for them to narrate their experiences and whether the peer justice model can function as an alternative space for the survivor to narrate their experiences without any shame and fear of judgment.

Keywords: Universities, Sexual harassment, Peer justice, Higher education, and Survivors

8.6

Contemplating Workplace Harassment and Violence in India from a Gender Perspective and Understanding Implementational Issues and Drafting Lacunae of POSH Act, 2013 – A Multivariate Analysis

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"There is one universal truth, applicable to all countries, cultures and communities: violence against women is never acceptable, never excusable, and never tolerable." - Ban Ki-moon, UNO. Women and sexual minorities endure superfluous levels of violence, which is not a new occurrence. Its ubiquitousness eludes even the most sophisticated legislative and policy-action mechanisms designed to curb it. Gender-based violence (GBV) has increased rapidly over the last decades, despite major redressal efforts at the international and national levels. GBV is not only emblematic of a severely harsh patriarchal social setup, but it also underlines the worldwide colloquy on human right's ineffectiveness in providing basic protection and safety to individuals. Victims and survivors of gender-based violence can encounter a number of human rights violations, notably the right to lead a decent life, freedom from torture and humiliation, freedom from prejudice, and the right to feel secure and protected. All of these rights are outlined in international and regional human rights treaties. In order to advance the fight against violence and discrimination against women, internationally and nationally adopted instruments exist. It is unfortunate, but not surprising, that India has a long and bleak record when it comes to workplace sexual harassment. This is a common problem affecting everyone, regardless of the working sector. The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal)/POSH Act, 2013, was a big step forward in providing women with a safe working environment in India. But can we describe the POSH Act as a panacea capable of miraculously eliminating workplace harassment of women? Gender-based violence (GBV) in the workplace can have a severe influence on women's mental and physical health as well as their fecundity. Hence, the purpose of this article is to chiefly investigate the prevalence of GBV (workplace hostility, intimidation, and sexual abuse), as well as the elements that contribute to it, implementational concerns and inadequacies enmeshed in the

POSH Act, 2013.

Keywords: Gender-based Violence, Workplace, Human rights, and Acts

8.7
Witch-Hunting in Goalpara, Assam: Persistence of Gender-Based Violence in an 'Aspirational District'

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The history of early modern Europe (15th -18th century) is replete with cases of witch-hunting, which today stand testimony to the misogynist beliefs of the contemporary 'developed' world. Rough estimates of that period calculate 90,000 persecutions, of which fifty per cent were punished with death. Centuries later, in the 1970s, Mary Daly appropriately listed witch hunting along with practices like Sati, Foot Binding and Female Genital Mutilation to prove how patriarchy systematically oppressed women. However, what writers like Daly failed to recognise is the spatial and territorial diffusion of the phenomenon.

In the present context, the National Crime Records Bureau has included data from 12 states where the motive was witch-hunting. It is noteworthy that as most of the victims are women, witch-hunting constitutes a specific form of gender-based Violence. Among the North-Eastern states, Assam has borne witness to around 200 cases where women were persecuted and murdered on allegations of witchcraft and sorcery since 2011. This is despite the fact that Assam has a state-specific legislation that prohibits witch-hunting, and community policing was used as a strategy to deter such crimes.

In the context of the above, the present paper attempts to place the lived experiences of 15 women who were labelled as witches. Using a narrative analysis of interviews and data, this paper argues that the motivation for such labelling is not just property but also the fear of independent women. The narratives also reveal the role that 'Ojhas' play in the entire persecution process. Effectively, this paper brings into play the question of how a skewed model of development

has led to the persistence of certain forms of violence against women. It needs to be mentioned that among the 12 states where witch-hunting is present, most of these are states with high concentrations of tribal population. In Goalpara of Assam, where instances of witch-hunting are high, the percentage of the tribal population is substantial. The case of Goalpara is noteworthy as it has been classified as an aspirational district by the Niti Aayog, acknowledging its exclusion from the 'development' process. An uneven developmental model has not only meant that the population suffers from material backwardness but also persistent gender-based violence. Women who have been labelled as witches not only face a physical threat but also the associated social, cultural, political and economic costs. The paper, therefore, attempts not only to describe the nature of violence that survivors of witch-hunting face in Goalpara, Assam, but highlight the related dimensions of social exclusion that women who are labelled as witches must endure.

Keywords: Witch-hunting, GBV, Development, Social exclusion, and Persecution

8.8
Mirage of justice for domestic violence survivors: Insights from Maharashtra

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Dr. Shazia Chaudhary, Professor of Law, Wadham College, Oxford

Findings presented in this paper are an outcome of a three-state study that aims to understand how domestic violence survivors navigate the day-to-day effects of domestic violence, as well as when and to whom they turn to for support, assistance, and justice. Drawing upon the experiences and narratives of domestic violence survivors from urban, semi-urban, and rural locations in Maharashtra, the present paper examines what is happening in the gap between the experiences of violence and ineffective practices of the relevant laws and

how these survivors attempt to reduce, mitigate, or exit violent relationships through access to informal and formal services and support. Conceptualised as feminist socio-legal research, this inquiry into the engagement of the survivors with the law is set in the context of Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 (PWDVA).

DV survivors interviewed during this study worked hard to stop the violence and preserve their marriage. An overall pattern to achieve this was informal mediation at first and if that failed and violence crossed tolerable levels, seeking help from one or more formal agencies. Informal mechanisms include mediation through parents, siblings, friends, or a trusted relative. In every instance, it was noted that these mediations only had a short-term effect before the violence resumed. Quasi legal mechanisms include religious boards, tribal Panchayat and non-government organisations (NGOs). The religious boards and Panchayat embedded in social structures tended to find manageable solutions rather than challenging power hierarchies. It was noted that NGOs proved to be helpful for survivors to access formal legal systems, including the police, PWDVA service providers such as NGOs, protection officers, as well as lawyers and courts. Survivors' experiences with different stakeholders vary. The main problem identified was the way the courts operated, including delays, inconsistencies, lack of sensitivity on the part of some judges, and procedural challenges. As a result, for the DV survivors who used the route of PWDVA, justice seemed to be perpetually out of reach, like a mirage.

Keywords: Domestic violence, Justice, PWDVA, Protection officer, and Service providers

8.9
From the Margins to the Mainstream: Women's Experiences and Visions of (Un)Safe Public Spaces in Delhi

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This paper's central aim is to understand the interplay of and negotiations with safety, mobility, and digital technologies in public spaces through community-based participatory research with women from socio-economically marginalised

communities. Articulations of safe and inclusive public spaces (e.g., streets, public parks, footpaths, transit stations) have primarily focused on the experiences and needs of relatively privileged women, leaving out the experiences of women from marginalised locations. Using Participatory Photo Mapping (PPM) exercises conducted with groups of five to twelve women with diverse education, age, and employment characteristics in four low to middle-income communities in Delhi, this study explores four key threads, a) mobility patterns, choices and negotiations, b) factors affecting perceptions of safety, c) cell phone and internet usage, and d) re-envisioning safer public spaces. We use a feminist grounded theory approach to analyse the themes and reflections that emerge from each PPM critiquing one-size-fits-all notions of safety. Firstly, familiarity with a neighbourhood, street or city plays a key role in how women perceive safety while navigating public spaces. Secondly, while there have been critiques of neoliberal surveillance technologies like CCTV cameras as solutions for making public spaces safer, our study reveals a more complex relationship, with CCTV cameras seen as useful forms of "eyes on the street." Thirdly, in understanding women's use of cell phones, we probe the promises/challenges of digital crowd-sourcing street safety across socioeconomic classes.

Finally, we offer ideas for building safer and more inclusive public spaces from the collective reimaginations of the participants.

Keywords: Public spaces, Safety, Urban, Inclusive, and Women

8.10
Unmuting silence against sexual harassment and gender discrimination in sports

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The intended study shall focus on the issues of gender justice, equality and women's rights while understanding the implications of sexual harassment and sexism experienced by women in the realm of sports. By engaging in a wide array of feminist epistemology and scholarship that invokes critical feminist theory, the paper intends to address how women athletes combat gendered forms of

violence in their workplace and in everyday life. The study also aims to emphasise the psycho-social impacts and negative consequences of sexual harassment that women athletes face after incessant mental torture and abuse at the hands of authorities that they trust and rely on. This shall be explained in detail by taking a few examples in the form of case studies of sexual harassment faced by women athletes in sports, which would further explain the phenomenon in detail. The paper also intends to study the evolution of feminist jurisprudence by looking into the various preventive acts and measures which aim at recognising and safeguarding the rights of women and addressing the issue of sexual harassment. Last but not least, the paper, through a few primary visits to the field and with the collection of a few primary and secondary sources, shall throw light on the recent protests of the women wrestlers against sexual harassment and exploitation in Jantar Mantar, New Delhi. The endeavour is to put forward a narrative that opposes and challenges the idea of silence against any form of harassment, abuse or discrimination, which would therefore aid in a better understanding of the context.

Keywords: Sexual harassment, Workplace, Discrimination, Violence, and Sport

8.11
The socio-psychological perspective of domestic violence – A Case study of Gujarat Stree Kelavani Mandal

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Domestic violence is indeed a significant social problem that affects individuals and communities worldwide. Domestic violence violates human rights because it infringes upon fundamental rights and freedoms that every individual should enjoy. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948, states that "everyone has the right to life, liberty, and security of person" (Article 3). Domestic violence directly contradicts this principle by endangering the safety and well-being of individuals within their own homes. Domestic violence takes place across all groups and cultures. Various

studies have revealed that socio-cultural and psychological perspectives are very important to understand this problem. It is a very serious socio-psychological problem where women are trapped in a traditional situation which is characterised by gender discrimination, suppression and inequality even though there is a law regarding domestic violence. There are many social, cultural and economic reasons behind this. Psychological views of domestic violence emphasise on three phases: tension building, acute violence and reconciliation. Control theory, resource theory, social isolation theory, system theory and object relation theory, attachment theory and violence as trauma are used in this study.

Research Methodology

The following broad objectives have been taken for this study:

1. To know the socio-economic background of the victims.
2. To identify the social causes of domestic violence of women.
3. To explore the psychological impact of domestic violence.
4. To know the role of GSKM in preventing domestic violence.

The Gujarat Stree Kelavani Mandal (GSKM) is a prestigious, 103-year-old institution which is run by women and works for women. They have one department where social work is done. The data is collected from March 2020 to March 2023. A total of 582 cases of female victims and survivors of domestic violence are selected for the study.

Various factors that were identified as causes for domestic violence were societal norms, cultural values, demand for dowry, financial problems, indifferent attitudes of in-laws and bad/unwelcome habits of partner, lack of understanding and adjustment of each other, etc. Sometimes it also leads to divorce . The psychological impacts on victims are very harmful to them. The role of government and NGOs played an important role in reducing domestic violence. The study covers the main findings and suggestions.

The study says that domestic violence requires a multi-faceted approach involving legal, social, and educational measures. It is essential to promote awareness, provide support services for victims, strengthen legal frameworks, and encourage societal attitudes that reject violence and promote healthy, respectful relationships. By doing so, we can work towards eradicating this problem.

Keywords: Domestic violence, Women, Socio-cultural aspects, Psychological aspects, and Human rights

8.12
"Ofcourse, you wouldn't know": Rethinking Gas-lighting from a Socio-cultural Lens

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"Put up and shut up"- This is often what women are taught and told. It is the ultimate exercise in gaslighting that leads to a devastating sense of loss-loss of possibility. Gaslighting has popularly been recognised and conversed about as a psychological type of violence that distorts the victim's version of reality and renders them 'crazy', 'irrational', 'insane' and so on. Although the contemporary understanding of the word, 'hysteria', has lost scientific legitimacy, it has taken new shapes in the sociological definitions and understandings. Gaslighting has not been scrutinised much, rather, disenfranchised as a cultural form of abuse. This paper will delve into the deconstruction of gaslighting as a socio-cultural phenomenon that relies on the conventional linkage of femininity with irrationality. Gaslighting is fuelled using cultural stereotypes and structural vulnerabilities to manipulate women's realities in patriarchy (Sweet, 2019). It deeply affects the sense of self and leads to the acceptance of a dictated reality, further pushing women into isolation, dependence and submission. Sweet argues that gaslighting is particularly gendered because women cannot possibly gaslight men due to lack of socio-political and economic capital. It gives men the power to question the credibility of women's experiences, and invisiblise their pain to further declare it illegitimate. Gaslighting is gendered because the power to label someone 'crazy' is gendered and essentially thrives on the stereotypes around women being sensitive and emotional, therefore, being irrational and lacking credibility, in turn affecting their sense of self and the world. The idea of femininity being 'deviant' from 'logic' is further perpetuated through romantic relationships, family, law, education, health and religious systems. It is about the way global social systems are built from the ground up to advantage men and disadvantage women through male privilege, sexism, power hierarchy and patriarchy. This maintains the typecasting of women's narratives as unreliable and makes them more prone to institutional abuse. It furthers the difficulties women face in relying on the same institutions for support. Against this backdrop, this paper examines how these advantages are distributed in a complex, uneven way through intersections of various social markers of class, caste, age, sexuality, religion, marital status, ethnicity, educational background, health, and financial status. The paper will help to locate gaslighting in a sociological framework and

understand how it enables attrition of women's worldview.

Keywords: Gaslighting, Violence, Gender, Intersectionality, and Stereotypes

8.13
Burden of Proof and Evidencing Trauma: A Critique of Casteist Medical Jurisprudence and Legality of Rape

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The 2021 National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB) report shows that there were eighty-six cases of rape reported in the country on an average every day in 2021, recording an increase of nearly twenty per cent. Almost eight per cent of these reported rapes were against Dalit women (2,585 cases of rape were against Dalit women and 1,285 cases of minor rape). Cases of rape, attempt to rape, assault on women to outrage her modesty and kidnapping of women and minors cumulatively stood at 16.8% (8570 cases). Within this, less than forty per cent of the cases that were charge-sheeted and tried in court resulted in convictions. The absence of corroborative evidence has been used by the accused, the defense counsels and the judiciary, time and again, to deny the occurrence of the crime in the first place.

Against this backdrop, this research highlights how an over-emphasis on procuring medico-legal evidence denies Dalit victims of rape the immediate medical care that they require and are entitled to. During the trial, there is a consistent presence of archaic notions and misguided jurisprudence pushing the fact that the absence of visible physical injuries is conclusive proof of the innocence of the accused. Unscientific and unethical practices in medical examinations like the two-finger test are rampant, and it is used to invoke the sexual history of victims, thereby raising 'reasonable doubt' about their character. The legal repercussions of a forced dichotomy of sexual assault (including non-penetrative acts) and rape have been particularly detrimental for Dalit women due to apathy and negligence shown by police in the collection and preservation of evidence from the hospitals. The research attempts to critically engage with the idea of consent and compromise, the impact this has in cases of non-compoundable offences like rape, and further

questions the basic premise of how violence is constructed within and through a casteist and sexist legal discourse. There is a detailed analysis and critical engagement with what constitutes sufficient 'evidence' in the courtroom through a sociological reading of sessions court judgments from the eight most atrocity-prone states in the country.

Finally, the research highlights a narrative of shame that the judicial system thrusts upon Dalit women and thus necessitates a particular critique of how caste-based rape trials are adjudicated in the country.

Keywords: Caste-based sexual violence, Medical jurisprudence, Evidence, Judicial system, and Crime

8.14

Demolishing Patriarchy: Analysing Gender Perceptions in Malayalam Short Stories of Smt. Saraswathi Amma and Smt. Silvikkutty Joseph through Sociological Lens

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The term 'gender' includes social, psychological, cultural and behavioural aspects of being a man, woman, or other gender identity. In our society, the first position among genders has been occupied by males and the second position by women for centuries. Menstruation, conception, procreation, childbirth and many other factors play a very significant role in the subordinate female position.

Serious discussions based on gender are usually being made in Sociology and Gender Studies. But most often, it is confined to academic circles. Literature which discusses gender is closer to the wide literate populace and has effects on society. Here, the researcher tries to link literature and sociology concepts in the area of gender on the basis of a short story collection titled Annayum Karthavum by Smt. Silvikkutty Joseph. Silvikkkutty is a writer cum academician from Kerala. It has been more than 15 years since Annayum Karthavum has been published. Though the short stories competed equally well with many famous contemporary short stories, this particular book did not get the wide appreciation

it demands. The background of contemporary Kerala society discussed in the book, and the critical arguments in the stories are highly relevant.

Through this study, the researcher tries to share the idea that changes in patriarchal models in society are possible by discussing literature and theories in sociology together with contemporary issues instead of exclusive analysis in watertight compartments. It is the need of the hour to blend academic content, literature and societal issues together for an emancipatory social system. Researchers suggest that the inclusion of these literary works, which criticise the existing power structures in school curricula, eventually will enhance the critical thinking of the young generation, which will foster an egalitarian society and eliminate gender-based violence in the long run.

Keywords: Gender-based violence, Criticism, Literature, Sociology, and Patriarchy

8.15
Pour, Rub, Pour: The Politics of Casual Violence in Select Advertisements

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World Health Organisation has defined violence as "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation" Over the years, the definition of violence has expanded to recognise the ways that patriarchy and its attendant agencies have inflicted violence upon bodies. The paper examines how casual violence is inflicted on the female body, which could be on screen or absentia, in the advertisements that play out on our screens. The harridan mother who wants nothing but the "best" for her child, the doctor mother who in her doctorly vestments advocates the use of a certain brand of floor cleaner, the off-screen mother whose husband is terrified of the ketchup stain on the son's shirt and who can only be assuaged by the systematic rhythm of "pour, rub, pour", are all examples of the way that the woman is decentralised

through making her a figure to be feared or to be apprehensive about. The subtexts of these advertisements serve to dehumanise women, detach the labour element of their work and provide the viewer with a glimpse of a figure that, through the terror she inspires, becomes a caricature in the community of men who outsmart them through the easy-to-use technology of washing machines and washing liquids. An examination of the general nature of advertisements aired on television further highlights this casual violence inflicted on a day-to-day basis. The paper shall analyse these advertisements appearing on television and look at how the vocabularies of presentation are shaped through the possibilities of these perceptions. It is important to recognise these presentations as violent as they hurt or injure a sense of self that women have and also take away agency from the women in domestic and workplace labour.

Keywords: Casual violence, Advertisements, Patriarchy, Labour, and Violence

8.16
Uncovering the Role of Technology in Enabling Gender-Based Violence

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The rapid advancements and the ever-expanding terrain of technology in recent decades have resulted in its increased usage. This newly created 'space' as a 'public sphere', in the Habermasian sense, has witnessed exponential growth in its consumption and utilisation but has also resulted in an escalation of criminality. The substantial rise in violence in the techno-social space is predominantly a gendered phenomenon called 'technology-facilitated gender-based violence'. It consists of a spectrum of behaviour including but not limited to stalking, bullying, sexual harassment, defamation, hate speech and exploitation that is enabled by technology. While there exists a marginally fair amount of literature explaining what constitutes technology-facilitated gender-based violence, however, there is a gap in the availability of data that corresponds to the literature since most of these studies tend to focus on heterosexual individuals based in high-income countries and ignore other important factors such as class, caste, race, sexual orientation, age, or disability. By preparing case profiles and using in-depth

interviews with the victims and survivors of technology-facilitated gender-based violence, the paper, therefore, makes an attempt at addressing these gaps by firstly, assessing the impact of technology-facilitated gender-based violence on the lives of the victims and survivors of the violence as a result of the newly emergent 'public space'; and secondly, reflecting on the nature of the violence vis-a-vis the identity of the individual, with a primary focus on their gender identity, and intersectionalities such as caste and class location, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, disability, age, et cetera. The framework of 'embodied harms' and 'hegemonic masculinities' provide a nuanced understanding of the occurrence and legitimisation of 'male domination' and reiteration of the oppressive power structure which perpetuates gender imbalances. It reminds us how the virtual world is a significant part of our contemporary lives and is to be viewed as an extension of our social life. More importantly, resistance to violence in the digital sphere is crucial as it poses a threat to the safety, autonomy and dignity of women and other gender minorities. Herein, the role of the feminist movement is critical for combating technology-facilitated gender-based violence through advocacy, initiatives for empowerment, legal reforms and thus, challenging the hegemonic structures by prioritising safe, inclusive, and just digital spaces.

Keywords: Embodied harms, Gender, Hegemonic masculinities, Technology, and Violence

8.17
Domestic Violence in Films: Comical Depiction or Sensitive Portrayal?

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Domestic violence is a serious issue. In spite of it being a deplorable concern and a crime, it makes its ubiquitous presence in society as one of the foremost manifestations of violence against women. This violence that women face in the domestic space at the hands of their intimate partners, mostly husbands, results in physical and psychological harm. Over the years, Malayalam cinema has tried to incorporate the theme of domestic violence in its storyline from different perceptions. Despite being praised for realistic scripts and socially relevant themes, Malayalam cinema, right from its outset, had been misogynistic, silencing women's

experiences and also their pain and trauma. The paper, through a discussion of the film Jaya Jaya Jaya Jaya Hey, written and directed by Vipin Das, released in October 2022, tries to probe how the important issue of domestic violence is depicted in its narrative. However, the purpose of the paper is not to provide either a review or a eulogy. Rather, it uses the film as a tool for investigating the problematic issue that the film conveys. The paper also explores how domestic violence and abusive marriages have been depicted in Malayalam films so far and how Jaya Jaya Jaya Jaya Hey tries to present an alternative outlook in tackling this issue. The manner in which domestic violence is handled in Malayalam films is a reflection of the mindset of the society emphasising the apathy that it bestows on the critical matter of violence against women, especially in the domestic space. The film also highlights the fact that when a woman decides not to tolerate violence anymore and decides to retort, she gets zero support from her own family. The film points to this ironic situation where society accepts men's violence on women but not women's violence on men, even if she is resorting to it in the form of self-defense. The paper makes a comparison with other films where wife battering scenes were shown as comedy scenes for the viewers to laugh. When compared to this callous portrayal, Jaya Jaya Jaya Jaya Hey shows a paradigm shift wherein violence against women is not shown as a comic scene. The storyline develops through the character, Jaya Bharati who is a newly married bride. The paper traces the journey of Jaya Bharati from a conforming wife to a confident and independent woman. Realising that there is no future in the abusive marriage, she walks out of it and sets herself free. The paper also explores the kind of message the film leaves on victims of domestic violence and on society. It concludes that it is welcoming to have such films which question the normalisation of violence against women. Simultaneously, the paper critically raises the question as to how martial arts can act as a panacea in addressing the grievous issue of domestic violence, which in itself is a manifestation of misogyny, a characteristic feature of a patriarchal society. Finally, the paper calls for a sensitive way of handling the theme of domestic violence in films.

Keywords: Domestic violence, Misogyny, Patriarchy, Self-defense, and Martial arts

8.18
Violated Bodies: Unveiling Cultural Practices of Virginity Test and Female genital mutilation

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Women's sexuality has been attempted to be controlled by patriarchal societies in multiple ways, including monitoring their mobility, dress, aspirations, and so on. Some of these ways are more heinous than the myth of the chastity belt. They violate the mind, body, autonomy, and dignity of women. This paper examines two such ways: the cultural practices of Female Genital mutilation (FGM) and Virginity Tests in India.

The conversation around FGM is confined to the context of the Davoodi Bohra community. There are hardly any academic or political engagements on FGM in other communities in India. A few anecdotes and a journalistic investigation provided evidence of the practice in certain sections of Sunni Muslims in Kerala.

Virginity tests in the Kanjarbhat community in Maharashtra became a discussion when a video about the practice was circulated on social media, and the young community members initiated a WhatsApp campaign against the practice called "Stop the V ritual." The paper approaches these practices as embodied cultural practices of sexual control and monitoring, violating women's bodily autonomy and scarring their bodies and psyche and not as an essential practice of any community.

As a survivor of FGM, the author takes an analytical autoethnographic approach to analyse female genital mutilation in Kerala. She employs content analysis of online newspaper articles and social media posts to analyse the practice of the virginity test of the Kanjarbhat community. The author rejects the arguments of FGM as a 'rational choice' of the community as a community practice of FGM in girl child of 40 days old, where one cannot consent to the practice. Only the older women in the families will know about the process. She finds the practice of determining the virginity of the women on the wedding night unscientific, a violation of women's dignity and bodily autonomy. The paper captures the experiences of the survivors of these practices. The paper shows that the association of honour of the family to women's bodies, notions of masculinity and femininity, boycotting and shaming, and caste and religious institutions ensure the superseding of these practices. The researcher also tries to analyse how the

social prescription of being "a good modest woman" and as the gatekeeper of morality functions as a counter-intuition for women to align with the practices. The paper also captures dynamics in family and community relations in prescribing or challenging the practices. Thus, the researcher attempts to unveil the FGM and virginity tests by illuminating the lived experiences and cultural narratives that collide on women's bodies.

Keywords: Female genital mutilation, Virginity test, Embodied cultural practice, Sexual control, and Bodily autonomy

8.19
Rape Adjudication in Trial Courts: Role of Medical Evidence and Intersecting Factors

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&

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The health sector and healthcare providers have a crucial role to play in responding to survivors of sexual violence. These include therapeutic as well as forensic roles mandated by the law in both the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2012 and the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act 2013. Following the recommendations of Justice Verma Committee and subsequent changes in law, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Union of India, issued procedural guidelines and a protocol in 2014 for medical professionals to respond to cases of sexual violence in a gender-sensitive and scientific manner. It articulated the vision for a multi-stakeholder, coordinated, and survivor-centric response to sexual violence. The Centre for Enquiry into Health and Allied Themes (CEHAT), in collaboration with the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai, has been actively demonstrating comprehensive healthcare response to rape survivors through a model initiated in 3 public hospitals in Mumbai since 2008. Through this presentation, we examine the role medico-legal evidence plays in rape trials and understand the factors that affect court outcomes. Seven hundred twenty-eight survivors reached the three hospitals between 2008-2015. Using the available information, a search was conducted on the e-court website for

related orders in the cases. The website indicated that 139 cases had reached an outcome, but full judgements were available only for 96 cases, which were considered for content analysis.

Findings showed that doctors were called to testify as expert witnesses in 61 out of 96 cases, and they provided reasoned medical opinions in most cases. They were also able to explain the lack of medical evidence citing delays in reaching hospitals, as well as the nature and circumstances in which sexual violence occurred. However, doctors faced some challenges during cross-examination, such as when posed with close-ended questions regarding whether injuries could have been caused by reasons other than sexual violence. The findings also showed that courts relied on the presence of genital injuries as an important factor for conviction but did not take physical injuries and other health consequences into consideration. Preparation by the prosecutor to interpret medical evidence and a combination of factors such as; immediate reporting and FIR recording by the police and eyewitness testimony contribute to conviction rates, despite legal provisions and judicial precedents iterating their limitations. The analysis showed that conviction rates were much lower for adolescent and adult women as compared to victims aged below 12 years. The court displayed many stereotypical, victim-blaming attitudes in cases where victims were compelled to turn hostile, or in cases of breach of promise of marriage, without appreciating the nuances of the surrounding circumstances. Qualitative research with survivors shows that they experience hostility across institutions, are seen with suspicion by the police and courts, and face challenges with basic processes in the criminal justice system (CEHAT, 2018).

Contemporary evidence from CEHAT's continued engagement with the healthcare system shows that the nature of medical evidence in cases of rape remains unchanged. Thus, doctors, police, prosecutors, and the judiciary need to acquire a more scientific understanding of medical evidence, its scope and limitations, and rely on it appropriately in the justice delivery process. Appreciating the role and constraints of medical evidence can also contribute to emancipating the adjudication process from regressive stereotypes.

Keywords: Sexual violence, Medicolegal evidence, Health systems, Justice delivery, and Stereotypes

8.20
Intimate Partner Violence and gynaecological morbidity: a propensity score-matched analysis

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Intimate partner violence (IPV) is associated with poor reproductive health outcomes in women. This paper aims to study the relationship between intimate partner violence (IPV) and gynaecological morbidity among women in India. Nationally representative data from India's latest National Family Health Survey conducted during 2019–21 is used for the present study. Propensity score-matched analysis was used to analyse the effect of IPV on gynaecological morbidity among women.

Results showed that 8011 (13.25%) out of 60480 respondents had self-reported gynaecological morbidity. Using the matched sample, the probability of having gynaecological morbidity was significantly higher among women exposed to IPV than those not. The unmatched sample estimate shows that those women who had experienced violence were 8.2 per cent more likely to have gynaecological morbidity than those who didn't experience violence. Using the nearest neighbour matching with replacement method, calculated ATT value in treated and control groups were 0.19 and 0.13, respectively, which means that the prevalence of having gynaecological morbidity was improved by six percentage points because of violence.

The current study proves that IPV and women's reproductive health are related. More longitudinal studies are required, or at the very least cross-sectional studies, that are better able to offer histories of both violence and reproductive health outcomes, such as symptoms of gynaecological morbidity. There is a need for quantitative and qualitative, community- and facility-based research that examines these relationships and explores potential intervening mechanisms.

Keywords: Intimate partner violence, Women, Gynecological morbidity, Propensity-score matched analysis, and India

8.21

Bully Bai and Sulli Deals Applications: Exploring the VAW on the Internet from Academia and Civil Society's Response in India

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The rise of the digital age has brought numerous opportunities and challenges for society. India has seen a rapid advancement in internet userbase across different gender and age groups in rural as well as urban demographics. But rapid digitisation has also exposed women to new forms of violence, mainly through the internet. The situation went from bad to worse during the COVID pandemic and in a post-COVID world.

This research aims to shed light on violence against women online, explicitly focusing on the Bully Bai and Sulli Deals web application incidents in India during late 2021 and early 2022. These two shocking incidents targeted Muslim women, wherein their personal details and photographs were publicly disclosed for auction, exemplifying a brazen crime fuelled by religious prejudice.

In recent years, the exploitation of the internet as a platform for perpetrating violence against women has become a pressing concern worldwide. These concerns are even more alarming in India, given the diverse cultural landscape and the potential for targeted attacks against specific religious groups. The Bully Bai and Sulli Deals cases emerged as glaring examples of how online spaces are used to demean, harass, and violate the privacy and dignity of women based on their religious identities.

India has a vibrant civil society ecosystem which, from time to time, has played a crucial role in raising awareness against various social evils and injustices and advocating policy intervention to curb them. The critical part of civil society and think tanks have been essential in providing justice to the victims of incidents like the Nirbhaya Rape Case (2012) and the Muzaffarpur (Bihar) Shelter Home Rape Case (2018). Ideally, violence against women on the internet comes under the purview of civil society organisations and think tanks working in the domain of

women's rights, judicial reforms and internet governance. They have the expertise and mandate for conducting research, analysing the impact of such incidents on victims, and providing evidence-based recommendations for strengthening internet governance and women's rights, ensuring safety and dignity of internet users across various gender, religion, and age groups.

This study seeks to identify the measures taken by these entities to support the victims, raise awareness, and advocate for enhanced internet governance to prevent such incidents. The importance of this research lies in its potential to generate empirical evidence and insights into the prevailing attitudes and responses of key stakeholders; policymakers regarding violence against women on the internet, particularly in cases driven by religious bias.

Keywords: Violence against women, Bully bai, Sulli deals, Civil society, and Muslim women

8.22
Feminist interventions in reproductive violence and the possibilities of reproductive justice

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Over the last twenty years, and particularly in the last decade, reproductive violence has emerged as a site for struggle, advocacy, and feminist interventions, particularly in the Global South. The term 'reproductive violence' encompasses violence that girls and women are exposed to by virtue of their gender and their capabilities and autonomy (or lack thereof) for procreation (or not) (Grey, 2017). It may take the form of denial of reproductive rights such as the denial of abortion access or contraception for adolescents or non-married women, a lack of access to menstrual hygiene products, forced pregnancies, forced abortions or sterilisations, violence (physical and emotional) that women encounter during pregnancy, during labour, and the post-partum period, non-consented or painful or undignified gynaecological examinations, denial of reproductive and sexual health services for women who may no longer be in a position to procreate, violence associated with infertility, forced surrogacy, and the devaluation of maternal and

procreative labour. Given the wide ambit of the term reproductive violence, for the purposes of this study, I focus specifically on violence that women encounter during childbirth and in the postpartum period from health systems, medical institutions, and providers in India, while drawing parallels with other low and middle-income countries (LMIC) like South Africa, and in Latin America where the issue of birth violence has also animated feminists for nearly two decades. I analyse feminist interventions in reproductive violence necessarily inflected by the specificities of different geographies, political economies, and cultural practices. In particular, I use the example of a transnational global advocacy group the White Ribbon Alliance (WRA) comprising health providers, pregnant women and mothers, and other stakeholders to examine whether the discursive practices of such groups can help ensure equitable maternal healthcare for all. I foreground my analysis in the lived experiences of being a woman as it intersects with other identities such as caste, class, religion, tribal affiliations, geography, and residence and how these social locations manifest themselves in the experience of giving birth, and the quality of care that women are likely to receive. Using methods drawn from digital humanities and anthropology, I find that the campaigns (and audio-visual material) of WRA foreground a rights-based framework drawn largely from western understandings of individuated rights where awareness and sensitisation appear to be sufficient for the realisation of these rights. Empirical evidence and ethnographic insights indicate that such accountability mechanisms particularly in LMIC contexts succeed only when they enjoy political support and mostly in contexts where social justice movements for social, economic and cultural equity either predates these interventions or parallelly exist. I reflect on the implications of such campaigns and the importance of organisations like WRA for the cause of reproductive justice and respectful maternal care in India.

Keywords: Reproductive violence, Childbirth, Health systems, Campaigns, and Feminist interventions

8.23

Locating Health-Centred Interventions in Addressing Gender-Based Violence and the Access to Justice

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According to the NFHS-5 data, 77% of women and girls who have faced violence in their lifetime have never sought help or told anyone about it. Even in the remaining 23% who did seek support, only 6% approached the police, and 2% approached medical personnel or lawyers. In a caste-patriarchal society where gender-based violence (GBV) is a systemic issue and is instrumental in upholding institutions of oppression, the above data speaks volumes of how even the State, whose duty is to uphold equality and non-discrimination, has failed to inspire confidence among survivors to extend the support that caters to their needs in upholding their human rights to a life of dignity that is free from violence and health.

The barriers to accessing support services from State institutions (duty-bearers) range from but are not limited to social barriers to access that label survivors as vengeful for seeking help outside of the community; lack of clarity on the role and low priority to GBV among duty-bearers; gendered biases within health systems, criminal legal system, and other support services; defunct State infrastructures and lack of resources for proper functioning of services.

A few scholars have studied these barriers, and our observations through Sama's work also reflect similar results. At Sama, we work at the intersection of health and gender with an intersectional feminist understanding that gender justice and freedom from violence are critical determinants of health and vice versa. Through our work with civil society groups working on women's issues at the grassroots, we explore the role civil society support groups play in addressing gender-based violence(GBV) and facilitating access to support services so that systemic patterns can be challenged and reconstructed. With this insight, we collectively build towards health-centred interventions to address GBV to achieve the right to health and healthcare.

When we say health-centred interventions, we mean two issues - a) that the approach of psycho-social care and well-being are cross-cutting through all multi-sector interventions, be it by duty-bearers like police, protection officers, medical officers or civil society like community-based organisations, peer support groups or community leader, and b) that the health system prioritises GBV as a

public health concern and plays an active central role toward a robust response by providing a safe space for disclosure, for prevention.

Through this paper, we will highlight how incorporating a broader understanding of health, i.e. psycho-social care and well-being, by duty-bearers and civil society in initiatives towards prevention and redressal of GBV and, therefore, integral for access to justice to be survivor-centric - placing the health system in a critical position to institutionalise care and safe space, along with well-coordinated linkages with support services. In doing so, we will explore how the popular response to GBV, i.e. of an approach of protectionism and deterrence, has been shaped by the patriarchal nature of the State and unpack how these have contributed to the barriers to accessing justice.

Keywords: Psycho-social care, Survivor-centric, Public health, Health system, and Patriarchal state

8.24
Representation of sexual violence in Indian newspapers and the question of intersectionality

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The study focuses on the socio-cultural anomalies that permeate over the representation of sexual violence in selected newspapers. The miscellaneous roles of newspapers as documenters, critiques or facilitators of policy making or as passive witnesses in the society which they are a part of, is explored in this paper. It seeks to understand the potential of media in shaping the discourse of sexual violence in India. The paper further seeks to promote critical language awareness and highlights the importance of gender sensitivity in language use, especially in the domain of media.

Rape as a gender based violence receives inadequate media attention in India. However, its implications as a multi-pronged act of violence manifesting readily over the immediate power differences are altogether overlooked. In India, statistics show that despite the proliferation of digital media, the print media still witnesses a constant growth and it still continues to maneuver the nation's socio-cultural ideologies. Media's interventions in the socio-political uprisings

from Mathura (1972) to Hathras rape (2020) cases stand as a testimony. In India, not all rape cases make into newspaper headlines. With the aid of published literature in the field, and interviews with lawyers and journalists, backed with consumer surveys, this paper attempts to understand the socio-cultural reasons that govern the representation of rape in Indian newspapers. As the data for analysis, the Trivandrum edition of The Hindu and The Times of India are selected. The study offers a diachronic analysis of "The Hindu from 2010- 2020 (2010, 2015, 2020)" and a synchronic study of The Hindu and The Times of India in 2015 and 2020. Along with this combination of methods, the study is also complemented by quantitative and qualitative analysis. The paper is structured around tenets of three-dimensional approach developed by Norman Fairclough; the theory emphasises on the dialectical relationship between media language and society. Hence, in this paper, the correlation between the selected news genre with Indian society is explored using the framework of discourse analysis, especially, three-dimensional approach. News reports are analysed according to the analytical tools available at the three levels (text, discursive and social practice) of the framework. Positive and negative indexes of news items are created and compared with a consumer survey to establish the dialectical relationship between the discourse of rape news and its immediate sociopolitical surroundings.

Keywords: Sexual violence, Media, Intersectionality, Language, and Discourse

8.25
Social support and psychological capital as predictors of post-traumatic growth among women pellet victims of Kashmir

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The present research was undertaken to investigate the role of positive variables such as social support, and psychological capital on post traumatic growth among women pellet victims of Kashmir. For the present study purposive sampling was used to collect data through questionnaire method. Total sample size for the study after removing invalid or missing data was 250. To ensure homogeneity of

the sample, demographic details were taken. Research design was correlational and predictive in nature. Social support and psychological capital were treated as predictors and post traumatic growth (PTG) as the criterion variable. The aim of the study was to examine the relationship among social support, psychological capital and post traumatic growth and also to identify critical predictors of post traumatic growth among social support and psychological capital. The descriptive statistics show that the minimum age of women was 19 years and maximum was 25 years with the mean age of 21.59 years. 200(80%) respondents were from rural and 50 (20%) were from urban areas. The inferential statistics shows positive relationship among social support, psychological capital and post traumatic growth. support and psychological capital were predictors of post traumatic growth. Therefore, it can be concluded that positive variables play a vital role in overcoming difficult times. There is a need to formulate a systematic framework for effective psychosocial intervention for treating the post traumatised stressed victims. There is a need to resolve issues through renewing the existing policies, political dialogue, conferences, seminars, workshops, etc.

Keywords: Women pellet victims, Social support, Psychological capital, Post traumatic growth, and Kashmir

8.26
Developing Nari Adhikar Kendra to counter gender-based violence within public systems delivery in Madhya Pradesh

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The paper will look at the experiences of Nari Adhikar Kendra, an institutional mechanism developed in Madhya Pradesh, as part of the efforts to address gender-based violence and facilitate access to entitlements for survivors and marginalised communities. Transforming Rural India Foundation renders technical support to National Rural Livelihood Mission and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee programme, National Health Mission

and Ministry of Panchayati Raj with the objectives of creation of sustainable livelihoods, enhancement and control over income leading to economic empowerment, strengthening community based organisations' access to village health and nutrition services and strengthen village poverty reduction plan and integration in Gram Panchayat development plan. It also works at the block level to develop immersion sites for learning in the states of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, and Bodoland Territorial Council.

In TRIF's technical assistance to NRLM, it focuses on economic empowerment. Approaching work from a multi-dimensional and multi-sectoral lens, the focus is on attaining quality of life standards.

In order to address gender issues which impede social, economic and political empowerment, Nari Adhikar Kendras/NAK (Gender Resource Centres) were established in Madhya Pradesh. Nari Adhikar Kendras are established in the cluster federation offices and managed by cluster level federations. Nari Adhikar Kendra is an engendered virtual and physical space which enables women, especially from marginalised communities to access entitlements, link young women to skilling and employment, engendering entrepreneurship programme to most significantly addressing gender-based violence.

There are organic inter-linkages with self-help groups at the village level, social action committee at the village organisational level, cluster federation level and gender forum comprising of elected representatives, ASHA, Anganwadi worker, ANM, police beat and principal of schools to address gender issues. The NAK works in convergence with departments such as women and child development, police, SC/ST, revenue, education, health and legal services authority to resolve gender issues. Thus, an ecosystem towards realisation and voicing of gender issues has been created. Gender sensitisation trainings have been conducted for the staff, cadres, leaders of SHGs and its federations like the village organisation and cluster level federations. The trainings include concepts of gender, patriarchy, social construct, gender division of labour, access and control over institutions and resources, gender and decentralisation, rights and entitlements, violence against women, institutional mechanisms, roles and responsibilities, etc.The capacity building process has thrown open the platform to raise voices, enhancement of individual and collective agency.

Women have started addressing domestic violence, child marriages, child sexual abuse, second marriages and human trafficking of girl child across borders. These issues are being raised through NAKs and are being addressed through social pressure and interface with different stakeholders in a concerted endeavour . The impact is deeply felt in realisation of their unequal status, the need to resist violence and seek institutionalised support through collective agency. NAK has

been upscaled to 102 blocks in the state of Madhya Pradesh and the process of engendering the ecosystem to counter violence is being intensified. The endeavour through technical support of TRIF is being undertaken to enable articulation and engagement of gender-based violence by SHGs and its federations and enhance interface with public systems.

Keywords: Nari Adhikar Kendra, Gender based violence, Federation, Survivors, and State departments

8.27
Role of women civil social organisations in resisting gender-based violence in Manipur

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Manipur, a state in north-east India, is a society where there has been a continuous conflict between the ruling governance and the public. The women in this society are visible in public domain providing, protecting, and agitating against any civil or state injustice since pre-colonisation. Preoccupied with the state turmoil, the women in Manipur had never called out for their own upliftment or awakening in the public domain. In the 21st century, too, they are facing domestic violence and sacrificing themselves in the name of duty and the 'courage of Meitei women'. Nupigi Punshi and Women and Crime are the two journals published by two women's organisations in Manipur – 'Young Women Help Organization' and 'Organization for Indian Women against Crime', respectively, that operate from the valley of Manipur. They record crime and violence incidents faced by the women in Manipur related to domestic violence, family conflict, polygamy, sexual harassment, rape, murder in family and any other issue related to civil conflict. They also help helpless women monetarily in addition to delivering justice.

Being in a state of conflict for a long time, the people of Manipur have minimal or no trust in the judicial system. Moreover, it is perceived as time and money-consuming; so people often depend on public justice, namely the local clubs and the Meira Paibi. They are the ones who excommunicate a family or punish a perpetrator when any criminal activity takes place in a locality. For heinous

crimes, they also assist with capturing the suspects and handing them over to the police. However, they do sometimes harm the innocents, especially when they are misled with wrong information. However, to avoid such victimisation by mob justice, the state police also take steps to enlighten the citizens. Irrespective of the state's effort, the money and time that one needs to spend to seek justice is not preferred by the citizens – as said by Arambam Ongbi Robita Devi in the editorial of her first publication of Nupigi Punshi.

To date, mob justice is still practised in Manipur, and some persons are still victims of such practices. However, the two organisations are established as an alternative to mob justice as the organisations bring together both social morals and judicial system to solve any crime and violence faced by people, which is either women-oriented or conflict in family or heinous crimes like rape and murder. For heinous crimes, they investigate before acting and hand over the perpetrator to the police. Their motto does not allow them to punish the suspect. Instead, they investigate and listen to the story of both sides – the complainant and the accused, to resolve the issue accordingly. In this paper, I will be analysing the contributions of such organisations in a disturbed society.

8.28
Understanding Elder Abuse and Gender Interconnect in the Indian Context

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Population ageing is almost a universal phenomenon in the contemporary world with multifarious implications for societies such as India, which is undergoing a rapid transition in the wake of globalisation and associated processes. Against such a backdrop, providing safe and secure ageing to the aged of our country becomes a real challenging task. Hence, Indian society today is much concerned with the emerging problem of elder abuse as a manifestation of its ongoing social changes.

An interesting dimension of this demographic transition is the rising share of women in older age groups that might rightly be termed as 'feminisation of

ageing.' Taking this dimension into account, along with the patriarchal social set-up of India, the problem of elder abuse is assumed to have a gender aspect that has largely remained obscured from academic inquest due to the general tendency to homogenise the elderly population. But in reality, elderly women in India are sometimes denied even their basic human rights.

The United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women defines the term 'violence against women' as any act of gender-based violence that resulted or may likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty occurring in private or public life. Though different definitions regarding elder abuse have also been proposed, the concept is multidimensional and lacks definitional clarity. Moreover, gender-neutral words like victims, perpetrators or abused all serve to obscure the magnitude of the problem. But definitely, it may be a function of a multitude of factors like old age itself, low levels of education, low socio-economic status and so on.

Older women of our country may suffer from two types of vulnerability-one due to deprivation of the basic needs of food, clothing and shelter along with access to proper and timely medical care, or due to deprivation of literacy or information, financial security, leisure or recreation in the family or society at large, and access to rights along with dignity or respect in the family or society. Reports on elder abuse in India suggest that the main perpetrators are from within one's family, especially sons and sometimes daughters-in-law. But, such violence has largely been denied or hidden because it not only questions the patriarchal social structures of the country and the subordination of women therein but also because it may incur an assault on the family's integrity and reputation. Moreover, love for the abuser and dependence on them, personal embarrassment and fear of being abandoned, along with societal attitudes where family relationships are held in high regard are being presumably looked upon with reverence, often deters the victim from reporting such abuse. Data from the National Crime Records Bureau, however, shows that with time, abuse of elderly women is on the rise.

Though in India, there are certain constitutional and legal safeguards for its senior citizens, government agencies and the community in general needs to develop more age-friendly approaches. This study thus attempts to highlight the interconnection between elder abuse and the gender aspect in India so that concerted actions may be taken at different social levels to mitigate the problem.

Keywords: Feminisation, Elder abuse, Women, Marginalisation, and Constitutional safeguards

8.29
Adequate Housing for Queer Women and Transgender Persons

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Rituparna Borah and Varsha Verma – Nazariya
Geetha Nambisan - Lam-lynti Chittara Neralu (LCN) - National Network on Shelters for Survivors of Violence & Housing and Land Rights Network

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were agreed upon and accepted by 193 states in 2015 on the idea that they apply to everyone, everywhere, and will leave no one behind. The SDGs had tremendous potential to enhance equality for all, even though they could have gone further by expressly advocating for LGBTQIA+ equality. The principle of leaving no one behind is especially important for LGBT people, who have been repeatedly left behind by national and international development initiatives. Discriminatory laws, programmes that do not address their special needs, and unfavourable social attitudes have all contributed to the marginalisation of LGBT persons. Goal 11 of Sustainable Development Goals emphasises making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

At an international level with regard to LGBTQIA+ persons, in response to well-documented patterns of abuse, a prominent group of international human rights experts met in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, in 2006 to define a set of international sexual orientation and gender identity principles. The Yogyakarta Principles are the result and a universal guide to human rights that affirm binding international legal standards with which all states must conform. They offer a different future in which all people born free and equal in dignity and rights can use their priceless birthright.

The Right to Adequate Housing

Principle 15 of Yogyakarta Principles mentions that Everyone has the right to adequate housing, including protection from eviction, without discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. Suppose we view this goal from the perspective of Queer Women and Trans persons, to attain Goal-11. In that case, certain actions need to be taken to support and train local government and housing associations to take account of the specific needs of LGBT young people. It includes providing specialist services, such as safe houses, for LGBTQIA+ groups at risk of homelessness, particularly young people and the elderly, and in the longer term, to provide affordable, non-discriminatory and

safe housing options for LGBT people that take account of the specific needs of LGBT communities.

The government of India launched the Garima Greh, an initiative to rehabilitate members of the transgender community. The grehs are transgender-friendly shelter houses or rehabilitation centres established by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. However, Garima Grehs across India are currently facing budget crisis and government indifference. In addition, queer women and partners of transmen do not have shelter home facilities in any government-sponsored shelter homes.

In this panel, LCN proposes to present relevant observations from its rapid study entitled 'AT HOME, AT RISK' - a series of rapid surveys to understand how the redressed ecosystem for domestic violence has functioned during the COVID-19 pandemic. The series also focused on shelter homes across the States, where the Network is based. LCN also focused on queer women and trans persons' issues in this study. Housing and Land Rights Network will share findings and insights from its study entitled, 'A Place to Call Home: Report on the Access to Housing for Transgender Persons'. The study documents the lived experiences of transgender persons from marginalised groups who have faced homelessness, evictions, violence, and lack of tenure security. In the background of legal and policy provisions for the transgender community, the study examines the access of transgender persons to various forms of housing (shelters, rental housing, traditional guru-chela systems, among others) and the aspirations for an equal human right to adequate housing.

Keywords: Shelter homes, Transgender, LGBTQIA+, Housing, and Violence

8.30
'Displaced' Women and 'Outside' Marriage Bonds: Understanding Chosen Care Systems in the context of domestic violence

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Through the years, the unit of family has been understood as one that is based in ideals of gender and caste, central to the functions of power and domination.

Unequal power relations and violence act as a consequence of these interpersonal and hierarchical relationships created by systems of caste, gender, age, class, religion, sexuality and so on. The most vulnerable population of any family unit has been understood to be women, people of marginalised genders, children and older folks (also to be understood as 'dependencies'). While there have been numerous discussions around violence against women in the domestic spheres of their marital homes, the conversation around natal family violence and abuse against women and other marginalised gender identities remains invisibilised or sidelined.Unsafe and hostile environments for married women in their domestic spaces, including marital and natal homes, leave them 'displaced'. This feeling of displacement often finds and creates space for the desire for care, intimacy and friendship in relationships outside of marriage and the family unit. It is imperative to note that this displacement of married women experiencing domestic violence may not always be one of physicality, but of dissonance, distance, lack of safety and need. The space of marital and natal homes, through ideas of the family unit and marriage often force married women into dependence, leaving them no choice but to continue staying within the structure. Due to this system and its workings, whom I call 'displaced women', I find the cracks in the systems which open to liberating, voluntary and agentic relationships of friendships and spaces of belongingness. As a queer person growing up in a rigid understanding of a heteronormative family, I strongly realised the need for alternative spaces and friendships where one can breathe an air of freedom -freedom to seek care, share vulnerabilities, feel desire for others and to be desired by others while finding solidarities and argentic ideas of living. These chosen systems provide a sense of independence, companionship and intimacy. Further, working with the survivors of domestic violence for a few years now, I have noticed that women's struggles with natal and marital family violence create this need for alternate systems of comfort. Women who come to the organisations with domestic violence cases are often accompanied by their family members who wouldn't always provide a safe, inconsequential or comfortable environment to talk. However, women are often accompanied by their friends, who tend to become their comfort spaces, allowing them to share their experiences of violence and abuse more freely. My experience of working with these cases led me to think critically about how relationships outside of marriage and family bring a certain sense of freedom and allow married women to exercise their agency without fear or hesitation. In this paper, I hope to unravel the varied reasons for which married women facing domestic violence do not feel safe to reintegrate themselves into natal families. However, they are often forced to return back to natal or marital families instead of their chosen care systems. Further, the question arises as to how do we then understand the transgression of gender roles as an act of initiating domestic violence as a chain of events. The research will also speculate as to why women

are compelled to discontinue friendships or care systems built outside of their family unit or marriages and also to be able to understand what meaning these care systems hold for married women and how they are built while breaking structures of marriage, family units, caste, and gender. These questions will be speculated in the context of Pune, Maharashtra based on interactions and case studies from my previous work across the span of two years along with secondary content and data analysis.

Keywords: Married women, Natal family, Domestic violence, Care systems, and Agency

8.31
Ordeal and Narrative of the 'Other': A Study of Gender-based Violence against Trans and Non-binary Sex Workers

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Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) is violence committed against a person because of his or her sex or gender. It is forcing another person to do something against his or her or their will through violence, coercion, threats, deception, cultural expectations, or economic means. There are different types of sexual and gender-based violence - sexual violence, physical violence, emotional or psychological violence, socio-economic violence and other harmful practices. The space for gender-based violence includes both private and public domains like home parks, streets and public transport, health care centres, police stations, bars, brothels, etc. The perpetrators may include family, friends, peers, neighbours, strangers, intimate partners, sex work clients and other sex workers. Sex workers face discrimination and gender-based violence at multiple levels. Transgender and non-binary sex workers are at high risk of facing gender-based violence as they challenge certain set of traditional 'norms' and behaviour. Thus, it is imperative to understand how gender determines the nature of risk.

A transgender in Jakarta shared an experience for a survey, "because the family life a man and woman have is also experienced by us... [He] has bitten me; there are so many things like that. Because for me, truly, he is a man, and because I

always behave with a woman's character, I can never lift a hand to him. Because normally, a woman doesn't lift a hand to a man." While another transgender sex worker in Kathmandu shared, "Four policemen opened my clothes, asking, 'Are you a boy or a girl?', and beat me with a long bamboo stick. Some of them slapped my face with their hands. One [policeman] kicked me on my chest, saying, 'Why are you behaving like this?' They hit me, saying, 'Why are you behaving like a girl?"

This paper, based on various reports and literature, will look at the concept of sexual politics, the position of transgenders and non-binary individuals, the nature of gender-based violence faced by transgender and non-binary sex workers and look at their physical, emotional and reproductive rights and access to justice and various health care programmes.

Keywords: Sex workers, Transgender, Non-binary, Conformity, and Violence

8.32
Examining notions of immorality in the context of soliciting sex in public: A Case Study from Bangalore

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'Soliciting for prostitution' in public is a criminal offence in India under Section 8 of the Immoral Trafficking Prevention Act (ITPA), 1956. My work as a legal advisor to Sadhana Mahila Sangha (a street-based sex worker collective in Bangalore) has shown that (i) the provision is disproportionately deployed against the sex worker community to ensure 'clean' public spaces and (ii) the presence of certain women in public spaces is criminalised and perceived as a threat to normative ways of occupying the city. These factors have progressively rendered sex workers vulnerable to gruesome forms of violence, exacerbated their susceptibility to harassment by the State, and imperiled their right to the city. However, there is limited discussion on how social and legal ideas of (im)morality feed into each other to provoke such abuse.

In this paper, I examine how soliciting is framed under the Indian Law, why it is often conceptualised as 'public nuisance' and implications that this carries

for women who earn their livelihoods through supposedly 'immoral' ways. I investigate the history, rationale, and underlying assumptions of (im)morality in the Act alongside the impact of public nuisance jurisprudence on this discourse. Based on in-person interviews with women in the Sangha, I juxtapose my analysis with their lived experiences to demonstrate that their realities contest the presumptions of law. Ultimately, I will present a creative re-imagination of the law regulating sex work in the country.

Keywords: Soliciting, Sex work, Violence, Public nuisance, and Immoral trafficking

8.33
Feminist agents of change:
Fight against gender-based violence
by Samta Sakhis of Sheopur

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Gender based violence is deeply embedded within patriarchal societies. This gets aggravated due to vulnerabilities triggered by multi-dimensional poverty. This paper examines a model of feminist leadership building within one of the largest government programmes i.e. National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM), to create a cadre of community leaders (called the Samta Sakhis) who understand, identify, engage and address the issue of gender-based violence within their own lives and in the lives of women in their communities.

The institutions under the aegis of the NRLM have a strong potential to fight against gender-based violence. Through the Gender Justice Program (GJP), implemented in Sheopur district of Madhya Pradesh, Samta Sakhis underwent a capacity building programme based on feminist pedagogies and values. A leading gender rights based civil society organisation built their capacities through training, exposure visits and on-job handholding and mentoring through Master Trainers. Samta Sakhis were entrusted with conducting trainings on gender and women's

rights at the level of women community institutions i.e. Village organisation (VO) and Cluster level federations (CLF). They also took a lead in helping women access their rights and fight injustice including gender-based violence. As feminist agents of change, Samta Sakhis fought against violence in their own lives and in the lives of women from the community. They leveraged the collective power of the NRLM institutional platforms and newly established Lok Adhikar Kendras (LAK) to support survivors of violence. They mobilised women from self-help groups (SHG), VOs and CLFs to support survivors of violence within their communities. Due to their persistent efforts, the community institutional spaces transformed into platforms where women found a voice, support and visibility for their concerns. Samta Sakhis built and relied on the strength and solidarity of women's collectives which was instrumental in destigmatising violence, questioning the naturalisation of violence, and enabling women to identify and resist violence in their lives. They also established convergences with the Panchayat bodies, One Stop Centres and police stations on a case-to-case basis. They used various strategies ranging from mediation, resistance, confrontation, collective solidarity and escalation to authorities to address the issues. They leveraged, wherever possible, the Social Action Committees to ensure women live in violence-free and non- threatening environments.

Continuous social action through embedded leadership within the communities and institutional backing helped Samta Sakhis in their battle against gender-based violence. They successfully demonstrated the potential of feminist community leaders and community institutions in raising and addressing sensitive and important issues such as gender-based violence. The paper discusses how a trained cadre of feminist community leaders is built, the strategies they employ to address gender-based violence in their own lives and in the lives of women in the community and the role played by legitimacy gained due to their embeddedness within a government programme challenging entrenched gender norms.

Keywords: Gender, Women's collectives, Gender equality, Community leadership, and Gender-based violence

8.34

Ten Years of Muzaffarnagar Communal Violence: Impact on Women, Sexual Violence, Displacement, Role of Secular Politics and Civil Society

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In the year 2013, communal violence was perpetrated by communal forces in Muzaffarnagar and its surrounding districts. About 80 people were killed in this incident of communal violence. Most of those who died were from the Muslim community. Large-scale looting took place in the houses of Muslims. Due to the prevailing insecurity in the Muslim society, thousands of people fled from their homes. Their displacement took place towards those areas of Muzaffarnagar and Shamli, where the Muslim population was in majority. About 100 women were raped in this communal violence. But according to media reports, only 7 cases were registered .These cases were registered only after the intervention of the Supreme Court. 6 victims withdrew their cases within a year due to fear and insecurity. In only one case, after 10 years, the accused have been punished by the lower court. The condition of the rape victim/survivor and her experiences of torture and struggles will be discussed in this research paper. There has been a popular belief about riots; that men of two communities fight with each other. Women are missing from this popular narrative. Due to the disappearance of women from this popular narrative, the injustice done against them does not become a part of popular discourse. For the first time in independent India, after the anti-Muslim violence in Gujarat (2002), the question of sexual violence against women became a part of popular discourse due to efforts by civil society. Even today, when the Gujarat massacre is discussed in any form, the face of Bilkis Bano comes to our mind. All this was possible only because of the efforts made by civil society and women's organisations.When we talk about Muzaffarnagar (2013), the 100 rapes that took place and Verma Committee (2013) recommendations come to our mind. Despite all these, there is a visible lack of commitment and effort by civil society and women's organisations now in Muzaffarnagar. Thousands of people were displaced in the communal violence in and around Muzaffarnagar. This process of displacement affected women in a more negative way. The work done by them was affected due to displacement. Restrictions on their movement and sexuality became more severe than before. The role of secular politics in the

aftermath of communal violence will also be discussed in the research paper.

Keywords: Communal violence, Sexuality, Displacement, Civil society, and Demography

8.35
A deep dive into the Courts of Women as a Global Movement in the Search for a New Paradigm of Justice

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Women's actions have long been made to fit within the purview of legal jurisprudence without considerations from women themselves. When the purview evolved to fit the narratives of women, other issues arose. The various forms of gendered violence that exist within society developed a duplicitous nature in public and private forums. So even despite the pervasiveness of women's movements, of women's growing self-assertion and independence, despite the reforms in laws and creation of state structures, the lived realities of women continued to immensely differ. From a legal lens crimes against women have reduced as a result of these interventions, however, on ground practitioners disagree.

As a response to the androcentric political paradigm and its praxis, the Court of Women was envisioned and initiated in 1991. It is a global movement and a feminist methodology that is rooted in a discourse of dissent that seeks to relook the rights and other notions of justice from the lives and the life visions of women, particularly from the global south. A women's court follows the concept of a tribunal, with public hearings that are the personal testimonies of women concerning violence and violations of human rights. The purpose of the tribunal is multifold. It aims to challenge both the mainstream definitions and perceptions of women and violence against women, and to solemnly question the existing solutions or remedies offered within established socio-legal discourses and institutions. It comes from the strong belief that only after the problem has been identified from an intersectional feminist perspective, which meaningful strategies can be worked out to combat it.

Through this paper, we will seek to juxtapose the history of the laws pertaining to women's rights, specifically those that were documented through the courts of women against the subjective testimonies of the women in the court.

We aim to examine the discourses and testimonies that emerged from the courts as evidence for the dire need to deconstruct the existing systems of justice and visibilise violations from the lens of the oppressed. This paper will analyse how such a conception can develop new parameters for defining the discourses surrounding justice that in turn determine political, institutional and cultural imaginations. Along with this, we will look at the structure as a means of sociological and psychological reparation for survivors of gender-based violence.

Keywords: Justice, Humans rights, Feminist, Testimony, Courts of women, and Legal jurisprudence

8.36
Girls' Participation:
Pathway to Reduce Gender-Based Violence

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The National Crime Records Bureau reports an 87% rise in incidents of crimes against women from 2011 to 2021. The World Health Organisation identified a need to address the epidemic of violence against women and girls for shared prosperity and development. Gender being the overarching factor among other intersectional deprivation, girls and young women from Bastis (commonly known as slums) in urban areas is vulnerable to various forms of violence, including structural violence. It is visible in the forms of restricted access to education and other resources, forced marriage and sexual abuse and harassment in family and public places. These girls and young women belong to the migrant population whose life decisions are regulated by the authorities/ power figures living in their native villages. They experience violations of their basic human rights, such as survival, education, health, mobility, and safety which prevent them from living a dignified life.

Vacha Charitable Trust is a Mumbai-based feminist organisation focusing on girls'

and women's rights issues. Vacha shifted its focus from Women to Girls in 1995 to challenge the deep-rooted patriarchal values. It was difficult for women to accept constructive change, and therefore it realised the need to make interventions at early adolescent age when these ideals and beliefs develop.To facilitate girls' and young women's agency and voice, Vacha creates safe spaces for them where they can feel a sense of belongingness and freedom from social pressures/norms and where they can make their own personal decisions and can feel equal.

Vacha rescripts girlhood experiences through a gender-focused non-formal education programme to impart 21st-century life skills. The girls acquire skills in English language, computer, self-awareness, social awareness, critical thinking, communication, problem-solving, negotiation and social action. Along with this, training on gender and health education and self-expression through various creative media are also held. Vacha also engages with boys, men, women, and other influential leaders in the community, along with civic authorities and NGOs.These engagements result in creating a positive ecosystem for girls and women. Vacha's firm belief in democratic participation and giving voice to girls and women shaped it's growth and journey, and 'Nothing for Girls without Girls' became a tagline of Vacha's programme.

This paper will examine Vacha's experiences of working with adolescents and young women living in Bastis in the Mumbai and Thane districts to make a cultural shift in their life. Vacha's long-term, multifaceted, and girls and women-centric approach have witnessed breaking their own patriarchal notion about subjugation, violence, and abuse in the family and public sphere. It has also aided in shifting the community's skewed views about girls' and women's rights. The paper will explore Vacha's strategies, learnings, and challenges, as well as their future pathways to create a gender-just and violence-free society.

Keywords: Gender-based violence, Vulnerability, Agency, Participation, and Early intervention

8.37

Political Construction of Love-Violence and Resistance in Naxalite Politics: A Cinematic Contemplation

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In 1967, the 'Naxalbari' movement had a massive impact on middle-class urban youth and students. It also introduced a new era of 'Arm Struggle' in the Eastern part of Indian politics. In the first half of the 1970s, Naxalite leader Charu Majumder was in search of cadres among urban youths and students. Films and literature from the 70s to 80s, often visualised the socio-political impact of the Naxalite cultural movement, the spontaneous roles of urban youth, the annihilation and anti-establishment campaign, and the success and failure of the revolution. Nonetheless, it is still questionable that the Naxalite movement confiscates the binaries between public and private domains for women, those who were directly involved in the movement and took up idealised heroic femininity. Did they ever recognise the composed self-identity of women in acts of negation, abjection, and prejudices?

With the influence of the third wave of feminism, post-nineties Indian literature and films tried to explore how Madhyabitta Bhadromohila (Educated Middle-Class Woman) to Subaltern women were attracted and was like a fold to the long-standing tradition of militant nationalist and ultra-leftist politics of Naxalibari movement. So, in the present paper, I would like to explore in the context of post-nineties parallel Indian films, how the unconventional contribution of women as cadres, girlfriends, or sympathisers had given examination of patience, broadmindedness and endured humiliation. How did a fantasy of revolution identify as entitled abjection of those experiences that were rooted in more fragmentary and vulnerable aspects coded as feminine within primarily male heroic self-sacrifices? It will also discuss if contemporary films depict the extraordinary violence of the state on women sympathisers as a normal and banal phenomenon or was it recognised as a form of everyday violence that persists through the period of political upheaval and relative peace.

Here, an interpretive analysis has been employed to explore the political construction of love-and violence in Naxalite politics. Post-nineties Films like 'Haazar Churashiki Maa' (1997), 'Anu' (1998), 'Kannathi Muthamittal (2002)

'Hazar Khowaish Hai Aisi' (2005), 'Kalbela' (2011) will be discussed as primary sources to explore the politics of gender, heterosexuality, class, and cultural identities in urban middle-class society. Here, the films will be discussed from a particular sense of representation, where the term 'representation' will be used from two discourses i) Representation as 'Speaking of' as in terms of politics and ii) 'Representation' as in the art or the philosophy of filmmaking.

Keywords: Women, Love-violence, Resistance, Naxalite politics, and Films

Sub-theme 9

Legal reforms,
Judicial system,
and Emancipatory agenda

9.1
Right To Period Leave:
Need for Policy Interventions

Dr Preetha S

The debate on period leave/menstrual leave has raised a number of issues such as right to health, gender equality, gender inclusivity, gender discrimination and so on. Biologically, menstruation is considered as the beginning of motherhood. It is the process through which female body prepares itself for motherhood. Several countries like Japan and Spain are providing menstrual leave to its employees. Menstrual Benefits Bill,2017 a private bill presented in Lok Sabha lapsed without any serious deliberation on the issue. Recently, the Supreme court of India rejected a writ petition demanding paid menstrual leave. The Supreme Court asked the petitioner to approach the Union Ministry for Women and Child Development to frame a policy on menstrual leave. State of Bihar is providing menstrual leave to the women employees. In Kerala, students of Higher Educational Institutions are entitled to period leave. Proponents of period leave argue that providing period leave will make the workplace women friendly and act as a support mechanism for women who experience discomfort during periods. The counter argument is that period leave will inhibit recruitment of women and increase the stigma and taboos surrounding menstruation. Hence, it is to be examined whether period leave should be recognised as a legal entitlement. A paid period leave scheme is essential to ensure women a level playing field in workplace. In this context, role of women's organisations in formulating a policy on period leave and making appropriate interventions to address the issue assumes significance. It is necessary to have open discussions and engagement with women employees on the need for tailored leave policies. Women's organisations should take the lead

in campaigning for the right to period leave based on employee perceptions.

The paper will look into the legalisations and regulations providing period leave in other countries to understand the legislative policy. The study will identify the loopholes, anomalies and contradictions in the policy. The paper intends to make suggestions in making a robust policy framework on period leave in India. The policy suggestions would help the concerned Ministry in drafting a legislative policy on period leave.

Keywords: Period leave, gender equality, right to health, gender inclusivity.

9.2
Perception and Practice around Personal Law: 'Hajong' Women

Maitree Devi

This paper is based on the study and field work conducted in Bangladesh in the period of February-October, 2020, on minority women's opinions, views, and expressions regarding their rights and entitlements in the Hindu Personal Law debates, in the urban and rural background. This paper is specifically based on the focus group discussion with Hajong community women in Sylhet (Kaitkona, Bishwamvarpur Upazila, Sunamganj District), Bangladesh. Therefore, this paper examines whether indigenous community women practicing Hindu Personal Law (along with Minority Hindu and Buddhist women) have endured their deprivations silently or fought against unequal clauses of personal laws (along with customary practices), state-community repression which denied them equal opportunity, gender justice. The study also seeks to determine whether the negotiations and movements of Hindu, Buddhist, and indigenous women (following Hindu Personal Law) engaged in the acquisition of rights, equality, justice follow similar trends or diverge in different directions; and if these community women were able to raise their voices together, conduct a joint struggle and movement in Bangladesh with the mainstream women's movement in the discourses of personal law for gender justice or otherwise. My study finds out that in the indigenous Hajong community despite practicing Hindu Personal Law, the Hajong women remarkably claim of not facing family violence and oppression, discrimination against them in marriage, maintenance, child custody,

guardianship, and entitlements. Thus, this paper makes a two-fold argument. First, the Hajong community women's position in society refutes the existing argument and perception that the imperative factor of women's subordination and discrimination lie in their status and position in society, as conceptualised solely in their personal laws. Second, it argues that rather the role played by social, economic, regional and gender-related conditions, do affect women's position in the society, family, community and in the public and private sphere.

Keywords: Customary practices; Hindu Personal Law; Indigenous community; Minority women; Hajong women; Women's movement.

9.3
Women's Land Rights and Economic Development in India

Pradeep Kumar Panda

Since Boserup's seminal work on 'Woman's role in economic development, women empowerment has witnessed great attention, especially in developing economies; and the struggle for gender equality has gained momentum. It has been acknowledged that to stimulate equality, diversity, and productivity of the economies, as well as, shift gears in the gender roles at the individual, household and community levels; women empowerment is the most effective channel— empower them to participate equally in economic decision-making across existing markets, access decent work and productive resources, and take control over their own time, lives and bodies. However, what's not weighed enough is the backlash of the empowerment. This backlash which can be defined as structural and institutionalized oppression of women, including violence against them, is driven by patriarchy, where men retaliate to the power-shift due to women empowerment. Patriarchal norms do not make way for gender inequality, rather, raise controls over women and curtail their autonomy. Such issues are more abysmal in developing and under-developed regions. As much as 83% of the agricultural land is inherited by male members of the family. A region-wise break-up shows 28% of female ownership of land in the hills and only 8% in the east and west India each. The World Economic Forum meeting in 2018 emphasized that India is one of the 15 countries in the world where deep-rooted patriarchal norms hamper women from claiming and exercising their rights to property. It

is important to mention when an institutional change such as an inheritance law comes into force, this entrenched patriarchy becomes visible in the form of violence against women, as women attempt to claim their property rights, leading men resort to violence to sustain their power in response to women's increased status.

Keywords: Women, Land right, Asset, Gender Equality, Women Empowerment, SDG, India

9.4
An Analysis on the Gender discrimination in access to Energy: Legal and Policy Implications

Shainy Pancrasius & Bhagyalakshmi R

Gender discrimination in access to energy is a pervasive issue that affects millions of people around the world, particularly women. Energy is a fundamental necessity for human development, providing the power needed for lighting, cooking, heating, and access to modern technologies. However, gender disparities in energy access persist, perpetuating inequality and hindering progress towards sustainable development goals. One of the key aspects of gender discrimination in access to energy is the disproportionate burden placed on women in obtaining and managing energy resources. In many societies, especially in developing economies like India, women are primarily responsible for household chores, including cooking, gathering fuelwood, and water collection. These tasks often require significant amounts of time and energy, taking away from opportunities for education, income generation, and personal development. Moreover lack of access to clean and efficient energy sources forces women to rely on traditional, inefficient, and harmful energy options, such as solid fuels like firewood and charcoal, which contribute to indoor air pollution and have adverse health effects. Limited access to electricity also impacts women's economic empowerment. In many developing countries like India, women are engaged in small-scale businesses and entrepreneurial activities. However, without reliable access to electricity, these women face numerous challenges. Lack of electricity restricts their productivity and hampers their ability to engage in income-generating activities. This perpetuates the cycle of poverty and prevents women from breaking free from the chains of gender discrimination. Moreover, gender discrimination

is often embedded in the energy sector itself, including policies, institutions, and decision-making processes. Women are significantly underrepresented in energy-related decision-making bodies, both at the local and national levels. This lack of representation leads to a lack of consideration for gender-specific needs and priorities in energy planning, resulting in policies that fail to address the unique challenges faced by women in accessing energy services. Added to these gender dimension and disparity in the policy perspective, the legal context also depicts the reality of rights failure in the energy sector. Rights failure is where rights of women are suppressed because of unequal gender relations and denial of the privilege of being rights-holders. Rights failures in energy systems concern two interrelated areas, lack of recognition of women's energy needs, knowledge as well as contribution and the unequal distribution of control over energy resources and benefits between women and men. This paper focuses on gender discrimination in the energy sector in India by highlighting the consequences of such discrimination and the challenges faced by women in India in accessing energy resources and opportunities. The gender disparity in access to energy is analysed in this paper from a legal and policy perspective through detailed study of existing legislation and policies to evaluate its effectiveness. This paper is suggestive of measures for increasing women's participation and leadership in the energy sector through inclusion of women in decision-making bodies and effective realisation of rights based framework for access to energy.

Keywords: gender discrimination, access to energy, energy poverty, rights failure

9.5
The limits and harms of criminalization in addressing violence against women

Madhu Mehra

The law reform campaigns against different forms of GBV against women (and girls) have largely framed gender justice through deterrence and criminalization. What do the law reform debates within the feminist movements say about our imagination of gender justice, social change; and indeed, the very understanding of law and the state in relation to violence, women and marginalization along intersections of class, caste, among others. Partners for Law in Development

(PLD) has carried out socio legal studies, both through case law and participatory action research on different thematic areas, broadly categorised as violations and violence against women, that raise the above concerns. These studies bring out the limits of punitive approaches, its harms, asking us to revisit our engagement with and imagination of law reforms. Social legal studies, being distinct in methodology, are more likely to have outcomes different from that of law research. This presentation will dwell on three thematic areas that PLD has studied, to explore, among other, the following questions: For whom and under what conditions is criminal law most accessible for redress; against whom and under what conditions is law most effective for prosecuting; and further, what does a comparative look at what the victim needs versus what the law can deliver tell us about the possibilities of reimagining legal justice. The presentation will discuss how these questions relate to the themes of: rape trials, targeting of women as witches and child marriage. It will also dwell on research methods, which are necessary means for evidence collection and making sense of how the law operates in a society. Given the persistence of violence against women, the law reform debates on these themes are ongoing – rape, witch hunting and child marriage laws. The appeal of punitive and deterrence approaches remains undiminished in spite of the emerging evidence on the harms and limits of criminalisation approaches. In relation to rape law, the benchmark for stringent sentencing and death penalty have only increased since 2013, with little attention other holistic aspects of justice. With several states enacting special laws on witch hunting, the goal post has shifted for a national law, without dwelling sufficiently on evidence of how the law works within the states which has enacted these, or an exploration of alternative legal regimes to address this practice. With child marriage becoming the subject of renewed state attention in the last few years, the proposals for declaring marriages void, increasing minimum marriage age (including through the proposed Uniform Civil Code), and the use of POCSO to prosecute underage marriages has gained ground. The terrain for punitive responses continues to expand and take on new meanings. The conversations on limits and harms of criminalization, are relevant to the past law reform debates as they are of the contemporary movement. By unpacking evidence of how the law works across these themes, allows making linkages between vulnerability to violations alongside the harm of criminalization, for women and girls situated at the intersections of poverty, caste and other axis of marginalization – forcing us to look at the political economy within which vulnerability to violations is constituted and the law operates.

9.6
Legal Subjectivity vs. Human Rights:
A case of the hindu landowning widows of West Bengal

Rai Ganguly

Within the ambit of gender and law, perhaps inheritance of land by the Hindu widow lays bare the multiple ways laws work as a means of social control, as well as that which allow women to acquire rights as enshrined in the Constitution. The nature of land as immovable property is such that it belongs to both private and public spheres. Widowhood is also that phase in the life cycle of a woman when she has both social and legal sanction to inherit property. With reference to the land reforms law that were implemented across the states of India in 1955, and the Hindu Succession Act enacted in 1956, the widows became primary heir to intestate landed property. Land reforms laws were directed towards abolition of private property by marking out agricultural land as a special kind of property upon which the cultivator has the right of inheritance. It fell under the ambit of redistributive justice that gave precedence to right to livelihood and right to life over right to property. Widows from households who were involved in agricultural labour during the lifetime of their husband, therefore, are justiciable to inherit these lands. In West Bengal (WB), particularly, a legal recipe was concocted to ensure that land remained in the hands of the tiller. On-spot verification of actual tillers of the soil by land reforms officers whose decisions were binding, transferring of title to only one heir to prevent land fragmentation, focus on able-bodied heir who will not keep the land fallow, considering widowed or divorced daughters as adult children contributing to the land ceiling are some of the significant features of the WB Land Reforms Act. Arguably, rural, agrarian Bengali widows can become a 'double beneficiary' when it comes to inheriting landed property. It is a situation where legislation, impact of two laws, executive policy by quasi legal bodies come together to turn a need into an entitlement – that of the widow's right to income generating property. The question arises, do widows go to court to claim land under these clement conditions? Aftermath of litigation is an important lens to understand the impact of law and judicial approaches to ensure an individual has received justice. However, recent discourses on human rights also show that relying on legislation to eradicate social evils has had an adverse effect on the status of women. Rather than translating into meaningful freedom, recent discourses, for instance, that

by Ratna Kapur in Gender, Alterity and Human Rights: Freedom in a Fishbowl (2018), have focused on the disempowering and exclusionary effects of laws. My paper will discuss the experiences of Hindu widows who legally got their names registered as the next able-bodied heir to agricultural land in Birbhum district of West Bengal. Focus will be on whether claiming land has ultimately implicated the widow into a governance regime that regulates and disciplines her into being a legal entity who has to now conduct her labour and life in ways that amounts to being unfree.

Keywords: widows, land reforms, inheritance, legal subject, freedom, human rights, West Bengal.

Narratives of Violence: Women's experiences of domestic violence and their access to law

Himalika Mohanty

This paper deals with the question of violence against women, understood through the lens of domestic violence, and looks at the question of the empowerment of women through their access to justice. Cases of domestic violence had increased manifold, both nationally and internationally during the COVID-19 pandemic. Reports of domestic violence cases reaching a ten-year high in June 2020 were commonplace in leading national dailies in India, and this number was especially striking since women who experience domestic violence do not always register complaints (Jacob and Chattopdhyay, 2019). Between March 25 and May 31, 2020, 1477 complaints were made by women. This 68-day period recorded more complaints than those received between March and May in the previous 10 years (The Hindu, June, 2020). It was during the same time that I was conducting research with survivors of domestic violence, recording their narratives for my MPhil dissertation. The state of crisis brought into sharp relief hitherto missed nuances of such violence, the foremost being that the natal family is as much prone to it as is the marital family. Hence, my paper seeks to understand women's self-reflexive understandings of their experiences of domestic violence, making the argument that it is only through the input of such narratives and their insights that a truly robust legislation against domestic violence - one that is able to help its survivors - can be effected. This further highlights the many contradictions

present within law itself, how it is often both a tool of subjugation of experience, as well as the main guarantor of change with respect to women's rights. Finally, it also looks at the question of the amalgamation between the ethic of rights and ethic of care in imagining a feminist jurisprudence.

9.8
Feminist Jurisprudence : The real life experiences of women in India

Dnyanada Patha

Feminist jurisprudence is universal & widespread phenomenon. Discrimination & subordination of women is recognised by feminist and studied the existing framework of law. Feminist jurisprudence is new branch of feminist legal theory which evolved along with the feminist movement. The first known use of the term feminist jurisprudence was in the late 1970's by Ann Scales used the term feminist jurisprudence first time during the celebration of first woman graduating from Harvard Law School in 1978. In 1984 Martha Fineman founded the Feminism and Legal Theory Project at the university of Wisconsin Law School to explore the relationship between the feminist theory, practice & law, which has been instrumental in the development of feminist legal theory. Feminist jurisprudence is the theoretical study of the concept of law based on the political, economic & social inequality of sexes. There are various theories to understand the feminist perspective about law & society Feminist jurisprudence is understanding women's rights which are imbibed in Indian law and Constitution of India. In India there are various laws to protect & empower women. Feminist Jurisprudence is field of study that criticizes & analyzes the law from the feminist perspective. It covers wide range of issues, including gender discrimination, reproductive rights , domestic violence & sexual harassment. Feminist Jurisprudence based on real life experiences of women may be largely incompatible with the current legal system, which is based on men's lives. The author discusses legal theories presented by feminist scholars including MACKINNON,GILLIGAN,SMART & BARTLETT. The aim to write this research paper is to understand and evaluate Feminist Jurisprudence and women's legal rights in Indian subcontinent.

Keywords: Feminism, Jurisprudence, Women's rights. Feminist theory.

9.9
Neoliberalism and gender inequality at workplace

Sutapa Maji

Gender intersects with neoliberalism in various ways with complex entanglements, linked to higher gender inequalities at work. A body of evidence suggests that the influence of neo-liberalism has not only shaped legislation of nation but also attitudes to women and work. Such an overview would depend on our understanding of 'gender' and 'neoliberalism': concepts that have been defined and used differently, depending on disciplinary orientation, political outlook, and spatial and temporal context. Although gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a prosperous, sustainable world., according to the World Economic Forum (WEF) less than 20% of India's women work at paid jobs and female workforce participation has been declining in the country and all other nations in the world. There are certainly other factors holding women back from paid jobs in all settings; the question here is whether the neoliberalism (which can be defined as a policy model that encompasses both politics and economics, favouring private enterprise and seeks to transfer the control of economic factors from the government to the private sector), reducing or reinforcing those. While the advocates of neoliberalism have repeatedly claimed that this set of policies support the realization of women's right to work, generally confirmed the positive relationship between neoliberalism and women's employment, opponents argued that the restructuring of the labour market has not favoured women's participation in the paid labour force: neoliberal economic policies may have improved macroeconomic performance, a micro-level analysis revealed how their implementation manifested a dramatic erosion of women's right to work. The World Economic Forum (WEF), has highlighted that at the current rate of progress, it will take 132 years for the world's labour force to reach full gender parity. Undoubtedly, access to paid work can increase the economic autonomy of women- key to greater equality between women and men. In fact, there could be a certain visibility of women entering the paid labour force through capitalism: either because the market's need for labour actually makes it blind to gender prejudice, or because it preferentially recruits women simply because their labour is cheaper. Yet the incorporation of women into the labour market is far from turning out to be always positive, with the systematic dismantlement of labour regulations has particularly affected women; have pushed them into even greater precarity. Further analysis of some key social policies and specific legal interventions show the fusion of the two: the convergence of neoliberalism

and androcentrism results in a shift from rights-based entitlements to further commodification-the move from welfare to financialization and the undermining of labour rights through regulatory and disciplinary labour codes. This article is an attempt to elucidate detrimental repercussions of neoliberalism towards achieving gender equality in workplaces. By drawing on the findings from empirical research of several countries, considering a sample each of them, essay will explore the gendered- neoliberal subjectivities with intersectional gaze.

Keywords: Neoliberal authoritarianism -capitalist political economy - Gendered- Labor

9.10
Unpacking the category of child in child sexual abuse

Sayali Shankar

The necessity to look at the definition of what or who can be considered as a child comes from the differing understanding of who is considered as a child and in what context. The universal definition of child is any person who comes under the bracket of 0-18 years of age. Once the age of 18 years is attained the individual can be considered as an adult person depending upon the context in which they are located. For instance, 18 years can give an individual a majority status, which would entail that they are entitled to cast vote which would mean they have the ability to choose a government in a democratic system. Yet attaining 18 years of age has also gendered implications attached to it as women can get married once they turn 18, but for men the age at marriage is 21 years. The different ages of marriage for men and women would mean then the logic that underlines who has attained the status of adult hood clearly deviates in the context of gender. Similarly, we find differing legal ages when it comes to capacity to consent for work, sex, consumption of alcohol and culpability to commit crime. Broadly then we can delineate what constitutes a child and when the status changes from child to adult on the basis of their capacity to consent, their ability to become responsible and their culpability to commit crime. To be specific then, the legality of the age matters in the arenas related to work, consent for sexual intercourse, drive vehicles, caste vote, consent for marriage, and consumption of alcohol (substances?). The legal age then becomes a universal understanding,

which is, for instance, 18 years of age would mean that person can be treated as adult. But we find fairly differing treatment of '18 years of age' as attaining a majority status. The difference occurs especially in the context of capability to consent, culpability to commit crime, age at marriage and cases of sexual assault or abuse. In this context, I would like to specifically focus on unpacking the definition of child in child sexual abuse related laws. My interest in looking at child sexual abuse cases lies in the historical journey of laws that were created specifically for protection of children in cases of abuse. As recent as a decade ago we find introduction of Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act which specifically criminalizes sexual assault, harassment and pornography involving persons under 18 years of age. Prior to formation of POCSO Act, crimes of sexual nature against children were addressed through the rape laws which also addressed violence against women. Thus, it is only recently that the category of child was separated from the category of women when it came to cases of violence of sexual nature. This would also warrant an in-depth analysis of why the category of women and children were one in the same for cases of sexual violence. By reading together the cases of sexual violence against children (girls?/ female children?) that were tried before the introduction of POCSO and afterwards will help locate the problem in the historical context of law itself. Through this paper I would like to argue how the seemingly universal category of child defined as a person under the age of 18 years is shaped by the subjectivities of gender, caste and class. Thus the notions of who can be protected and who can be held culpable for a crime are also shaped at the intersections of gender, caste and class. In order to address the question of how does the category of child gets formulated in the context of child related laws in India, I would to look at the discourse around child sexual abuse both pre and post formulation of POCSO Act to argue that the understanding of who gets considered a child mediated through gender, caste and class relations.

9.11
Pro-Women: The legal, the theoretical and the actual

Ms. Charu Kriti

Legal paradigm of India is trained to extract abstract, universal and objective solutions of social evils related to socio-cultural and politico-economic prejudices

and discriminations against the weaker genders, in a form of comprehensive judicious doctrines. The present study offers a hermeneutical approach to the present day 'pro-women' acts, their assumed roots in Feminist Jurisprudence and the underlying patriarchal patronisation. The primary questions that the paper poses are whether the process of law making included the concepts of feminist jurisprudence and whether the reading into the theoretical perspective of feminism is somewhere plagued by the machismo of protecting the 'weaker sex' through positive discrimination. Law as a postulate operates on a pre-existing gendered identity but the law also contributes to the construction of gendered identities, which makes this entire exercise of reviewing the legal regime phenomenon from a feminist lens crucial. Since the law does not simply operate on pre-existing gendered identities but it very substantially contributes to the construction of gendered societies, it only seems prudent to examine how the Indian Legal discourse experience evinces the working of constitutional feminism. To realise the feminist goal of transforming gender inequalities, it is essential to approach the power dynamics and inherent gender politics at each stage of this legal process. In the past two decades or so, the Indian legislation has emphasised on passing statutes to safeguard the women citizens of the nation, be it the Sexual Harassment of Workplace Act or the Domestic Violence Act. On the surface, these attempts appear to be innocuous and benevolent. However, in implementation, both the process and impact of such laws seem to induce more disparity than cohesiveness. Therefore, this excursus intends to extrapolate said laws through the academic analytical understanding of gender equality. Gender justice and ensuring equality are indispensable for 'development' in a true sense and the abolition of the patriarchal system from the core; thus, closely connected to the feminist legal perspective in India. Although since decolonisation, the common law system has evolved and feminist jurisprudence has remained a theoretical enterprise having many practical and concrete effects in women's lives, there reportedly is a deficit of interdisciplinary investigation into legal conflict and theoretical feminist jurisprudence. The development of a legal pedagogy that would include the reading of feminist scholars, lawyers, and activists and traditional and existing legal theory and practices only seem astute. Thus, a range of questions from the gendered perspective that highlights the problems of how the law is currently being read to selective usage of certain legal theories in practice etc. are ideas that become the cornerstone of this paper, where the existing statutes, amendments and relevant case laws in the last two decades to laws under the shroud of gender equality are being examined.

Keywords: Indian Legal System, Pro-Women Acts, Feminist jurisprudence, Gender Inequality, Legal conflict.

9.12
Myths, Devadasis and Itinerant communities in India: Colonial dilemma and negotiations

Debasmita Sarkar

In India, Dance accompanied with music and poetry was an essential part of worshiping rituals in the temples and the public rituals in the royal courts. Other than the classical artistic culture (practised primarily by the Devadasis earlier), Kuravanji is a type of dance drama very distinctive to Tamil Nadu which balances between the classical and folk arts. The history of Kuravanji is as old as the history of the Devadasis. The performers of Kuravanji sometimes tried to imitate dance and lifestyles of the Devadasis. 'Kuravar' community (an ethno-cultural group of traditionally itinerant people who originated in northern India) played a very important role for the Kuravanji dance drama performances. The performers from the 'Kuravar' community also used to perform in the royal courts and the temples like the Devadasis and some of their rituals were same with those of the Devadasis. Similarities in costumes and ornaments were also found among these two communities. Before the colonial era, Devadasis were the subject of honour as the practitioners of the highest level of art, as well as they were regarded sacred from the Hindu religious points of view. They were literally married to the deity of the temple through some rituals and considered to be auspicious in the Indian subcontinents for centuries. Royal patrons provided land and property to them and to the temples. 'Kuravar' community was the worshipers of the Hindu gods and they were believed to be seers or fortune tellers, and considered as auspicious too. From the popular myth and common lore, the connection between Devadasis and the itinerant community Kuravar are intimate. If we concentrate on the trajectory of the Devadasi tradition and the Kuravar community from the ancient time to the colonial rule, we would find that there were different complex understandings among the Indians and the English. Over a period of time, their voices were supressed both by the elite Indians and the British in different ways. How the inclusion of them in the mainstream society challenged the administrative system and the dynamics of negotiations therein, remain a question for my research. The practice of the Devadasi custom was gradually banned in India by the British colonial administration as it was very different from the European sense of civilization and morality. But the Devadasis were seen as the protectors of Indian Art and culture, the abolishing of the act did hurt the aesthetic sentiments. During that time, in one way, Brahminical Hinduism and the so called 'upper caste' Hindu men tried to legitimize women's

enslavement to men, the suppression were legitimised through religion and 'shastras' (Hindu religious texts). From this, perspective, the British, on the other hand, found the Devadasi system problematic, for their administrative convenience. The idea of worship and sexual relationship already raised much debate among the Indians that time, the problem was further enhanced with the colonial interference as the British failed to provide any significant alternatives to the temple dancers. Devadasi communities were treated as the 'Other', and it made them marginalised. People of 'Kuravar' community used to travel from one place to another sometimes for the sake of artistic performances, and sometimes in search of the royal patrons. Their activity as travellers, later on, gave them the most disadvantaged socio-economic status comparing with the frequently associated activities of the 'Roma' or 'Gypsies' and their previous status attributed with the idea of purity and auspiciousness came under questions. It is interesting to frame a discourse on how the Devadasis and the nomads are both treated as the 'Other' in this context.

Keywords: Devadasi, Kuravar community, rituals, performance, judicial system, Marginalization

9.13
Challenges of Women and Girls to access justice for discrimination and abuses

Ms. P. Lalidamballe

The challenges of women and girls to access justice for discrimination and abuses are many. They face a lack of knowledge about their rights, which prevents them from claiming what is rightfully theirs. They often do not know where to turn for help, and they may be afraid of retaliation from their abuser if they seek legal assistance. Furthermore, many women do not want to report their abuse because they fear that the police will not believe them or that they will be blamed for what has happened to them. This lack of trust in the system can make it difficult for women to find justice when they need it most.

9.14
Gender-Sensitive approaches
in the post-pandemic epoch: An overview

Dr. Sananda Sen

The impact of law on women's emancipation has been significant and transformative throughout history. Laws play a crucial role in shaping societal norms, promoting gender equality, and safeguarding women's rights. Women's movements have always recognized law as an important means to facilitate any changes for the betterment of women in society. They believed in the transformative power of law that can ensure women's right to own property, education and employment, participation in political and public life, and so on. Laws have provided a foundation for equality and non-discrimination. Legislation prohibiting gender- based discrimination in various fields has opened doors for women to pursue their interests. Affirmative action policies and gender-sensitive laws have been implemented in India to ensure equal representation of women. Besides ensuring full participation of women in the workforce or access to education, laws have played a fundamental role in protecting women from violence and discrimination. In many instances, domestic violence laws, sexual harassment legislation, and laws against gender-based violence have provided legal remedies and support for survivors, who are mainly women. To add to this, anti-discrimination laws have also been implemented to address gender-based discrimination in various spheres of life as far as women are concerned, such as in the cases of employment, housing, and public services. Legal frameworks have played a crucial role in women's reproductive rights and autonomy. Laws related to contraception, abortion, and reproductive health have helped women to make decisions about their bodies and reproductive choices. Access to safe and legal abortion services, in particular, has been a significant aspect of women's emancipation in Indian society, which is dominated by male ideologies. Maternity leave laws and policies have aimed to support women in balancing their work and family responsibilities. These laws provide job protection during pregnancy and childbirth and enable women to take time off work to care for their newborns. Whether it is the underrepresentation of women in the public sphere or ensuring justice in the private realm, the role of law has always been crucial. But behind the gender-sensitive laws, lies the endless struggle of the feminists, who endeavored to ensure gender equality in Indian society. Through grassroots organizing, activism, and advocacy, feminists have highlighted the need for gender-sensitive laws that address the specific challenges faced by

women. They have performed extensive research, done debates to examine and deliberate upon the gaps and shortcomings in existing laws and policies as well as identified areas where gender- sensitive legislation is needed. Feminists have also demanded changes in the area of development and amendment of laws. Through strategic litigation, they have brought cases to courts to address issues like gender-based violence, discrimination, and reproductive rights. Landmark court decisions have resulted in the reinterpretation or amendment of laws, setting important precedents for gender equality. Most importantly, they have brought to the forefront the lived experiences of women and the diversity in gender-specific needs. The importance of the feminist movement is incontestable and continues to be true even in today's time. These movements are constant reminders of the toll that the feminists have experienced to bring a substantial change in society. The present article would focus on the prominent changes, amendments in laws, and discussions in the parliament that is pro- women. Mostly occurring after the post-covid period in the year 2022, the changes seem to be more inclusive in nature. Delving into such changes is essential that reflects the ongoing efforts of the feminists' that are absolute, which have become crucial for realizing gender impartiality and shaping a more unbiased and fair society for all.

Keywords: feminist, gender, laws, movement, women.

9.15
Law and Work: Impact on women's leadership in Health sector

Sapna Kedia & Radhika Uppal

Laws provide a background structural framework which impacts the employment opportunities available and accessible to women. Laws intersect with a range of social and structural environments including executive policies, organizational policies and social norms to influence a woman's career trajectory. This paper aims to analyze the availability of legal provisions, or the lack thereof, that support women to progress equally into leadership positions within the formal health workforce in India. It further presents findings from primary study about the impact, a gender progressive law has had on women's career progression. For this research we looked at 27 laws in India. These legislations were identified based on their relevance to four domains i.e. 1) pay; 2) workplace protections; 3) care,

family life and work-life balance; and 4) reproductive rights. These domains were adapted from World Bank's Women, Business and Law framework. Following a 'law cube' approach, laws were analyzed on three axes i.e., comprehensiveness, accountability and justice orientation. Under comprehensiveness, we reviewed good practice legal provisions across the four legal domains. The legal domains for which performance was high (defined as including two-thirds or above of the number of recommended provisions) was the Workplace and Reproductive rights domain. Legal domains where performance was low were Care, family life and work-life balance and Pay. The analysis showed that most of the laws contained accountability measure, albeit very few had independent monitoring mechanism. There was a near absence of equity and human rights measures in the reviewed laws. The findings suggest that the existing legal environment seems to be inadequate in addressing inequality of opportunity at the workplace. There seems to be a need to address legislative gaps, so women have a wider basket of rights available to them and have legal recourse if their rights are violated. However, laws do have the potential to work as a positive determinant. Through primary qualitative data analysis, we uncovered the critical role gender progressive legislations such as Maternity Benefit Act has had on women's careers. It gave women the freedom and right to take paid off from work to take care of her health and of the child, without worrying about her job or financial security. However, this has also had unintended consequences of implicit bias against hiring women who are pregnant or newly married. Further, the absence of legally mandated Paternity leaves also signals the lack of emphasis in the legal system on redistributing women's unpaid care burden, which is likely to hinder women's entry into health sector occupations or prevent them from assuming leadership roles, by contributing to temporary absences, attrition, as well as poorer physical and mental health. Legislations are framed within existing social contexts; however, they serve as critical instruments which can either reinforce existing gender stereotypes and social norms or can challenge deep-rooted biases. The paper presents several recommendations for the governments as well as advocacy and research communities, to strengthen and develop gender progressive legal framework which is fundamental to realising gender equity and justice in the workplace.

Keywords: law; leadership; health sector; health workforce; women; legal determinants, gender equality

9.16
Women's access to justice under customary laws with special reference to ADI'S Kebang System

Nargis Choudhury & Nandita Gogoi

Access to Justice, though necessary for leading a civil life in society, but is still an illusory concept for several women. There are without any doubt several legal entitlements given and enactments have been made for women's empowerment and enhancing their right to access to justice. But it cannot also be denied that women's human rights are still being violated, be it due to growing religious practices, economic inequalities, or discriminatory cultural norms. As such, Customary Laws greatly hinder women's access to justice, as several women still hesitate to go to court when they suffer from any problems. Contrastingly, customary law has also long since governed every way of life and society since time immemorial, and people now consider it a part and parcel of life. People see such systems as speedy and hassle-free disposable system with cultural relevance. Nevertheless, such systems, as observed from reports that are still in favour of patriarchal value and male-dominated structures which often works against women. Such systems are only posing a continuous threat to enhancing women's easy access to justice and will continue to do so in the long run. One such customary and informal system of justice is still being followed by the Adi Society of Arunachal Pradesh, known as Kebang. The Constitution of India guarantees equal protection of laws and prohibits discrimination. However, despite these legal protections women from Arunachal Pradesh continue to face significant barriers when accessing justice systems. This paper is an attempt to study how justice for women is denied, especially with the practice of customary systems in several places, with a special study and spotlight on the Kebang System of the Adi Society of Arunachal Pradesh.

Keywords: Women, Access to Justice, Customary Laws, Adi Tribe, Kebang System

9.17
'A womb of one's own' reproductive rights of women in india

Sruthina K

"*No women can call herself free who does not own and control her body*"

Margaret Sanger

The reproductive rights were established as a subset of the human rights at the United Nations International Conference on Human Rights in 1968. Parents have a basic human right to determine freely and responsibly the number and the spacing of their children. The WHO defines reproductive rights as follows:

"Reproductive rights rest on the recognition of the basic right of all couples and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number, spacing and timing of their children and to have information to do so, and right to attain the highest standard of sexual and reproductive health. They also include the right of all to make decisions concerning reproduction free of discrimination, coercion and violence."

Reproductive rights are essential to the realization of all human rights. They encompass a spectrum of civil, political, economic, and social rights, from the rights to health and life, to the rights to equality and non-discrimination, privacy, information, and to be free from torture or ill-treatment. The Indian Courts have been extremely progressive on women reproductive rights by issuing several notable decisions recognizing women's reproductive rights as part of the "inalienable survival rights" which is impliedly protected under the fundamental right to life. Judgments have an important bearing on the reproductive rights of women. The Supreme Court and 1 American birth control activist, sex educator and writer. High Courts in India have made important strides in recognizing the denial of reproductive rights as violations of women's fundamental and human rights. Women's control over their own child-bearing is a key component of reproductive rights. The legal right to abortion is certainly one important component to ensuring that women are able to control their childbearing destinies. However, large proportions of women in the world lack not only access to safe abortion, but also access to safe and effective contraception. In India, where motherhood is glorified and infertility viewed as a curse, the use of contraception is frowned upon and terminating pregnancy is not promoted stating that the children are "gifts of god." Although India was among the first countries in the

world to develop legal and policy frameworks guaranteeing access to abortion and contraception, women and girls continue to experience significant barriers to full enjoyment of their reproductive rights, including poor quality of health services and denials of women's and girls' decision-making authority. The paper entitled "A womb of one's own- Reproductive rights of women in India" is an attempt to bring out the reproductive rights of women in India and the obstacles they face to cherish those rights in a patriarchal society. The paper will also examine how a patriarchal society controls and decide upon the choices of women regarding the exercise of her reproductive choices and rights.

Keywords: Reproductive rights, patriarchy, Indian judiciary, women rights.

9.18
Feminist Jurisprudence in India: A Brief Analysis

Manasa. M & Parin Alfi Imtiyaz

In India, the fight to stand upright to the male chauvinism and the struggle for the liberation of the women's hands from the harsh shackles of gender-based discrimination has taken a stance to inculcate feminism. Feminist Jurisprudence has its base attached to the three forms of equality viz. Social, political and economical and balancing these rights at the leverage of an unbiased scale. This idea became more prominent when social set up in the past made it clear that women and men were treated differently. Women were subjected to suppression, barred from political participation and were defied emancipation. Despite this, even in a modern world like today, it is still a hot topic for every discussion about reserving special rights to women to achieve gender equality. It questions and deconstructs the conventional underpinnings of law, exposing how they have been utilized to sustain and strengthen systems of dominance and oppression. In this paper, an attempt has been made to cover the subject matter of law and justice in a holistic manner and put in place a feminist approach to the legal framework in India. Women's opinion and their historical roles tend to be missing out from the main juridical picture when it comes to the question of analysing age-old law and practices. The paper extensively analyses how the scrutiny of feminist jurisprudence in India impact positively on women. The legal system in India is devoid of various gender-neutral laws which increases the problem of gender

discrimination in India. The existence of a male-centric approach in the Indian Penal Code, existence of the gendered categorization of men and women, mostly, is inclined to favour a man's perspective in the Manu Smriti, the ancient legal text, highlights how the Indian society happens to frame hierarchical relations between both the genders. Further it scintillates on the evolution of feminist jurisprudence in India, different strands of feminist theories and the patriarchal nature of the old law theories along with the contemporary ones. An analysis of how feminist perspective can come to lessen the vulnerable status faced by women in the legal fabric has also been discussed at great perusal.

Keywords: Feminism, Feminist theory, Feminist Jurisprudence, legal system, gender equality

9.19
Transformative Pathways:
Unveiling Feminism and the Indian Muslim Women's Movement in the reform of Muslim Personal Law

Arfa Khan

India, as a nation, represents a diverse tapestry of religious, linguistic, and cultural communities. Among these, Muslims constitute the largest religious minority, comprising approximately 14% of the total population. However, despite the significant presence of Muslims in India, they often find themselves among the most marginalized segments of society. This is particularly true for Muslim women, who face educational, social, and economic challenges that hinder their progress. The Sachar Committee, which conducted an in–depth analysis of the socio-economic status of Muslims in India, found that Muslim women, in particular, lag behind their counterparts in various indicators of development and well-being. Minority feminism takes into account the unique socio-cultural dynamics, religious diversity, and legal frameworks present in India. Indian minority feminism addresses the specific challenges faced by Muslim women in India and strives for gender justice inclusivity and reform of discriminatory practices within family laws. This ideology or movement contributes to the broader discourse on gender equality and women's empowerment, providing alternative perspectives that challenge traditional gender roles and discriminatory

practices. These movements play a crucial role in advocating for the rights of Muslim women, fostering dialogue, and promoting social change within Muslim communities. This research paper aims to shed light on the comparative analysis of Islamic feminism on a global scale and its manifestation within the Indian context. It explores the emergence and activities of two networks, namely the Muslim Women's Rights Network (MWRN) and the Bhartiya Muslim Mahila Andolan (BMMA), which have been actively advocating for the rights of Muslim women. The paper delves into their endeavors and assesses their impact, particularly concerning Muslim Personal Law. By examining these networks and their advocacy efforts, this research paper seeks to contribute to the understanding of the Muslim women's rights movement in India, highlighting their challenges, strategies, and achievements. It also explores the implications of these movements on the reform of Muslim Personal law, a significant area that directly influences the lives of Muslim women.

Keywords: Minority Feminism, Women's Movements, Muslim Women, Muslim Personal Laws.

9.20
Raise in legal age of marriage for women in India: Does it Empower?

Fathimath Suhara U.K & Rajani Ramachandran

In the budget speech of 2020-21 the finance minister, Nirmala Sitaram announced the plan to raise the legal age of marriage of women to 21 years. She pointed out the importance women's education and employment, and the need to lower maternal mortality rate while explaining on the need to raise legal age of marriage for women. The task force constituted to study this proposal also gave recommendations in support of raising age of marriage into 21. However, the proposal received criticism from state governments, political parties and other organizations from various parts of the country and hence it is yet to be amended. In this context study was planned to gather general public opinion on the proposal to raise legal age of marriage for women. Data was collected using an opinionnaire from 255 participants who were natives of Kerala state. Results showed that majority of the participants agreed with the potentiality of law in bringing gender equality and enhancing decision making of women in their

marriage. Whereas the idea of raising legal age to reduce birth rate and control population growth is mostly rejected. Women education and improved social conditions were perceived as major contributors in changing status of women. Thus, for ensuring equality and opportunities for women in India, the structural and cultural inhibitions also need to be addressed along with raising the legal age of marriage.

Keywords: marriageable age, law, women, India

9.21
Incarceration of Women: Access to Justice

Shabeeba N Noorainganakam & Prof. Neena Pandey

Background: Prisons have always been a popular topic of discussion in criminology, but is contemporary times studying the imprisoned are getting more attention. In order to improve the conditions inside a prison, it is necessary to be able to interact with those living there. A prison is a place of confinement where various thoughts arise and discrimination are experienced. It may be perceived as both stigma and creativity. The current paper captures the international and national prison system and the historical developments that happened in the access to justice for women in incarceration, especially with regard to the under-trial of women prisoners. Major legislation and reports that discuss the historical emanation of the prison management system of under-trial women in Kerala has been elaborated in the paper. The Indian perspective of women prisoners, the current scenario of them in Kerala, and legislations with respect to their bail along with its implementation reality is explained comprehensively. The lives of women inmates in correctional settings, breaking the stigma and viewpoints of the readers associated with prisons in general are covered. This also enables the readers to relook and redefine their views into a broader perspective. This paper deals with research on experiences of incarcerated women, the way prisoners try to assert individuality within the prison, their ability to adjust to life inside, their challenges in accessing justice. This study tries to figure out how women under trial deal with being imprisoned by looking at their physical and psychosocial social wellbeing, and the role of relationships inside and outside the prison in helping them cope.

Aim: The study aims to understand access to justice for women in

incarceration.

Methods: This study is qualitative in nature. The research, therefore, adopts the narrative approach for the purpose of fulfilling its objectives. The design of the present study is descriptive in nature. The narratives of incarcerated women were collected and analyzed to study the research phenomena.

Emerging Issues: The correctional home facilities do not have constructive, gender-sensitive, specialized mental health services for the under trials to keep them engaged and help them healthily deal with their crises. The under-trial women prisoners should have certain flexibility in terms of reaching the outside in order to be able to arrange for resources to work around their cases. There is a need for more frequent visits by professionals, in terms of legal aid, counseling, social workers, and activity instructors having regular interactions and updates with the women. Women are harmed by imprisonment, whether it is for a long or short period of time. The impact is so intense that it affects not just the woman inmate but also her family and associates who claim to have ties with her. There is a fear of social exclusion and discrimination against these women, as well as their families and other ties. Getting back to a normal life after having a history in prison often becomes a challenge that leads to these women cornering their identities, life choices, and experiences in order to make sense of their imprisonment. Recommendations: It is observed that in the correctional settings there is only one social worker designated as welfare officer with prescribed roles and responsibilities. Regular trainings may be arranged for the in charges of each prison to handle the inmates and handhold them for better wellbeing. It is important to engage with each woman who is incarcerated to formulate constitutive measures towards their reformation.

Keywords: Women, justice, incarceration, prison, coping. reformation.

9.22
Detouring Feminism
before the Indian Legal Discourse

Dr Sreemoyee Sarkar

The Victorian Common Law idea has put the woman on an apparent respectful pedestal, higher than the general society, which is further particularised in

the Indian socio-legal paradigm. Hence, mainstream legal studies incorporate 'gender' or, more problematically, 'sex' as one of the socio-cultural and economic variables. Feminist scholars have argued that traditional legal theory approaches have disenfranchised women's participation based on biological differences or socio-economic hierarchy. In limited inclusion, the woman also experiences schemes of hierarchy and distortion and marginalisation. Indian women have experienced waves of 'feminist urges' as an inextricable part of colonialism-mediated modernity and emancipation. Post-colonial articulation of equality, inclusion, social justice, and liberation have gone through episodes of inherent contradictions, ambiguity, denial, a sense of exclusion and paternal patriarchy from the state of India. Other common law countries have moved towards a more progressive legal discourse where legal standards are defined by equal right vs special right dichotomy; Indian legislative and judicial legal standards lack such fundamental foundation, coherence and stability. Legal feminism requires the systematic articulation of the language of law and the continuous critical revision of the social structure, precedent application and perception of the social organs. The underlying assumption is that cultures worldwide submitted to patriarchal constructs of masculine over the feminine, cis-genders over trans-genders, heterosexuality over homosexuality and men over women. Some see these ideas as intellectually radical and thought-provoking, whereas others dismiss them as a mischievous maxim of cultural imperialism. The present study offers a hermeneutical approach to feminist jurisprudence and gauges its scope and limitations in the context of Indian legal discourse. There is a stark deficiency in reading a legal conflict through the lens of feminist legal theories. It seeks to determine how far the Indian law-making process has adopted feminist legal theories as a promising tool for social change; and how far Indian judicial decision-making uses the feminist lens in determining the result of a case on gender issues. Hitherto, the paper critically analyses feminism as a methodology for India's politico-legal debates and discourses. This paper relies on the premise that in post-colonial India, gender identity is a complex, socially determined, culturally ascribed, tiered phenomenon, a process that is unavoidable to its subjects. The divergence of opinion, widely advertised as a weakness of gendered 'point of view' is 'sex-linked' and exists in the socio-legal advances in modern India, in an epistemological, psycho-social and socio-legal critique of objectivity. Hence this paper attempts to scrutinise the solutions to inequality through the lens of abstraction vis-à-vis the multidisciplinary disposition of legal development.

Keywords: Legal Feminism, Feminist Jurisprudence, Post-colonial India, Gender inequality, Indian Legal system.

9.23
Women's empowerment and
policy reforms in India since 2001

Warisha Shafeeq

There are different reasons for evaluating, promoting, and monitoring the level of women's empowerment in India, from which household health and nutrition are generally in the control of women. Their empowerment is mandatory for ensuring not just their development or welfare but the good fortune of the entire household. For the development of India, women's empowerment is also critical. It amplifies both the quality and quantity of human resources available for development. Moreover, the success of development efforts depends on both men and women. The last reason for promoting women's empowerment is that failing to empower women and men to reach their full potential is a violation of their fundamental human rights. Empowerment is the procedure by which the powerless acquire maximum control over the circumstances of their lives. But power doesn't mean dominance over goals and ends. Conceptually, empowerment is more appropriate for those with no power, whether a male or female individual or a group, class, or caste. Hence, the concept of empowerment is not just for women. This paper will be divided into two portions, and the first portion will discuss a conceptual framework based on which indicators or factors of women's empowerment are developed. In India, women have been ignored in the race for development in the name of customs, traditions, and religion. Consequently, they have been denied opportunities for their social, economic, and political development, leading to a lower status in society. Still, after independence, refinement was made in various areas that led to the well-being of women within the community. Still, women are considered subordinates to men. The next portion will discuss a general overview of changes in policy and the advancement of women in India from 2001 to the present. Key findings show that significant progress has been made in numerous industries toward strengthening women's rights and gender equality. Initiative for economic, social, and political empowerment. But despite these encouraging advancements, problems still exist. Additionally, caste, religion, and class intersecting difficulties make the problems faced by marginalized women more difficult. To overcome these obstacles, transformative transformation requires a multi-sectional, all-encompassing strategy that addresses structural issues while empowering women individually. The abstract concludes that while India has made significant strides toward women's empowerment and policy reforms since 2001, inclusion and sustainable development would only be possible with a

continuous focus on tackling the underlying causes of gender disparity. Further research is advised to conduct more studies to determine the long-term effects of policy changes on women's empowerment and to create specific solutions for the empowerment of marginalized populations.

Keywords: women's empowerment, development, power and human resource.

9.24
Women Rights and implications of Legal safeguards available to Women

Narmatha K

The Indian Constitution provides equality of status and opportunity to women. Article 14 provides for equality before law and Article 15 (18) prohibits discrimination based on sex. Article 15 (3) provides for positive discrimination by the state in favour of women. Similarly, Article 39 (a), (b), (c), Article 42 and 44 of the Indian Constitution provides for the welfare of women. The cruelty to wife by her husband is considered illegal and a new chapter was included in the Indian Penal Code under Section 498- Chapter XX- A. The section defines cruelty to married women as any wilful conduct which may cause the wife to commit suicide or an attempt to commit suicide or cause injury to them. It also includes torture in demand for dowry. The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 criminalises giving and getting of dowry in any form. This Act defines dowry as any property or valuable security that is received from the girl's family in order to marry her. The Act was amended in 1986 and the punishments were made more stringent and the earlier stipulated time period with regard to the filing of complaint was removed and the complainant shall not only be the victim herself or her blood relative, but even any registered welfare organisation can also do so. Dowry is considered as a base upon which the other forms of discrimination against women is built. The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 prohibits a Hindu man from marrying for the second time without getting proper divorce out of his first marriage. The Hindu Succession Act, 1956 provides the women with the right to inherit their family property and decide on how to use that property. The Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1976 increased the age of marriage of girls from 15 to 18 years of age. The Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986 prohibits the indecent representation of women in advertisements, books, pamphlets, etc. With regard

to the working rights of women, the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 introduced the provision for maternity leave with 12 weeks of paid holiday to women. The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976 provides for the provision of equal remuneration to men and women for the same work of similar nature. The Sexual Harassment at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 provides for safety to women at workplace and establishment of Internals Committee to look into the grievances of women. Despite such provisions, women still face inequalities and there are increasing instances of harassment of women. This paper tries to analyse the evolution of women rights and various laws available to women and the level of implementation of such laws in India.

Keywords: Constitution, Discrimination, Victim, Harassment, Maternity, Violence, Acts, Legislations

9.25

"Legal Subjectivity" of Dalit Women: A case of Women Manual Scavengers of Indian Metropolises

Ahana Ganguly & Professor Nilanjana Gupta

The paper seeks to uncover the lived experiences of Women Manual Scavengers in India who perform diverse scavenging tasks in urban areas. After a decade since the first cognizable legal action was taken, forbidding the manual cleaning of human excreta through the enactment of the Prohibition of Employment of Manual Scavengers and Their Rehabilitation Act 2013 (referred to as the PEMSR Act 2013 in the piece), the paper argues that this legal step has obliterated a huge sector of hazardous cleaning in urban India, comprising a dominant number of women workers. Chapter I, subclause 2 (g), (m), (n), (p), and (q) of the PEMSR Act 2013 includes an exclusive definition of manual scavengers and hazardous cleaning resting solely upon the direct contact of workers with 'human excreta' in dry latrines, followed by a "condition-based prohibition" (Wankhede, 2021) of the hazardous occupation. Interestingly, tasks such as cleaning public toilets, streets, etc. have been kept outside the legal ambit, where Women Manual Scavengers are not legally recognized as "Manual Scavengers", and consequently are deprived of Protective gears and Rehabilitation. In the social matrix of rural India, the task of manual scavenging is mostly associated with cleaning dry latrines and carrying human excreta on the head, as is traditionally enforced on a

particular community of Dalit Women (Shankar, Swaroop, 2021; Permutt, 2011; Singh, 2014). However, the conditionof women manual scavengers in the Indian metropolises is overlooked due to an insufficient imagination of the occupation, transcending the idea of cleaning dry latrines and carrying human excreta on their heads. Therefore, the study has included in-depth interviews with 50 women engaged in the task of cleaning public toilets, bio-wastes outside hospitals, and streets within two Indian metropolises- Delhi and Kolkata. The observation takes into account issues of workplace safety, occupational health hazards, medical support, access to protective gear, and the possibility of Rehabilitation for women employees. Almost all the participant observers (except a very few) of the study are Dalits, who have taken down the traumatic experiences of workplace sexual harassment by supervisors, severe health hazards caused by occupations, repeated instances of social humiliation, and so on. The Sociology of Legal Subjectivity by Jan Broekman, Social Relationship and Norms by Evgeny Pashukani, and Theory of Labour as Stigma by Mary E. John have framed the theoretical formulation of the study. In this context, the paper attempts to discern the absence of a gender sensitive imagination of Women Manual Scavengers by the Indian Legal system, where the legal subjectivity of a three-fold exploitation is hushed up- as manual scavengers, as Dalits, and as Women. This gap in legal ideography is reflected in the limited definition of Manual Scavengers, hazardous cleaning, and Rehabilitation enshrined in the provisions of the PEMSR Act, 2013, where the job roles of Women Manual Scavengers in urban India are ostracized. The state apparatus's blatant denial of the social reality of manual scavenging in India in all of its varied forms has contributed to a further delay in putting an end to the dehumanizing practice.

Keywords: Dalit, Women, Manual, Scavenging, Legal, Subjectivity, Caste, Gender, Law

9.26
Beyond the prison gates:
Law, Justice And Women's Movement

Natasha Narwal & Devangana Kalita

The women's movement in India has had a long history of engagement with the law and criminal justice system in terms of demanding legislations for ensuring

justice and equality for women, especially against various kinds of gender based violence women face on an everyday basis. But an engagement with the other side of this system, embodied by prisons and the carceral state has been largely amiss. In our paper, drawing on our own lived experience of incarceration and the stories of women we encountered while in prison, we would delineate how prisons are deeply gendered spaces, and extension of the patriarchal state which incarcerates and punishes women, mostly from marginalised communities, who do not conform to its moulds. We hope to look at how reform and discipline for women prisoners is about domesticating such 'wayward' women and restoring them back in the familial lives as obedient wives/daughters/sisters. We will also elaborate on how the criminal justice system is designed in a way that makes access to justice even more difficult for women prisoners, whether in terms of getting legal representation or encountering judicial biases. The paper will argue why it is pertinent for the women's movement to interrogate the construction of crime and punishment and the workings of law which flatten out the complexities of women's lives and render them 'criminal'. Another critical aspect of such engagement with law and prisons is imaginations of what justice could and would look like beyond carceral punishments. We hope to argue why building such an understanding is important for articulating a feminist understanding of law and for an emancipatory feminist future.

Keywords: Gender, Law, Prisons, Justice, Emancipation

9.27
Legal Reforms, Judicial System and Emancipatory Agenda

Mayuri yadavrao Gatari

Indian women have actively participated in the global awakening for women's rights. The struggle for gender equality in India has a long history, dating back to at least the mid-nineteenth century and continuing into the present era. While progress has been made in terms of women's education, the question of women's safety in India remains a significant concern. In India, women face various challenges and find themselves trapped in multiple ways. Despite the implementation of several legislations and government measures, the rate of crimes against women has not shown a significant decline. Women in India continue to experience horrific

crimes such as rape, dowry deaths, domestic violence, kidnapping, molestation, torture, and sexual harassment. Recent cases like the Shardha Walkar case in Maharashtra, the Saraswati Vaidya murder case in Mumbai, and other incidents serve as reminders of the ongoing threats to women's safety. Even our national player suffering for the sexual harassment in at work place. The male-dominated Indian society is one of the root causes of crimes against women. It is ironic that women are often revered as "Devi" (goddess), while in reality, they face physical abuse, torture, and sexual assault. Despite the existence of laws to protect women, such as the Indian Penal Code, the Sexual Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, the Dowry Prohibition Act, the Indecent Representation of Women Act, the Immoral Traffic Prevention Act, and the Commission of Sati Prevention Act, the crime rate against women continues to rise. The Constitution of India, under Article 14, ensures gender equality. However, even with the introduction of a substantial number of laws, the crime rate against women in India remains alarmingly high. Women in India often suffer in silence for extended periods. According to a BBC report, every five minutes, a woman in India experiences violence. Lack of financial and family support, the need to compromise for the sake of children, and limited access to employment, property, and medical care are the primary reasons that prevent women from raising their voices against violence. In order to address this pressing issue, concerted efforts are required at all levels of society. The government, law enforcement agencies, educational institutions, and communities must collaborate to create a safe and inclusive environment for women. Patriarchal norms deeply ingrained in Indian society need to be challenged, and women should be empowered through education, economic opportunities, and social support systems. Gender equality and women's safety should be prioritized in policymaking, with a focus on effective implementation of existing laws and stricter punishment for offenders. Raising awareness through campaigns, promoting community education, and fostering a cultural shift are vital in transforming societal attitudes towards women. Additionally, providing accessible resources such as helplines, shelters, and legal aid for women facing violence is essential. In conclusion, while Indian women have been active participants in the global movement for women's rights, ensuring their safety in India remains a significant challenge. Despite the introduction of numerous laws and measures, the crime rate against women continues to rise. Women in India silently endure violence due to a lack of financial and family support and the need to compromise for the sake of children. To address this issue, it is imperative to challenge patriarchal norms, empower women, and enforce existing laws effectively. By creating a safe and inclusive society, India can ensure the well-being and security of its women.

9.28
Study of marriage Laws of India
through the lens of Gender Perspective

Bhagyashree Balasaheb Jawale

India is democratic country and there is separate judiciary system for justice. There are different laws for civil, criminal, and separate for family related disputes between husband and wife. Indian society is largely patriarchal in nature. Through this separate judiciary system for family disputes reinstate the patriarchal norms of family through the practices. Family members, relatives, friends, peer groups and others involved into the process do play an important role in maintaining these structures. For this research paper I am focussing on the different marriage laws in India in family court. There are different marriage laws for different religion in India. Hindu Marriage law, Muslim Marriage law, Christian Marriage law, Parsi Marriage law, Special Marriage law and Foreign Marriage law. There are different rules and regulations for registration and objections as per different marriage laws. Agnes Flavia in her book discusses gender bias in family law and judicial process, interpretation of laws by courts, judicial pronouncements due to this constitutional provision. In patriarchal system women are exploited along the caste hierarchy but women are not a homogenous entity socially as well as politically. Therefore, they argue that the demand for uniform civil law is inappropriate. The book deals with the changes made by the British in the customary family laws during the pre-colonial period. The study of marriage laws needs deep understanding of legal as well as social context. Thus, in my research I will focus different marriage laws of India. To understand this, I will do content analysis the differences and similarities of marriage laws. Through this I will try to find out how family laws are differently functions in India. Through the study of marriage laws, I will try to understand marriage laws through the lens of gender perspective. What are similarities and differences of marriages laws in India? To study the various changes in family laws.

9.29

Women on Digital Platforms & the Labour Laws in India

Bhavya Gupta

<div align="center">All women work, and only some are paid.</div>

More than eighty per cent of the population in India works in the informal sector, and more than ninety per cent of women in paid employment work in the informal sector. Thus, there is an urgent need to increase productive employment in the Indian economy, particularly among women with historically low labour force participation rates and a high level of informalization. Digital labour platforms can enhance employment outcomes by embedding skilling, addressing information asymmetries, and enabling more effective matching of employees and jobs at scale by leveraging the spread of technology. Given gendered constraints to employment, such as women's family responsibilities and reduced mobility, the flexible nature and location of platform labour can benefit women more. However, challenges of restrictive norms and a lack of gender-sensitive public infrastructure persist as the gender digital divide widens. In India, 7.7 million workers are engaged in the gig economy, which is expected to expand three times by 2030 (NITI Aayog 2022). However, under Indian law, gig workers lack the 'employee' status, which has significant legal implications, such as entitlements to minimum wages, benefits, and legal protections. They are instead classified as independent contractors, self-employed individuals or under other categories of workers but not as employees. In 2020, new labour codes were enacted by the Parliament of India to consolidate numerous labour laws and ensure better compliance by removing inherent contradictions and repetitions. The Code on Social Security, 2020, yet to be notified, defined gig and platform workers as "outside of traditional employer-employee" relationships. It is now internationally recognised by developed states and international economic & financial institutions that reducing the gender gap in labour force participation has positive economic impacts. In India, women significantly contribute to the economy by working in companies and fields, as workers or freelancers, or providing unpaid care at home. With digitalisation, technology must be leveraged to avoid the digital divide and gain access to work through skilling without being confined to a particular location. As a result, there has been a growing need to address the legal framework surrounding women in platform and gig work. In light of the above, the study will give a detailed analysis of laws governing the

labour markets in India. It will review the existing laws and the new labour codes that are yet to be implemented. The first section outlines the crucial issue of misclassification of Platform and Gig Workers by analysing existing categories of workers. Legislative developments concerning defining platforms and gig workers will be assessed in the second section. The third section examines the rights and benefits available to women in digital labour markets.

9.30
Customary Laws Vis-À-Vis Inheritance Rights of Sikkimese Women: A quest for Equality

Md. Faraz Ahmad

The Treaty of Indo-Sikkim in 1950 shifted Protectorate status of Sikkim from British India to the Union of India. Post the treaty the issue of preserving cultural rights of Sikkimese people started. Thereafter, in 1961, the Sikkim Subject Rule 1 was issued by the then Chogyal (monarchs who ruled over the Kingdom of Sikkim) that formally recognised and laid down certain criteria in order to be considered Sikkimese citizens. This was also with a view to demarcate between Sikkimese and non-Sikkimese. The Rule further prohibited citizenship rights to Sikkimese women in case she marries a non-Sikkimese, she was denied from being a Sikkim subject. In 1962, Chogyal passed the Married Women Property Regulation Act 2 which put conditions for Sikkimese women who married non-Sikkimese and the consequences thereby mainly: 1. If she marries a non-Sikkimese then she has to forfeit the property rights, 2. She could not sell or mortgage land, and 3. The husband and offspring of such Sikkimese cannot have any interest in her property. In 1975, Sikkim became part of India and a special protection was provided to the old laws of Sikkim that were applicable till 1975 which means that all customary practice that existed before merger will continue to prevail even if it contradicts the provisions of the Constitution. The constitution of India under Article 13 recognizes customs and usages as law unless it in conflict with Part III of the Constitution i.e. Fundamental Rights. Article 14-16 deals with right to equality among citizens of India. The Government of Sikkim in 2008 enacted Sikkim Succession Act which providing a uniform succession law in the state of Sikkim for all Sikkimese (Chettri, 2020). This legislation is pertinent especially for Sikkimese women as the act guarantees inheritance ancestral property as a

coparcener 3 at par with their male counterparts. However, the said legislation is also problematic to an extent that it deprives a Sikkimese daughter married to a non-Sikkimese man from inheriting the ancestral property (Narayanan, 2016). Moreover the act has not been enforced yet which creates confusion as what laws/ practices are applicable on the matters related to Succession in Sikkim. Thus, this paper will examine the status of the Sikkimese women and their right to inherit ancestral property as per the customary practices and old laws of Sikkim. The paper will also explore the legality of certain proclamations by the government of Sikkim in the light of constitutional ethos and human rights principles on equality and dignity. Finally, the paper will examine how the retention of old laws and customary laws by discarding the redundant and dormant customary practices is possible by collective efforts by all community leaders, policy makers, academicians, religious heads and the people of Sikkim.

Keywords: Women, Sikkim, Inheritance Rights, Customary practices.

9.31
Intersectional Feminism In India:
Unequal among Equals

Chemmalar. S

The term "intersectionality" is associated with Professor Dr. Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw's ground-breaking research on the broader context of racial disparity in the United States. Crenshaw remarked that gender bias has several aspects and that the "singular focus on rape as a manifestation of male power over female sexuality tends to eclipse the use of rape as a weapon of racial terror." Discrimination based on gender is distinct and interwoven. Women are ethnically diverse group, and they have a variety of experiences in which physical ability, age, caste, nationality, and other factors play a significant influence. A person's privilege in society is determined by intersectional feminism, which enables us to understand how several identities within a gender overlap. In Indian Context, the notion of intersectionality is employed by feminist, anti-caste, disability, and queer rights researchers, activists, and organisations since 1990. The Supreme Court of India acknowledged the phrase "intersectional oppression" in Patan Jamal Vali v. The State of Andhra Pradesh (2021) and outlined the factors to be considered by the court while dealing with matters involving intersectionality. The case involves the

rape of a visually impaired girl who belonged to a Scheduled Caste community. The court sentenced the defendant to life imprisonment, and held that, "when a woman's identity intersects with, inter alia, caste, class, religion, disability, and sexual orientation, she may face violence and discrimination due to two or more grounds. Transwomen may face violence on account of their heterodox gender identity. In such a situation, it becomes imperative to use an intersectional lens to evaluate how multiple sources of oppression operate cumulatively to produce a specific experience of subordination for a blind Scheduled Caste woman."Caste and gender being the major forms of discrimination in the Indian society make life even more difficult for women who belong lower position in the caste hierarchy. Women's issues often go unnoticed and unreported since they are often excluded and subjected to the harshest forms of oppression. Legal framework's view gender and caste discrimination as two separate entities and fail to recognise their intersection, which prevents victims of prejudice from receiving the justice. There is still controversy on the nature, the limits, and applications of intersectional analyses of gender, despite the fact that feminist theorists in many fields have accepted them broadly. The concept suffers deafening silence from researchers and academia. The article seeks to demystify the origin and meaning of the concept of intersectional feminism. The article attempts to comprehend the interconnection of all forms of subordination in India and stresses the need for mainstreaming intersectionality.

Keywords: Intersectionality, Gender discrimination, Diversity, Social Identity Structures, India

9.32
Women in the Crafts:
Developing pathways to decent work

Sona Mandal

The handicraft sector in India which is largely a part of the informal sector, provides employment to a significant proportion of the workforce after agriculture; where women are preferred over men as they command a low supply price to produce craft items during their spare time at home. It helps the capitalist to extract surplus through the global subcontracting system by employing these poor home-based workers. The work is uncertain, poorly paid, lacks social security; and is not

represented through collectivisation which leads to substantial devaluation of work. They seem to have fallen through the cracks of the labour market as they are neither identified as self-employed workers nor as wage workers and don't have access to sustainable livelihood opportunities. An employment policy to provides decent work opportunities to these women should be an important policy agenda of the State. In literature there are two prominent ways to create employment in the informal sector - one is through wage-work by promoting enterprises in public and private sector that absorbs the informal workers and the other is through the creation of avenues for self-employment for informal sector workers. In both the strategies the State has an important role. In the former, the State undertakes direct and indirect measure to promote craft industries and also provide training for skill development to improve their accessibility to wage-work; and in the latter the State provides social security and incentives such as easy access to credit and marketing facilities to the self-employed. However, the sub-contracted workers may remain invisible and out of the purview of State intervention. The role of civil society and non-governmental organisations also becomes important when the State falters to deliver. The paper examines the components of an effective employment strategy that provides decent work that secures the livelihood of these workers and suggests a possible way by which such a policy can be put into practice. The paper draws data mainly from secondary sources and also draws important insights from group discussion with craftswomen from the grassroots to provide an analysis of the substantial devaluation of their working conditions due to the global and local sub-contacting system and builds a framework to suggest the alternative ways by which policies can be designed to achieve sustainable and gainful employment. It proposes to integrate the key features that makes for an ideal employment policy, such as the adoption of gender-sensitivity; use of innovative technology that aids work without causing displacement; fostering community participation; and granting autonomy in production and decision making to the craftswomen. The employment policy should help them exercise control over the means of production in order to eradicate the exploitative practices of middlemen and subcontractors and empower them so that they can stake a claim in the management of production, and distribution of the profits in an egalitarian way to create conditions for decent and sustainable work.

Keywords: Decent Work, Handicrafts, Employment Policy

9.33
Care or Control? :
Therapeutic Interventions Around Multiply-Marginalized Girls In India's Juvenile Justice System

Sujatha Subramanian

How do institutions established for the care and protection of girls become institutions of confinement and punishment for multiply-marginalized girls? Existing conceptualizations of India's juvenile justice system have largely neglected an examination of how concepts of childhood, care, and protection are structured by caste, class, gender, sexuality, and religion. My paper studies the juvenile justice system of India, focusing on the policies and practices of children's homes which house girls who are designated as Children in Need of Care and Protection by the Indian state. Drawing on critical analyses of the policy documents and ethnographic research at a juvenile institution in Delhi, I examine how India's juvenile justice system conceptualizes and enacts the care and protection of girls, particularly girls who belong to marginalized caste, class and religious backgrounds. I argue that the juvenile justice system's policies and practices of care and protection punish multiply-marginalized girls through systems of confinement and control. My paper's focus will be on therapeutic interventions which are framed as a key technique through which the care and protection of girls in enacted within juvenile institutions. There has been an increasing involvement of various therapeutic experts within juvenile institutions in India who provide care in the form of counseling, psychiatric support, and vocational education. I argue in this chapter that far from enacting care in the lives of girls, therapeutic interventions in India's juvenile justice system entrench Brahmanical patriarchal constructions of multiply-marginalized girls as incapable, unreliable, and hypersexual. I argue that therapeutic care interventions inside juvenile institutions, rather than healing girls, lead to girls feeling isolated and experiencing a shrinking of liberatory possibilities in their lives, both inside and outside juvenile institutions. My paper draws on and contributes to research in the fields of feminist critiques of Brahmanical patriarchy, feminist perspectives on justice, and feminist critiques of the state. The paper specifically engages with the following questions— "How have such socially excluded women encountered the collective entities of the State, civil society, market and law?" and "the experiences of social and cultural injustice within communities".

9.34

Feminist Jurisprudence and the Paternalistic-Patriarchal Approach of the Indian Legal System

Shabnam Kodalil

At the heart of the concept of Feminism lies the essence of a society where no gender is disadvantaged. In pursuance of this ideal, Feminist Jurisprudence is a school of thought based on the social, political and economic equality of the sexes. A modern outlook on the same would reiterate the definition as equality of genders. Even though most of the development of Feminist movements was accredited to the West, India saw its own route of organic adaptation tackling unique social evils and societal statuses in terms of property, marriage, guardianship, access to education etc. Resultant of a relatively-young constitution and continuous struggles by grass-root and mainstream outfits, various women-centric legislations and amendments in personal laws came into place aligning itself to the new and emerging school of Feminist Jurisprudence. However, the nature of such 'protectionist' approach and its subsistence as per the evolving socio-political needs of women in India is a subject to be critically analysed. The discourse primarily raises the question whether socially imposed constraints on Feminist Jurisprudence is mitigating the true intent of grass root-level women-led movements and whether the dichotomy of sexes and their roles still linger in precedents and legislations created post-independence. In light of the constitutionally guaranteed and internationally accepted principle of equality before law and equal protection of law, this paper divulges into the nuances of the approach adopted by the Indian legal system towards laws concerning women's emancipation. With conflicting ideologies of different personal laws and women welfare policies going against consensus of intersectional gender justice, the paper further discusses the possibility of re-victimisation induced through such judicial and legislative stereotyping with reference to the present trend of dicta and policy decisions. It aims to criticise the touchstone of 'honour' constituting women-centric laws and proposes a revaluation of the legal system in place, opting for a justiciable inclusion of Feminist Jurisprudence's idea of autonomy as an alternative to the archaic concept of sheltering and protecting women as a paternal figure and scrutinises the scope of intersectional gender justice in the norms followed today. Through study of relevant legislations, its objectives, policies of criminal justice system, precedents and general governance this paper will accentuate the infirming effect of a patriarchal approach on the subject matter. Amidst the rise in legal awareness of citizens and controversial

takes on questions of law by the judiciary, the relevance of Feminist Jurisprudence has been highly accorded than ever making a comparative analysis a pressing priority.

Keywords: Feminist Jurisprudence, Indian Law, Women-Centric Law, Paternalistic Policy, Gender-bias, Intersectional Gender Justice, Judicial Stereotyping, Indian Women Movements

9.35
Single Mothers in Meghalaya: Contestations, Legal Frameworks and Remedial Measures

Charanjeet

This paper is an attempt to throw light upon the issue of Single Mothers in Meghalaya. Meghalaya state comprises largely three tribes known as Khasi, Jaintia and Garo, which are matrilineal in nature, which means descent and lineage are traced through the female line. Meghalaya is governed by a set of constitutional laws as well as customary laws. Though matrilineal in structure and nature the society of the three tribes of Meghalaya is confronted with the problems of the high rise of single mothers. The number of single mothers is rising immensely in Meghalaya because of many reasons. The paper will discuss the crisis of separation, desertion, and divorce, with a focus on the experiences of women in the context of a matrilineal society in Meghalaya. Many single mothers are concerned about their children's well-being and experience constant stress. However, some single mothers think that leaving their marital status would help them escape abuse and violence from their intimate partners. The matrilineal system in Meghalaya offers some liberation from the social and cultural stigma associated with divorce. Despite legal provisions for maintenance and support, these single mothers face obstacles in obtaining their rights due to the influence of male-dominated institutions and social stigma. In this paper, the concept of single mothers is interchangeably used with female-headed households due to the paucity of empirical data on single mothers. The focus of this paper is to understand the major problems faced by single mothers and the main reasons for the high rise of single mothers in Meghalaya. The paper will also delve into the measures taken by various civil society organisations as well as the Government to curb and mitigate the increase of single mothers and the problems faced by

them. Besides this, the paper will also discuss the legal measures to counter these social problems and some solutions will also be discussed.

Keywords: Single mothers, Meghalaya, constitutional law, customary law, legal frameworks, remedial measures, traditional clan system, legal provisions, autonomy, empowerment, legal reforms, awareness, community support, social justice.

9.36
Rape as a Caste Atrocity: Analysis of Judgements Delivered by Courts in West Bengal

Debarati Choudhury

Historically, dalit women have been perceived as inherently incapable of embodying honour; hence, the social meaning of rape loses its power to describe the humiliation that Dalit women face. This stems from the fact that colonial law invested upper-caste women with greater modesty or honour as compared to dalit women in the sphere of judicial interpretation and sentencing. Therefore, the PoA Act, by naming the outraging of the modesty of or the dishonouring of a Dalit woman as an atrocity marks a discursive shift and imbues honour or modesty with a newer meaning with regard to Dalit women. The 2021 National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB) report shows that there were eighty-six cases of rape reported in the country, on an average every day in 2021, recording an increase of nearly twenty percent. Almost eight percent of these reported rapes were against dalit women (2,585 cases of rape were against dalit women and 1,285 cases of minor rape). In West Bengal, Dalits comprise 23.51% of the total population, the third highest Dalit population among Indian states.As much as 10.66% of the entire Dalit population of India lives in West Bengal. The NCRB data suggests that a total of 243 cases of crimes/ atrocities against dalits were under investigation, out of which more than fifty percent cases were pending from the previous year, and over 43% cases were pending investigation at the end of the year. A total of 836 cases cases were pending trial in courts, with a staggering low conviction rate that is virtually nil. The absence of corroborative evidence has been used by the accused, the defence counsels and the judiciary, time and again, to deny the occurrence of the crime in the first place. In this backdrop, this research highlights how an over-emphasis on procuring evidence denies

dalit victims of rape and other forms of sexual violence the immediate medical care that they require and are entitled to. The legal repercussions of a forced dichotomy of sexual assault (including non-penetrative acts) and rape have been particularly detrimental for dalit women, due to apathy and negligence shown by police in collection and preservation of evidence from the hospitals. The research attempts to critically engage with the idea of consent and compromise, and further questions the basic premise of how violence is constructed within a casteist and sexist legal discourse, through a sociological reading of sessions court and appellate judgements. Finally, the research highlights a narrative of shame that the judicial system thrusts upon dalit women, and thus necessitates a particular critique of how caste-based rape trials are adjudicated in the state.

Keywords: caste atrocity, rape, evidence, PoA Act

9.37
The Changing Contours of Obscenity: Modesty and The 'Indian Woman'

Hananya A S

The obscene is something characterised as that which should be away from public consumption. Obscenity is a standard used for cultural regulation and establishes a social and moral order. However, it can be argued that the converse can also be true. With the predominance and political capital of "Indian" culture, there are a more significant number of instances of obscenity against persons who display any sense of subversion. When attempting to remedy this subjective bias, there arises a need to investigate the social characterisation of obscene material. Is there an objective truth to what can be classified as obscene? Does this standard remain the same irrespective of gender, caste, class and religion? Obscenity is intertwined with the language of desire, anything that might stimulate a 'man's' passions and desires is seen as obscene, this is often combined with the incitement of the consumer to indulge in immoral or indecent acts. In such criminal acts, the creator's intention is irrelevant, the focus is on the effect. The standard is decided upon the articulation of these effects by the judiciary. In this paper, the researcher aims to investigate this articulation by courts and the Court as a forum for objective assessment of such claims and their effect. Further, the researcher relies on the lens of gender to primarily explore the ways

in which the categorisation of 'men' and 'women' and their desires plays a role within the paradigm of criminalisation of obscenity. A feminist legal analysis of the judiciary's standard of obscenity and effect of criminalisation in the context of India's class and caste dynamics is necessary to explore the landscape of desire and women's role in the country.

Keywords: Obscenity, Modesty, Desire, Women, Sexuality

9.38
Postmodern Feminist Legal Method: Deconstructing Norms and Re-Imagining Justice

Divya P.

"The goal of feminism should not be to establish a matriarchy, but to dismantle the power structures that oppress women." The postmodern feminist legal method is a dynamic and critical approach that challenges traditional legal frameworks by deconstructing normative concepts and re-imagining justice. The postmodern feminist legal method emerges from a critique of traditional legal theories that perpetuate patriarchal power structures and reinforce gender-based discrimination. This method recognizes the social construction of legal concepts and the ways in which language, power, and knowledge shape legal discourse. The dismantling of normative legal categories and premises is one of the core tenets of postmodern feminist legal theory. This approach seeks to reveal the repressive character of the binary divisions and dichotomies ingrained in legal frameworks and to call into question their legitimacy. Deconstructing concepts like public/private, reason/emotion, and subject/object reveals the underlying power structures and promotes more flexible and context-specific methods of legal interpretation. Furthermore, the postmodern feminist legal method highlights the importance of voice and narrative in legal decision-making. Voices that have historically been excluded are given agency, promoting a more inclusive and diverse legal system. By centering the narratives of women, people of color, LGBTQ+ individuals, and other marginalized groups, this method seeks to challenge dominant narratives and broaden the scope of legal analysis. Additionally, postmodern feminist legal theory emphasizes the need for an ethics of care within the legal system. It rejects the detached and impartial approach often associated with traditional legal reasoning and calls for a more empathetic

and context- sensitive approach to justice. Intersectionality, a key component of postmodern feminist legal theory, highlights the interconnectedness of social identities and experiences. Through the lens of postmodernism and feminism, it recognizes that individuals possess multiple intersecting identities and experiences that shape their encounters with the legal system. By acknowledging the complex ways in which race, gender, class, sexuality, and other social categories intersect, this method seeks to address the unique challenges faced by individuals at the intersections of multiple identities. The paper attempts to understand the applicability of this method in context to Indian jurisprudence. . I have used the postmodern feminist legal method, which strives to adopt a relational conception of law and prioritize the well-being and dignity of all parties concerned, in order to grasp the present jurisprudence discourse context. Although it is complicated and subject to criticism, it marks a significant step towards bringing down repressive power systems and establishing social justice and equality. I intend to discuss the discourse around this method which I argue, through deconstruction, offers a transformative opportunity to re-conceptualize legal norms and challenge the status quo.

Keywords: Postmodern Feminist Legal Theory, Deconstruction, Normative, Intersectionality

9.39
Perspective of the Bhaujan Women on Education and Women Movement In India

Chele Vishakha Dnyaneshwar

In our modern society, women's education and struggles have not progressed as much as they should, especially for those from rural areas and the Bahujan community. India has achieved great feats like launching satellites to the Moon, but women's issues still lag behind. While some women have made progress and shared their experiences, many still live restricted lives, sacrificing their own dreams for others. Savitribai Phule was the first Indian feminist who founded the first women's school in Pune in 1848. The women's movement in India played a crucial role during the British era, and some legal changes were made after independence to improve women's status. However, despite these milestones, there has not been enough impact on the ground, especially for Bahujan women.

In our patriarchal society, women's careers are limited by various factors like the nature of work, time, salary, family commitments, and marriage. Education is often seen as a means to find a suitable groom rather than empowering women. The quality of education is also a concern, with a focus on income rather than nurturing minds. Bahujan women face even more challenges due to limited access to resources. As a Bahujan woman researcher, I aim to highlight their struggles and bring their voices to the forefront through qualitative research and secondary data collection. By understanding their experiences, we can work towards finding solutions and empowering Bahujan women.

9.40

A Stolen Innocence: Combating Child Marriage as a Human Rights Crisis

Dr.S.Meena Priya Dharshini & Dr. C.Hilda Devi

This is a poignant and impactful theme that captures the devastating consequences of child marriage and the urgent need to address it as a human rights crisis. It is also rightly cited as "Marriage steals childhood," by UNICEF Executive Director. Child marriage refers to the marriage or union of a child under the age of 18, violating their rights to education, health, and freedom. The refined title emphasizes the loss of innocence that children experience when forced into early marriages, highlighting the gravity of the issue. Child marriage is not only a violation of basic human rights but also perpetuates a cycle of poverty, inequality, and gender-based discrimination. It denies children their right to education, exposes them to physical and emotional harm, and restricts their personal development and opportunities for a better future. Addressing child marriage requires a comprehensive approach that involves legal reforms, community engagement, and awareness campaigns. It is crucial to work towards empowering girls, providing them with education, and fostering an environment that supports their rights and aspirations. By framing child marriage as a human rights crisis, the study prompts action and underscores the need for urgent intervention. It compels individuals, communities, governments, and organizations to recognize the severity of the issue and join forces to protect the rights and well-being of children worldwide. It compromises the development of girls and boys. Moreover, it often results in early pregnancy, poor health, little education and social isolation.

Education is a powerful tool in preventing child marriage. By improving access and eliminating gender disparities in education, we can reduce the likelihood of girls marrying at a young age. Every child deserves the chance to reach their full potential. Let's create a society that supports all children and to say big 'No' to child marriage, emphasizing these messages during awareness campaigns to raise awareness about the violation of human rights. Now is the critical moment to prioritize girls' education, raise community awareness, and safeguard children from the scourge of child marriage. Let us ensure that children can embrace their childhood and envision a society where no girl falls victim to any form of abuse, particularly child marriage. Let us grant children the freedom to live their lives to the fullest. Several studies found that the practice of child marriage to be the worst and in need of urgent attention in order to meet the country's development goals.There are reasons cited by several studies that few people does not have enough awareness of the consequences of child marriage and there is also a big need to invest more in child rights, child development, girls' education and girls' empowerment. Moreover, due to lack of social awareness, some parents and community people remain unaware of the adverse effect of child marriage. Overall, this study encapsulates the gravity of child marriage and calls for collective efforts to end this harmful practice, ensuring that every child can grow up free, safe, and empowered to fulfil their potential. Hence an attempt is taken to analyze scientifically about a study on child marriage, a violation of human rights among women in rural community and strategies to end the practice.

Keywords: Child marriage; Stolen Innocence; Combating Child Marriage; Human Rights Crisis; Collective efforts

Sub-theme 10

Gendering
the Digital Popular

10.1

Body dysmorphia in the new digital era: Relocating the real representation of women's bodies on social media platforms

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Keywords: Body Dysmorphia, Digital War, Social Media, Mental Health, Women's Health

Body dysmorphia is popularly known as a mental health condition in which the person cannot stop thinking about one or more flaws in their perceived appearance. The resultant cause of this is a rising number of anxiety, depression as well as eating disorder issues among most young women in India. This is accentuated by social media platforms today, which highly insinuate the "ideal body" of a woman in various advertisements, social media reels etc. The real war on women's bodies today, thus, could be identified as not the liberation of their bodies on media but the flawed/unrealistic representation of a woman's body and the aftermath of this representation as observed in unhealthy eating patterns and unrealistic body standards among women. There has also been a sharp rise in the number of women facing mild to severe anxiety and depression due to the body image that they continuously strive to achieve through the representation of flawless women on social media. Most social media platforms today including Instagram, Facebook, YouTube among others vouch for a change in the way women are perceived in our society, through beauty routines, dietary plans and even laser/botox surgeries to change the most important features of themselves or to alter it in a way they desire. Filters available on all almost all social media platforms today have given rise to an unhealthy obsession among

women to look like their "filtered" selves and thus develop hatred towards their own "real" bodies. Several studies have also proven that this has led to a drop in the self-confidence and self-esteem of most women who strive to achieve this filtered look on a regular basis.

This paper, therefore, attempts to highlight the new age war that has been identified on women's bodies all across the globe, and one that is brought upon with the advent of technology through reimagined beauty standards and an ideal body type that is almost never achieved. The paper also discusses the multitude of ways in which these beauty routines, filters, diet plans and laser/botox treatments cause an alarming rise in the number of cases among women suffering from acute anxiety or depression due to these unrealistic standards and how they affect the mental as well as the physical health of women's bodies in the present era. Women's health has been studied from various standpoints so far in sociological/scientific research but the ways in which technology has declared a new form of war on women's bodies today, also needs to be thoroughly discussed and examined in detail at the earliest, as the repercussions are already visible in women across the world.

10.2
Violent Belongings of Digital Queer Nationalisms: The Case of Queer Hindu Alliance

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Keywords: Digital spaces, Hindu nationalism, knowledge production, queer belongings

Recent years have seen the production of scholarship that critically looks at forms of knowledge production facilitated through the internet, that circulate hegemonic ideas of what constitutes freedom, agency and democracy. In the context of India, one witnesses a strategic mobilization of such discourses, which work in tandem with the shape shifting nature of religious nationalism which simultaneously champion queer politics while rendering some queer bodies disposable (Shahani, 2021). These entanglements also translate onto the digital space through campaigns such as 'Digital India' and 'India Shining' (Dasgupta &

Dasgupta, 2018) that underscores the 'exceptional' nature of India while obscuring forms of violence and inequalities that get operationalized through both offline and online practices. In line with these discussions, the paper will attempt to undertake a critical discourse analysis of a popular internet-based organization based in India called the Queer Hindu Alliance (QHA).

Through the course of the paper, the following questions will be explored - 1. Drawing on the simultaneous fossilization and virality of digital content (Kunstman, 2009), I will look at the ways in which discourse on queer politics gets organized and consumed through QHA's presence on Twitter, by paying specific attention to the layout of the content and the forms of engagement that take place (through comments, memes, shares, retweets, quote tweets). This will also involve a study of the strategic use of memes, emojis and other features that are particular to this digital platform, in order to understand how they facilitate the production of a particular nationalist infused queer rights discourse. 2. I want to look at the nature of the content and the ways in which the exceptional status of India, particularly in relation to its queers, gets articulated through these platforms- the decriminalization of homosexuality in 2018 and the current discussions on marriage equality will form significant backdrops. Crucial to this discussion is also the nature of engagement with the domestic politics of neighbouring countries, particularly those with a Muslim majority population. 3. Linked to this, I want to look at how this articulation of nationalism gets repeatedly enacted through QHA's online presence and its linkages to Hindu diasporic organizations located outside India, in order to understand the ways in which they feed into each other through narratives of threat and injury.

10.3
Normalising Menstruation:
Social Media and the Feminist Movements

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Menstruation is considered taboo, and men and women are still very uncomfortable speaking about the subject openly. Not just this, menstruation is associated with religious dogmas and sometimes superstitions of impurity where women are required to stay in cow-sheds away for three days. In some houses, they are not allowed to pray, cook or even sleep on beds. There have been incidences where labour women have removed their uterus as they lost four days' wages every month. In some parts of the country, healthy women remove their uterus as it interferes with their prayer schedules. These are some important practices that have affected women's health in the longer run. Along with the physical health women have borne mental stress and trauma resulting from the practices of othering and secluding women from home owing to menstruation. Unfortunately, there haven't been many movements that resisted these practices. Interestingly, the subject has found a space on social media where the representation has been shaped as a movement. Women are committed to normalizing menstruation and for this, they have announced deadlines. For example, the Instagram page of 'Menstrual Hygiene Day' has a statement on their profile page: "A global movement to make menstruation a normal fact of life by 2030 #WeAreCommitted".

In the present paper, an attempt will be made to study the several ways of representation and resistance on Instagram sites like 'Menstrupedia', 'Menstrual Hygiene Day', 'thewomanscompany' and some of the posts that use #menstruation. The methodology that would be employed in the paper is cyberethnography, where the Instagram pages would be studied in detail. The profile, post, and memes will be selected to understand the concerns related to representation related to normalizing menstruation and the resistance against taboos related to it. The study will look into content, colour choices employed in the memes, posts, and photographs, and the comments following the posts.

The major research questions addressed in the study are: How powerful is the representation as well as resistance? Is the post, colour-code, and depiction also breaking away from the gender divide? How feminine is the content, does the content, in its representation is it refixing femineity? How are the posts engaging male participants in their movement? How are men responding to such content, are they enforcing the taboos or are they resisting them too? Finally, how does representation become a movement?

10.4
A Critical Study on Assamese YouTube Music Videos in the Era of Digital Popular

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Keywords: popular digital, YouTube, lyrics, language, gender, representation, Assamese Music Videos.

The twenty-first century is the era of the cyber revolution. With the rise of the internet, a new generation is growing up, which can be named as 'Digital Generation', 'Net Generation', 'Cyber Kids', and 'Bionic Generation'. Nowadays, most youngsters are raised in a technologically rich environment surrounded by mobile phones, computers, and social media sites. With the development of new technologies, 'participatory cultures' have emerged where viewers or readers not only consume content but also produce and shares content with others. The new technologically rich digital environment also affects their identity socialization, and development. Although these changes are happening in the digital world over time, it is important to note whether these changes are happening only in the technological world or is it also happening in human behaviour and values. With the rise of cyberspace, it is important to examine people's sensitivity towards the equality of each sex in the society.

Many factors play an important role in society in shaping people's perceptions of sex and gender. One of the important factors is the media. With the rise of the digital era, YouTube is becoming one such type of new media space that reflects the present cultural politics. This virtual community has changed communication technology and the development of culture. It is also becoming one of the most influential social media platforms. With its popularity, YouTube is becoming one of the agents of gender socialization. The younger generation can find their role models in different videos uploaded on YouTube. Popular culture reflects the taste and aesthetics of the masses. If gender is misrepresented in popular media then it affects what society accepts and considers normal about men and women.

The current research aims to critically examine the portrayal of gender in contemporary popular Assamese music videos on YouTube from the viewer's perspective using a qualitative method. As gender is a crucial indicator to analyze in society therefore it is important to scrutinize how the ideas, themes, patterns, and lyrics are represented in contemporary popular Assamese music videos on YouTube. It is very much important to scrutinize how 'masculinity' and 'femininity'

or 'ideal man' and 'ideal woman' are represented in these YouTube music videos. Our study seeks to see how far new progressive ideas have managed to find their way into this democratization of the media space. The study found that gender sensitivity in Assamese YouTube music videos is relatively low. Gender stereotypes, body shaming, and misogynistic representations often occur in these music videos.

The study used interview and observation methods for data collection. The study adopted a feminist research methodology and was guided by grounded theory and an exploratory approach. Thematic analysis was the central method of data analysis.

10.5
Translating Transnational Feminism: Role of Media in 'Online' Cultures of Protest

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Keywords: democracy, dissent, transnational feminism, social media, protest

With the rise of right-wing authoritarian forms of government across the global south, the past decade has witnessed the slow degradation of humanity and human rights. The state subjects have found their voices in various forms of dissent and resistance to the state's rising authoritarianism and undemocratic practices. Their voices have resulted in multiple forms, or as one can rightly quote in an era of evolving cultural studies, "cultures of protest". Due to the advent of the internet and new media technologies, the shared experiences of divided space and time in the performances of resistance and democracy unite in their transnational subjectivities. The scholarship so far covers the role of social media, giving rise to a fourth wave of feminism sparked by the proliferation of digital feminist activism and resultant anti-feminist reactionism. The feminist reading of Bourdieu's theory of symbolic power demonstrates how online feminist activism is shaped by digital platforms that foster affective, ephemeral, abridged posts centred on individual experience. Support for or rejection of feminism is thereby framed around the individual on these sites, exemplified by three contestations: a desire for agency, embodied habitus, and traditional ideals. The privileging of agency in relation to

ideas and thoughts about feminism and gendered experiences, predicated by the materiality of digital spaces, has a strong influence on youth culture, identity, and perceptions of the world, with the application serving not only for youth to follow accounts that are aspirational but also for entertainment and identity building through memes. In contrast to memes, explicitly conservative accounts espousing white supremacists and hateful ideology and recent years have also seen a rise in accounts driven by the ideology of propagating ideas of democracy and resistance. Media serve as powerful institutions for the socialisation of youth, and content on the platform reveals that these accounts are serving as building blocks of ideological meaning. In this paper, I will study the cultural forms of protest adopted in the Mahsa Amini Protests in Iran and India's Hijab Protest of 2022 to analyse the changing dynamics of transnational feminist praxis in varied media practices. I will consider the various political arts and performative body politics executed during these protests and their representation across media, especially through social media content on digital platforms. I will also evaluate the trope of transculturation in the cultures of protests as distinguishing in their homeland and amalgamating in their host land. Using Bourdieu's work on language as a framework, this article will be an exploration of the recruitment and world-building practices on digital platforms using online cultural productions. It will be necessary to understand the movement and gain further insight into how these productions are being used as propaganda.

10.6

Closing the Digital Divide for Girls and Women: How Gamification Can Help Women Participate in Digital Networks

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Keywords: Youth, Girls, Women, Digital, Gamification, Gender based barriers, Women economic empowerment, access, Usage pattern

Technology, today, is all pervasive and is changing lives by improving access to information, services, and opportunities. Ericsson report mentions that the average time online per day in 2016 among women was one hour nine minutes; in 2020,

the time spent was eight hours 31 minutes. Even as women from underserved segments carry smartphones, many of them are unable to participate in digital networks for better education, skill development, and economic advancement, because of the English language which dominates the Internet and access and usage related barriers. It has been found that in poorer states, innovations like gamification in e-learning programmes can bring about a big change as to how these young women look at the Internet as a medium of learning, thereby helping them make better career choices. According to the findings of an urban Bihar focused micro study with 40 adolescent girls and young women living in Patna's urban slums, despite the fact that smartphone ownership is on the rise, they rarely use the Internet to access information related to healthcare, government welfare programmes, skill development, and so on, and instead use it for recreation and to connect with family and friends. Chatkarey Zindagi Ke, a PCI India edutainment series, has been extensively seen among SHG members in rural Bihar who own smartphones, and its content is appealing. LoveLudo, a smartphone game that raises awareness about family planning, received a positive reaction from women of reproductive age. Internet-enabled devices and connectivity may not lead to girls and women leveraging knowledge and participating in digital networks. While they are becoming more comfortable with technology, there is an urgent need to systematically and structurally address impediments to effective and rewarding use of digital in terms of economic empowerment.

The paper analyses smartphone usage habits among girls and women, including the mobile games they typically play and the impact they have on them. It also emphasises the power of gamification to engage people and increase their understanding of a range of topics, from information access to life skills to financial wellness.

10.7
Democracy and the Indian Cyberspace: Examining the Politics of Gender and State Through Digital Media

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Keywords: democracy, identity politics, feminism, digital spaces, cybercrime

With the growing use of digital media around the world, the cyber-world no longer exists as a third space where power and societal structures can be ignored. While initially heralded and advertised as a democratizing platform, the complicity of social media with state power in many countries has been seen to reinforce a system of subjugating minority groups on the basis of identity politics, including the politics of gender. Against this background, the digital medium, comprising of social media platforms, artificial intelligence, big data analysis, channels of communication, networking, etc., has emerged as a conflicted and gendered space, providing new ground for interrogating the ideological systems in place. While cyber–feminists, following the second- wave feminism rooted in the work of Simone de Beauvoir as well as postmodern feminism, have repeatedly indulged in "a techno-utopian dream that the new e-media will offer women a fresh start to create new languages, programs, platforms, images, fluid identities and multi-subject definitions in cyberspace" (Faith W, NEME, March 28, 2006) the same e-media space has witnessed multiple attacks on women in various forms. A 2022–UN report on "Accelerating efforts to tackle online and technology-facilitated violence against women and girls (VAWG)" noted that globally the prevalence of online and ICT facilitated VAWG ranges from 16% to 58%. In India, the scene has not been much different. As per the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), cases targeting women online with explicit content have doubled in the last 3 years (Tripathi R, The Economic Times, Jan 06, 2022).

This paper attempts to present a gendered view of the digital popular, emphasizing especially on the Indian scene, trying to understand how state power plays a complicit role, and uses the digital medium as an instrument to suppress the voices of women, maintaining the binary of gendered politics, the effects of which percolate to the micro level and affect the daily lives of women who have a visible presence on social media. Following the Foucauldian view of power as a complex set of relations emerging from a strategic situation, the paper begins by

briefly noting the relationship of cyberfeminism and cybercrime against women, critically analysing recent statistics, and existing literature on violent attacks and threats against women and women's groups over the Indian cyberspace. Next, it analyses cases of online attacks against women journalists, activists, politicians, notable women figures, establishing a pattern by unravelling how these attacks are motivated, and influenced by the present political situation of the country. It notes how the rise of BJP-led Hindutva politics, and the party's IT cell has resulted in orchestrated targeting of minority groups online, attacking women in particular. In the next section, the paper shall seek to understand the daily experiences of women from diverse social groups who use the digital space, through recorded testimonials, following strict norms of maintaining the respondent's confidentiality, in an attempt to delve deeper to study how the digital medium being transformed by the socio-political situations of the society defines the personal experience of women accessing the digital popular.

10.8
Inventing 'Corrupt' Femininity:
The public vilification of
Sonia Gandhi during the IAC Movement

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India witnessed a series of anti-corruption movements towards the beginning of the second decade of the 21st century. Led by Gandhian activist Anna Hazare, RTI activist Arvind Kejriwal, Kiran Bedi, lawyers Prashant Bhushan and Shanti Bhushan and others, the IAC movement sought to bring Janlokpal Bill (Citizen's Ombudsman Bill) to fight endemic corruption in India. The sporadic protests between May and August 2011, presented using nationalist flavour, received widespread media attention. In which the traditional media heavily televised the movement framing the corrupt government on one hand and the moralist public citizen on the other. It was the first time after 1947 that the English media and the

vernacular media came together to cover the protest in a "with-us-or against- us" (Rajagopal, 2011) approach. The heavy media coverage and the nationalist fervour of the movement created an environment of 'neo-nationalism'(Arunima, 2012). What aided in the extreme popularity and mass attention of this movement was the use of social media by the organisers of the movement and the enthusiastic social media public who used social media to share and create buzz around the movement.

It is in this context the paper would look at the use of visual media shared by the popular page RVCJ media on Facebook and the multiple visual strategies and tropes employed to garner discourse around politics and corruption. Using visual media shared by the page between the period of 2011-2013 as the focus of analysis, the paper would highlight how the moralist nationalist fervour of the movement and euphoria created by the media was interpreted and reacted along heavily gendered terms by the social media public. Employing visual discourse analysis as the methodological tool and engaging with theoretic literature from the field of media studies, gender studies and visual studies, the paper would showcase how the gendered images shared by the page denigrated the image of Sonia Gandhi along the lines of a 'loose woman' spearheading a corrupt government and a party. These visual media framed politics using humorous pop-cultural references and enabled a 'think space' (Brosius, 2002) which resulted in an outpouring of vile and abusive discourses in the comments section. Reading the visual media, the added captions and the ensuing comments as cultural texts, the paper intends to throw light on an alternative and albeit 'lost' account of the movement and that period and showcase how politics is imagined along the lines of gender in everyday life.

10.9
Auctioning women on the internet: The symbolic, gendered violence of the Bulli Bai-Sulli Bai case

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Out of the many cases within the fundamentalist, Hindutva ecosystem of gendered violence, the case of Bulli Bai-Sulli Bai mandates a closer look of how Hindu men "auctioned" Muslim women over cyberspaces. The cases, the specific targeting of Muslim women who are in the public view, especially if they are opinionated and critical of the current political regime, the accused who made the apps, as well the state's lackadaisical reaction to it, prompt important questions about the fractured nature of cyberspaces that enable such violence, as well as the particularities of the fundamentalist State that employs a sex-gender system that paints the picture of the "Other", hypersexualised, promiscuous Muslim woman, who 'can' be auctioned off or saved as per the disposition of the Hindu "Political man". The case of the digital auctioning of Muslim women, therefore, is that of appropriating them within the sexual politics of the Hindutva nation which, along with the symbolic castration of the Muslim male, ascribes the "selleability" of Muslim women on the image of the promiscuous, 'Other' woman. The paper looks at different forms of digital violence specifically targeted towards Muslim women over cyber spaces, and situates them as symbolic acts in the patriarchal and gendered creation of nations and national pride, wherein the attack on Muslim women is discursively constructed alongside an image of the virile and masculine Hindu man, and the de-sexualised and inviolable Hindu woman. The paper adopts Bourdieu's conceptual framework of Symbolic Violence and Misrecognition in order to understand how instances of cyber violence is "experienced as legitimate' (Jenkins, 1992); the impunity accorded to the perpetrators of the case of Bulli-Sulli Bai indicates a certain justification of the cyber-violence, which necessarily reproduces the discourses around the proper Hindu masculine State and the im-proper Muslim sexualities. Further, the paper locates digital violence within the larger "continuum of violence" (Kelly, 1988) as a way of emphasising the incidences of cyber forms of violence and how the 'fear' or 'threat' of violence that they evoke (Kelly, 1978, Radford, 1978) then acts as an agent of social control by limiting women's participation in digital spaces.

10.10
STREETS TO SCREENS: Visibilising the commonalities in the exclusionary politics of virtual and physical public spaces

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Keywords: Online Publics, Gender and Technology, Coding Resistance, Social Media

As the world celebrated the dawn of the new year, 2022, more than a hundred Muslim women in India were greeted with their online identities doxed and put up for 'auction'...for the second time in six months. Vocal activists, journalists, artists, researchers, and social workers - who visibly occupied space online - found their names and photographs posted on a site called 'B*lli Bai' along with degrading text like 'for sale as maids' with their online handles. This was the second attempt at extremist online violence after the app, 'S*lli Deals' which, just like this site, employed derogatory slurs used in India to explicitly humiliate, and harass Muslim women. The site took pride in defining itself as a 'Community-driven, Open-source Project' and was hosted on the popular open-source developer platform - GitHub. These assiduously designed websites are a harrowing example of how the unafraid, tech-savvy, alt-right troll ecosystem inflicts violence, misogyny and Islamophobia upon minority women in online spaces to keep them 'in their place'. The internet as an online space and a public sphere closely follows the footsteps of urban spaces- as portrayed by horrific instances like S*lli Deals - as it subtly or violently excludes marginalised identities from the internet commons. More so when the interests, opinions and desires of marginalised identities do not agree with the majoritarian religious supremacist Brahminical patriarchal systems of operation and expression. The inequalities in information access, language and tech-literacy have set oppressive power structures in stone, giving a small group of people an upper hand owing to the exorbitant gender and caste gap in internet use in South Asia. In the Indian context, the people with this upper hand are largely educated, right-wing, cispeople from oppressor castes who call themselves 'Trads', have the ability and skills to organise and erase those in the margins by making degrading technology shareable.

The terms 'spaces' and 'places' are often liberally defined but they are in fact realms that hold long histories and multiplicity of meanings and connotations. They

may exist offline, online or may even be a "utopian" mix of both. Shared spaces promise to enable expression, participation, politics, engagement, and pleasure. However, women, trans' and non-binary persons' claim to the public sphere is inherently a political act that challenges the dominant and oppressive structures that create and maintain it. This article analyses the relationship of gender and technology by tracing how algorithmically and infrastructurally online realities mimic the discriminatory structures of the offline world and the ways in which dominant and oppressive power structures permeate online spaces.

In this article, I propose to document how decolonial, anarchist, democratic and feminist technology activists, their networks and collectives in India are constantly making efforts to shift power structures on the internet by conceptualising a pluriverse of 'feminist internets'. By collating feminist principles for infrastructural justice or by questioning what a 'feminist internet' is, the article aims to understand the relationship between online spaces and marginalised identities while amplifying how spaces of exclusion in online public spheres have been and continue to be navigated by these collectives that explore ways to carve out feminist spaces of collective resistance and care.

10.11
Instagram Account and Women's New Virtual Space in Rajasthan

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Keywords: Queer, Folk, Gender, Sartorial Practice, Digital Space

Sartorial practice plays a significant role in the expression of one's identity. Social media is providing people with a novel agency of curating content about one's life in a way that is becoming a socially expected and accepted norm. As phone cameras invade homes across the globe, the hitherto private spaces have also begun to open up to the charm and public scrutiny of the digital space. Women in Rajasthan are negotiating this new found space online. Through case studies of selected Instagram accounts, this paper will explore how women from Rajasthan are using Instagram to break barriers of space and gender norms to create a new

virtual space to express themselves, to share and consume sartorial content of cultural significance, as people spend more and more time online and become financially solvent as small business owners. The paper will also explore how social media has created an engagement with folk music of Rajasthan that is interlinked with the consumption of clothing materials and curatorial practices centered on traditional clothing and accessories.

10.12
Victimisation of Single Women through Online Romance Scams: A Social Impact Study based on Select Case Studies from India and South Africa

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Keywords: victimization, single women, social media platforms, online romance scams

Online romance scams have emerged as a significant and persistent threat in the digital age, causing extensive financial and emotional harm worldwide. The rise of social media platforms has provided scammers with new avenues to exploit unsuspecting victims, necessitating a comprehensive analysis of the role played by these platforms in facilitating and perpetuating such scams. Online romance scams represent a distressing manifestation of entrenched patriarchy and misogynistic behaviour in the digital realm. Patriarchy and misogyny strongly impact the behaviour of both men and women on social media by perpetuating gender inequalities and the victimization of single women. Men may exhibit dominant and controlling behaviours, while women, succumbing to the societal pressure of marriage and so-called "settling down," may seek validation and become more susceptible to manipulation.

This research paper presents a comparative analysis of a social impact study that examines the victimization of single women in India and South Africa in the context of online romance scams, focusing on the mutating nature of patriarchy and misogyny globally. Considering the cultural factors, social norms, and gender

dynamics prevalent in culturally complex, emerging economies like South Africa and India, scammers mainly target vulnerable single women who are highly educated and technologically adept. Scammers manipulate their emotions and trust to gain financial advantages, sometimes sexual favours, exacerbating the challenges faced by these women in finding suitable partners due to caste, education, and independence.

Online romance scams have become a prevalent form of cybercrime, exploiting the vulnerability of single women seeking romantic relationships online. Online romance scams, from a strong feminist perspective, represent a distressing manifestation of patriarchal structures and misogynistic behaviour in the digital realm, exploiting and victimizing single women while reinforcing harmful gender dynamics, gender stereotypes, economic disempowerment, emotional consequences, and emphasizing the importance of collective action and solidarity in addressing the underlying systemic issues. These scams often rely on the assumption that women are more susceptible to emotional manipulation, reinforcing patriarchal narratives that undermine women's agency and intelligence.

The research employs a qualitative approach, utilizing select case studies to delve deep into the experiences of single women who have fallen prey to online romance scams. By analysing these case studies, the study investigates how scammers use social media platforms to exploit and deceive their victims.

This study emphasizes the importance of addressing the holistic needs of single women. It highlights the significance of fostering single women solidarity groups and peer-to-peer connections and helping them come out of isolation. It calls for an increased awareness of cyber security education and emphasizes the importance of collaboration between social media platforms, law enforcement agencies, and policymakers to develop robust strategies and policies that address this issue effectively.

10.13
Beyond Femvertising and Managing the Social Media: Issues and Contexts

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Keywords: Femvertising, male gaze, gender sensitization

This presentation attempts to look at recent developments in the social media front in which women have explored newer ways of self-exploration by breaking away from stereotypical gender identities. At the outset, many of the problems affecting women in the real world appear to be reiterated in the social media platforms as well. They are silenced, ignored, belittled, bullied, harassed, stalked and dominated in the cyber world, much like they are in the real world. Little wonder that the percentage of women using the internet, particularly in India is so low. Studies reveal that the percentage of women accessing the cyber world in India is about one third of the number of men using the social media platforms and there is hardly and data regarding the other genders.

Yet a closer perusal of the social media reflects a somewhat better picture in terms of women's awareness and empowerment. From being the exception, acceptance of women's multiple identities and support and sensitivity to women's issues has gained greater acceptance, even though much of this acceptance may still be mere lip service to the ideals of equality and equity.

As far back as 1986, the Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act had come into force, but many Advertisers blatantly ignored the law and it failed in terms of implementation, despite its various revisions.

Laura Mulvey's critique of the male gaze in the visual media is still relevant to our various discourses on digital media. New laws and cyber policing have come into force yet the patronizing patriarchy continue to dominate. New attempts at empowerment through Femvertising and gender sensitization have now made new inroads into the digital sphere. Women who were once seen as silent spectators have now come to the foreground as actors and change makers.

In my presentation, I look forward to exploring many of these new developments in the popular social media and critically examine their effectiveness in achieving gender justice.

10.14
Navigating Algorithmic Management:
Insights from Women Food Delivery Workers

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Keywords: Gig platforms, Algorithmic management, and Gender

The share of 'gig economy' platforms which act as digital 'intermediary' between workers and customers is increasing all over the world. The recent report of NITI Aayog (2022) estimated 7.7 million gig workers in India. Along with this growing size of 'gig economy,' the discourse around the gig economy business model is also on rise. The limited entry and exit restrictions and ability of gig platforms to offer flexibility and freedom to the workers support the arguments to consider the gig works as 'future of work.' These peculiarities of gig platforms are improving female labour force participation. However, there are various studies that consider gig works as silver coated version of contingent work, many of the gig workers are lacking the social security protection and minimum pay for their efforts. The other major debate on gig platforms revolves around their algorithmic management practices. This paper specifically looks at the algorithmic management of the gig economy platforms from a gender perspective.

The algorithmic management refers to the use of self-learning algorithms for undertaking managerial functions in an organization, thereby limiting human involvement in managerial tasks. The implications of algorithmic management in the gig economy platforms are diverse. Various studies have been explored the implications of algorithmic management on the labour process, labour regulations, and future of work aspects. The algorithmic management practices in the ride hailing platforms, food delivery platforms, courier service platforms, and crowd work platforms have been subjected for enquiries. However, most of the studies on the algorithmic management techniques of gig platforms are conducted in the context of global north, least studies have been explored the topic from the context global south, especially in Indian context. The gendered implications of algorithmic management are remained unexplored, and this study tried to address this gap in literature.

The study intended to understand the existing algorithmic management practices of food delivery platforms and explore the gendered implications of the specific system of algorithmic management in food delivery platforms. A qualitative research based on 10 case studies collected from the pool of women gig workers

from two major food delivery platforms in Trivandrum, namely Swiggy and Zomato, are carried out in this study. The study revealed the presence of 'dual subordination' for women gig workers in food delivery platforms in terms of societal restrictions to engage in delivery services and hegemonic control of food delivery platforms using algorithmic management techniques.

10.15
Challenging Assumptions: Interrogating Data Practices via Data Feminism Principles

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Keywords: Data Breach, Data Collection, Data Feminism, Informational Privacy, Data Performativity

In recent news, data of multiple women from a popular lingerie company were breached and put up for sale on the dark web and through a messaging platform, Telegram. A similar incident occurred in 2019 when data of thousands of pregnant women were publicly available online for over a month, even after the breach was reported to the authorities. Both of these incidents compromised the privacy of women, without their knowledge. These are not isolated cases of data breaches, raising serious concerns about the privacy of women, especially in a time when online harassment is becoming more common. Beyond the immediate privacy issues, these incidents compel us to take a deeper look at the nature of data and data collection practices.

The proposed paper attempts to interrogate the evolving nature of data collection practices. It is important to understand that privacy implications on women and marginalized communities cannot be fully grasped if we do not separate data from its assumed technological objectivity. Data is not objective, nor it is always representative. As Garfield Benjamin (2021) argues, it is performative. In this paper, the attempt is to probe into the mechanics of data collection practices by adopting the framework of sociotechnical relationalities. The paper argues that data practices, encompassing both data collection and computing, are embedded in a power network involving the state, technology, and commerce. This network is inherently gendered and violent and it is imperative to problematize these

practices. We need to ask questions about the ways in which data is collected, computed and analysed.

Drawing upon the principles of data feminism (D'Ignazio and Klein, 2020) and the framework of data performativity, the paper attempts to explore an alternative meaning of data practices. The aim is to contribute towards an inclusive understanding of informational privacy and strive for a more equitable and privacy-conscious approach.

10.16
Rise of a Post-Feminist Digital Popular

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Keywords: Post-feminism, Sexual Harassment, Masculinism, Malayalam Digital Popular, post-feminist digital popular

In May 2023, a young woman called out a co-passenger for harassing her during a bus journey. The incident was reported promptly at the police station and the perpetrator was placed under arrest. However, once released the perpetrator was given a grand reception by All Kerala Men's Association. Digital technology, in the form of a video recording that the young woman made—and which was then shared on social media—played a vital role in nabbing the perpetrator. But it also played an indubitable role in collecting and mobilising people at reception he received after the perpetrator was released. This event thus provides a useful entry point into a discussion on the paradoxical role played by digital technology in relation to the gendered subject. The paper takes note of both the praise and insult that the young woman faced to see how a post-feminist narrative is shaping up in the Malayalam digital popular. The paper intends to use digital content and comments as signposts to the anti-feminist and pro-masculinist tendencies that are witnessed within this milieu. Expanding the scope of the argument, the paper places this event in the context of the Sabarimala protests where men and women came forward to oppose the Supreme Court judgement that allowed the entry of women into the temple complex at Sabarimala. Citing these and similar events in the recent past, the paper underlines the role of digital technology in generating and circulating a post-feminist digital popular that is committed to masculinism and a patriarchal vision of women and their politics.

10.17
An Exploratory Study of Digital Financial Inclusion of Muslim Women in Varanasi City

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Keywords: Digital financial inclusion, Muslim women, Varanasi, Demonetization, ATM, Internet Banking, Insurance, Investment, Credit, UPI

Digital financial inclusion is a potent tool to reach the financially excluded sector of society. It is emerging as a low-cost method of delivering a range of formal financial products, tailored to the needs of the poor and excluded, at an affordable rate. This study will be focused on evaluating all three aspects of digital financial inclusion, namely access, usage, and suitability from the demand side perspective. In addition, it seems intuitively clear that there are certain factors that are holding women, especially Moslem women, back from the digital financial space in spite of the mainstream view that equates ownership of an internet-connected smartphone with financial inclusion.

The qualitative research design will be used for the study in view of the widely accepted fact that it is best suited to highlighting the voices of the women themselves. The data is being collected through semi-structured, in-depth, individual interviews with women of the Muslim community above the age of eighteen who are normally residents of Varanasi City. The theoretical sampling will be used to ensure as wide a variation as possible in the dimension of our interest. The participants are encouraged to talk about the type of digital financial products/platforms they use, the means by which they access the digital financial space, their comfort level in using these, their awareness of the risks associated with digital transactions, their dependence on male family members (if any) in navigating these, and the barriers faced by them in the process. The qualitative data thus obtained will be coded for further analysis. As the Grounded Theory approach is particularly suited to exploratory studies the researchers plan to return to the field as required. It is hoped that this study will be able to highlight the areas of concern related to a segment of the female population that is unique in its characteristics and whose voice is thus largely unheard.

10.18

Wrestlers' Protests and Hashtag Activism: Examining 'Mediated Solidarity' in Women's Movements

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Keywords: Wrestlers' protest, digital feminism, ICTs, hashtag activism, mediated solidarity

The use of new ICTs in social movements has been subjected to academic debates for the last two decades. The rise of the new ICTs, such as social media platforms, is closely linked to the ways in which the New Social Movements strategise, engage, mobilise and frame their discourses. On the one hand, the new ICTs are celebrated for enabling a more democratic citizenship, negating the distortions of the mass media, facilitating mass mobilisation in the real world and breaking down hierarchies in movement leadership. On the other hand, its critics argue against the over-optimism placed on their efficacy and democratic character. Despite these divergent standpoints in analysing the new ICTs' relationship with social movements, their role in activism and social movements continues to become ever more important.

One of the most prominent social media platforms which has lately emerged as a key site for online activism is Twitter. Twitter has given rise to many movements online, like, #MeToo, #WhyLoiter, etc. which can be seen as a form of digital activism or hashtag activism. These digital movements have changed the form of feminist activism by providing a space for more diverse viewpoints and a platform for amplification of feminist voices through feminist audio-visual content, giving rise to a new form of feminist consciousness.

By bringing together diverse groups with polycentric ties around certain common issues, online activism facilitates a 'mediated solidarity'. Mediated solidarity encompasses fluidity, multiple and overlapping belongingness and polycentric affiliations of the actors of a movement. This mediated solidarity was overtly visible in the recent wrestlers' protest which was started in January 2023 by Indian wrestlers against the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) chief and BJP MP Brij Bhushan Singh in Delhi. The wrestlers have been demanding the arrest of Brij Bhushan Singh, on grounds of sexual harassment of female athletes, including a minor. The aim of this paper is to understand the dynamics of a discursive

online space which has emerged in the context of the wrestlers' protests. We seek to understand this through content analysis of a number of tweets, traced through competing hashtags around the protests. We choose 4 hashtags, with 2 on either side of the oppositional camps (#isupportbrijbhushan; #NationWithBBSS ;#arrest_brijbhushan_now; #पहलवान_देश_की_शान). These competing hashtags have had a polarising effect between the supporters of the WFI chief and the supporters of the wrestlers' protests. The objectives of this paper are twofold. Firstly, we trace the emergence of a mediated solidarity

among the supporters of the protests. We argue that it has given rise to a polymorphy in terms of the language and narratives of the protest on Twitter. This has led to the framing of the protests diversely in terms of national pride, community honour, besides sexual harassment against women. Secondly, we understand how this polymorphy of views and the polycentric affiliations of the protest actors offer grounds to the supporters of the WFI chief to negate the claims of the protestors. We show how the support by the khap mahapanchayat and political parties has led to trolling by the right wingers on Twitter. In doing so, the paper, thus, problematises the idea of a mediated solidarity in online spaces. It, thus, offers a critical examination of the relationship between women's movement and online spaces.

10.19

Gendering the Digital Popular: Use of Digital Devices by Women in a Rural Landscape in Kerala

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Keywords: digital technology, rural women, ownership, digital divide

Digital literacy and use of digital gadgets have emerged as an interesting area for sociological theory in recent years. Developments in the field of digital technology are at a breath-taking speed and often the marginalised get further marginalised in the process. However, the power of the technology to liberate has been made popular and has become part of the urban folklore. Role of

technology in ensuring equity in society has been known for some time. With the near universal availability of mobile phones, digital technology is literally at the fingertips of the masses. Touchscreen mobiles have revolutionised and has made digital applications popular. As we already know, the 'neutral' technology has made visible the contours along the society's power structure. When it is with the powerful, it makes them decisively stronger and may further marginalise the already marginalised sections of the society.

The proposed paper would explore the critical relationship of gender and technology by relying on an empirical study that is going on in a rural setting in the Thiruvananthapuram district of Kerala. Preliminary data collected during a household survey there show that men and women may be equal as far as digital literacy is concerned almost in the same way as the general literacy level in the state of Kerala. Mobile phones and internet are practically an inevitable part of their lives. They communicate and share videos among family members and friends through WhatsApp, using digital technology. The latter is the medium for a number of groups also like neighbourhood groups, staff groups, student groups and so on. Younger generation also use digital devices for online shopping. Men and women of the same age group display more or less similar tendencies in these areas.

Nevertheless, a serious departure occurs in terms of the nature of ownership of the digital devices. In the case women, digital devices, especially mobile phones are often handed over to them after the first use by their family members. The recently employed, younger women between 21-27, seem to be an exception but even for other employed women with considerable income, first use of mobile phone is not a general rule. Even when women buy them, their family members, especially men and boys, take them, emphasising on the general practice of women not requiring such fashionable devices for communication.

The trend in the above mentioned survey shows that while the new communication technology offers greater access and empowerment to all marginalised including women, ownership over technology and digital divide are emerging as serious concerns. The data, in the preliminary analysis, show that gender identity is a relatively stronger factor at its intersection with class and caste status of women in deciding the ownership of digital gadgets and nature of its use. The proposed paper will further explore the use of digital device for media and see whether women use the digital devices for any purpose beyond communication.

10.20
Misogyny through Humour:
An Analysis of the Jokes and Memes
in the Social Media Sites

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Keywords: Misogyny, Jokes and Memes, Assamese Proverbs, Social Media Sites, Humou

Humour is an essential part of everyday life of any society. It has the ability to make people laugh. It can be used in different genres like jokes, memes, anecdotes etc. Such genres have the freedom to express anything. These can even break the social taboos and people can talk about social and political conditions of a society through these genres with the sense of humour. Social media is one of the most powerful tools which can make something viral by passing messages from one to the other. Therefore, we must consider social media as the most popular as well as the most important cyber space to understand the urban psyche. Sharing jokes and memes among friends is a popular aspect of social media. Out of these jokes and memes sexism is the most common theme which is shared among friends and family members through cyber space. The present paper intends to examine how cyber space is constantly and subtly trying to reinforce gender stereotypes as natural given in the minds of the people by spreading misogynistic humour. The paper also talks about the politics of humour while dealing with meme culture as a popular site of gender stereotyping. It talks about how jokes and memes are popular within the virtual space that encodes sexist ideologies and for that matter, it tries to focus on how the conventional genres like proverbs, saying or idioms have been constantly reestablished through the medium of sexist jokes and memes popular in the cyber spaces. The paper focuses on how conventional genres like proverbs, in general, and Assamese proverbs, in particular, are reconstructed through the medium of different jokes and memes circulated in the social media sites.

10.22
Digitizing Women:
A Study of Miranda House Archiving Project

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Keywords: Archives, History, Feminist practice, Digital, Popular culture, Education, Knowledge, University, Women's College, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter

Archiving has always been associated with dilapidated, dusty buildings and old, torn documents. Even though this imagination still holds for government organizations like Miranda House, it is not the only picture.

Miranda House is a women's educational institution, affiliated with the University of Delhi. Founded in 1948, the college started with thirty-three students and six female faculty members. In March 2023, Miranda House celebrated its platinum jubilee with a student strength of more than five thousand and a faculty of over two hundred and fifty. The Miranda House Archiving Project was started in 2019. The project is trying to preserve, archive and digitize seventy-five years history of the college.

Women historians over decades from different backgrounds and regions have encouraged the writing of alternate feminist histories through the production of archives. Archiving has been one of the feminist practices to document different female narratives and voices. While preserving and archiving women's history are important feminist practices, it is equally important for us to build and produce knowledge through collective memory and disseminate it.

As technology becomes an important part of our lives and identity, we observe how recently archival research has also moved to digital space. Today, a lot of feminist archives are available online for research. This has helped us to learn and connect with other feminist archives and histories. However, knowledge dissemination through archives has still not moved beyond academic pedagogy.

This paper proposes to discuss and explore the methodology of archival research using digital popular culture. Using the study of the Miranda House Archiving Project, I would analyze the production and consumption of digital applications like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. The paper would discuss how the production of digital memory through posts, stories and reels helped us in engaging students, faculty & alumni and hence, in the creation of collective memory. The paper would

study the popularization of archives using data insights from multiple digital platforms. I would also like to discuss the use of these digital popular mediums as a feminist practice for creating digital feminist narratives and histories.

10.23
Women's Participation in Digital Spaces: Exploring the Role of Women's Activism and Political Engagement in Uttarakhand

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Keywords: Uttarakhand, women, gendered spaces, digital spaces, social movements, ecofeminism, new media spaces

This paper examines the participation of women in digital spaces within the context of social activism and political engagement in Uttarakhand, India. Drawing on the intersections between eco-feminism and geographic research, as acknowledged by scholars, this research investigates the evolving cultural geographies of digital technologies and their impact on women's activism in online spaces. Regionally situated, the research highlights the dynamic relationship between women's movements, digital media, and political participation in the context of Uttarakhand state. A focal point of early feminist activism in India, Uttarakhand region plays an instrumental role in the country's history of women's movements. This Himalayan state has been for several decades home to several movements around anti-alcohol, Chipko, anti-mining and quarrying, regional autonomy, and other region-specific movements. One enduring feature of all these movements is the prominent role of women as critical social actors and leaders having raised questions related to development, employment, access to forests, alcoholism, regional autonomy and the present post-development statehood issues. This study dives into Uttarakhand's rich feminist history and the impact of these movements on women's political involvement. By scrutinizing the effects of digital environments on feminist campaigns in India, the study aims to examine the transformative role of technology in recasting women's political agency in region specific issues. Beyond possibilities, it highlights the dynamic relationship between women's movements, digital media, and political participation under the emerging concerns of exclusionary practices.

To gain insights into women's participation in digital spaces and their engagement with social movements, the paper employs evolving work on ecofeminism and cultural geographies to understand the gendered dynamics of activism within digital spaces. The methodology includes a qualitative approach, content analysis of online platforms, interviews, and participant observation through review of literature and case studies. By highlighting the specificities of Uttarakhand's socio-cultural and political landscape, the study aims to analyze how women's movements have evolved and adapted to digital spaces, facilitated by new media spaces considering the region's historical significance in the early rise of women's movements in India. The paper explores several key themes, such as the historical context of women's movements in Uttarakhand and their contributions to climate action. It also investigates the presence of young women in digital spaces and analyzes emerging discourses in women's activism. Furthermore, the paper addresses ecofeminist critiques of digital spaces and explores the potential for empowering women and girls through these platforms.

10.24

Genderization of Jokes and Memes in Post-COVID Times: An Analysis of Women-Centric Humor and Sociocultural Implications

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Keywords: COVID-19, Gender, Women, Jokes, Memes, Humor, Sociocultural Implications, Stereotypes, Empowerment, Online Culture.

The COVID-19 pandemic has ushered in significant societal changes, including the transformation of humor and online culture. This research study examines the genderization of jokes and memes in the aftermath of COVID-19, with a specific focus on women-centric humor. The objective is to analyze the evolving landscape of humor and its sociocultural implications in a post-pandemic world. This research adopts a qualitative approach, combining content analysis and discourse analysis to explore the themes, trends, and narratives within women-centric jokes and memes. It also considers the impact of these forms of humor on

gender stereotypes, empowerment, and social discussions surrounding gender equality. The findings reveal a variety of women-centric COVID-19 humor that addresses the challenges faced by women during the pandemic, such as balancing work and household responsibilities. Additionally, the study examines instances where jokes and memes perpetuate gender stereotypes, highlighting the potential negative consequences of such content. Conversely, it explores humor that promotes women's empowerment and resilience, emphasizing their strength and achievements during difficult times. Furthermore, the research discusses the impact of online platforms in facilitating discussions and criticism regarding gender-related humor. It considers the growing awareness and critique of jokes and memes that reinforce sexism or harmful stereotypes, leading to conversations around the importance of inclusive and respectful humor. This research contributes to the existing literature on humor, gender, and online culture, shedding light on the evolving landscape of jokes and memes in the post-COVID era. It underscores the significance of promoting inclusive humour that respects diverse perspectives and avoids marginalization or offense to particular genders.

10.25
Converting ("feminine") Emotions of a Complaining Wife into 'Political Resource': Online Activism of Neha Singh Rathore

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Keywords: Bhojpuri songs, 'feminine emotions', digital activism, counterpoint, emotional capital

Neha Singh Rathore shot to fame in 2020 through her self-composed YouTube Bhojpuri video song- Bihar mein ka ba? And UP mein ka ba indicating developmental and welfare failures in Bihar and UP- India's two cow belt states. With millions of followers on Facebook and You Tube, and several thousand on Twitter and Instagram, she has emerged as a new and young antihegemonic face and alternative voice of issue-oriented online activism. Her self-composed

regional Bhojpuri songs on YouTube constitute music education with pedagogic value (Hess 2019) and assume significance in awakening the 'regional public' (Rege, 2010). She is said to have created a new political horizon for the regional public on the digital platform in the age of what may be called 'authoritarian democracy' with the 'mainstream media' blamed as being substantively servile to the former. What also sets her activism apart is her Bhojpuri songs borrowed from the regional folk contexts- she takes the gendered emotions of the local (feminine) folk expressive traditions and converts them into 'political resources' in her strategic mobilizational tactics on digital spaces. Though she also composes songs with political contents which are pressing and timely, I focus more on her 'traditional' Bhojpuri folk songs filled with "feminine" emotions of a complaining wife strategically deployed to launch her critical attack on the ruling establishments which seems to have both educative and emotional appeal and she ends up creating a critical public sphere and a politically informed regional public. I use digital ethnography as a technique of data collection, and 'alternative media' theories as well as Edward Said's 'Counterpoint' and the concept of 'emotional capital' (Heaney 2019) as theoretical and analytical tools.

10.26
Documenting 'Leisure' as 'Feminist': Analyzing the (Re)emergence of new digital feminist movements through #Womenatleisure

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Keywords: Social Media, Digital Media, Digital Feminism, Digital Feminist Movements, Digital Protests, Women at leisure

A photo on Instagram shows three women sitting in a garden reading, another photo shows old women sitting in a domestic space playing carom with each other. The caption to these photos contains a hashtag- #womenatleisure. This is a recently formed movement on Instagram wherein photos, clicked candidly or created, digital or traditional art work is being posted by photographers and artists under the hashtag #womenatleisure. These visual depictions show women

at leisure, passing time at public/private spaces, doing activities that are not considered 'work'. This movement started by an activist based in northern India, has been taken up spontaneously by several artists and photographers across India, making it a feminist visual project.

The theorization around digital and social media is currently questioning the assumed democratic nature of the medium. Yet, the contestation that occurs on these spaces cannot be denied. On the one hand the spaces of social media are critiqued for being the hegemonic where the gender and caste inequalities of the offline world are reconstructed, on the other hand several feminists are using them as spaces of freedom, expression and even protests. From Nisha Susan's usage of Facebook for the Pink Chaddi campaign to Shaheen Bagh's protest being documented on Instagram, Social Media in India, since its inception have been used as a space for feminist protests. In the last decade, it is also seen that several Indian feminist activists have taken to social media to further their movements, prominent examples of which would be Pinjra Tod or #Metoo. Yet, the form and fluidity of #womenatleisure is not only testimony to how social media spaces can create counter narratives but also a commentary on how women's leisurely activities are almost invisible in the mainstream media.

This paper, is trying to make sense of social media spaces, with a special focus on Instagram and the feminist theoretical lens of 'presentation of self' by exploring a) how social media is claimed and reclaimed by women as a public space b) (re) emergence of counter narrative spaces through the presentation of 'self' amidst the chaos of online discrimination and violence c) the privilege to pass time and be at leisure and reshaping the forms and identities of the new age feminists and their movements.

10.27
Women's Labour and Community Formation in the Changing Digital Economy

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Keywords: Gig Economy, Networked Effect, Algorithmic Arbitrage, Kinship Networks. Cultural Work

In this paper an attempt will be made to look at the material implications arising out of the emerging prevalence of cyber space along the axis of labour and community processes. Given that the overarching economic system that we are embedded in as a capitalistic one with a shifting trend from industrial capitalism to informational capitalism an attempt will be made to locate these shifts within the larger capitalistic structure itself.

The objective of the paper would be to locate the changing conception of work and consumption from a gendered perspective and the possibilities of collective action as workers in the age of information. Global trends show a move away from formal industrial labour to informal, disaggregated work especially in the realm of gig work. Beyond the material results of labour, one is also noticing the increasing importance of cultural work which was once confined to the household or immediate kinship-based community and traditionally seen as women's work. This however doesn't automatically lend itself to the empowerment of women but rather one can see the rising instances of feminization of labour. Within this context the evolution of the cyberspace, evolution of the sphere of work and the social implication created by the interaction of these two forces will be examined.

Preliminary results- Bare life itself today produces a trail of data which is monetized and thus acts as raw material for surplus generation. The extraction of this surplus is facilitated by the networked effect created by a few monopolizing entities like Google Uber etc. The networked effect also leads to disaggregation of the workplace making it difficult to regulate as well as making work based collective action more difficult. This networked effect makes it easier to extract surplus value while also creating a surplus of labour leading to a problem of not just economic management but also a problem of governmentality. This leads to an increasing sense of lack of control over one's own life vis a vis one's labour. In an attempt to gain back a sense of control there is a fall back on pre-existing networks which in the South Asian context is often traditional kinship networks. Despite the rise of women workers and the monetization of work that earlier was seen as limited to the private realm, the bargaining power of women as workers haven't changed much and reliance on pre-existing structures for support has led to new tensions around boundary maintenance which has implications not only in the labour market but also in the social fabric of life. Attempt at combating these developments have led to creation of new strategies in the informational age but the networked effect produced by them are of a lower intensity due to a lack of control over the basic infrastructure and architecture of the informational age.

Conclusion: The particular stage at which the development of cyberspace is at right now on one hand challenges existing structures and relations in the socio-

economic spheres but if this potential goes un-channelized it could lead to an increase in informalization of labour, weakening of labour laws and loss of consumer control over new products and patterns of consumption.

10.28
Linchpin of New Age Social Movements: Hashtag Activism

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Keywords: hashtag activism, digital feminism, power, reclamation, social change.

The internet has today been widely acknowledged as having enormous potential for effecting social change, as well as for establishing new resources and technology networks that may be used to organise and empower people. This research paper explores the phenomenon of hashtag activism and its significance in the context of digital feminism. It examines the ways in which women are reclaiming digital spaces and utilizing technology to challenge existing power structures and advocate for gender equality. Through an analysis of various case studies and empirical evidence, this study aims to shed light on the transformative potential of identifying hashtags (#) as a sign of power and protest against machismo and patriarchy.

The paper begins by providing a comprehensive overview of the concept of hashtag activism, highlighting its origins, mechanisms, and the role of social media platforms in facilitating online activism. It explores the unique characteristics of hashtag activism, including its decentralized nature, virality, and its ability to foster global conversations and mobilize individuals around specific causes.

Drawing on feminist theory and digital sociology, the research examines the intersection of hashtag activism and digital feminism. It delves into the ways in which women are utilizing hashtags as powerful tools for self-expression, community-building, and challenging societal norms. The paper investigates how hashtags such as #MeToo, #WhyIStayed, and #EverydaySexism have catalyzed conversations around sexual assault, domestic violence, and everyday sexism,

respectively. These hashtags have provided platforms for women to share their personal stories, raise awareness, and demand systemic change. Furthermore, the research explores the ways in which women are reclaiming digital spaces and technology, challenging the gendered biases that exist in the digital realm. It examines initiatives such as online feminist communities, women-led social media campaigns, and digital platforms designed by and for women. The paper investigates the impact of these initiatives on shaping public discourse, influencing policy debates, and fostering a sense of empowerment among women in digital spaces.

The study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative analysis of online content and interviews with activists, along with quantitative analysis of social media data and online engagement metrics. By analyzing the narratives and experiences of women engaged in hashtag activism, this research seeks to provide a nuanced understanding of the motivations, challenges, and outcomes associated with their digital activism.

Additionally, this research paper examines how digital feminism is reshaping power dynamics within online spaces. Traditionally, the digital realm has been dominated by male voices and perspectives, reflecting and perpetuating the gender inequalities prevalent in society. However, digital feminism is challenging these power imbalances by providing a platform for marginalized voices, particularly those of women, to be heard, acknowledged, and taken seriously.

Ultimately, this research paper aims to contribute to the existing literature on digital feminism and hashtag activism. It underscores the transformative potential of digital spaces and technology in empowering women, challenging patriarchal norms, and promoting gender equality. The findings of this study have implications for scholars, activists, and policymakers interested in understanding the role of digital platforms in facilitating feminist activism and fostering social change.

10.29
Gendered inequalities in digital India -
A study with special reference to smart phone usage among MGNREGA workers in Tamil Nadu

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Keywords: Gender, inequality, digital,women empowerment, equality, MGNREGA

This paper is an attempt to examine gendered inequalities prevailed among rural women in using smartphone . Digital India is the slogan pronounced everywhere in India. . Our country gets drastic development in digital marketing as well. In this digital world women empowerment and gender equality is also getting polished and nailed in all sectors. The usage of smartphone is showing an upward trend regardless of age, education and economic status. Can the digital world bring zero discrimination between men and women ?To address this issue the researchers explore the reasons that bring glass ceiling between men and women. Gender is the term used to justify the inequalities that exist between men and women. The so called inequalities are gendered and thereby the policy makers could not find zero discrimination in a country. One cannot assure that there is an absence of gender inequality in owning and using a smartphone in rural areas. The present study has been undertaken to find out the factors that are responsible for gender inequalities in owning and using a smart phone among MGNREGA workers. The remote village – Desingurajapuram from Thiruvarur District, Tamil Nadu has been selected for the study. The sample of women workers who are in the field have been interviewed. The findings will be helpful for the government to implement a new policy to mitigate gender inequalities at rural areas in the digital world.

10.30

Misogyny and Transphobia on Social Media: Case Study of Social media discussion of DeppVHeard Trial

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Keywords: Cybertrolling, Online Misogyny, DeppVHeard, Domestic abuse, Feminism, Social Media

The continuous evolution of the internet and digital communication technologies has been envisioned to subvert the status quo, disrupt existing power imbalances in access to information, and provide a voice to the voiceless. The internet provided avenues for common people to self-express, influence markets, opinions, politics and policies, citizen journalism, and topple the government (Arab Spring). It paved new pathways for the production, consumption and distribution of media(on Tiktok, Instagram, Reddit and Youtube) from the monopoly of a few elites with capital. The internet, especially social media, offered space for the marginalised, oppressed and disenfranchised to resist and protest the injustices and discrimination meted out to them. From the internet movements, #Metoo has been influential and witnessed some success in procuring justice for victims of sexual and domestic violence. The #MeToo movement has seen a shift in the discourse on gender-based violence and brought focus on the plight of women who face microaggressions every day. The #MeToo movement also witnessed backlash as the #NotAllMen trend, especially the Men's Rights groups on the internet, turned to trolling and discrediting the victims and fearmongering of false accusations and witch-hunting of innocent men.

At the peak of the movement, Amber Heard wrote an Op-ed in Washington Post on her journey as a domestic abuse victim, alluding to her relationship with Johnny Depp. The public media trial of DeppVHeard in the USA was watched with intense scrutiny by many worldwide. The DeppVHeard verdict has transformed the outlook towards the #MeToo movement, and it was used by many detractors of the #MeToo movement as evidence of manipulation and false accusations by women. In this background, this paper analyses the online discourse over the trial. The paper seeks to investigate the impact of online discussions on the progress of the #MeToo movement. The paper also focuses on the language of misogyny

and sexism when discussing or commenting on the case and the verdict. The paper employs discourse analysis to observe the patterns of anti-feminism in online communities and the implications of it on future feminist movements and women victims of gender-based violence. The paper further finds that the online community rigorously formulated an archetype of the "perfect victim" based on Amber Heard in the trial, which will have far-reaching implications for abuse victims.

10.31
The Voices of Women with Disability in Digital Media

Debadrita Biswas

Keywords: Woman Disability rights, Disability rights, Digital media, Exploitations, Negligence, Indian

On disability rights in India, there is already noticeably less discussion. There are significantly fewer voices that we can hear when it comes to women's disability rights. One in five women is likely to experience a disability in her lifetime. Women and girls with disabilities face multiple barriers and discrimination to access education, economic opportunities, and participation in making policies and decisions. Disability representation in the media has a huge influence on disabled individuals' lives. Media narratives around disabilities play a crucial role. In India, 2.21% of the total population is disabled. 44% of that population is female. Disabled women face more discrimination because of their gender identity. To fight this discrimination, we need to educate people more, build awareness, raise voices, and have more effective discussions about female disability rights. The expansion of numerous feminist and human rights movements has been greatly aided by digital media in the age of the Internet. Digital media is also having an impact on campaigns for disability rights, although not as significantly as the above-mentioned ones. This paper aims to analyze how the battle for women's disability rights is being impacted by the representation of women with disabilities in digital media and how we could potentially make use of this more.

10.32

Erasure and Assertion of Indian Women in e-commerce platforms and digital content: Finding the praxis of digital gender divide through the lens of South Asian Cyberfeminism

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Keywords: Cyberfeminism, South Asian Feminism. Digital platforms, E-commerce, Sexual harassment, #me_too movement, Misogyny

The digital revolution has paved the way for a new iteration of feminism in India. The digital space can now boost feminist movements by encouraging inclusion and improving accessibility in organizing collective action. The merging of technology with the physical world has revolutionized the global economic, social, and political landscape. In theory, technology—as embodied by the digital revolution—provides an opportunity to policymakers to create a more inclusive future. Tools like blogging and social media have led to the democratization of the feminist movement by providing accessibility, encouraging diversity, and inspiring leadership in a movement that has historically been lacking these elements. Online or cyberfeminists make use of blogging and social media as a measure of political mobilization and community building. Social media allows for the swift dissemination of knowledge and information across borders and thus enables transnational feminist networks. Using digital tools, feminists have appropriated the internet culture with the use of creative formats as a mode of communication. The adoption and integration of advanced digital technologies (fifth-generation (5G) mobile networks, the Internet of things (IoT), cloud computing, artificial intelligence, big data analysis, robotics, etc.) mean that we are moving from a hyperconnected world to one of digitalized economies and societies. It is a world in which the traditional economy, with its organizational, productive, and governance systems, overlaps or merges with the digital economy, with its innovative features in terms of business models, production, business organization, and governance. This results in a new, digitally interwoven system in which models from both spheres interact, giving rise to a more complex ecosystem. In this regard, the emergence of women in Indian e-commerce platforms is playing a major role in bridging the digital gender divide.

At the same time, however, the digital space can also become a breeding ground

for sexism and misogyny. Digital misogyny in the form of hate speech, physical threats, and obscene language has a deep impact on women's voices online, which results in self-censoring, assuming an anonymous identity or a pseudonym, or withdrawing from online domains altogether. Digital content creation is one of the leading digital trends all over the world. But, to what extent these contents are concerned about gender equality? Cyberfeminism is in many ways a direct response to the toxic offline and online space, the misinformed, gendered, misogynist digital content in the forms of reels, blogs, vlogs, online stand-up comedies, social media interactions, and perhaps a way through which the cycle can be broken.

This research paper will attempt to analyze how digitization can affect women's movements, especially in South Asian emerging economies like India, and discuss critically the different facets of contemporary cyberfeminism through postcolonial and postmodern feminist theories. It will also highlight the strengths and deficits of digital activism.

10.33
Exploring the Effectiveness of Social Media on Women during the Covid Era: A Study Based on Southern Kerala

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Keywords: Covid 19, social media, strategy for communication

Social media platforms are the easiest and most effective way of communication, that are used by professionals, celebrities, educators and general public alike to stay connected with each other. Over these years, social media networks have been a powerful technical tool for spreading factual as well as fictitious information to the humanity (Baruah, 2012). Covid 19 is the first social media pandemic in

the world, so it is bound to lay out misconceptions, inaccurate information and unscientific propaganda about this illness in the global level (Rosenbarg, Syed, & Rezaie, 2020). The frightening and damaging magnitudes of Covid 19 was recognized by general public through the rapid communication and publication of the news and leads (Vallejo Jr & Ong, 2020). The present study has focused on analysing the influence of social media on women and its effectiveness towards the circumstances created by Covid-19. The study found out that women seem to get more involved in social media irrespective of their age education and income. A significant number of women have found social media as an effective strategy for the communication and regarded as a source for information during the Covid period.

10.34
Digital Methods and Organisation of Labour: The Potential to Undermine Patriarchy?

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Keywords: patriarchy, trade union, women employment, gender equality, digital methods

In this article the aim is to examine the role of digital methods in the context of patriarchal industrial relations. This article traces how the perspectives of trade union shifted and reflect new avenues available for female workers. As per the latest Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), 2019-20, the estimated worker population ratio (WPR) for women all over India is 28.7 percent for aged above 15 years. This highlights the low share of women's employment in the world of work. On the contrary, we find women's contribution is significant in the textile and garment sector (Dutta, 2021) which ranges from being employed in a factory to home-based production. Evidence suggests that women are sporadically resisting low wage, poor working condition, sexual harassment, verbal abuse and work pressure by colluding with patriarchal frameworks or by forming separate unions. Furthermore, exposure to exploitation and oppression is manifold for women in comparison to men. However many questions remain vague related to the gendered nature of trade unions, women's accessibility and knowledge of these unions. Hence we see that in these fastest growing developing countries

there is least sign of progress on gender equality (Pillinger and Wintour, 2019). Through these debates, the article contributes to the feminist scholarship by drawing attention to workers stories.

The global rights index of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC 2023) documented major challenges faced by workers, including the right to strike, restricting the right to free speech, assembly and intimidation of prominent trade leaders. Dismantling trade unions and replacing it with workers committee is a popular strategy adopted by employers to curtail the trade union movement. This is an outcome of buyer's governance initiative failing to respect worker's right and denying them access to essential pillar of labour market institution – trade union. According to ITUC (2023), in the last 10 years, on the scale of 1 to 5 India ranked 4.18 – there is no guarantee to rights. In these circumstances the new methods of unionising to promote gender equality, empowerment could result in declining inequalities which otherwise perpetuate under patriarchy. To research this gap the article uses podcast shows of Gram Vaani and Radio Active 90.4 community radio stations. With the use of digital ethnography as a qualitative research method the article can explore accessibility to governance in the context of women. These radio stations exclusively host radio shows for textile and garment workers. However, there is little evidence of discrimination of workers based on gender, employment and migration statuses. The uses of technology mask these indifferences and promote new avenue and contribute to gender equality studies. Gram Vaani operates in Tiruppur and other districts of Tamil Nadu while Radio Active radio station is functional only in Bengaluru city. The article uses 50 podcast shows from Behind the Label, Namma Kural and Vandu Murugan to discuss the ways in which digital methods could overcome patriarchal structure of social dialogue.

10.35
Disparate Realities, Divergent Possibilities: The #Metoo Movement in India

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Feminism in India is rife with issues surrounding caste, gender, class, and religion. The recent rise in feminist consciousness has seen a resurgence owing to the influence of social media. The #MeToo movement has opened new directions in revisiting women's sexual harassment and transforming the notion of justice and allyship. While the movement has provided women with the much-needed scope to speak up and assert solidarity, concerns have also been raised about the method employed by #MeToo that creates concerns regarding accountability and 'due process' to achieve legal justice. The movement also raised several questions vis-à-vis caste in India in terms of the constituent element of the movement, 'woman', who now seems to stand in for the subject of feminism, and accessibility.

Feminism's presence in the public sphere has been configured popularly both in terms of the space it occupies and can also be traced back to the public/private dichotomy. The #MeToo movement initiated a public face of feminism, potentially signaling the initiation of 'Big Feminism' in India. The growth, ironically, also seems to have marked the undoing of feminist movements. Racial, casteist, religious, ethnic segregations have reached their peak. The emergence of 'Big feminism' in its contemporary sense, owes largely to its travels through the social media. The world wide web has made transnational, transtheoretical, transhistorical, and transidentitarian interactions possible.

The questions however remain: How to read this visibility of 'women' and the gender question in India? What does it say about feminist theory and practice today? Who are these 'women' of #MeToo movement? More importantly, who all can claim solidarity by the use of the hashtag 'MeToo' in social media? Does this new space (marked by an unmistakable presence of the social media) envision inclusivity? What methods are used to achieve this 'bigness' and are they adequate in envisioning inclusivity? The constituency of this movement, i.e. women, and the idea of feminism, have come under fire for its classist-casteist nature. With many arguing that accessibility to social media is in itself an indicative of class hierarchy in India, the concept of sexual harassment in the workplace—on which the #MeToo movement is built—comes at the cost of erasing caste and imposing a savarna perspective. I intend to argue that feminism in India needs to be conceptualised not as a homogeneous whole but as knowledge produced through different strands of articulations. In other words, acknowledging difference and how that difference contributes to transforming the contours of feminism. To this end, I look at the Pinjra Tod movement and the documentary, Writing With Fire (2021), to explore the emergence of social media as a space that complicates the notions of public sphere, visibility, and accessibility, vis-à-vis caste, gender and class.

10.36

Silence to Resonance: Exploring the Visibility, Opportunities and Challenges of Feminist Street-Making in the Virtual Realm

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Keywords: Social Media, Internet Activism, Virtual Street-making, women-only spaces, Online-Harassment

This study examines three different facets of digital feminism, such as feminist hashtag movements like #womenofshaheenbagh #metoo, the existence and significance of women-only online spaces, and the potential and pitfalls of femvertising, to address the impact of various social networking aspects on the gendered digital public in India. This paper examines the intricate relationship between gender and the digital ecosystem. It tries to paint a clear picture of how technology influences and reinforces feminist narratives, spaces, and the difficulties encountered while coexisting and asserting themselves. The neutrality of the internet has dramatically aided the creation of virtual feminist streets. Digital space has inspired the disadvantaged to expose the covert chains and patriarchal power structure. Social media has provided the feminist community exposure, a forum for public self-expression, and outreach to a larger audience. For feminists, using social media has created new platforms to share their opinion. In the past, queer communities have benefitted from the anonymity provided by the social networking sites like Facebook to come out about their sexuality. The feminist internet assisted women in creating forums where they could connect with the broader public and which finally enabled them to bring attention to the oppressions, abuse, or prejudice they suffer at home, at work, or in public, as evidenced by movements like #metoo, #LoSHA, and #Ain'tNoCinderella, among others. Feminist street-making has created a sense of agency and power among the actors, as seen by establishing alternative, independent rural feminist journalism platforms like Khabar Lahariya. The digital ecology made it easier for women to develop sisterhood and community building. Analysis of digital activism cannot be complete without the obstacles that come with it. Online activism can be challenging as it requires technical know-how or an in-depth understanding of the technological environment to create a successful campaign or hashtag, make it visible, build transnational solidarity and record or archive the protest. This article aims to clarify the advancement of Web 2.0, ICT and Digital India and its

contribution to the growth of gender activism in the nation. It makes an effort to address the issue of the gender gap in the digital sphere and pinpoint the struggles of intersectionality in the technology-driven world by analysing and illuminating the geographic, cultural, political, and economic aspects that affect the digital divide. I investigate how the issues of online harassment, accessibility, proper infrastructure, language barriers and others affect the creation of gender-equitable online. This paper advocates developing digital literacy projects to empower the novice digital public. It also called for adopting harsher laws and increased law enforcement to combat sexual objectification and online predators.

10.37

Creating the space through digital popular; an auto ethnographical perspective of dependent migrant women

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Keywords: Migrant Women, Dependent Women ,Misogyny , Gender Stereotyping

The women who migrate to countries other than their own after their marriage are invisible in the narratives of migration unless and until these women mark their presence felt with some extra ordinary activities. The women choose to migrate to different countries for multiple reasons ranging from better employment opportunities, higher education to migration with the partner as a dependent. These dependent women's stories are not much discussed in the literature on migration. However, the digital space gave such women new opportunities to explore themselves and to connect to their homeland in diverse ways. This paper explores how dependent migrant women find articulation of their agency and independence through social network platforms. This paper uses auto ethnographical method to get a sense of the inner world of the migrant women and it describes the digital journey to articulate themselves through opportunities. The paper also discusses doxing, misogyny and gender stereotyping faced by these women in the digital space.

10.38
The Intimate Affair of Gossip:
Of Social Media and Resilient Women

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Keywords: Virtual media, Gender, Gossip, Power, Resilience, Shame

Across centuries the whispers of gossip have been thriving in different societies. The tempting and alluring nature of gossip has the core aspect of enabling communication and weaving networks. However, it is built on the idea of making a spectacle out of a person(s) character, personality or life. It is especially discussed with respect to women's domain- i.e. it is more rampant among women and that engaging in it is a core characteristic of women, an idea which has been debated academically. The other domain where gossip with respect to women becomes important is the way in which women also become the subjects of gossip. In the time of digitalization, gossip has also ushered into virtual spaces very effectively. The presence of women on social media platforms is remarkable, however, with it also comes the risk of putting oneself out among masses to be the subject of trolling in the form of gossip. The power of creating a particular kind of narrative through this phenomenon of gossip on social media platforms is something which needs to be studied and explored. Gossip, though looked down upon can be categorised as positive, negative and even neutral, but, is more inclined towards being negative. The nature of the content, the intent and the emotions behind that generated content about a person (subject of the discussion) determines the nature of the gossip. The malicious intent and the emotions of jealousy and pity are some of the driving forces behind the negative gossip. There is a sense of supremacy, power and authority over the value-laden statements, which can equally have the consent of the fellow participant of the gossip. Several times, the content of the gossip, subtly or overtly, highlights the guilt of the person subjected to the topic of gossip. This is followed by shaming the person through those conversations which many times take place between strangers on social media platforms.

However, women who become subject to such a process of narrative creation, or who can potentially be the subject by merely becoming public online, have found ways to respond to this in their own ways. They have also shown how negative gossip can be turned into positive gossip, and what methods of resilience can lead them to create their own narratives. This paper studies the role of online gossip

where women become the subject of virtual violence, and also the methods of resilience that women use to challenge such violence by taking Instagram as the field and using content analysis as the method.

10.39
Women's safety through mobile phone applications: A feminist exploration in India

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Keywords: women safety; digital ethics; India; feminism

Women's safety has always been a pressing issue worldwide, and India is no exception. According to the 2011 Census, almost 48.5% of India's total population is female. India recorded an average of 87 rape cases daily, with an overall 4,05,861 cases of crime against women during 2019 alone, a rise of over 7% from the previous year (NCRB, 2020). The recently published National Family and Health Survey (NFHS) carried out by the government of India found that between 2019 and 2021, India now has 1,020 women for every 1,000 men (IIPS, 2022).

While most reported cases of crime/violence against women are usually severe, the voluminous number of unreported cases of violence against women goes unnoticed. Cases of physical and mental abuse by close ones at work and home have always been a concerning issue and have received less attention than public violence. On the other hand, violence against women over the internet, including hate speech, hacking, or intercepting private communications, identity theft, user data theft, stalking, harassment, threats of rape, sexual assault, and murder, is something which is rising day by day without much of academic insight for substantial legal and policy discourse.

The emerging technological advancement has opened various avenues for the women safety device industry. From handheld devices meant to send distress message in emergency to mobile based application for women safety is all around us today. But the emerging technologies bring various implications, ethical and moral concerns, gender compatibility aspect, discourse of digital divide and exclusion followed by social, cultural barriers and technological limitation to

understand and resolve the delicate nuances behind the issue of women safety in social sphere.

The objective of this research is to explore the role of mobile phone applications in enhancing women's safety in India, while critically examining the digital ethics aspect from a feminist standpoint. By analysing the experiences and perspectives of women using these mobile applications, we aim to identify key challenges, opportunities, and potential solutions for fostering safer digital spaces for women.

This research will contribute to the existing literature by shedding light on an emerging area of concern in the context of women's safety in India. The findings will inform policymakers, researchers, and technology developers on the ethical implications and necessary interventions for creating inclusive and secure mobile phone applications meant for providing women especially in Indian context.

10.40
Understanding Digital Surveillance through a Feminist Lens

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Keywords: Digital Identities, Gender, Surveillance, Privacy, Big Data

The recent decades have seen a rapid evolution of digital technologies, so much so that they have become ingrained into our daily lives, and life without it seems impossible. Society has moved towards a digital form of sociality where our digital identities have become synonymous with our offline lives and govern the ways in which we communicate and express ourselves. The internet has managed to touch almost every aspect of how we socialize, work, shop, play, and live. In a short amount of time, the internet has gone from being a method of communication for the US military to becoming the heartbeat of the always-connected human race.Given that so much of an individual's information is now online, several questions then arise. How secure is this data? In what ways is the data used? What does it mean for the privacy of individuals and the human right to privacy? Furthermore, how do we connect the issue of surveillance with digital technology and the internet?

Surveillance as a concept has found much attention in research and the dichotomy

between security and privacy has come up time and again. While some argue that surveillance is necessary to detect and prevent unlawful activities, who has the power to decide what is "unlawful" and concerns over its misuse remain. Surveillance has existed in the pre-internet era, since the conception of the state and maybe even before that. However, the reason why it has become a cardinal point of the internet is that it has become hidden, and almost impossible to trace. In the digital space, surveillance functions unseen, and the extent of its invasiveness is challenging to comprehend and untangle.

The aim of this paper is to understand the system of surveillance in digital spaces, connecting it with the theoretical underpinnings of the sociology of surveillance. Moreover, it seeks to understand its relationship with capitalism and "big data." The analysis is done from a feminist perspective as surveillance has historically functioned as a patriarchal tool of control, with the objective of imposing restrictions on women's bodies, self-expression, and activism. It explores the implications of the data-driven model of surveillance for women, using an intersectional standpoint, recognizing that the data and metadata in surveillance are not neutral and that they interact with gender, race, class, caste, etc. The attempt of this paper is to map the system of surveillance and explore the key issues in the nexus between surveillance and gender.

10.41
Digital Literacy and Inclusion –
An Analysis of Gendered Space

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Keywords: digital literacy, gender, inclusion, labour, work

United Nations have identified "innovation and technology for gender equality" as their theme for this year, which means that there need to be more women managing their work and daily life in the digital space. Technology and women are always associated as two alien genres, but there need to be more awareness and investment to be made under the digital literacy and financial inclusion aspect of the country. Women still constitute a very high percentage on the informal employment sector where they undertake unpaid and exploitative

labour. Women are facing a greater disadvantage when it comes to digitisation of the economy; a study by UNICEF shows that girls have lesser access to digital platforms and this impacts their workforce participation rates as well.

There are several factors leading to digital literacy and use of digital tools by women and girls; social norms, gender inequality, education and access are few of the barriers to digital usage. Apart from the employment point of view, everything in the present world is available in mobile phones. When women are restricted their access in the digital platform it means that they are still kept away from the development point of view. This illiteracy will affect their participation in household and societal activities which ultimately impact their freedom and independence. There are several studies conducted on how digitisation can lead to less carbon emissions and will result in a green economy; therefore, initiatives must be made from different stakeholders who can teach these technical skills to the women and girls in different localities.

The present paper tries to look at the factors affecting the workspace of women from a gendered point of view. The paper analyses financial participation of women in a family where decisions are made taking into account their digital literacy and awareness into consideration. The paper also critically looks at the policies which was introduced to help increase their access to digital world.

10.42
Unveiling the Gender of Digital Popularity: A Study on Online Social Platforms

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Keywords: gender, digital popularity, online social platforms, social media, user engagement, social network analysis, algorithmic biases.

This paper presents a comprehensive study focused on investigating the relationship between gender and digital popularity within online social platforms. With the rapid advancement of technology and the increasing prevalence of social media, understanding how gender influences popularity dynamics in the digital realm has become crucial for individuals, researchers, and policymakers alike. This study aims to shed light on this intriguing phenomenon by examining

various aspects related to gender disparities in online popularity.

To conduct this research, a mixed-methods approach was adopted, combining quantitative analysis of large-scale datasets with qualitative analysis of user experiences and perceptions. The study analyzed data from diverse online social platforms, including microblogging platforms, and video-sharing platforms. Quantitative analysis involved the examination of user engagement metrics, such as likes, shares, comments, and follower counts, to identify potential gender differences in online popularity. Additionally, social network analysis techniques were employed to explore the structure and dynamics of online social networks and determine whether gender plays a role in shaping individuals' popularity within these networks. Qualitative analysis was carried out through interviews and surveys with a diverse group of social media users, aiming to capture their experiences, attitudes, and perceptions regarding gender-related influences on digital popularity. The qualitative data provided valuable insights into the underlying factors that contribute to gender disparities in online popularity, including societal norms, self-presentation strategies, and algorithmic biases.

The findings of this study contribute to the existing body of literature on gender and digital technologies, providing a nuanced understanding of how gender influences online popularity. By exploring the mechanisms that shape digital popularity within online social platforms, this research has implications for individuals seeking to enhance their online presence, as well as for platform designers and policymakers interested in promoting more equitable and inclusive digital spaces.

10.43
Exploring the Second-Level Gender Digital Divide Among Educated Men and Women in Kerala: Analyzing the use of digital technologies

Nimisha S S

Keywords: Gender digital divide, second-level digital divide, Information and communication technology, Intersectionality

One significant inequality women face in this world is the inequality in access, usage and skill related to digital technologies. This gender digital divide negatively affects women in various spheres of life. This paper aims to shed light on the second-level gender digital divide among educated working-class women, with a specific focus on the use of digital technologies rather than mere access. The study examines the extent to which educated working-class women in Kerala can benefit from new information and communication technology(ICTs) compared to men from the same class. The research acknowledges that while education is considered a tool in bridging the digital gap, the persistence of gender-based disparities suggests that education alone may not guarantee equitable outcomes regarding ICT usage and its benefits.

Additionally, the paper will look at the intersectional aspects of the digital divide, whether personal inequality, such as a person's community status, and gender together contribute to their discrimination. To explore the second-level gender digital divide in Kerala, the study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews. A representative sample of educated men and women will be selected from different communities. The study's findings will help formulate inclusive policies for promoting gender equality in digital technology use and empowering women to leverage the benefits of ICT.

10.44
Emanation of gendered gig economy-
A perspective analysis

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Keywords: Gig Economy, gender-gap, societal perception, Gig work, gendered
labouring

The frozen state of the economies induced by the pandemic caused the future
of work to be at the centre of debates related to the emerging digital society. The
Gig economy is one such prognosticator for the future of the labour market. Gig
economy is an inconspicuous domain wherein majority of the population get
involved directly or indirectly either as a customer or in terms of employment.
While substantial progress is being made towards reaching economic gender
parity and women have made remarkable strides over the long haul in both social
and economic spheres, it is undeniable that inequality persists. With the explosive
expansion, it has become crucial to track gender-gap trends and consider viable
solutions to address gender disparity in the gig economy explosive expansion,
especially from a social standpoint. This calls for an understanding of the level
of awareness and acceptance of gig work among the society. The study looks
forward to analyse the gendered dynamics of labouring on gig economy from the
perspective of common people. The article also gives insights into the influence
of gender in the selection of nature of work and problem perception from the
vantage point of an onlooker.

10.45

Voyage of Vogue India:
A Study of Covers of Vogue Magazine

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Keywords: vogue, magazine, magazine covers, male gaze, subversive, print media

"*India is ready for a magazine that is intelligent, sophisticated, and edgy and fun and that understands the stylish modern woman*".

-Priya Tanna

It is Autumn 2007, the 17th edition of Vogue worldwide, and the first foray of Vogue into the Asian subcontinent launched in India. The editor-in-chief of the magazine, Priya Tanna, in her interview with New York Times, asserted that India was ready for the Vogue magazine and that the magazine will prove to be an apt avenue for 'the stylish modern woman.' Ever since then, Vogue magazine has both reflected and contributed to the growth of the Indian fashion industry. Apart from this, the magazine has functioned not only as a popular form of entertainment but also maneuvered the contemporary discourse on femininity. The paper proposes to study the discourse related to the female body through a close analysis of the covers of Vogue India magazine.

As we know, print media has always had powerful control over the masses' perception and construction of reality. The employment of colorful images serves as a powerful tool in this exercise, as it communicates both with the literate and the illiterate readers. Moreover, unlike verbal characters, images have a tendency to imprint onto the unconscious register for a longer duration. In this regard, magazine covers become iconic objects that both inform and define the audience's perspective. The aim of the paper will be to understand the perspective crafted by the covers of Vogue magazine in the last 16 years. Such an exercise will not only highlight the strong potential of the print media but also help us access the nature of the discourse crafted by the magazine.

Does a fashion magazine, mainly run by and for women, offer a subversive space or reinscribe the existing gender norms? What role does a fashion magazine serve in a developing country like India where the majority of the population cannot afford the magazine? Do fashion magazine covers reverse the male gaze or further the objectification of women? The paper aims to offer possible answers to these questions through its discussion of the covers of Vogue India magazine.

10.46
Rural Women in Digital India:
A Study on MGNREGA Women Workers in Karnataka

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Keywords: Women Empowerment, Rural area, Employment, Women Participation, Digitalisation.

In India, more population is living in the rural areas. Government schemes are concentrating on rural areas and rural women. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme is among other rural area development programmes. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme is a demand-driven wage employment programme which enhances the livelihood security of households in rural areas. This scheme provides at least one hundred days of guaranteed wage employment in every financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.

This act provides special priority for women in such a way that at least one-third of the beneficiaries shall be women who have registered and requested work. Efforts to increase the participation of single women and the disabled shall be made. This is a gender-positive programme which promotes the participation of women by providing wage parity with men, provision of separate schedules of rates of wages for women, crèche facilities, work-side sheds for children and child care services. The Scheme also endeavours to provide work near the residence of the beneficiaries. These measures enhance the participation of women.

Digitalisation started in the world in the era of the 90s in India, Digital India become a flagship programme of India, its vision to transform India into a digital India. Our Hon' Prime Minister launched the programme on July 1, 2015. This is the one of important characteristics of Good Governance and E-Governance. The concept of women's empowerment has gotten wider popularity and acceptance all over the country. It has become a beacon of light in rural women's empowerment and contributed substantially to improving their lifestyle and economic conditions. This article attempts to explore the effects of digitalisation on MGNRGS women workers.

10.47
Cultural violence in the margins:
A study of representation of women from Denotified tribes in Popular Culture

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Keywords: De-notified Tribes, Popular Cultural Texts, DNT Activists

While highlighting the narratives of women from marginalized sections of society, the definition of what constitutes the margins are still guided by larger socio-economic development goals. Women with agency, that are not 'perfect victims' are rarely a subject within popular cultural texts. Even when they are portrayed they have to first be built up as individuals with impeccable character arcs. This paper will address the issue of representation of women from denotified tribes in popular culture as perfect victims without addressing the context of casteist occupational practices that have inter-generationally impacted their identity formations. It is a well-known fact that when it came to the oppression of women belonging to the denotified tribes of India, they have been continuously exposed to state-violence. Looking at key texts like Jai Bhim and Delhi Crime – Season 2, this paper will argue that women from denotified tribes in India have always been portrayed in popular media as bearers of victim narratives that does not do justice to their journey within their family, community, society and state at large. While chunks of their oppression have been fetishized, they have not been treated with the same agency that their male counterparts have been afforded within these texts. This paper will utilize a thematic analysis of these texts to establish the contentious relationship with the state that popular media is trying to water down but cultural texts produced by the denotified tribes like Chharas are clearly contesting with their on-ground perspectives. While within the DNT-Activism arena, women's representation still lags behind but this may very well be due to the fact that the denotified tribes of India can be counted amongst some of the most marginalized peoples in the country whose narratives have always been shunned due to the stigma following them of being branded 'born criminals'. The utter failure of society to take cognizance of the casteist practices that have led to their original criminalization and the subsequent stigma has led to a certain kind of invisibilisation. Moreover, in an age of trending and clickbait news, India has a new process of categorization whereby it is far more convenient to club all the marginalized peoples under impoverished instead of

address their culturally contextualized oppression. Within this invisibilisation, the marginalization of women's narratives and their representation in popular media merits specific attention. This paper will look at narratives from DNT activist spaces and popular cultural texts to argue that violence against women from denotified tribes in either fetishized or invisibilised by minimalizing the effects of the invisible signs of patriarchy.

10.48
Instagram based Sex-Education Pages and the imbibed Politics of Multiculturalism

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Keywords: Sex education, multiculturalism, social media, instagram, sexual health, digital media

The exponential expansion of digital media especially as a result of the technological inundation into all spaces of human life has resulted in diversification (and creation of specific hubs) of content that focuses and adjusts to multivariate individualistic tastes. This has been the case with sex education itself, still considered a taboo topic in many conservative societies. With the rise of social media efforts for generating sexual education and awareness is finding an enhanced space for public discussion. Instagram, which has emerged as one of the most popular social media platforms, particularly among the urban youth, with it's emphasis on largely visual interactions, is playing a major role in redefining the fault lines of sex education as we know it and not merely because of its ability to reach a larger audience.

This paper attempts to explore the politics of multiculturalism within the context of new media spaces in the 21st century, with a specific focus on sex education pages in India, which serve as informal educational spaces that make use of hashtags, reels, posts: in attempts to overcome the socio-moral restrictions of a largely conservative society(s). Using a methodology that combines digital ethnography and discourse analysis, this paper attempts to explore the multitudinal dimensions that arise from 15 Indian Instagram profiles with focus

on sexual awareness. These pages are subsequently contrasted with global Instagram pages curating similar content, thus enabling an in-depth examination of the more peculiar 'Indian' facets, and distinct themes that are a result of the specific cultural context(s). Juxtaposed against the restrictions and limitations of a conservative patriarchal society that continues to dominate discussions of sexuality and associated moral ethos, this study attempts to shed light on the potential of Instagram as a platform that content creators use to navigate and negotiate cultural sensitivities and proclivities over the intersectional interplays of new media, sex education and multicultural politics. We argue that despite the rising importance of the quotidian intended audience- usually a targeted set of young adult urban and peri-urban youth, there is a development of 'distributed imagination' especially as a result of the inherent meta-media like characteristics that Instagram presents.

10.49
Examining Cyberspace Participation of Muslim Women Students: Challenges and Resistance

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Keywords: Cyberspace Participation, Social-Media Platforms, Muslim Women Students, Gendered experiences, Online community building

Cyberspace has emerged as a powerful platform that has revolutionized the way people communicate, interact and engage with the world. Cyberspace participation refers to the active involvement of individuals and organizations in the digital sphere. This involvement takes many forms, such as social media engagement, online gaming, e-commerce, information sharing, and virtual communities. Through cyberspace, people can connect with others globally, share their thoughts, ideas, and experiences, and contribute to various online

platforms. In this digital era, Muslim women students are increasingly utilizing cyberspace as a means of active participation, empowerment, and expression of their identities, beliefs, and aspirations. As Social media platforms have become a powerful tool for Muslim women students to share their perspectives, challenges, and achievements. Through blogs, vlogs, and social media accounts, they amplify their voices, advocate for their rights, and contribute to important discussions on issues such as gender equality, women's empowerment and religious tolerance. By sharing their personal narratives and lived experiences, Muslim women students inspire others, challenge societal norms, and foster a sense of community and solidarity. In an era where digital spaces play an increasingly significant role in shaping societal dynamics, it is crucial to investigate how Muslim women navigate cyberspace, considering the intersection of cultural norms, religious practices, and gender expectations that may hinder their participation.

The research investigates the multifaceted challenges faced by Muslim women students, considering factors such as cultural norms, religious practices, and gender expectations that may hinder their participation in online platforms. These challenges encompass issues like cyberbullying, Islamophobia, online harassment, and exclusionary practices that affect Muslim women's ability to freely express themselves and engage in digital discourse. The research also highlights the various forms of resistance demonstrated by Muslim women students in response to these challenges. These forms of resistance may include creating supportive online communities, employing privacy measures, engaging in digital activism, or leveraging social media to challenge stereotypes and misconceptions. Through its findings, this research paper aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the complexities surrounding the cyberspace participation of Muslim women students and inform strategies to foster inclusive and empowering digital environments for this group. The researcher will employ a methodology involving the collection of primary data from 100 students studying in various colleges in Delhi, using a Google questionnaire. The analysis will encompass both quantitative and qualitative aspects.

10.50

Challenges in Access to information on Women's Safety Mobile Apps - A Case Analysis of Tamil Nadu Experience

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&

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Keywords: Women, Public places, Violence, Safety and Security.

Women and girls are facing different kind of violence in their life time. The safety questions of woman is still continuing in all over the world. The Sustainable Development Goals 5 and 11, as well as the New Urban Agenda, emphasize gender equity and safe, resilient, and inclusive cities are vital for gender equality and sustainability of development. The 'safe cities' scheme for women includes their equal right to access the city and public places within it, which includes their right to be mobile in the city at any time of the day, as well as their right to loiter in public spaces without any threats of harassment or sexual violence. Women's safety involves strategies, practices and policies which aim to reduce gender-based violence or violence against women, including women's fear of crime. Women's safety involves safe spaces. Spaces is not neutral. Today, the safety of women in India is widely discussed everywhere. Now it has become a serious concern one among the problems as barrier for women empowerment process. The crime rate is increased from 56.5 per cent in 2020 to 64.5 per cent in 2021 periodically as per the statistics of NCRB (2021). Women are encountering unsafe living situation at all spaces i.e., public, private, and cyber spaces. Though many organisation and women's movement are engaged on the issues of violence against women since late 70s after the Nirbhaya incident women's safety in public spaces has been seek more attention. Moreover, after this cruel incident the central and state governments also introduced various ICT enabled solutions to prevent violence against women apart from the toll free helpline numbers such as missed call provisions, "Safety Pin" in New Delhi, "Kavalan App" in Tamil Nadu. This Paper explores role Kavalan App" in Tamil Nadu to ensure the right to women's access to public places and mitigate the violence against women in public places with an objective to analyses the challenges in access, understanding, usage and impacts among college students of Tiruchirappalli City

Corporation in Tamil Nadu. For this study 80 students from 10 colleges located in Tiruchirappalli City Corporation jurisdiction have been selected as samples by using convenient sampling method. Both primary and secondary data are used to explore the challenges in access to Kavalan App.

10.51
From Distance to Touch: Caste in the Experiences of Brahmin Women on Mobile Dating Applications

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Keywords: gender, sexuality, caste, digital, dating, space, urban

With the growing popularity of mobile dating applications in India, newer forms of intimacies and relationships may be forming in online and offline spaces. Based on narratives of young Brahmin women in Bangalore, the paper shows how caste is understood, reproduced, and negotiated within the apparently modern space of dating apps, as well as the city via the apps.

In trying to understand the origins and sustenance of caste, Ambedkar (1916) wrote of the caste order as a mechanism of endogamy. Similarly, much feminist scholarship is dedicated to unpacking the historical linkages between caste, gender, and the control of women's sexuality (Gupta, 2016, Paik, 2017, Joseph, 2021). Following literature on how caste elites presented themselves as secular and modern subjects of the new nation (Geetha and Rajadurai, 1998), later studies have demonstrated the contemporary 'reinvention' of caste in its dynamic remaking of identities (Bairy, 2010), and its endurance in modern, urban, often middle-class contexts (Fuller and Narasimhan, 2015).In this context, how has the proliferation of mobile dating apps impacted the regulation of sexual boundaries in the caste society that is India? What are some of the ruptures and continuities with respect to enduring social structures?

Scholarship on digital dating apps has focused on how traditional gender relations and inequality get reproduced even while these spaces offer the possibility of disruption (Das, 2019, Chan, 2018). As global companies encourage newer forms of non-marriage-based intimacies in a cosmopolitan setting, local 'home-grown'

companies expand their market domains by branding themselves, especially in tier 2 locations, as spaces to find companionship that specifically leads to marriage (Das, 2019). Following the reading down of section 377 of the IPC, global dating apps also seem to ensure that their branding in India visibilises relationships hitherto criminalised and socially unsanctioned, displaying what Kanai and Gill (2021) call the 'aestheticisation of difference' where everything is capitalisable.

While building on these works, this study tries to address how caste engenders women's articulation of their subjectivity. It does so by asking how sexual relationships are being forged today by women who enter the realm of dating as autonomous and agential beings on apps.

The paper proceeds with two main objectives while drawing from in-depth interviews and the digital content on apps among 'touchable castes' who go largely unmarked in academic practice (Paik, 2021). First is to unpack the particular modes in which caste gets operationalized online and offline in the women's choices and experiences in dating. Second, to explore the idea of wokeness that both corporates and customers embody, albeit in different ways. Questioning who this wokeness serves, and who can push the boundaries of sexual morality, it argues that any conversations on the liberatory potential of dating apps in the country need to foreground caste and its relation to respectability.

10.52

The Dichotomy of 'Mothers' and 'Whores'; Unveiling the Online Media portrayal of Women Offenders in Kerala, India

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Keywords: women offenders, online media, Digital era, portrayal, dichotomy, gender stereotypes, Kerala, India.

Women offenders have long been a subject of fascination and condemnation in media narratives. Their actions are viewed as a betrayal of maternal roles or confirmation of deviant, immoral nature. In the digital era, online media platforms wield immense influence by rapidly disseminating news to a vast audience and fostering interactivity; however, their reliance on clickbait sensationalism

often leads to the unfettered portrayal of women offenders through voyeuristic and objectifying narratives, devoid of fact-checking or authenticity. This paper examines the portrayal of women offenders in online media with a particular emphasis on the perpetuation of the dichotomy between 'mothers' and 'whores. The study conducts a manual content analysis of news reports and videos in online media focusing on three murder cases involving women offenders. The research explores the intricate dynamics within the interactive space of online media and fills a crucial gap by exploring the media overlooked privacy and dignity of women in offender positions and emphasising the need to shift gendered and stigmatized portrayal of them.

10.53
Vlogging as a feminist activity:
A study of women vloggers from Assam

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Keywords: Vlogging, YouTube, Public and Private, Women and Technology.

In this paper, I seek to explore the phenomenon of daily vlogging by women on YouTube in the Assamese language. I argue that these vlogs have become a significant means for those women who are primarily homemakers to establish an identity of their own. These videos do generate income for them, but more than the monetary aspect, earning a name for themselves appears to be the primary motivation for women vloggers. I look at five channels where the number of subscribers is more than one lakh. Three of these women work outside of the home for a salary, and the rest two are not engaged in formal employment. They are often highly educated, with all the women under study possessing a minimum of a Bachelor's degree. The purpose is to see how the ease of technological access and the digital revolution has made ordinary women without any apparent marketable set of skills social media influencers, as the large number of subscribers to these channels indicates. Along with the financial autonomy that social media has brought them, there is also an interesting but often overlooked aspect of women's increasing access to modern technology, as all these women are quite adept at using various editing software for their videos.

At the same time, this digital revolution and women's increasing comfort levels with technology do not necessarily make vlogging a feminist activity. All the channels that I examine, firmly uphold the patriarchal gaze of looking at the 'perfect housewife.' Most of these women prefer to do their household work, especially in the kitchen on their own, with only occasional help. The sexual division of labour is also firmly upheld. There is a tendency to portray themselves primarily as homemakers and mothers, even among those women employed in the formal economy. As daily vlogging as an activity blurs the boundary between the public and the private, there is a conscious performance on the part of these vloggers to showcase their lives as mundane, but perfect to a great extent.

The comments that these vlogs receive reveal an interesting chasm between women's increasing confidence as social media influencers and how they are perceived by the viewers (subscribers) for their life choices. I came across comments coming from total strangers asking mothers to 'teach proper manners to their children,' or to 'dress up appropriately in front of guests.' At the same time, there is also a feminist solidarity visible in the comments- total strangers trying to defend the choices made by the YouTubers as matters of individual liberty and rights. Through an analysis of such comments and the individual vlogger's response to them, I aim to argue that viewers of these channels prefer to watch their version of the ideal housewife. This need for validation from subscribers at times motivates the vlogger to uphold the patriarchal gaze. Significantly, this gaze is challenged if unwarranted comments are aimed at their children.

10.54
Reel Vs Real - From Screen to Status: Women-Centric Films in Tamil Cinema – Empowerment or Illusion?

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&

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Keywords: Women-centric films, masculine principles, empowerment, flaws,

societal challenges

The Tamil film industry is one of the most progressive industries in the Indian film cosmos in terms of production, direction and content. In the recent times, the Tamil film industry is producing a lot of "women-centric films." This paper seeks to delve into an in-depth analysis of select women-centric films from the recent times within the Tamil film industry. Despite their purported aim of empowering women, these films inadvertently express and reinforce masculine principles, thereby contradicting their intended purpose. By examining these movies, this paper aims to shed light on the flaws inherent in portraying an overtly masculine side of women while the broader society continues to struggle with deeply entrenched issues such as child marriages and dominant households that confine women within oppressive boundaries. By exploring the discrepancies between the cinematic portrayal of women and the socio-cultural realities, this paper aims to foster a deeper understanding of the limitations and complexities surrounding women-centric films in the Tamil film industry.

10.55
Mothering on Social Media

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Keywords: mothering; social media; motherhood; online visibility; online community

Of late, social media has established itself as a space for self-expression, varied interactions and even the monetization of private life. In a domain characterized by its global scale, Indian women have over time managed to carve out niches of their own and build communities around content based on common experiences and interests. From fashion and lifestyle to content centered around their professional or academic expertise and even vlogging one's daily life, Indian women participate in a plethora of such niches. This paper, through an ethnographic approach to the domain of social media, intends to critically engage with the emergent role that social media is playing in shaping motherhood. With the increasing blurring of lines between the online and the offline spheres, and an accelerated interest in sharing what is otherwise private, the sharing of women's parenting experiences has become commonplace. Here, I will explore the use of digital spaces by Indian

women as a means of 'mothering' as well as a resource for it– from learning the nuances of motherhood and parenting, to sharing experiences around it and documenting them.

Through the use of digital ethnography and content analysis, I explore the ways in which women appropriate online spaces to share their narratives around experiences of motherhood, turning it into a site of information sharing, solidarity and even entertainment via a documentation of motherhood and its local knowledge systems. Familiarity between the literal and the online 'family' become grounds for publicizing the gendered experience of being a mother, and managing the expectations that are associated with it. Social media within this niche becomes a means for mothers to give visibility to their struggles and societal pressures and access support and solidarity from a community.

Lastly, I argue that the questions of digital privacy and bodily autonomy deserve more deliberation with this rising phenomenon of online mothering, as more and more women take on the practice of sharing (often sensitive) information regarding their children online. I also link this question to the possibility of monetization and how the publishing of family life may be a means to earn an income.

10.56
The Not so "Humorous" Politics of Representation: Women in Digital Media

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Keywords: Representation, digital spaces, misogynistic humour, strategic tools

The politics of "representation" has always aroused a great deal of controversy. And this controversy becomes even more challenging, when one looks at the representational politics of gendered identities. Representation, in this context, becomes more of a "re-presentation" wherein the existing social reality is assiduously safeguarded by the careful cultivation of a set of norms that are deemed to be indisputable. The role played by popular culture in the propagation of such representations is highly pertinent and yet we often fail to comprehend the hidden agenda. The present paper tries to analyse the evolving gendered identities

ushered in by the new media and how it reflects the ideological conditioning of contemporary society. Digital spaces have now become palpable sites of conflict and often one is startled by the sheer misogyny evident in the narratives that are camouflaged under the pretext of humour or moral sermons. A cursory glance at the various trolls, memes and blogs reveal the manifold ways in which society still controls the parameters of acceptable femininity. Any deviation from the accepted norm is met with "digital catcalls" and often women are shamed viciously so as to bring them back to the fold of tolerable behaviour. Digital media play a key role in enforcing gender constructs. By establishing femaleness as a set of signifiers that is subservient to the male authority, it is suggested that the female identity can be objectified according to the whims and fancies of the societal gaze. Thus, digital media not only capitalises on stereotypical depictions, but also capitulates to the notion of the authoritarian gaze. The parameters of gendered behaviour have always been determined by the dominant discourse and any deviation is met with firm resistance. It is indeed quite surprising that such strictures are still potent in an age when we don the garb of liberalism.

Any relevant social and cultural event is now accompanied by a whole host of ideas that can be easily disseminated through the digital platform. Such platforms simultaneously witness the creation of new gender constructs that promise to be different but become as oppressive as the earlier models. In this context, humour is a powerful tool harnessed by the custodians of moral behaviour to ensure the popularity of gender constructs. Such humour is often predatory in nature and the victims seldom laugh! The present paper attempts to analyse the multifarious ways in which digital media employs misogynistic humour to safeguard the paradigms of ideal femininity. When one attempts to question the rampant misogyny associated with such depictions, the most convenient excuse that is tossed around is that it is all in the name of "harmless humour." However, such humour is highly pernicious and it is imperative to analyse such "humourless humour" that is an essential ingredient in the heady cocktail of female identities and digital spaces.

10.57

Protection Motivation Theory and Designing Social Media Campaigns to deal with Gender-based Online Violence

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Keywords: Gender Based Violence (GBV) Online, Protection Motivation Theory, Social Media, Meta-Data, PRISMA

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) has been an issue of concern for centuries but with the growth of technology and internet; new digital avenues of violence have emerged. Cyber Bullying, Cyber Harassment, Sextortion, Cyber Grooming are some of the most prevalent forms of Gender-Based Crimes Online. The cases of GBV Online continue to increase rapidly because of two factors- firstly, it is cumbersome to catch the cyber-crime perpetrators because of anonymity. Secondly, because of the silent on-lookers or bystanders who do not take any action against such atrocities and rather sometimes add up to the level of victimization by promoting online abusers.

To combat GBV online, several organizations in the domain of Cyber Safety are using different social media platforms to sensitize people about such crimes. There have been several existing behavioral and communication centric theories which can help in developing impactful campaign strategies but Protection Motivation Theory mediates behaviour change through use of appropriate appeals and in identifying the best coping strategies to deal with any kind of threat. It is an individual centric framework and can help in creating content that can influence at two levels:

A) Individuals who can become target of GBV Online

B) Perpetrators and Bystanders of GBV Online

Most studies are focusing on Online Victimization and a handful are focusing on Perpetrators and Bystanders Behaviours. Additionally, most of the Social Media Campaigns are only targeting Individuals who can become target of GBV Online by creating memes, informative vlogs/ videos and other types of content. It is important that the campaigns also instill fear of being caught or penalized amongst Perpetrators and bystanders. Further the Health Belief Model can be applied to this situation to understand and justify that most of the Cyber Crime Perpetrators

believe that they will never be caught because of the anonymity factors and other safety measures they adopt. Further, Protection Motivation Theory can be used to encompass what fear appeals can instill highest amount of fear amongst virtual perpetrators and bystanders.

For the study Meta-data analysis has been done to identify the effectiveness of Protection Motivation Theory to deal with cyber threats. The systematic research has been done as per the PRISMA guidelines. For extraction of the data a computer based form was created by records identified through database searching. Based on the key words contained in titles and abstract initial screening of the studies were done to decide the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Duplicate records were removed and the studies were included for analysis after assessing full-text of the articles. The study helped in discerning to effectiveness of Protection Motivation Theory for creating social media content to deal with GBV Online.

10.58
Digitized Memories:
An Archive of Traversed Echoes from Sindh

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Key Words: Digital Archives, Partition, Sindh, Material Memory, Intersectionality, Nationality, Digital Memory, Narratives, Nationalism, Politics

The paper will seek to have a look at the material memory in the form of digital archives as per the oral history and narratives of people of Sindh during the partition of India in 1947 and how it becomes significant to impact or determine the legacy and generations of the future. Having read Partition Literature since almost more than four years. One of the significant reasons due to which I stumbled onto this was the incident of going through the Instagram account of one of the authors and oral historians of Partition of India, Aanchal Malhotra. She was telling a story of an old man whom she met for one of her interviews regarding the same. She is an author who works around the material memory during the time of Partition of India.

It is intriguing to see that something like certain objects, which held an important story in people's lives, could also be something to talk or research about, certainly in the most careful and sensitive ways. Therefore, my paper also will map the identity formations and what gets archived along with how communities and

national identities are formed, thus, to analyse in a more nuanced way. Through this, I also wish to investigate the digital platforms as 'archival' whilst bringing out the specificity of Sindh and focusing on memory which becomes material and thus, how history and memory are connected to each other. The general considerations which continued to enter my thoughts all through and persistently were with respect to how these digital archival accounts are disrupting, yet by and large, how they involve accounts of injury, unsettling influence, country, nationalism, personality, governmental issues, uniqueness, and cooperation. This paper will reflect on how the narratives of people of Sindh during the partition of India impacted the times and lives of those and in contemporary times; also, who could be called the natives or people of Sindh and how that transition carried forward furthermore focusing on how their generations got to be determined. For this paper I would be using the already archived narratives available in the form of oral histories and life narratives carried by other historians and the contemporary digital platforms like websites and social media handles of Museum of Material Memory, Partition Museum, Sahapedia to develop a further analysis of the research. My identity, social location and position as a person is something and someone who has not been directly affected by the Partition and yet, having access to a repository of narratives from those who are, is a gripping thought which kept occurring while thinking this a topic. The fact that how this digital enables a transfer of memory, ergo, and affect, not just vertically but horizontally as well, talks about the nature of one of the main reasons to preserve but transform the idea of memory. This paper will therefore largely engage with, the concept of memory and how is it determined, transitioned, carried forward and impacts and how the narratives of the people of Sindh and their material memory are contained in the digital format in contemporary times.

10.59
Feminist Approaches to Consent and Boundaries in Indian Prank Culture

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Keywords: prank culture, social media, consent, sexual harassment, feminism.

This synopsis explores the feminist perspectives on consent and boundaries within the context of Indian prank culture. Pranks have gained popularity in India through various mediums such as television shows, online platforms, and social media. While pranks can be seen as harmless and entertaining, they often involve crossing personal boundaries and disregarding consent, which raises important feminist concerns. The feminist lens emphasizes the importance of consent and respect for boundaries in all interpersonal interactions. Consent is a fundamental principle that recognizes individuals' autonomy and agency over their bodies and experiences. In the context of Indian prank culture, feminist scholars argue that consent is frequently violated for the sake of entertainment, perpetuating a culture of non-consensual and often harmful behaviour.

Indian prank culture often relies on gendered stereotypes and power dynamics, which further complicates the issue. Many pranks involve objectifying women, making them targets of sexual innuendos or subjecting them to embarrassing situations. Such practices reinforce patriarchal norms, reinforcing the idea that women's bodies and boundaries can be violated for the purpose of humour or entertainment.

The prevalence of prank videos on social media platforms magnifies the impact of non-consensual pranks. These videos often go viral, reaching a wide audience and normalizing boundary-crossing behaviour. This normalization can have detrimental effects on society, perpetuating a culture that trivializes consent and disrespects personal boundaries.

This research will primarily rely on qualitative methods, utilizing digital ethnography as the primary data collection technique. By immersing oneself in online communities, forums, and social media platforms where pranks are prevalent, the researcher can gain an in-depth understanding of the subject matter. The study will involve observing and analysing online content, discussions, videos, and narratives related to pranks, paying particular attention to the ways in which gender and feminism are represented and negotiated within this context. In conclusion, this synopsis sheds light on the feminist perspectives regarding consent and boundaries in Indian prank culture. It emphasizes the need to challenge the normalization of non-consensual behaviour and objectification of women. By fostering a culture that respects consent and boundaries, we can create a more inclusive and equitable society

kerala

God's Own Country

keralatourism.org

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