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Editorial

The present issue of the Research Journal of Social and Life Sciences (Vol. 0973–3914, Impact Factor 7.0) stands as a rich intellectual confluence of contemporary concerns, interdisciplinary inquiry, and regionally grounded research. This volume thoughtfully brings together voices from sociology, political science, law, psychology, education, management, cultural studies, environmental studies, and life sciences, reflecting the journal's commitment to integrating social realities with lived human and ecological experiences.

At the sociological core of this issue is Akhilesh Shukla's study, “A Sociological Study of Family Structure in the Digital Age: With Reference to Vindhya Vihar Colony, Rewa City (Madhya Pradesh)”, which offers a nuanced micro-level analysis of how digital technologies are reshaping family relations, communication patterns, and intergenerational dynamics. Rooted in local context yet resonating globally, the paper contributes significantly to debates on modernization and social change.

Social institutions and entrenched practices are critically examined in “Dowry: Hidden Cost of Marriage” by Sneha Lata and Sakshi Kumari, which exposes the persistent economic and psychological burdens of dowry, despite legal prohibitions. The paper foregrounds gender justice and calls for deeper social awareness and policy intervention.

Contemporary political and legal transformations find strong representation in this issue. Dharmendra Kumar Singh, in “India's Foreign Policy under the Modi Government: Balancing Pragmatism and Ideology”, critically evaluates India's evolving diplomatic posture, highlighting the interplay between strategic realism and ideological assertion in global affairs. Complementing this is Ananya Choudhary's incisive legal analysis, “A Critical Study of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS): India's Criminal Law Reforms of 2023–24”, which rigorously examines the implications of India's landmark criminal law reforms and their potential impact on justice delivery.

Governance and democracy are further interrogated in Lalan Kumar Mandal's paper, “Criminalisation of Politics in Bihar: A Persistent Challenge”, which sheds light on the deep-rooted nexus between crime and electoral politics, raising urgent questions about democratic accountability and institutional reform.

The intersection of development, sustainability, and livelihoods is explored through “International Year of Millets (IYM) 2023 in Uttarakhand” by Amrita Shilpi and Anchal, which situates millets within discourses of food security, ecological sustainability, and traditional agricultural knowledge. Rural development and social empowerment are further examined in “Women Empowerment and Rural Transformation: A Study of MGNREGA” by Ajamattulla and Abhai Srivastava, highlighting the transformative role of employment guarantee schemes in enhancing women's agency and rural socio-economic resilience.

Psychosocial dimensions of contemporary life are addressed in “Stress and Life Satisfaction among Working Women in India: A Psycho-Socio Perspective” by Rina Kumari and Veena, which offers valuable insights into work-life balance, mental health, and gendered expectations in modern India. Organizational and managerial perspectives are brought forth in Manjushri Mishra's paper, “The Role of Innovation and Knowledge Management in Organizations”, emphasizing how knowledge-driven strategies are essential for institutional growth and competitiveness in a rapidly changing economy.

Education and pedagogy emerge as key themes in “A Comparative Study of Lifestyle among Higher Secondary School Teachers” by Shiny Prakash and Ishwar

Singh Bargah, which examines professional lifestyles and well-being among educators, and “Exploring Digital Tools for Creating and Sharing E-Content: From Canva to Google Classroom” by Priyalata Pandey and Prakriti James, which underscores the transformative potential of digital platforms in contemporary teaching-learning processes.

Cultural, philosophical, and historical reflections add depth to this issue. Sukanya Som's paper, “Ancient India as the Light of Civilization: Relevance of the Saga of Ancient Indian Colonization in the Indian Knowledge System Classroom”, reinterprets the concept of 'Greater India' within the framework of the Indian Knowledge System, advocating its pedagogical relevance in fostering global harmony and civilizational dialogue. Similarly, “Echoes of Enlightenment: Buddhist and Indian Philosophical Streams in Swami Vivekananda's Vision of National Humanism” by Roshni Bharilya and Kishori Soni offers a profound philosophical exploration of spiritual humanism, bridging ancient wisdom with modern nationhood.

The issue also engages with cultural representation and media studies through “Translation of Socio-Cultural Realities in Film Adaptations: A Comparative Study of Slumdog Millionaire and The White Tiger” by Govind Rajak and Kishori Soni, which critically analyzes how cinema mediates poverty, class, and globalization for global audiences, enriching postcolonial and film studies discourse.

From the life sciences perspective, “Acacia nilotica: Traditional Uses in the Local Area of Jodhpur District of Rajasthan” by Meenu Singh and Ram Nath Khorwal documents indigenous knowledge systems and ethnobotanical practices, reaffirming the importance of traditional ecological wisdom in contemporary scientific research.

Taken together, the contributions in this volume exemplify rigorous scholarship, methodological diversity, and a strong engagement with pressing social and life science issues. This issue not only reflects current academic debates but also bridges theory with practice, local realities with global concerns, and tradition with modernity. The Research Journal of Social and Life Sciences thus continues to serve as a vital platform for interdisciplinary dialogue and meaningful knowledge production, contributing to informed scholarship and socially responsive research.



Professor Akhilesh Shukla
Chief Editor

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A Sociological Study of Family Structure in the Digital Age With Reference to Vindhya Vihar Colony, Rewa City (Madhya Pradesh)

• Akhilesh Shukla

Abstract- *The family has traditionally been regarded as the fundamental unit of society, playing a crucial role in socialization, emotional support, and cultural continuity. However, rapid technological advancement and the widespread use of digital media have significantly transformed family structures and interpersonal relationships. This research paper presents a sociological study of family structure in the digital age, with special reference to Vindhya Vihar Colony in Rewa City, Madhya Pradesh. The study explores how digital technologies such as smartphones, social media, and online communication platforms have influenced family interactions, authority patterns, value transmission, and generational relationships. Using a descriptive and analytical research design, data were collected from 60 respondents belonging to General, Scheduled Caste, and Scheduled Tribe categories through structured interviews and questionnaires. The study reveals a gradual shift from joint to nuclear family systems, changes in communication patterns, and increased individualism among younger generations. While digital technology has enhanced connectivity and access to information, it has also contributed to reduced face-to-face interaction and emotional distancing within families. The findings highlight both the positive and negative sociological implications of digitalization on family life. The study concludes that while family structures are evolving in response to technological change, the core values of mutual support, responsibility, and social cohesion require conscious reinforcement to maintain familial stability in the digital era.*

Key Words- *Family Structure, Digital Age, Sociological Study, Nuclear Family, Joint Family, Social Change, Technology, Vindhya Vihar Colony, Rewa*

In sociology, family structure refers to the composition, organization, and pattern of relationships within a family unit. Traditionally, Indian society has been characterized by joint and extended family systems. The digital age denotes a period marked by the extensive use of digital technologies, internet-based communication, and electronic media. The interaction between family structure and digital technology represents a crucial area of sociological inquiry, as technology acts as a powerful agent of social change influencing values, norms, roles, and relationships within families.

Concept and Introduction to the Problem and Background of the Study- In sociological thought, the family is regarded as one of the most fundamental and enduring social institutions. The concept of family structure encompasses the size, composition, organization, authority patterns, role distribution, and modes of interaction among family members. From a sociological perspective, family structure is not static; it evolves in response to broader social, economic, cultural, and technological forces. Traditionally, Indian society has been dominated by joint and extended family systems, characterized by co-residence of multiple generations, collective decision-making, shared economic resources, and strong kinship ties. These family forms have historically provided social security, emotional support, cultural continuity, and moral regulation.

The emergence of the digital age marks a significant turning point in the evolution of social institutions, including the family. The digital age refers to a historical phase marked by the pervasive use of digital technologies such as smartphones, computers, the internet, social networking platforms, and electronic media. These technologies have transformed the way individuals communicate, access information, work, and socialize. Sociologically, technology functions as a powerful agent of social change, capable of reshaping social relationships, value systems, and institutional structures. The interaction between family structure and digital technology thus represents a crucial area of sociological inquiry, as it reveals how technological innovations reconfigure intimate social relations and everyday life.

From a conceptual standpoint, digital technology influences family structure in multiple ways. It alters communication patterns by enabling instant, virtual, and often impersonal interactions. It affects role relations by redefining authority, especially between parents and children, as younger generations often possess greater digital competence. It reshapes value systems by promoting individualism, autonomy, and consumer-oriented lifestyles, sometimes at the cost of collective family norms. At the same time, digital tools also offer new opportunities for maintaining family connections across physical distances, supporting education, and accessing health and welfare services. This dual character of digital technology both integrative and disruptive makes it an important subject of sociological analysis.

The family as a social institution has historically played a central role in shaping individual behavior and maintaining social order. In Indian society, families have traditionally functioned as units of economic cooperation, where resources were pooled and livelihoods were collectively managed. They have also served as primary sites of socialization, transmitting cultural values, religious beliefs, gender roles, and moral codes from one generation to the next. Emotional bonding, care for children and the elderly, and mutual support in times of crisis have been defining features of the Indian family system. However, these traditional functions of the family have been increasingly challenged by large-scale social

transformations.

Processes such as globalization, urbanization, and industrialization have significantly altered the social context in which families operate. Economic pressures, migration for education and employment, changing aspirations, and the growing participation of women in the workforce have contributed to the decline of joint family systems and the rise of nuclear and smaller family units. The digital revolution has intensified these changes by introducing new forms of interaction and social organization that extend beyond the physical boundaries of the household. As a result, family life in contemporary India is marked by both continuity and change, stability and tension.

Rewa city, situated in the Vindhya region of Madhya Pradesh, provides a meaningful context for examining these transformations. Traditionally known for its cultural heritage and value-oriented social life, Rewa represents a semi-urban setting where traditional social structures coexist with emerging modern influences. In recent years, the city has experienced growth in education, infrastructure, and digital connectivity. This transformation is particularly evident in residential areas such as Vindhya Vihar Colony, which reflects the broader transition from traditional to modern lifestyles. The colony comprises families from diverse social backgrounds, including different caste groups and occupational categories, making it a microcosm of contemporary urban Indian society.

The increasing penetration of smartphones, internet services, and social media platforms in Vindhya Vihar Colony has significantly influenced everyday family life. Digital devices have become central to daily routines, affecting how family members communicate, spend leisure time, and engage with the outside world. While family members may physically share the same living space, their social attention is often directed toward digital screens, online networks, and virtual communities. This shift raises important sociological questions about the nature of intimacy, togetherness, and emotional bonding within families.

The problem addressed in this study revolves around the changing nature of family structure and interaction patterns under the influence of digital technology. On one hand, digital tools have enhanced connectivity by allowing family members to stay in touch despite geographical separation. They have facilitated access to education, employment opportunities, and information, thereby contributing to individual empowerment. On the other hand, concerns have emerged regarding the weakening of interpersonal bonds, reduced face-to-face communication, and the erosion of collective family life. The excessive use of digital media has been associated with time displacement, where shared family activities are replaced by individual screen time.

Another critical dimension of the problem is the widening generational gap within families. Younger members, who are often more technologically adept, may develop lifestyles, value orientations, and communication styles that differ significantly from those of older

generations. Elderly family members may experience feelings of exclusion, isolation, or loss of authority in a digitalized household. This shift in power and competence can challenge traditional family hierarchies and role expectations, leading to tension and misunderstanding. From a sociological perspective, these changes are not merely individual or psychological issues but reflect broader structural transformations in society. The family, as a social institution, is adapting to the pressures and opportunities of the digital age, often in uneven and contradictory ways. Some families successfully integrate digital technology into their lives while maintaining strong emotional bonds and shared values, whereas others struggle to balance technological engagement with meaningful interpersonal relationships. In this context, the present study seeks to examine the impact of digital technology on family structure and interaction patterns in Vindhya Vihar Colony, Rewa City. By situating the analysis within a specific socio-cultural and geographical setting, the study aims to provide a grounded understanding of how global technological processes are experienced at the local level. The sociological analysis of this problem is significant because it contributes to a deeper understanding of contemporary family life in India and highlights the need for conscious efforts to preserve family cohesion in an increasingly digitalized world.

Significance of the Study

1. To understand the sociological impact of digital technology on family life.
2. To document changing family patterns in a semi-urban Indian context.
3. To contribute empirical data to the sociology of family and social change.
4. To provide insights useful for educators, social workers, and policymakers.

Objectives of the Study

1. To analyze the prevailing family structures in Vindhya Vihar Colony.
2. To study the impact of digital media on family interactions and relationships.
3. To examine generational differences in digital usage within families.
4. To assess whether digitalization strengthens or weakens family cohesion.
5. To compare responses across different social categories.

Limitations of the Study

1. The study is limited to Vindhya Vihar Colony, Rewa City.
2. The sample size is restricted to 60 respondents.
3. Responses are based on self-reported data, which may involve bias.
4. Time and resource constraints limit longitudinal analysis.

Literature Review- The sociological study of family transformation in the context of technological change has a long and well-established intellectual tradition. Scholars across different periods have emphasized that the family,

though a relatively stable social institution, is deeply influenced by broader processes of social change. One of the earliest and most influential contributions in this regard was made by William F. Ogburn (1922), who introduced the concept of cultural lag. Ogburn argued that material culture, particularly technology, changes at a much faster pace than non-material culture, including social institutions such as the family. As a result, families often struggle to adjust to new technological realities, leading to tension, disorganization, and transitional instability. This concept provides a foundational framework for understanding how digital technology today may outpace the family's capacity to adapt smoothly.

Building on the idea of structural transformation, William J. Goode (1963) examined family change from a global comparative perspective. He highlighted the shift from joint and extended family systems toward nuclear family forms as a consequence of industrialization, urbanization, and occupational mobility. Goode's analysis demonstrated that economic and technological changes weaken traditional kinship ties and promote individualism, residential mobility, and smaller family units. His work is particularly relevant for understanding the declining prevalence of joint families in urban and semi-urban contexts, where digital technology further accelerates these trends by facilitating independent lifestyles.

The transformation of personal relationships in modern societies was critically analyzed by Anthony Giddens (2000), who emphasized the emergence of new forms of intimacy based on emotional satisfaction, negotiation, and individual choice rather than traditional obligations. Giddens argued that modern communication technologies reshape how individuals experience closeness, trust, and commitment within families. In the digital age, relationships are increasingly mediated through electronic communication, which alters the depth, frequency, and quality of interpersonal interaction. This perspective helps explain changing parent-child relationships and evolving spousal dynamics in contemporary families.

Similarly, Manuel Castells (2010) introduced the concept of the network society, highlighting how digital communication technologies restructure social relationships by creating flexible, decentralized networks. According to Castells, digital media redefine social interaction by prioritizing connectivity over physical co-presence. Applied to family life, this framework suggests that family relationships are no longer confined to shared physical spaces but are increasingly embedded within digital networks. While this enhances connectivity, it may also fragment family interaction by shifting attention away from face-to-face engagement.

Indian sociologists have provided critical insights into the specific context of family change in India. Scholars such as I.P. Desai and A.M. Shah examined how modernization, urbanization, and economic change have altered traditional Indian family structures. Their studies documented the gradual transformation of joint families into nuclear or functionally joint units, emphasizing continuity alongside change. These works underscore

that family change in India is neither uniform nor abrupt but shaped by cultural values, social norms, and local conditions.

Recent empirical studies further suggest that digital technology significantly influences authority patterns, parent-child interaction, and emotional bonding within families. However, much of this research remains macro-level or urban-centric. There is a noticeable lack of micro-level empirical studies focusing on smaller urban localities such as Vindhya Vihar Colony in Rewa City. This gap in the existing literature establishes the relevance and necessity of the present study, which seeks to examine family transformation in a localized socio-cultural context shaped by digitalization.

Research Problem- “How has the digital age influenced family structure, interaction, and relationships in Vindhya Vihar Colony, Rewa City?”

Social and Practical Significance- The study addresses real-life challenges faced by families, including communication gaps, generational conflict, and changing values. Understanding these dynamics can help strengthen family relationships and guide social interventions.

Hypotheses

1. Digital technology has significantly altered family interaction patterns.
2. Increased digital device usage has reduced face-to-face communication within families.
3. The shift toward nuclear families is positively associated with digitalization.

Research Methodology- The present study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design, which is appropriate for examining the existing patterns of family structure and the influence of digital technology on family life. The descriptive approach enables a systematic portrayal of current family arrangements, communication patterns, and technological usage, while the analytical component facilitates interpretation of relationships between digitalization and changes in family interaction. This combination allows the study not only to document social realities but also to explain the underlying sociological trends shaping family transformation in the digital age.

Both primary and secondary sources of data were utilized to ensure comprehensiveness and reliability. Primary data were collected directly from respondents residing in Vindhya Vihar Colony, Rewa City, which provided first-hand insights into lived family experiences. Secondary data were drawn from books, research journals, government reports, and credible online academic resources to establish a theoretical foundation and contextualize the findings within existing sociological literature. The use of secondary sources also helped in identifying research gaps and framing the study within broader academic debates.

For primary data collection, multiple data collection tools were employed. A structured interview schedule was used to maintain uniformity and depth in responses, allowing respondents to express their views while ensuring comparability of data. Questionnaires facilitated the collection of quantifiable information on family type, digital usage, and communication

patterns. Observation supplemented these tools by providing contextual understanding of family interactions and everyday digital practices, thereby enriching the qualitative dimension of the study.

The study employed stratified random sampling to ensure representation of different social categories within the population. The sample was divided into three strata General, Scheduled Caste, and Scheduled Tribe to capture variations in family structure and digital impact across social groups. A total of 60 respondents were selected, with equal representation of 20 respondents from each category. This method enhanced the inclusiveness and analytical validity of the research.

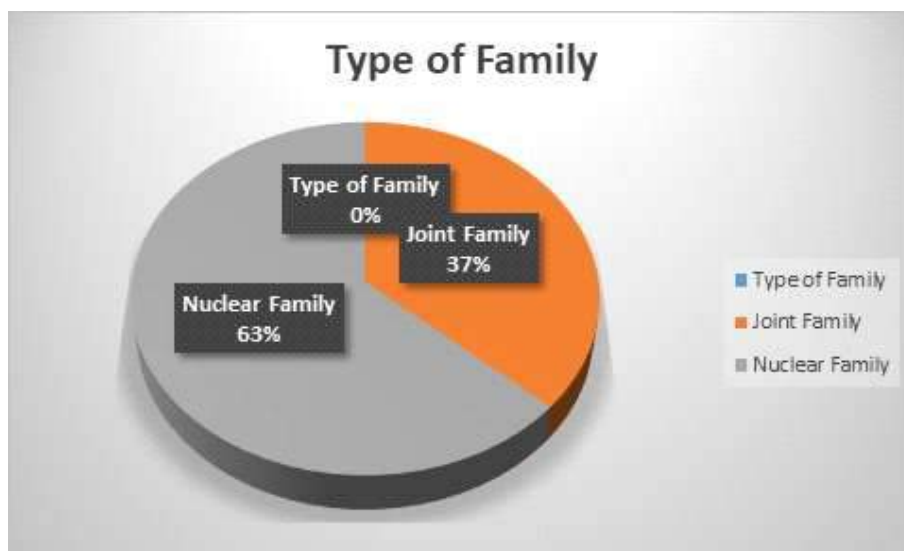
For data analysis, descriptive statistical techniques, particularly percentage analysis, were used to interpret quantitative data. Qualitative interpretation was applied to understand attitudes, perceptions, and experiences related to digitalization and family life. The findings were systematically presented through tabulation and diagrammatic representation, such as bar diagrams and pie charts, to ensure clarity and ease of understanding. Together, these methodological approaches strengthened the accuracy and sociological relevance of the study's conclusions.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 01
Type of Family

Type of Family	Type of Family	
	Number	Percentage
Joint Family	22	36.7%
Nuclear Family	38	63.3%

Chart 01



Interpretation- The table shows that a majority of respondents (53.3%) use digital devices for 3–5 hours daily, while a significant proportion (30.0%) use them for more than 5 hours, indicating high digital engagement. This extensive usage can be attributed to increased dependence on smartphones for communication, entertainment, work, and information. The availability of affordable internet services and the integration of digital platforms into everyday activities have further intensified screen time. Only a small percentage (16.7%) report limited usage, suggesting that digital technology has become an integral part of daily life in the study area.

Table 03
Impact on Family Communication

Response	Impact on Family Communication	
	Number	Percentage
Improved	18	30.0%
Reduced	34	56.7%
No Change	8	13.3%

Interpretation- The data reveal that a majority of respondents (56.7%) believe digital technology has reduced family communication, indicating its negative impact on interpersonal interaction. This reduction is largely due to excessive use of smartphones and social media, which diverts attention from direct conversation and shared family time. Although 30.0% feel that communication has improved through quick and convenient connectivity, this benefit appears limited. A smaller group (13.3%) reports no change, suggesting variation in usage patterns. Overall, the findings reflect that digital engagement often substitutes face-to-face communication within families.

Chart 03

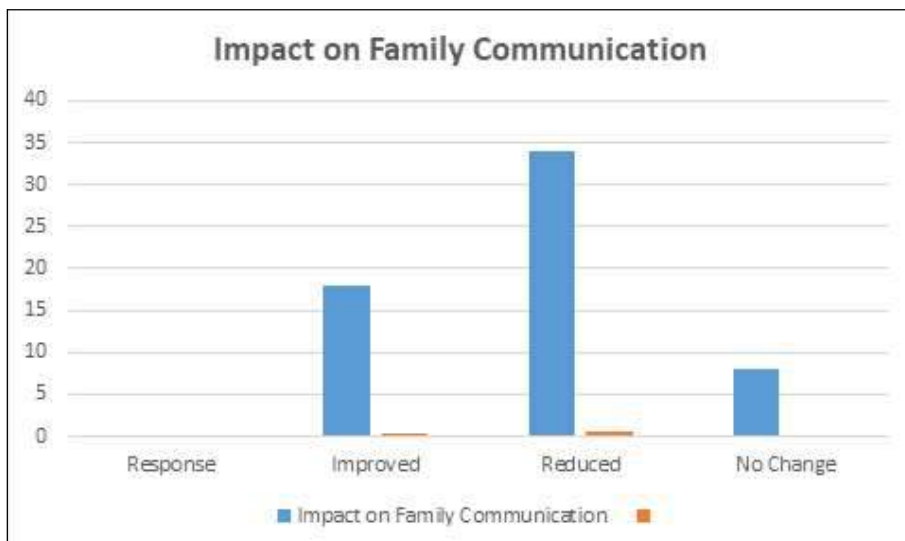
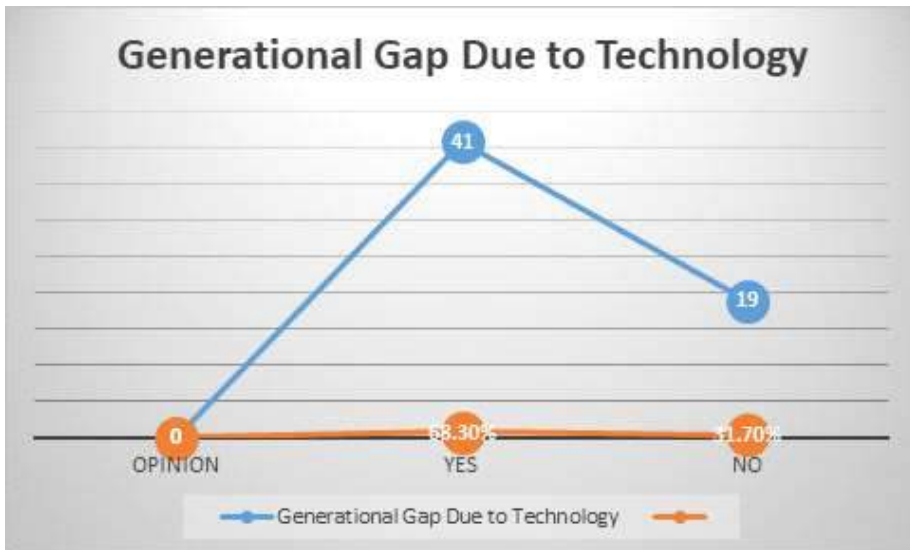


Table 04
Generational Gap Due to Technology

Opinion	Generational Gap Due to Technology	
	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	41	68.3%
No	19	31.7%

Chart 04

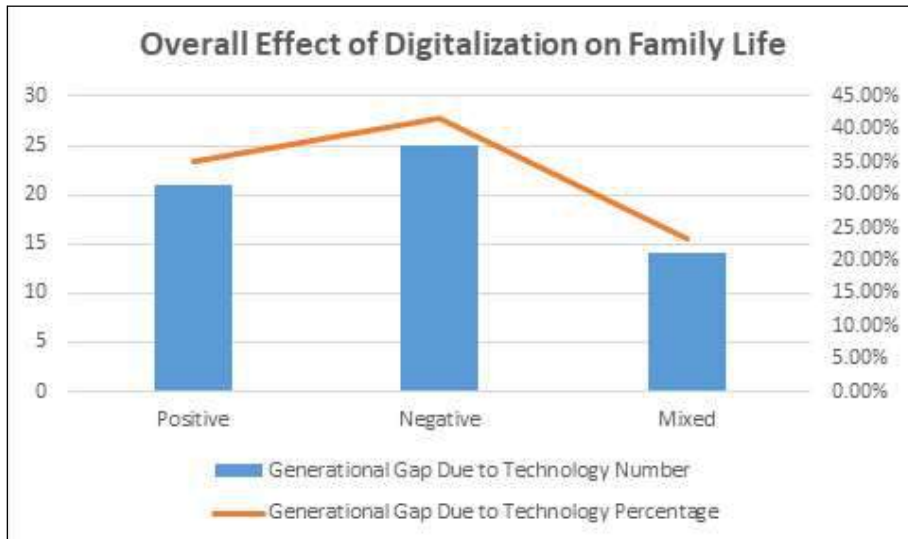


Interpretation- The table indicates that a large majority of respondents (68.3%) believe that digital technology has increased the generational gap within families. This perception arises because younger members are more digitally skilled and immersed in online environments, while older members often struggle to adapt to new technologies. Differences in communication styles, values, and daily routines further widen this gap. In contrast, 31.7% do not perceive such a divide, possibly due to shared digital use or adaptive learning by elders. Overall, the data suggest that unequal digital competence contributes significantly to generational distance.

Table 05
Overall Effect of Digitalization on Family Life

Effect Type	Generational Gap Due to Technology	
	Number	Percentage
Positive	21	35.0%
Negative	25	41.7%
Mixed	14	23.3%

Chart 05



Interpretation- The table shows that the largest proportion of respondents (41.7%) perceive the overall effect of digitalization on family life as negative, indicating concerns about reduced interaction, emotional distancing, and excessive screen dependence. However, a substantial group (35.0%) views digitalization positively, citing benefits such as improved connectivity, access to information, and convenience in daily life. Meanwhile, 23.3% report a mixed impact, recognizing both advantages and drawbacks. These findings suggest that digitalization has a complex influence on family life, producing varied experiences depending on usage patterns and family values.

Results of Hypotheses- The hypotheses formulated for the present study were tested on the basis of primary data collected from respondents of Vindhya Vihar Colony, Rewa City, and were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques and sociological interpretation. The purpose of hypothesis testing was to examine whether digital technology has brought measurable and meaningful changes in family interaction, communication patterns, and family structure in the digital age.

The first hypothesis, which stated that digital technology has significantly altered family interaction patterns, was tested by analyzing respondents' views on changes in daily interaction, shared family activities, and modes of communication within the household. The data revealed that a majority of respondents acknowledged noticeable changes in the way family members interact with one another. Family discussions, collective leisure activities, and traditional forms of interaction have increasingly been replaced or supplemented by digitally mediated communication. Many respondents reported that interactions now occur simultaneously with digital engagement, such as using smartphones during family time. This indicates a shift from collective, face-to-face interaction toward more

individualized and technology-driven forms of engagement. Based on the consistency of responses across different social categories, the first hypothesis was empirically supported and therefore accepted.

The second hypothesis, which proposed that increased digital device usage has reduced face-to-face communication within families, was tested by examining the amount of time spent on digital devices and its perceived impact on direct interpersonal communication. The findings showed that a significant proportion of respondents believed that excessive use of smartphones, social media, and internet-based entertainment has reduced opportunities for meaningful in-person conversations. Respondents, particularly from older age groups, expressed concern that family members often remain physically present but socially disengaged due to continuous screen usage. This phenomenon reflects a displacement effect, where digital interaction substitutes traditional interpersonal communication. The prevalence of such perceptions across caste groups and age categories strongly supports the hypothesis. Consequently, the second hypothesis was also accepted.

The third hypothesis, which suggested that the shift toward nuclear families is positively associated with digitalization, was examined by correlating family type with the adoption and usage of digital technology. The analysis indicated that nuclear families were more likely to adopt digital tools extensively and rely on them for communication, information, and daily coordination. Digital technology enables independent living by reducing dependence on extended kin networks for information, services, and support. Respondents from nuclear families reported greater reliance on digital platforms for social connectivity, which reduces the functional necessity of joint family arrangements. This pattern supports the argument that digitalization reinforces individualism and autonomy, thereby facilitating the growth of nuclear family structures. On the basis of these observations, the third hypothesis was found to be valid and was therefore accepted.

Overall, the testing of hypotheses confirms that digital technology plays a significant role in reshaping family interaction patterns, reducing face-to-face communication, and contributing to the structural shift toward nuclear families. The acceptance of all three hypotheses demonstrates that digitalization is a powerful factor influencing contemporary family life in Vindhya Vihar Colony, reflecting broader sociological trends observed in urban and semi-urban Indian society.

Findings- The findings of the present study reveal important sociological insights into the changing nature of family structure and family life in the digital age, particularly in the context of Vindhya Vihar Colony, Rewa City. Each finding reflects a specific dimension of transformation influenced by technological advancement and changing social conditions, and together they present a comprehensive picture of contemporary family dynamics.

The first major finding indicates that nuclear families are more prevalent than joint families in the study area. This shift suggests a gradual

but steady transformation in traditional family arrangements. Factors such as urban living conditions, employment mobility, smaller housing units, and the desire for privacy and autonomy contribute to the preference for nuclear family structures. Digital technology further supports this trend by enabling families to function independently without relying on extended kin networks for information, support, or coordination. While joint families once provided economic and emotional security, the availability of digital resources has reduced functional dependence on larger family units, reinforcing the dominance of nuclear families in urban and semi-urban settings.

The second finding highlights that digital technology significantly affects family interaction. The widespread use of smartphones, internet services, and social media has transformed how family members communicate and spend time together. Interaction within families is no longer limited to direct conversation or shared activities but increasingly occurs through digital platforms, even within the same household. This has altered the quality and rhythm of family life, as communication becomes more fragmented and individualized. While digital tools allow quick information sharing and connectivity, they also shift attention away from collective family engagement, reshaping interpersonal relationships.

Closely related to this is the third finding that face-to-face communication is declining. The study reveals that increased screen time often replaces direct interpersonal interaction among family members. Shared meals, conversations, and recreational activities have diminished as individuals engage more with digital devices. This decline in face-to-face communication affects emotional bonding, mutual understanding, and the transmission of values within families. Sociologically, this reflects a broader transition from community-oriented interaction to technology-mediated individualism, which may weaken the social cohesion traditionally maintained through family life.

The fourth finding emphasizes that generational gaps are widening due to technology. Younger family members tend to be more digitally literate and immersed in online environments, while older members may struggle to adapt to rapidly changing technologies. This disparity creates differences in communication styles, values, and daily practices, often leading to misunderstanding or reduced interaction between generations. Traditional authority patterns are also challenged, as technological knowledge becomes a source of power within the household. As a result, elderly members may experience social isolation or diminished influence in family decision-making.

Finally, the study finds that families acknowledge both the benefits and challenges of digitalization. Respondents recognize that digital technology offers advantages such as improved connectivity, access to information, educational opportunities, and convenience in daily life. At the same time, they express concern over issues like reduced interpersonal interaction, digital dependency, and emotional distancing. This balanced

perception suggests that families are not entirely resistant to technological change but are aware of its complex implications. The findings indicate a need for conscious and responsible use of digital technology to preserve family cohesion while embracing the advantages of the digital age.

Overall, these findings underscore that digitalization has become a decisive factor in reshaping family structure, relationships, and communication patterns, highlighting both its transformative potential and its sociological challenges.

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Dowry Hidden Cost of Marriage

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•• Sneh Lata

Abstract- *Marriage is widely celebrated as a union of affection and partnership, yet in many societies it remains entangled with an enduring economic practice: dowry. Far from a symbolic gesture, dowry imposes a compulsory transfer of wealth from the bride's family to the groom's, effectively turning one of life's most intimate institutions into a financial transaction. This hidden cost of marriage reshapes family priorities long before any wedding takes place, influencing decisions about education, health, savings, and even the perceived value of daughters versus sons. It transforms marriage into a stratified market where grooms are evaluated and priced according to education, income, caste, or social status, thereby reinforcing gender and class hierarchies while placing disproportionate economic and emotional burdens on families with daughters. Despite legal prohibitions in numerous countries and decades of advocacy for reform, dowry has demonstrated remarkable persistence and adaptability in the face of modernization, globalization, and changing gender norms. This paper examines dowry not merely as a cultural relic but as a dynamic social and economic institution that continues to distort household behaviour, perpetuate intergenerational inequality, and undermine the ideal of marriage as an equitable partnership. Drawing on theoretical insights from economics, sociology, and gender studies, it explores the mechanisms that sustain dowry, the subtle and overt ways in which it erodes individual well-being and societal progress, and the challenges of dismantling a practice deeply embedded in notions of family honour, status, and reciprocity. By illuminating the less visible consequences of dowry—financial strain, skewed investments in children, and the quiet normalisation of transactional intimacy—this study contributes to a deeper understanding of how economic customs can perpetuate gender disadvantage even within the private sphere of family life. It concludes by considering potential pathways toward change, from stronger legal enforcement and community awareness to broader cultural shifts that reframe marriage as a relationship of mutual respect rather than monetary exchange. Ultimately, addressing the hidden cost of dowry is not only a matter of protecting daughters and their families; it is a critical step toward building more just and egalitarian societies.*

Keywords- *Dowry death, economic exploitation, dowry harassment, patriarchy, caste pressures*

Dowry- A dowry is a payment such as land, property, money, livestock, or a

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commercial asset that is paid by the bride's (woman's) family to the groom (man) or his family at the time of marriage.

Dowry deaths- Dowry deaths are deaths of married women who are murdered or driven to suicide over disputes about dowry.

Introduction- The institution of marriage in India, traditionally regarded as a sacred and socially binding union, has over time become burdened with a deeply entrenched and devastating practice dowry. What is culturally framed as a customary exchange of gifts has, in reality, evolved into a parallel economic system with far-reaching social and human costs. Among the gravest of these costs are dowry-related deaths, a phenomenon that continues to tarnish the moral fabric of Indian society. A dowry death typically refers to the suicide or killing of a bride by her husband or his family owing to dissatisfaction with the dowry provided at the time of marriage. Such deaths are rarely sudden events; they are usually the tragic culmination of sustained domestic abuse, coercion, and harassment by the husband's family. For many young women, relentless cruelty renders life unbearable, leading them to die by suicide—most commonly by hanging, poisoning, or self-immolation. In other cases, the violence takes the form of deliberate homicide: brides are doused in kerosene and set ablaze, a crime often disguised as an accident or suicide and widely known as “bride burning.” The magnitude of this violence has been documented across decades. According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), India records the highest number of dowry-related deaths globally, with 8,233 cases reported in 2012 alone. Statistical trends reveal a disturbing persistence: the NCRB recorded 8,331 dowry deaths in 2011, while earlier data from 2008 reported 8,172 cases- an alarming 14.4% increase from 1998, despite only proportionate population growth during the same period. A 1996 report by the Indian Police Service further highlights the gravity of the crisis, noting that over 2,500 cases of bride burning are reported annually. Yet even these figures are believed to represent only a fraction of the true scale, as numerous scholars and watchdog bodies argue that dowry deaths are chronically under-reported due to social stigma, institutional apathy, and the manipulation of evidence within domestic settings. Importantly, dowry-related violence transcends religious boundaries; it is not confined to any specific community, caste, or faith group, underscoring its status as a pan-Indian problem embedded in broader patriarchal and socio-economic structures. Despite legal prohibitions and increasing public awareness, the persistence of dowry deaths reveals the hidden and often ignored cost of marriage in India. This research paper seeks to examine the multilayered dimensions of dowry as a socio-legal problem, highlighting how an ostensibly customary practice has transformed into a systemic mechanism of exploitation, violence, and gender subjugation. Historical Background of the Dowry System in India the dowry system in India has a long and complex historical trajectory, evolving from a benign social custom into a deeply entrenched socio-economic burden. Its earliest origins can be traced to the Vedic period, where dowry existed in the form of

Stridhan—voluntary gifts, wealth, or assets given to the bride by her parents as a token of affection and as a means to ensure her financial security and independence within her marital home. Stridhan was legally recognised as the woman's exclusive property, reflecting a socio-religious framework that, at least in principle, sought to provide economic protection to women. However, by the medieval era, this benevolent practice gradually transformed into a compulsory and often extravagant payment demanded by the groom's family. This shift was particularly visible among upper castes and royal lineages, where marriage alliances became instruments of political strategy, social mobility, and prestige, with dowry serving as a symbol of wealth, honour, and familial status. The colonial period added another layer of structural inequity to the practice. British codification of property and inheritance laws entrenched patriarchal norms by limiting women's rights to ancestral property and reinforcing the notion that daughters were an “economic liability.” As women's access to property diminished under colonial legal regimes, families increasingly relied on dowry as the only means to provide some material security for their daughters. This strengthened the social expectation that dowry was not a voluntary act of giving but an obligatory transfer accompanying marriage. The post-Independence era witnessed legislative attempts to curb this harmful custom, most notably the enactment of the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961, which criminalised the giving, taking, and demanding of dowry. However, despite legal restrictions, the dowry system persisted and adapted to changing socio-economic conditions. In contemporary India, rising materialism, consumerism, and the pursuit of status have reshaped dowry into a transactional exchange involving cash, luxury goods, vehicles, and property-moving far beyond its original cultural meaning. What began as a protective provision for women has thus evolved into a systemic practice contributing to violence, economic exploitation, and gender inequality in modern Indian society.

Types of Dowry Crimes- Dowry-related crimes in India represent some of the most severe forms of gender-based violence, rooted in socio-economic exploitation and patriarchal domination. Newly married women are particularly vulnerable because they are socially and economically dependent on their husbands and in-laws, and often isolated from their natal families. In many households, dowry becomes a coercive bargaining tool—women are treated as leverage, and threats or actual violence are used to extort additional money, property, or valuables from the bride's family. This creates a hostage-like environment where the woman's safety becomes contingent on her family's ability to fulfil escalating demands. Such crimes occur across the country but are disproportionately high in northern and eastern states, where dowry practices are deeply entrenched in social norms. Within this broad spectrum of offences, several distinct categories of dowry crimes have been recognised in legal and criminological literature-

Dowry Death- Dowry death represents the most extreme manifestation of dowry violence, involving the killing or forced suicide of a bride due to

unmet dowry demands. These deaths often follow a prolonged period of harassment, domestic torture, or threats. Many victims die by hanging or poisoning after being driven to emotional collapse, while others are subjected to gruesome acts such as bride burning, where the woman is doused with kerosene and set ablaze. Dowry deaths are not isolated incidents but the culmination of sustained abuse by the husband or his relatives.

Abetment to Suicide- Abetment to suicide occurs when persistent cruelty, intimidation, and psychological torture push a woman to take her own life. The abuse often includes threats of harm, humiliation, and coercion aimed at extracting more dowry from her family. Legally, abetment includes instigating, encouraging, or assisting in the commission of suicide. While perpetrators frequently argue that the suicide was voluntary, the underlying pattern of dowry-related harassment reveals the coercive environment that led to the woman's death.

Domestic Violence- Dowry-driven domestic violence encompasses physical assault, emotional degradation, sexual coercion, economic deprivation, and psychological intimidation. It includes behaviours such as beating, isolating the woman, controlling her movements, denying financial support, or threatening further harm. This form of violence is sustained and systemic, aimed at breaking the woman's resistance and compelling her or her family to satisfy dowry demands. Although the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 offers civil remedies, many women remain trapped due to social pressure, fear of retaliation, or lack of support mechanisms.

Cruelty- Cruelty involves any wilful conduct—verbal, emotional, or physical—that causes grave harm or danger to a woman's life, limb, or mental health, specifically for the purpose of coercing dowry. This includes taunts, humiliation, restrictions on mobility, deprivation of basic needs, threats, and regular beatings. In many cases, cruelty is the first stage of dowry violence, escalating over time if demands remain unmet. Severe cruelty has also been linked to cases where women are forced into suicide because of unbearable harassment.

Fraud- Fraud in the context of dowry crimes occurs when marriage itself is used as a deceptive strategy to obtain dowry. A documented example is exposed in the Canadian documentary *Runaway Grooms* (2005), where Indo-Canadian men travelled to India, married women under false pretences, collected dowry, and immediately abandoned them after returning abroad. Here, dowry becomes the primary motive for entering into the marriage, and the bride is exploited as a means to unlawfully obtain wealth.

Root Causes of Dowry in India- The persistence of dowry in India arises from a multilayered nexus of historical traditions, gendered power structures, socio-economic pressures, and institutional failures. These factors interact in ways that normalize dowry as both a cultural expectation and an economic transaction. The root causes can be understood as follows-

Historical and Cultural Foundations- Transformation of Ancient Practices-

The origins of dowry lie in Kanyadan and Stridhan, which were once voluntary gifts symbolizing parental affection and the daughter's financial security. With time, these practices hardened into compulsory social conventions, detached from their ethical roots. This historical shift demonstrates how cultural rituals evolve into structural compulsions when embedded within patriarchal norms. Cultural Continuity and Social Legitimization: Many families continue dowry as a “customary expectation” rather than a coercive demand.

The cultural narrative that dowry is a tradition passed through generations sustains its widespread acceptance.

Patriarchal Mindset and Gender Inequality-

1. Women Viewed as 'Paraya Dhan'- Deep-rooted patriarchy positions men as heads of households and women as temporary members destined to leave their parental homes.
2. This ideology constructs daughters as financial liabilities, justifying dowry as a payment for transferring responsibility to the husband's family.
3. Gender-Based Neglect from Childhood: Girls often receive inferior nutrition, education, and opportunities compared to boys.
4. The perception that women add economic burden creates an environment where dowry becomes a compensatory mechanism.
5. Socialization into Inferiority: Mothers and daughters are taught to accept dowry as a norm, reducing resistance and perpetuating generational compliance.

Social Status, Prestige, and Hypergamy-

1. Dowry as a Marker of Social Prestige: Families offer extravagant dowries to assert their socio-economic status.
2. The amount spent becomes a symbol of honor, reinforcing competitive displays of wealth.
3. Hypergamous Marriages (Marrying Upward): The aspiration to secure a “higher-status” groom—more educated, employed, or affluent—fuels excessive dowry payments.
4. Marriages become a means to climb the social ladder, making dowry an economic investment rather than a cultural formality.

Caste System and Restricted Marriage Choices-

1. Endogamy and Limited Groom Availability: The caste system restricts marriage within specific communities, shrinking the pool of eligible men. With fewer “suitable” grooms, especially educated or financially secure ones, families compete by offering higher dowries.
2. Social Pressure to Conform: Families fear social backlash if they reject dowry-based expectations, reinforcing the practice within

caste groups.

Materialism and Rising Consumerism-

1. Dowry as a Source of Wealth Acquisition: Modern consumerism encourages families to view dowry as an opportunity to acquire luxury items-cars, electronics, property, and cash.
2. The wedding becomes a commercial exchange rather than a personal union.
3. Social Mobility Through Dowry- Dowry enhances the groom's family's economic and social capital, making it a coveted gain.

Weaknesses in Legal Implementation- Despite extensive legislation, legal deterrence remains weak due to structural flaws.

1. Ineffectiveness of Anti- Dowry Laws- Dowry is treated as a private familial matter, reducing public willingness to treat it as a legal offense.
2. Conviction rates for dowry cases remain below 2%, according to NCRB, reflecting systemic failure.
3. Weak Enforcement by Police and Judiciary: Police often show reluctance to register cases due to corruption, gender bias, and social pressure.
4. Investigations into dowry deaths are frequently compromised, poorly documented, or delayed.
5. Judicial Delays and Low Convictions: Prolonged trials discourage victims from pursuing justice.
6. Low conviction rates embolden perpetrators, undermining legal deterrence.

Lack of Awareness and Social Stigma-

1. Limited Knowledge of Legal Rights: Many women and families remain unaware of provisions under the Dowry Prohibition Act, Section 498A/85–86 BNS, Section 80 BNS, and PWDVA 2005.
2. Fear of Retaliation: Women hesitate to seek help due to fear of violence, loss of marriage, or societal blame.
3. Social stigma often isolates survivors, making legal recourse inaccessible.
4. Normalization of Abuse: Dowry harassment is often trivialized as a “domestic issue,” preventing timely intervention.

Legal framework and efforts to combat dowry death- The legal architecture governing dowry and dowry-related violence in India represents a layered evolution of statutory intervention, judicial interpretation, and policy reform. Despite decades of legislative attempts, dowry persists as a structural gender-based harm, necessitating a close analysis of the statutory framework designed to curb it. The following sections outline the principal legal provisions, accompanied by analytical observations that illuminate their significance and limitations.

1. The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961- The Foundational Statute the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 serves as the earliest comprehensive central legislation targeting the coercive exchange of property during marriage.

Key Features-

1. Prohibition of Demand and Acceptance- The Act criminalizes the request, payment, or acceptance of dowry as a “consideration for marriage.”
2. Statutory Definition- “Dowry” encompasses any valuable security demanded as a precondition to marriage; voluntary gifts remain exempt.
3. Punitive Provisions- Offenders may face up to six months of imprisonment or a fine up to ₹5,000, a relatively modest sanction by contemporary standards.

Uniform Application- It replaced fragmented state-level laws, creating a unified national framework.

Complementarity with IPC- While the Act addresses transactional demands, homicide and suicide arising from dowry disputes are governed by India's criminal penal law. Although path-breaking for its time, the Act's weak enforcement mechanisms and lenient penalties have historically undermined its deterrent potential.

2. Strengthening Penal Sanctions- IPC Amendments (1983) and Transition to BNS 2023 Responding to rising dowry deaths and sustained activism, the Indian Parliament introduced significant criminal law reforms.

A. Section 498A IPC → Now Sections 85 & 86 BNS (Cruelty by Husband or Relatives)

Statutory Scope-

1. Criminalizes cruelty in both physical and mental forms.
2. Includes harassment aimed at coercing dowry payments.
3. Covers behaviour forcing a woman to commit suicide or suffer grave mental injury.

Punishment- Imprisonment up to three years and/or a fine. Section 498A was revolutionary in recognizing domestic cruelty as a criminal wrong. Its preventive rather than merely punitive orientation marks a significant shift in Indian family law. However, scholarly critiques note uneven implementation and procedural delays.

B. Section 304B IPC → Now Section 80 BNS (Dowry Death)

Definition and Scope-

1. Applies when a woman's death occurs due to burns, bodily injury, or unnatural circumstances within seven years of marriage.
2. Requires evidence of dowry-related cruelty “soon before death.”

Punishment- Minimum 7 years imprisonment, extendable to life imprisonment. In aggravated forms, punishment may extend to death. By defining dowry death as a specific offence, the legislature acknowledges the systemic, patterned nature of such violence. The seven-year rule is premised

on empirical studies showing heightened vulnerability of women during the early years of marriage.

3. Evidentiary Presumption- Section 113B Evidence Act → Now Section 113 Bharatiya Saksha Adhinyam (2023)

Key Components-

1. Establishes a statutory presumption of dowry death.
2. If a woman dies under suspicious circumstances within seven years of marriage and has faced dowry-related cruelty, the court may presume the husband or in-laws are responsible.
3. Shifts the burden of proof to the accused.

This presumption is an exceptional departure from classical criminal jurisprudence favouring the accused, justified here due to the concealed and domestic nature of dowry violence, where direct evidence is rare.

4. Civil Protective Framework- Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 (PWDVA) While the penal code focuses on punishment, PWDVA provides civil and immediate remedies to women facing dowry-related harassment.

Core Provisions-

1. Protection orders, residence orders, and monetary relief.
2. Access to shelter homes, medical aid, and emergency assistance.
3. Empowerment of Protection Officers to intervene in dowry harassment cases.

5. Persisting Challenges- Despite Strong Legislation Despite a robust statutory network, dowry-related violence continues largely unabated.

Key Issues Noted by Scholars and Reports-

1. Under-reporting due to social stigma and familial pressure.
2. Inconsistent enforcement and poorly conducted investigations.
3. Rural vulnerability, where dowry deaths remain disproportionately high.
4. Deep-rooted patriarchal norms that dilute the effectiveness of legal safeguards.
5. A 2019 study underscores that dowry death cases remain on the rise, particularly in areas where traditional practices dominate marital expectations.

Impact of dowry system in India- The dowry system in India produces a constellation of deep social, economic, psychological, and cultural harms that collectively weaken the foundations of gender justice and societal well-being. Its most visible and brutal manifestation lies in the sustained violence inflicted on women: dowry harassment, coercion, torture, and deaths continue to be pervasive despite legal prohibitions. NCRB 2022 data, which records over 125,000 cases annually under Section 498A, exposes a grim reality-violence linked to dowry is not an aberration but a structural phenomenon embedded in domestic and social relations. Beyond physical violence, the dowry system perpetuates gender-based

discrimination that begins before birth; the economic perception of daughters as a “liability” and sons as “assets” has contributed to India's skewed sex ratio. NFHS-5 statistics indicating 1020 males per 1000 females underscore how dowry fuels a preference for male children through sex selection practices, thereby distorting demographic patterns and deepening gender imbalances. The economic impact is equally corrosive. For countless families, especially those with modest means, dowry becomes an unbearable financial burden. Parents often deplete lifelong savings, mortgage agricultural land, sell property, or take high-interest loans to meet dowry expectations, plunging households into long-term indebtedness. This pushes economically vulnerable families into a cycle of intergenerational poverty, where the marriage of one daughter can destabilize the financial stability of an entire lineage. The economic strain of dowry also results in delayed or denied marriages for women from poorer backgrounds, subjecting them to social humiliation, reduced matrimonial prospects, and a lifelong stigma that affects their personal dignity and mental health. Psychologically, the dowry system inflicts profound trauma on women. Continuous harassment, coercive control, taunts, and threats by the husband or in-laws can erode a woman's self-worth, leading to chronic anxiety, depression, emotional exhaustion, and in extreme cases, suicide. Many women are forced to remain in abusive marriages because of social stigma, lack of financial independence, or fear of retaliation. The emotional toll extends to their natal families, who often face guilt, helplessness, and societal judgment. In essence, dowry transforms marriage—an institution meant to nurture companionship—into a transactional arrangement that prioritizes material exchanges over human dignity. On a societal level, the dowry system corrodes moral and ethical standards by normalizing greed, materialism, and consumerism within marital negotiations. As marriages become avenues for acquiring appliances, vehicles, cash, and luxury goods, relationships are evaluated through the lens of profit rather than partnership. This erosion of values weakens the ethical core of the family structure and reinforces the commodification of women. The dowry system is sustained further by the ineffectiveness of anti-dowry laws, which are often dismissed socially as mere formalities. With conviction rates in dowry cases falling below 2%, law enforcement remains weak, delayed, and sometimes compromised by corruption or insensitivity. Women are discouraged from reporting abuse due to fear of social backlash, lack of awareness about their rights, and the perception that dowry is a “private matter” rather than a legal offence. Consequently, the dowry system operates as a multidimensional problem—one that entrenches patriarchy, perpetuates injustice, distorts demographic patterns, destabilizes families economically, inflicts psychological devastation, and corrodes societal values. Its impact is not limited to individual victims but reverberates across generations, communities, and institutions, making it one of the most persistent and damaging social evils in contemporary India.

Conclusion- The phenomenon of dowry in India reveals a disturbing truth: the most profound costs of marriage are not financial but human, social, and psychological—costs that remain largely hidden beneath the ceremonial grandeur of weddings. Though often normalized as a cultural obligation, dowry has evolved into a deeply exploitative system that endangers women's lives and destabilizes families. The alarming data surrounding dowry-related violence illustrates the catastrophic burden this practice imposes on society. Year after year, thousands of women are subjected to harassment, coercion, and torture, culminating in deaths that are either disguised as accidents or attributed to suicide. With over 8,000 dowry deaths annually, and more than 2,500 cases of bride burning reported each year, the hidden cost of marriage becomes a tragic reality for countless women across India. The rising number of dowry deaths—from 7,146 in 1998 to 8,172 in 2008, and 8,233 in 2012—reflects not only the persistence of this practice but also the inadequacy of legal deterrence and social accountability. Moreover, these figures likely represent only a fraction of actual cases due to under-reporting, social stigma, and institutional apathy. The fact that dowry deaths transcend religious boundaries underscores that this is not a problem confined to any one community; rather, it is a widespread socio-cultural crisis rooted in patriarchal norms and economic greed. Dowry transforms marriage into an economic transaction, turning women into commodities exchanged through wealth and property. Beyond the visible financial burden placed on families, the hidden costs include lifelong psychological trauma, erosion of women's dignity, deterioration of marital relationships, and even the ultimate loss of life. These hidden costs are further compounded by cycles of domestic abuse, isolation, mental distress, and the societal pressure that forces women to internalize suffering as their marital duty. Thus, dowry is not merely an archaic custom—it is a structural form of violence that places an invisible yet devastating price on marriage. Addressing this issue requires more than legislative intervention; it demands a collective transformation of social attitudes, strict enforcement of existing laws, and the empowerment of women through education, economic independence, and social support systems. Only when society recognizes the true hidden cost of marriage under the dowry system can meaningful and lasting change be achieved.

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India's Foreign Policy under the Modi Government: Balancing Pragmatism and Ideology

•Dharmendra Kumar Singh

Abstract- *This paper analyses India's foreign policy under Prime Minister Narendra Modi since 2014, focusing on its strategic, economic, and ideological dimensions. Modi's policies, including Neighbourhood First, Act East, and assertive multilateralism, blend pragmatic diplomacy with Hindu nationalist ideology. Using interpretive frameworks and primary and secondary sources, the study evaluates policy shifts, outcomes, and challenges in a multipolar world. It argues that Modi's approach combines continuity with India's non-aligned tradition and a distinctive assertiveness driven by economic and strategic ambitions, particularly against China. The paper highlights India's trajectory as a rising global power, identifying opportunities and constraints.*

Keywords- *Modi, foreign policy, India, Neighbourhood First, Act East, nationalism India's Foreign Policy under the Modi Government: Balancing Pragmatism and Ideology*

Introduction- Since assuming office in May 2014, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has reshaped India's foreign policy, positioning the country as an assertive player in global affairs. His tenure, spanning two terms (2014-present), reflects a blend of pragmatic diplomacy, economic ambition, and ideological reorientation rooted in Hindu nationalism. Modi's foreign policy seeks to elevate India's stature in a multipolar world, navigating complex relationships with global powers like the United States, China, and Russia while strengthening regional influence in South Asia and the Indo-Pacific. Key initiatives, such as Neighbourhood First, Act East, and enhanced diaspora engagement, underscore this approach, alongside efforts to reform global governance institutions like the United Nations [1, 2].

This paper examines the evolution of India's foreign policy under Modi, assessing its strategic priorities, ideological underpinnings, and challenges. It explores whether Modi's policies mark a departure from India's historical non-alignment or represent a pragmatic adaptation to contemporary global dynamics. Using interpretive political science frameworks, particularly the concept of dilemmas [1], the study analyses how external shocks, for example, the 2020 Galwan Valley clash, and domestic factors shape policy shifts. The paper draws on primary sources, including Modi's speeches and statements by External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, as well as secondary sources like journal articles, books, and

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policy reports from institutions like the Observer Research Foundation (ORF) [2].

Methodology- This study employs a qualitative, interpretive approach, focusing on the interplay of leadership, ideology, and systemic factors in shaping India's foreign policy. Data is sourced from:

- Primary sources- Speeches and statements by Modi and Jaishankar, official documents from the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), and policy announcements.
- Secondary sources- Scholarly articles, books, and reports from think tanks like ORF, Carnegie India, and others.
- Web sources- Reputable online platforms, including government websites and international news outlets, for real-time data on recent developments.

The analysis uses the interpretive framework of dilemmas [3], which posits that policy shifts occur when new knowledge or crises challenge existing strategies. Comparative analysis with pre-Modi eras, for example, Nehruvian non-alignment and Vajpayee's nuclear diplomacy, provides historical context [4]. The study also incorporates quantitative data, such as trade figures and defence spending, to substantiate claims.

Historical Context- India's Foreign Policy Pre-Modi India's foreign policy has historically been shaped by the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), championed by Jawaharlal Nehru, emphasizing strategic autonomy and equidistance from Cold War superpowers. The 1991 economic liberalization under P.V. Narasimha Rao marked a shift towards global economic integration, while the 1998 nuclear tests under Atal Bihari Vajpayee enhanced India's strategic credibility [4]. These developments laid the foundation for Modi's policies, which build on economic pragmatism and strategic assertiveness while introducing a Hindu nationalist lens. The post-Cold War era saw India deepen ties with the United States, particularly after the 2008 Indo-US nuclear deal, and engage with Asia-Pacific nations through the Look East policy [ibid.]. However, challenges like China's growing influence and strained relations with Pakistan persisted. Modi's foreign policy inherits these dynamics, adapting them to a multipolar world where India's economic and military rise positions it as a potential global power.

Key Features of Modi's Foreign Policy- Neighbourhood First Policy- The Neighbourhood First policy aims to strengthen India's influence in South Asia, countering China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and regional dominance. Modi's early visits to Bhutan (2014), Nepal (2014), and Sri Lanka (2015) signalled a commitment to regional cooperation. India has provided significant aid, such as \$1.6 billion to Nepal for post-2015 earthquake reconstruction and \$500 million in credit lines to Sri Lanka in 2022 to address its economic crisis [5]. However, relations with Pakistan have deteriorated, marked by the 2016 Uri attack, the 2019 Balakot airstrike, and the revocation of Jammu and Kashmir's special status in 2019. These events have frozen bilateral dialogue, with India prioritizing

counterterrorism over diplomacy. Ties with other neighbours, like the Maldives, have been inconsistent due to domestic political shifts, such as the 2018 election of a pro-India government followed by tensions under President Muizzu in 2023 [ibid.]. Despite challenges, India's security cooperation with Seychelles and Mauritius in the Indian Ocean Region and infrastructure projects like the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway reflect strategic intent to maintain regional supremacy.

Act East Policy- The Act East policy, an evolution of the Look East policy, deepens India's engagement with Southeast Asia and the Indo-Pacific. Launched in 2014, it aligns with India's aspiration to counter China's assertiveness in the South China Sea and beyond. India's participation in the Quad (United States, Japan, Australia, India) has been pivotal, with joint naval exercises like Malabar and agreements on critical technologies [6]. Modi's visits to Japan (2014, 2016) and Australia (2014, 2022) have secured investments, such as Japan's \$42 billion commitment to India by 2027 [7]. The policy has also strengthened ties with ASEAN nations, with trade reaching \$131 billion in 2022 [5]. However, China's criticism of the Quad as a US-led containment strategy and India's cautious approach to militarizing the alliance highlight the delicate balance India maintains [6]. The 2020 India-Vietnam bilateral summit, which emphasized maritime security, underscores India's strategic pivot towards Southeast Asia [ibid.].

Economic Diplomacy and Self-Reliance- Economic diplomacy is central to Modi's foreign policy, driven by initiatives like Make in India (2014) and Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan (2020). These aim to bolster domestic manufacturing and reduce reliance on imports, particularly from China. India's defence exports grew from \$200 million in 2014 to \$2.5 billion in 2023, reflecting self-reliance efforts [8]. However, as Narlikar notes, a protectionist streak has emerged, with India imposing tariffs on Chinese goods post-Galwan, aligning with global trends of weaponized interdependence [9]. India's approach to global trade balances national interests with multilateral commitments. At the World Trade Organization's 2022 ministerial conference, India resisted pressure to liberalize agricultural subsidies, prioritizing food security [ibid.]. Foreign direct investment inflows reached \$81 billion in 2021, driven by Modi's outreach to global investors through summits like Vibrant Gujarat [10].

Diaspora Engagement- Modi's engagement with the Indian diaspora, numbering over 32 million, has been a hallmark of his foreign policy. Events like the Howdy, Modi! rally in Houston (2019) and the Toronto diaspora address (2015) have mobilized the diaspora as a tool of soft power. The BJP's Hindu nationalist ideology frames the diaspora as a transnational people, reinforcing India's civilizational identity. The Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, an annual diaspora event, has been elevated under Modi, fostering economic contributions, with remittances reaching \$100 billion in 2022 [11].

Strategic Balancing with Global Powers- Modi's diplomacy navigates complex relationships with global powers. India has deepened ties with the United States, evidenced by the 2016 Logistics Exchange Memorandum of

Agreement and \$20 billion in defence deals by 2023 [12]. Simultaneously, India maintains strong ties with Russia, a key arms supplier, with 60% of India's defence equipment sourced from Russia in 2022 [13].

Relations with China are fraught, marked by the 2017 Doklam standoff and the 2020 Galwan Valley clash, which killed 20 Indian soldiers. These events prompted India to ban Chinese apps, reduce economic dependence, and strengthen Quad partnerships [6]. India's full membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in 2017 reflects its balancing act, engaging with China and Russia while aligning with Western powers [ibid.].

Multilateral Engagement and Global Governance- Modi has positioned India as a leader in global governance, advocating for reforms in institutions like the United Nations Security Council. India's G20 presidency in 2023, which secured the African Union's inclusion as a permanent member, showcased its diplomatic influence [5]. Initiatives like the International Solar Alliance, co-founded with France in 2015, and the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure highlight India's leadership in climate and infrastructure diplomacy. However, India's reluctance to fully align with Western sanctions on Russia during the Ukraine conflict (2022–present) underscores its commitment to strategic autonomy [12].

Ideological Underpinnings- Modi's foreign policy is infused with Hindu nationalist ideology, departing from Nehruvian secularism. Drawing on thinkers like Swami Vivekananda, Modi frames India as a Vishwa guru (world teacher), emphasizing its civilizational heritage. The concept of Amrit Kaal, a 25-year roadmap to 2047, envisions India reclaiming global prominence after twelve centuries of oppression [14]. This narrative resonates domestically but risks alienating minority communities and neighbours like Pakistan and Bangladesh, where Hindu nationalism is viewed sceptically. Scholars like Ganguly argue that Modi's policies retain continuity with Nehruvian principles, adapting them to a multipolar world [15]. For instance, strategic autonomy remains central, as seen in India's neutral stance on the Russia-Ukraine conflict [12]. However, the ideological shift towards Hindu nationalism distinguishes Modi's approach, influencing diaspora engagement and cultural diplomacy [11].

Challenges and Constraints- India's foreign policy under Modi faces several challenges-

- **China's rise:** China's \$4 trillion economy and military modernization outpace India's, with the 2020 Galwan clash exposing vulnerabilities in India's border infrastructure [6]. China's Belt and Road Initiative projects in Pakistan and Sri Lanka further encircle India strategically [5].
- **Economic limitations:** Despite Modi's reforms, India's GDP growth averaged 6% annually (2014-2023), below the 8% target [17]. High unemployment and infrastructure gaps constrain India's global influence [ibid.].
- **Domestic constraints:** Federalism limits foreign policy coherence, with states like Tamil Nadu influencing Sri Lanka policy. Industrial

conglomerates also shape economic diplomacy, as seen in Reliance's role in 5G technology exports [9].

- Populist diplomacy: Modi's reliance on social media, for example, 100 million X followers by 2024, and avoidance of press conferences reflects a populist approach, raising concerns about transparency, as Chandra notes [16].
- Regional instability: Political volatility in neighbours like Afghanistan (post-2021 Taliban takeover) and Myanmar (2021 coup) complicates India's regional strategy [5].

Discussion- Modi's foreign policy reflects a delicate balance between continuity and change. The emphasis on strategic autonomy aligns with India's non-aligned tradition [4], but the assertive pursuit of global leadership through the Quad, G20, and International Solar Alliance marks a departure [6]. The Galwan crisis, as analysed by Hall, illustrates how external shocks prompt policy adjustments, such as increased defence spending (4% of GDP in 2023) and Quad alignment [3]. However, ideological rhetoric risks straining relations with Muslim-majority neighbours, while economic constraints limit India's ability to compete with China [17]. The diaspora has emerged as a powerful tool, enhancing India's soft power but also reflecting the BJP's domestic agenda [11]. Modi's personal diplomacy, characterized by high-profile summits and social media engagement, has elevated India's visibility but faces criticism for lacking institutional depth [18]. The interplay of pragmatism and ideology positions India as a swing power in global politics, capable of shaping outcomes but constrained by systemic and domestic factors.

Conclusion- India's foreign policy under Modi has transformed the country's global engagement, blending pragmatic diplomacy with ideological assertiveness. Initiatives like Neighbourhood First, Act East, and diaspora engagement have strengthened India's regional and global influence, while strategic partnerships with the United States and Quad nations counterbalance China's rise [6, 12]. However, challenges like economic limitations, regional instability, and ideological polarization pose significant hurdles [17]. As India navigates a multipolar world, its ability to balance strategic autonomy, economic growth, and ideological ambitions will determine its trajectory as a global power. Future research should explore the sustainability of Modi's populist diplomacy and the impact of domestic politics on India's foreign policy coherence [18].

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A Critical Study of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS): India's Criminal Law Reforms of 2023–24

• Ananya Choudhary

Abstract- *India's criminal justice system underwent significant legislative reform in 2023–24 with the enactment of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), and the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam (BSA). These statutes replaced the colonial-era Indian Penal Code 1860, Code of Criminal Procedure 1973, and Indian Evidence Act 1872. This paper critically examines the BNS and BNSS, focusing on their substantive and procedural innovations. Drawing on doctrinal analysis and relevant case law from the pre-2024 regime, it explores reported reforms such as digital integration, stricter procedural timelines, forensic mandates, and expanded definitions of terrorism, organized crime, and crimes against vulnerable groups. The discussion also notes concerns highlighted in media and expert commentary, including vague provisions, increased executive discretion, infrastructural limitations, and challenges posed by the digital divide. The paper concludes that while these reforms mark a bold attempt to modernize India's criminal justice system, their ultimate success depends on careful implementation, institutional capacity, and judicial oversight.*

Keywords- *Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) 2023, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) 2023, Indian criminal law reform, Digital and electronic evidence, Organised crime, terrorism, Mob lynching legislation, Restorative justice mechanisms, Victim protection and rights, Procedural modernization in India, Judicial oversight, constitutional safeguards.*

Introduction- The introduction of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) and the Bhartiya Sakshya Adhinyam (BSA) in 2023 marked a pivotal moment in the evolution of Indian criminal law. For over a century, the Indian Penal Code (IPC), 1860, Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), 1973, and Indian Evidence Act (IEA), 1872, formed the backbone of criminal jurisprudence in India. While historically significant, these colonial-era statutes were often criticized for emphasizing state order over individual rights and proved inadequate in addressing contemporary challenges such as cybercrime, organized crime, terrorism, and digital evidence management. The enactment of the BNS, BNSS, and BSA represents a legislative attempt to modernize the criminal justice framework, reorganize offences, streamline procedural mechanisms,

and align statutory law with current social realities. The new codes attempt to contemporise the legal system, reorganise offences, streamline procedures, and align Indian criminal law with present-day social realities. The legislative change was introduced as a package of three new laws, aiming to modernise definitions, broaden the scope of offences, streamline procedure, and align the criminal justice system with Twenty first century social, technological, and constitutional realities.

Substantive Reforms under BNS- The BNS introduces several substantive innovations reportedly absent in the IPC. Under BNS, the total number of sections is **358**, arranged in **20 chapters**, whereas the IPC had **511 sections across 23 chapters**. It consolidates archaic provisions, and introduces new offences to meet contemporary social and criminal challenges. The restructuring also aims to modernize language, definitions, updating the terms of the colonial era, redefining property, and including contemporary categories of crime (e.g. data property). Some of the principal substantive innovations and redefinitions under BNS, with section numbers and details are as follows-

- **The BNS introduces “Organised Crime” under Section 111.** For the first time in a national penal code, criminal law explicitly addresses syndicate-style crimes including kidnapping, extortion, cyber-fraud, trafficking, land-grabbing, financial scams, weapons or drug smuggling, and other coordinated unlawful activity. BNS further distinguishes **petty organised crimes** under **Section 112**, recognizing lower-level or less severe group offences. The law prescribes severe penalties: in cases involving death or serious harm, life imprisonment (or death penalty, depending on severity) plus fine may be imposed. This change fills a major lacuna in IPC, where organised crime was often prosecuted under assorted laws (state-level or special acts), leading to inconsistency and legal fragmentation.
- Under BNS, terrorism is now incorporated into the main penal law via **Section 113**, defining “terrorist acts” broadly as any act intended or likely to threaten India's unity, integrity, sovereignty, security, or economic security; or to strike terror in people (or any section) in India or abroad. The inclusion brings offences such as smuggling of counterfeit currency or state-destabilizing economic crimes under “terrorist acts,” meaning certain economic or financial offences may now attract terrorism designations. Punishments include life imprisonment (or up to death depending on outcome), or prison term from 5 years to life with fine. This is a major shift, terrorism is no longer confined to special laws (like earlier anti-terror statutes), but sits within the general penal law, increasing uniformity and reach.
- The BNS also addresses the long-standing social problem of mob lynching. Previously, such incidents were prosecuted under the general provisions of the IPC primarily Sections 302 (murder) and 147–149 (rioting and unlawful assembly) without acknowledging

the distinctive character of mob violence. In response to repeated judicial criticism, including the Supreme Court's strong observations in *Tehseen S. Poonawalla v. Union of India* (2018), the BNS introduces Section 103(2), which specifically criminalises mob lynching and prescribes stringent punishment, including life imprisonment or even death. This reflects a conscious attempt to address this crime as a distinct category of collective violence.

- Offences such as "snatching", earlier dealt with under varied state laws or interpreted under general theft or robbery are now uniformly defined under BNS (e.g. **Section 304**, among others). The aim is to provide clarity and federal uniformity in offences dealing with property and theft, including new-age crimes involving mobile theft, pickpocketing, purse-snatching, etc. Finally, the BNS introduces snatching as a distinct offence under Section 304. Under the IPC, such acts were generally prosecuted as theft or robbery, creating ambiguity and inconsistent sentencing. The BNS clarifies this by distinguishing snatching as a sudden, forceful taking of property without the full elements of robbery. In addition, snatching committed by small gangs can also fall under Section 112 as petty organised crime. This specificity is crucial in urban environments where mobile phone and chain-snatching incidents are widespread.
- BNS introduces **Section 69**, which penalises consensual sexual intercourse obtained by deceitful means or under false promises (marriage, employment, promotion) even when it does not amount to rape. Such an offence may attract up to 10 years' imprisonment plus fine. This codification replaces earlier reliance on legal interpretations under IPC (e.g. Section 90 + Section 375) and seeks to provide a clear statutory framework for prosecuting such offences. This is significant in bringing clarity and codified accountability in cases of sexual exploitation by deception.
- The **Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) 2023** removes several outdated or socially obsolete provisions from the old **Indian Penal Code (IPC)**, reflecting changes in social values and constitutional principles. For example, the sections dealing with "Unnatural Offences" under IPC Section 377 have been removed, in line with **Supreme Court decisions decriminalising consensual same-sex relations among adults**. Similarly, the offence of **adultery**, which was previously punishable under IPC Section 497, is no longer a criminal offence under BNS. This change follows the **Supreme Court's judgment in *Joseph Shine v Union of India* (2018) 9 SCC 1**, which held that criminalising adultery was unconstitutional. These changes show that BNS aligns criminal law with modern social norms, individual rights, and constitutional protections.
- The law may still consider adultery in **civil matters**, such as divorce,

alimony, or custody disputes. BNS aligns criminal law with constitutional principles of **privacy, equality, and personal liberty** under Articles 14, 15, and 21. Decriminalisation removes the **gender bias** present in IPC 497, which criminalised adultery only if committed by a man. Focus shifts from criminal punishment to **civil remedies and marital rights**.

- As far as punishments are concerned, BNS increases the quantum of punishment for 33 offences compared to IPC; fines have been increased in 83 offences; mandatory minimum punishments have been introduced for 23 offences; and for 6 offences, **community service** is offered as an alternative to imprisonment.
- A significant reform brought by the BNS is the introduction of community service as a punishment. Under the IPC, Section 53 listed only five types of punishments, whereas the BNS, under Section 4(f), expands the list to include community service. The inclusion of community service suggests a shift in sentencing philosophy from purely punitive to more rehabilitative, restorative justice for minor and non-violent offences. This reformative sanction is designed for petty offences and reflects a shift towards humane, corrective justice. Courts in India had already indicated interest in such alternatives; for example, in *State v. Gurvinder Singh* (Delhi HC, 2017), the court recommended community-based reform rather than incarceration. The BNS institutionalises this progressive approach.
- Another critical reform is the change in treatment of hit-and-run cases. Whereas the IPC dealt with such incidents under Section 304A, prescribing a maximum punishment of two years, the BNS introduces Section 106(2), which greatly enhances the penalty when the driver flees the scene without informing authorities. The notorious Alistair Pereira case (2006), where fleeing the accident scene sparked public outrage, exemplifies the need for stronger accountability, which the BNS now directly mandates.
- The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) makes a major change by **removing the old sedition law**, which earlier existed as **Section 124A of the IPC**, a colonial provision widely criticised for suppressing free speech and often misused against journalists, students, and activists. The Supreme Court in *Kedar Nath Singh v. State of Bihar* (1962) had already limited sedition to acts involving **incitement to violence or threats to public order**, stressing that mere criticism of the government cannot be punished. Following this principle, the BNS **abolishes sedition** and introduces **Section 150 (Treason)**, which deals only with activities that genuinely threaten the **sovereignty, unity, and integrity of India**, such as assisting enemies, inciting armed rebellion, or engaging in violent anti-national acts. This reform narrows the scope of criminal

liability and ensures that dissent and criticism remain protected in a democratic society, while serious threats to national security are still strongly punished.

- Another notable reform pertains to the possession of fake currency. Under IPC Section 242, even mere possession of counterfeit currency was criminalised. However, Section 178 of the BNS requires proof of intention or knowledge for possession to constitute an offence. This aligns the law with the principle of mens rea (criminal intent), protecting individuals who accidentally receive counterfeit currency in the course of daily transactions. The BNS further modernises the definition of theft to accommodate digital realities. Under the IPC, Section 378 limited the definition of theft to “movable property,” meaning physical objects. The BNS, through Section 303, expands this to include data, identity information, digital accounts, and other intangible property, allowing prosecution of offences such as ATM skimming, credit-card cloning, and identity theft. With rising cybercrime cases, including large-scale data breaches, this reform is highly relevant. The BNS reportedly introduces restorative justice mechanisms such as community service for minor offences, signalling a shift away from a purely punitive framework. While much of the IPC has been retained in reorganized or renumbered form, these innovations suggest an effort to modernize criminal law while preserving continuity in fundamental principles.

Procedural Reforms under BNSS- The Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023 represents a landmark reform in India's criminal procedure framework, modernising and replacing significant portions of the colonial-era Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC). While retaining the basic procedural structure, the BNSS introduces a range of progressive, technology-driven, and citizen-friendly reforms aimed at strengthening investigation, ensuring faster trials, and making the criminal justice system more transparent and accountable. While retaining much of the substantive criminal law, it revises arrest and detention procedures, incorporates forensic and biometric evidence systematically, sets strict timelines for procedural steps, and updates outdated terminology. The law reflects India's evolving societal and technological needs, aiming to balance public safety with individual liberties. The BNSS redefines key provisions concerning arrest and detention. Under the CrPC, Section 41 allowed arrests without a warrant, and Section 46 outlined the procedure for arrests; these correspond in the BNSS to Sections 35 and 43, respectively. Similarly, the CrPC's Section 57 limiting detention to 24 hours corresponds to BNSS Section 58. The BNSS extends restrictions on early release to offenders sentenced to life imprisonment and those facing multiple charges, under Section 18. This ensures public safety and prevents habitual offenders from evading justice, though it may also risk over-detention if judicial oversight is insufficient.

These changes highlight the ongoing tension between safeguarding liberty and ensuring effective law enforcement. A significant innovation in the BNSS is the systematic integration of forensic and biometric evidence. While the CrPC allowed collection of handwriting and signature samples (Sections 53–54), the BNSS, under Section 28, expands this to include finger impressions, voice samples, and other biometric identifiers, even from unarrested individuals. Mandatory forensic investigation is required for offences punishable by seven years or more (Section 27), and search and seizure operations must be recorded electronically (Section 105). These provisions strengthen the credibility of investigations, reduce reliance on testimonial evidence, and align India's criminal justice system with global best practices. The BNSS also introduces strict time-bound procedures aimed at reducing judicial delays and protecting victims' rights. Medical examination reports in sexual assault cases must be submitted within seven days (Section 26(1)), charges must be framed within sixty days (Section 29), judgments delivered within thirty to forty-five days (Section 60), and victims must be informed of investigation progress every ninety days (Section 35). By enforcing these timelines, the BNSS addresses one of the long-standing challenges of India's legal system, ensuring that justice is not unduly delayed and victims remain informed throughout the process. The law reforms court hierarchy and legal terminology. The CrPC's designation of Metropolitan Magistrates has been removed, creating a uniform court structure across India, and outdated terms such as “lunatic” have been replaced with inclusive language such as “persons with mental illness” (Section 2). These changes are both symbolic and practical, reflecting a shift toward a more human-centric legal system while simplifying judicial processes. BNSS also revises police custody and bail provisions. The law allows up to fifteen days of police custody in segments (Section 19) and permits the use of handcuffs in organized crime, terrorism, and sexual offences (Section 33). Bail provisions, previously provided under CrPC Section 436A, are now restricted for individuals facing multiple charges (BNSS Section 20). While these measures strengthen investigative efficiency and public safety, they also underscore the need for robust judicial oversight to prevent misuse and protect individual liberty. The extent of change under BNSS is substantial. The CrPC has been entirely repealed, with approximately 160 sections amended, substituted, or renumbered, nine sections deleted, and new provisions added. Notable mappings include CrPC Section 41 to BNSS Section 35 (arrest without warrant), CrPC Section 46 to BNSS Section 43 (arrest procedure), CrPC Section 57 to BNSS Section 58 (detention limit), and CrPC Sections 82–83 to BNSS Sections 84–85 (proclamation and attachment of property for absconders). While the fundamental principles remain, the structural overhaul, updated language, and procedural innovations significantly modernize the criminal justice framework. Analytically, the BNSS balances efficiency, accountability, and human rights. Its integration of digital tools, forensic evidence, and biometric identifiers enhances the accuracy and transparency of

investigations. Time-bound procedures reduce delays and safeguard victims' rights, while updated terminology and uniform court structures promote inclusivity and clarity. At the same time, expanded police powers and stricter bail limitations illustrate the delicate trade-off between public safety and individual liberties, emphasizing the need for careful judicial oversight. In Conclusion the BNSS, 2023, is a transformative legal instrument that modernizes India's criminal procedure while addressing longstanding challenges such as delayed justice, outdated colonial provisions, and inadequate forensic practices. By embracing technology, scientific investigation, and citizen-friendly language, it creates a system that is transparent, efficient, and equitable. While some aspects require vigilant oversight to prevent potential misuse, the BNSS positions India to deliver justice that is timely, inclusive, and reflective of contemporary social and technological realities. Victim-centric reforms, including structured rights to medical examination, updates during investigations, and special protections for women and children, are consistent with judicial directions in *Nipun Saxena v Union of India* (2018) 10 SCC 703. Safeguards against misuse of police powers, as emphasised in *D K Basu v State of West Bengal* (1997) 1 SCC 416 and *Arnesh Kumar v State of Bihar* (2014) 8 SCC 273, continue to inform procedural protections under the BNSS.

Debates and Challenges- While media reporting and expert commentary highlight several progressive features of BNS and BNSS, significant concerns remain. Mandatory digitalisation and strict procedural timelines may be difficult to enforce due to infrastructural limitations. Certain new provisions, particularly those relating to sovereignty and national security, are critiqued for potential vagueness and executive overreach. Pending legal challenges, such as petitions regarding Section 152 of BNS, underscore the ongoing judicial scrutiny required to balance state power with constitutional liberties (Economic Times, 2025). The BNS retains much of the substantive framework of the IPC, which ensures stability but tempers claim of a complete structural overhaul. Nevertheless, the reported emphasis on technology, forensic science, victim rights, organized crime, and terrorism signals an effort to create a more responsive and transparent criminal justice system.

Conclusion- The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita represent a landmark attempt to modernize India's criminal justice system, replacing outdated colonial statutes with legislation that reflects contemporary social, technological, and procedural realities. Media and expert commentary indicate positive reforms in areas including digitalization, forensic mandates, victim protection, and procedural efficiency.

However, several reforms remain unverified pending official bare act analysis, and potential risks include vague statutory definitions, executive overreach, infrastructural challenges, and the digital divide. The ultimate impact of these reforms will depend on effective implementation, resource allocation, institutional capacity, and judicial oversight. By cautiously

navigating these opportunities and challenges, India has the potential to establish a more modern, efficient, and just criminal law framework.

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International Year of Millets (IYM) 2023 in Uttrakhand

• Amrita Shilpi
•• Anchal

Abstract- *The binaries of science and social science dissolve when challenged with the question of existence. Social science looks into the challenges before the society whereas science attempts to dig out the plausible solutions through technology and scientific methods. Food security and livelihood sustainability are two such issues that require combined efforts. From this perspective, International Year of Millets (IYM) 2023 was an initiative where nutritional needs of human societies and availability of food were addressed at global level. The goals set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development address all those issues that converged to undermine food security and livelihood sustainability worldwide. Human induced climate change has been a major concern in this regard. “Access by all people at all times to enough food for an active healthy life” has been one of the important goals of SDGs. It included concepts of availability, access and livelihood sustainability. The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) declared 2023 as the International Year of Millets (IYM) on 5th March 2021. The Government of India (GoI) declared 2023 International Year of Millets (IYM), for the inclusive benefit of the Cultivator, Consumer and Climate. This paper is a part of ICSSR funded short term empirical research titled “Impact of Year of Millets 2023 in select areas of Uttrakhand” that involved analysis of data collected in four districts of Uttrakhand (Dehradun, Pauri Garhwal, Tehri Garhwal & Almora). This paper aims to understand the issue of climate change and availability of food by assessing the climate resilience of Millets from social science perspective. It also provides a comparative analysis of different crops in Uttrakhand, India.*

Keywords- *Millet, climate resilience, food security, livelihood sustainability.*

Introduction- The binaries of science and social science dissolve when challenged with the question of existence. Social science looks into the challenges before the society whereas science attempts to dig out the plausible solutions through technology and scientific methods. Food security and livelihood sustainability are two such issues that require combined efforts. From this perspective, International Year of Millets (IYM) 2023 was an initiative where nutritional needs of human societies and availability of food in present and future were addressed at global level. The

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goals set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development address all those issues that converged to undermine food security and livelihood sustainability worldwide. Human induced climate change has been a major concern in this regard. “Access by all people at all times to enough food for an active healthy life” has been one of the important goals of SDGs. It included concepts of availability, access and livelihood sustainability. The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) declared 2023 as the International Year of Millets (IYM) on 5th March 2021. The Government of India (GoI) declared 2023 International Year of Millets (IYM), for the inclusive benefit of the Cultivator, Consumer and Climate. International Year of Millets (IYM 2023) not only addressed the issues of the food security and livelihood sustainability but also aimed to provide nutritional food to the people both at domestic and global level. Various initiatives were taken by different states in to promote cultivation, distribution and consumption of Millets. However, very less empirical work has been done on IYM 2023 in Uttarakhand. This paper is a part of ICSSR funded short term empirical research titled “Impact of Year of Millets 2023 in select areas of Uttarakhand” that involved analysis of data collected in four districts of Uttarakhand (Dehradun, Pauri Garhwal, Tehri Garhwal & Almora). The paper aims to understand the issue of climate change and availability of food by assessing the climate resilience of Millets from social science perspective. It also provides a comparative analysis of different crops in Uttarakhand, India.

Review of Literature- The review of literature shows that Millet is the common name for small-seeded grasses that are also called “Nutri-cereals or dryland-cereals” and includes Banyard Millet (Sawan, Jhangora, Kudraivali, Oodalu), Pearl Millet (Bajra), Sorghum (Jowar), Finger Millet (Ragi/Mandua), Little Millet (Kutki), Foxtail Millet (Kakun), , Proso Millet (Cheena Kodo Millet (Kodon) etc. Earliest available texts in India reveal use to Millets. References of these Shri Anna can be found in Yajurveda, identifying barnyard millet (aanava), foxtail millet (priyangava) and black finger millet (shyaamaka). This indicates that millet consumption was common in ancient India. Their health benefits are long established. Acknowledging the importance of contribution in the country's food and nutrition security, reserves of nutrients and climate resilience, India has mentioned it in the Mini Booklet through State Letter No. 133 dated 13 April 2018 finger millet (Ragi/Mandua), small millet i.e. foxtail millet (Kangni/Kakoon), Kodo millet (Kodo), Banyard millet (Sawa/Jhangora), small millet (Kutki) and two pseudo millets (Kuttu and Amaranthus). Their nutritional potential is very abundant and has been declared a “nutritious grain” from the point of view of production and trade. Willett et al., (2021) in their study emphasize identification of healthy and environmentally sustainable food intake along with more consumption of less consumed plant species, for example quinoa, millets, sorghum etc. This is suggested because of the climate resilience and dense nutritional content of these species. According to them, out of 14,000 edible plants just rice, wheat and maize contribute 60% of caloric intake. There is pertinent need to “replace

the major portion of the diet currently dominated by rice, wheat, and maize with highly nutritious grains,” such as millets to achieve the SDGs 2030 goal “of eliminating all forms of malnutrition by 2030”. Bahuguna and Maithili (2020) in their study of agro-forestry establish that it is the most widespread land use practice in Garhwal in the Himalayan region. Forest is an inalienable aspect of their lives that provides for wild edibles, fodder, fuel-wood and other livelihood necessities. The villagers use forest products in variety of ways. Forests for them are a precious treasure. They would go to any lengths for their protection from any illegal and destructive activity. “As in case of villages of Tehri Garhwal, the fodder and fuel-wood is the main requirement from the forest. The agroforestry system and village policies are different in different villages with least to maximum involvement of forest department and personnel in various forestry activities. The ownership of the forests varies from the government owned forest to the forest owned by village panchayats. In either case, the overexploitation of nearby forests was mostly found absent from the villages of Tehri Garhwal, Uttarakhand.” Sukanya et al (2022) have shown that small millets are eco-friendly and climate resilient. Climate change, increasing temperature and unpredictable rains have raised concern for food security. They suggest evaluating the effects of climate change on productivity of cropping systems and developing operative approaches for agriculture so as to uphold food security. Amrutha, T. (2019). “Economics of Cultivation of Small Millets for Meeting Food Nutrition Fodder Security and Sustainability in the Wake of Climate Change” worked on small millets economics, their impact on food, nutrition and health security, existing processing and marketing facilities and constraints in production and consumption of small millets in Central Dry Zone of Karnataka during 2016-17. The study was taken up in Chitradurga and Tumkur districts. Jayashree, B. (2021). Social Practices in Conservation of Millets in Kolli Hills: This study “explored linkages between social practices that contribute towards conservation of millets, known for their climate-resilient and nutrition-rich properties in the tribal region of Kolli Hills in Tamil Nadu, south India”. Saxena et al., (2018). Millets for Food Security in the Context of Climate Change, A Review (Department of Bioresource Engineering, Faculty of Agricultural & Environmental Sciences, McGill University, 21 111 Lakeshore Rd, Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue, QC H9X 3V9, Canada): Studied the adverse effect of climate change on “the quality and availability of resources, thereby food systems and crop productivity, especially of major cereals such as rice, wheat and maize”. They looked at the “availability of resources such as water and soil based on several modelling scenarios in different regions of the world”. And found that “all the major cereal crops are known to have a higher contribution to global warming than alternative crops such as millets which should be considered in mitigating global food insecurity”.

Methodology- The state of Uttarakhand state is the universe of this study. According to the topography the state has 10 hill districts and 3 districts that are mostly plains. The production of millets in the hill districts is high as

compared to the plains. So while selecting the districts for study it was decided that both the hill and plains should be represented as far as millet cultivation is concerned. Based on the data between 2019 and 2022 it was found that the top 5 millet producing districts in Uttarakhand were Almora, Tehri, Pauri, Chamoli and Rudraprayag. The least millet producing districts were Dehradun, Haridwar, Champawat, Nainital and Pithoragarh. There are different varieties of millets that are grown in the hilly areas of Uttarakhand. Different regions grow different varieties such as manduwa, jhangora, ramdana sawa, cheena and kauni. Due to paucity of time and difficult terrain only four districts were selected for the study 3 from hills (Pauri Garhwal, Tehri Garhwal & Almora) and one from plain region (Dehradun) to provide a comparative perspective. The time series data pertaining to area, production and productivity of different crops for state and district wise were collected from various stakeholders and state agencies. Sources of Data were.

Statistical data sources- surveys and other statistical reports; Census data sources and Government and Non-government publications (books, articles etc)

The analysis has been done on both primary and secondary data. Major findings were obtained with the help of Excel and SPSS tools. Trend analysis, cross tabulation with Chi-square analysis, frequency measures including average mean- minimum mean and maximum mean were applied to study the increase and decrease of trend analysis.

Objectives of the paper-

- To assess the Climate resilience of Millets
- To provide a comparative analysis of different crops in Uttarakhand.
- To understand the supply, production, consumption and popularization of Millets in Uttarakhand.
- Need to understand the issue of climate change and availability of food

Discussion- With India leading the way as Vishwa guru in food security and livelihood sustainability, the global future will stand secured with millets becoming significant part of diet. Lifestyle diseases and food insecurity in global north and south will be taken care of by adoption of millets or the Sri Anna in our food plates. If millets again become a part of our diet with collaboration of state civil society and market in hand-holding the cultivators they will be able to fight with the natural and manmade challenges. The importance of nutritious grains can be understood on the basis that in comparison to wheat and rice, these grains are richer in all the nutrients. Protein, calcium, fibre, minerals and vitamins are also found in nutritious grains. Studies have shown that compared to other grains, millets have medicinal properties to control diseases related to diabetes, heart disease, cancer, stones and obesity etc. These grains, listed among the healthiest foods in the world, can be easily grown in non-irrigated and rain-fed areas. And its specialty is that its production requires low cost. The discussion is divided into four parts that focus on millet production in

Uttarakhand, climate resilience of millets, supply, production, consumption and popularization of Millets in Uttarakhand and issues of Climate change, lack of awareness, political-economic scope.

Millet production in Uttarakhand- Millets have been traditional crop of Uttarakhand. Millets are an integral part of subsistence agriculture mainly in the hilly areas of the state. In 11 out of 13 districts of the state, the hilly areas Manduwa and Sawan are cultivated, which come in the category of nutritious food. Due to adverse geographical and climatic conditions, various types of nutritious grains are grown in Uttarakhand. Among the nutritious grains grown in the state, crops like Ragi, Sawan, Cocoon, Buckwheat and Amaranth etc. are grown.

Fig 1 Different Varieties of millets in Uttarakhand.

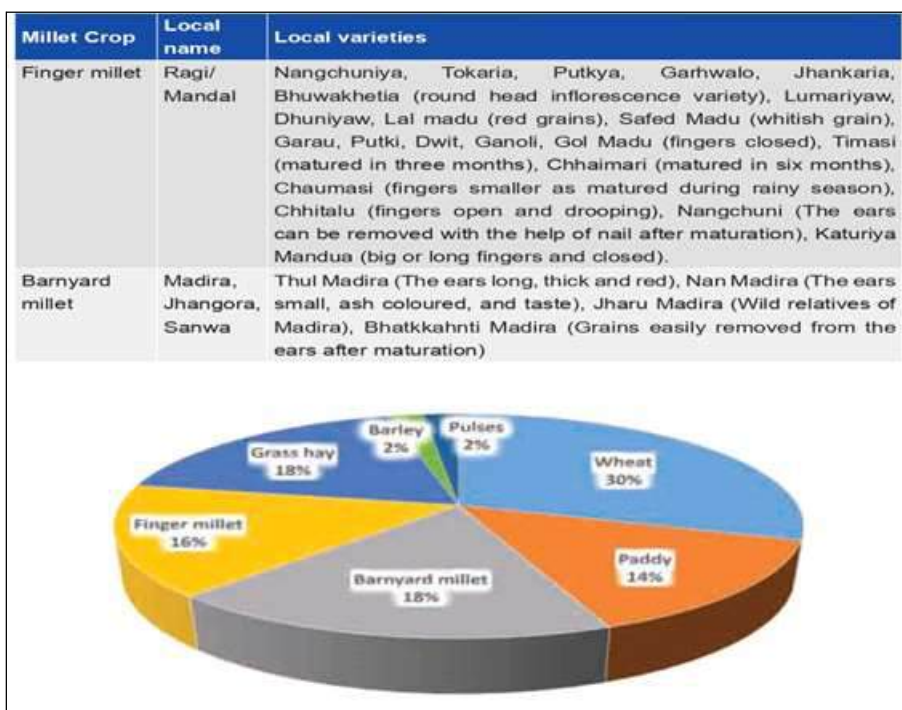


Figure 1 lists the local varieties of millets and also the consumption percentage. Figures 2 and 3 depict the area and production of millet in the year 2021-22. The selection of districts was done on this data. The figures reveal that millet production in the hilly areas is more than the plain. Millets are an integral part of subsistence agriculture mainly in the hilly areas of the state. In 11 out of 13 districts of the state, the hilly areas Manduwa and Sawan are cultivated. Due to adverse geographical and climatic conditions, various types of millets are grown in these areas.

Fig 2: Finger Millet (Area & Production 2021-22)

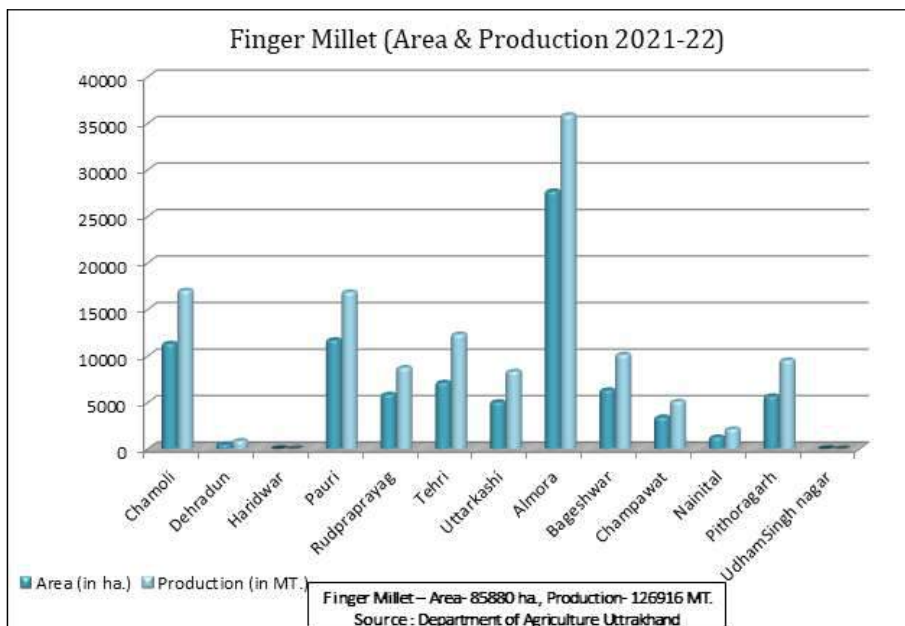


Fig 3: Barnyard Millet (Area & Production 2021-22)

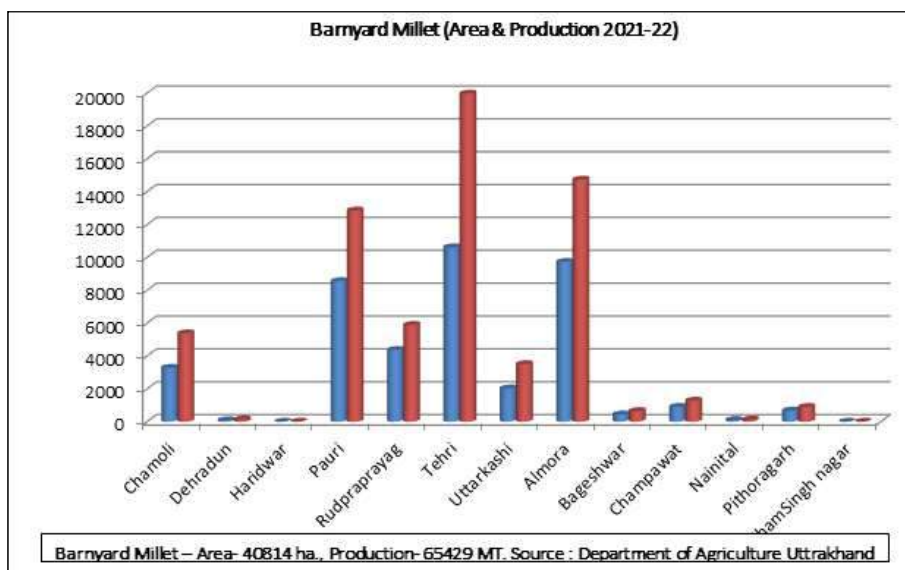


Fig 4: Amaranthus (Area & Production 2021-22)

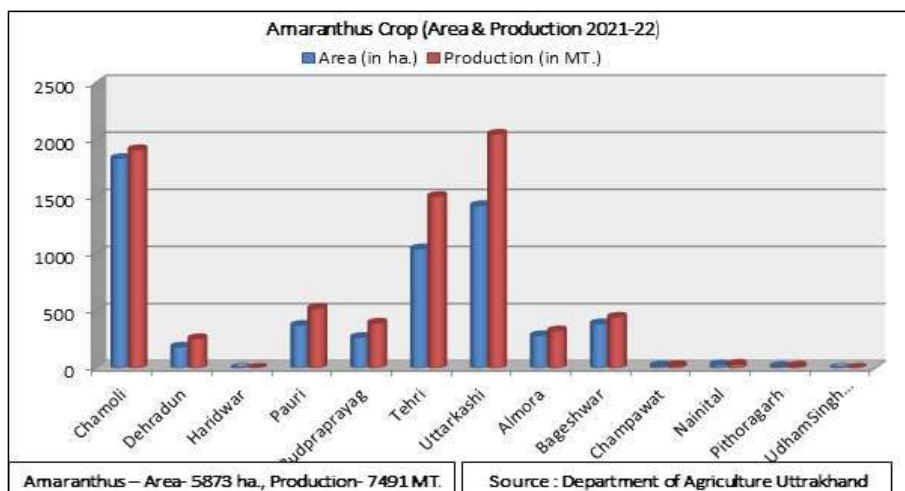


Table 1 discusses the production and contribution percentage to total millets produced in Uttarakhand. As seen in the table the finger millet top the other varieties in production.

Sr. No.	Name of Millet	Production (Metric tons) 2021-22	% contribution to total millets produced
1	Ragi (Finger Millet)	126916	63.51
2	Jhangora (Barnyard Millet)	65429	32.74
3	Ramdana (Amaranthus)	7491	3.75
5	Total	199836	100

Climate resilience of millets in Uttarakhand- Uttarakhand has different landforms from mountains to plains. Climate and vegetation keep changing with the altitude of the place in the state. Hilly areas have gravel and light textured soil which does not retain water for long and is suitable for small millet. These crops are known for their resilience, which helps them adapt to diverse ecological conditions. These unique properties of millets make them a suitable crop for rainfed conditions of hill agriculture. Millets are mostly cultivated on low fertile land, mountainous, and rainfed areas of Uttarakhand. 86% of the land is mountainous while 14% is plains.

Table 3 Measurement of rainfall

Month	Rain in mm			% of normal rain	
	Normal Rain	2020-21	2021-22	2020-21	2021-22
June	165.72	132.00	228.16	- 20.35	37.68
July	432.79	308.80	284.24	- 28.65	-34.32
August	426.78	311.00	216.57	- 27.13	- 49.25
September	204.48	38.80	153.16	- 81.03	125.10
October	58.84	0.10	177.23	- 99.83	201.21
November	9.24	5.40	20.82	-41.56	125.32
Total	1297.85	796.10	1080.18	- 38.66	-16.77

Source : Department of Agriculture Uttarakhand

Effect of Rain- The actual sown area in the state is 6.21 lakh hectares, out of which 3.22 lakh hectares (51.85%) is irrigated area and 4.51 lakh hectares (72.62%) of unirrigated area. Most of the agriculture in the state is based on the rain. On comprehensive analysis of the data provided by Department of Agriculture, Uttarakhand, there was more rainfall in the months of June, October and November 2021 than the previous year. Similarly, there was less rainfall in the months of July, August and September 2021 than the previous year. Millet crop has the ability to tolerate drought and hence it is grown as a rainfed crop. It can be grown successfully even in partially waterlogged conditions. It is grown up to a height of 2000 meters above sea level. Hot and moderately humid climate is good for growing Jhangora. It is generally cultivated in soils with marginal fertility. It can be grown in partially waterlogged soils such as low-lying lands along the banks of rivers etc. But it can be grown in sandy loam to loamy soils with adequate amount of organic matter.

Water Consumption- Millets consume minimal water for irrigation. They are mostly rainfed. Only 11.63 % of the mountainous area is irrigated. Table presents a comparative chart of irrigated area, total area, production and average yield of main crops that is, Paddy Manduwa, Sawa and Ramdana in Uttarakhand from 2012 to 2021.

Crop	Year	2012-	2013-	2014-	2015-	2016-	2017-	2018-	2019-	2020-
		2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Paddy/Rice (Kharif)	Irrigated area	175078	168051	169611	172171	174109	174263	174024	173107	177564
	Total area	255037	246959	247698	252163	251498	246539	243666	240411	241936
	Production	561339	551758	561856	591755	582720	620027	574963	615514	669372
	Average yield	22.01	22.34	22.68	23.47	23.17	25.15	23.6	25.6	27.67
Manduwa	Irrigated area	155	85	43	88	69	58	30	25	27
	Total area	113210	108656	107904	105450	106365	101504	94004	91584	85427
	Production	157792	148803	149033	148705	157402	138836	114457	129994	125897
	Average yield	13.94	13.7	13.81	14.1	14.8	13.68	12.18	14.19	14.74
Sawa	Irrigated area	116	0	0	2	10	35	4	5	0
	Total area	56870	54744	53586	50656	51410	46626	48151	44265	39246
	Production	75929	71537	74273	67145	72325	63483	62996	61518	57935
	Average yield	13.35	13.07	13.86	13.26	14.07	13.62	13.08	13.9	14.76
Ramdana	Irrigated area	3	0	2	1	3	5	4	15	3
	Total area	6620	5995	5948	5914	6057	6534	5678	6043	5523
	Production	3914	3800	4273	5487	6144	6910	5903	6449	7354
	Average yield	5.91	6.34	7.18	9.28	10.14	10.58	10.4	10.68	13.32

Area in hectares, production in metric tons and average yield in quintals per hectare.

The total production of millets in 2021-22 however showed an increase. Manduwa which is the second main kharif crop showed an increase in the area cultivated (453 hectare which is 0.53% increase), production was 1019 metric ton (0.81% increase) and productivity was 0.04q/hect (0.27%) increase from the last year. Similarly the third main kharif crop Sawa also showed an increase in the area cultivated (1568 hectare which is 4% increase), production was 7494 metric ton (12.9% increase) and productivity was 1.27 q/hect (8.60%) increase from the last year. In the same manner Ramdana another kharif millet crop showed an increase in all three categories the area cultivated (350 hectare which is 6.34% increase), production was 137 metric ton (1.86% increase) and productivity was 0.57 q/hect (4.28%) increase from the last year. The data shows that variation in rainfall did not affect production of millets in Uttarakhand in the year 21-22. In fact the area, production and productivity increased as compared to last year.

Supply, production, consumption and popularization of Millets.

Special efforts and attention has been given to promote millet crops in Uttarakhand. For this, Uttarakhand State Millet Mission has been taken up for five years (2023-24 to 2027-28). State Millet Mission has been implemented in the state in four components, in which the Millet crops have been taken care of from farmers' fields to marketing. The four components are as follows: production, incentive, collection and marketing. Millet Mission Cell for monitoring and implementation of the mission would be set up. To promote millets in State, Food and Nutrition Security erstwhile National Food Security Mission- Nutri Cereal is being implemented in the identified 09 districts. Under the Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY), 1657 organic clusters of millets and 620 organic clusters of millets are being operated under Namami Gange in the state. Post-harvest value addition is also being provided for, thus encouraging domestic consumption, and sale of millet products at national and international platforms. Initiatives for demonstration of latest technologies for improved varieties in millet crops have been taken. There has been creation of Millet Seed Hub and certified seeds of millet crops are being distributed at subsidized price. An Action plan along with calendar of events for celebrating IYOM 2023 were prepared and implemented in which workshops, Gosthis, value addition workshop, distribution of millet seed & demonstration, campaigning, awareness program, training of farmers was done. In addition to all this, Uttarakhand Shree Anna Mahotsav has been organized from 13 May, 2023 to 16 May, 2023 in Dehradun by State Government. The other initiatives include holding workshop in all the districts for awareness generation, training programs for millet cultivators by the Krishi Vigyan Kendra, painting and slogan, competitions in schools on millets, inclusion of millets in mid-day meals and Anganwadis etc. Krishak Mahotsav were organized at Nyay Panchayat level to promote millet crops. Purchase of finger millet at the minimum support price of Rs 3846 per quintal was done in 2023-24. District wise targets for finger millet

purchase were also allocated. Cooperative Departments enabled setting up of purchasing centers in all the hilly districts. There have been dedicated efforts to support various groups involved in Agri-food processing (Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), Self Help Groups (SHGs) and Producers Cooperatives) all along the value chain.

Fig 5 Value Chain Map of Millets

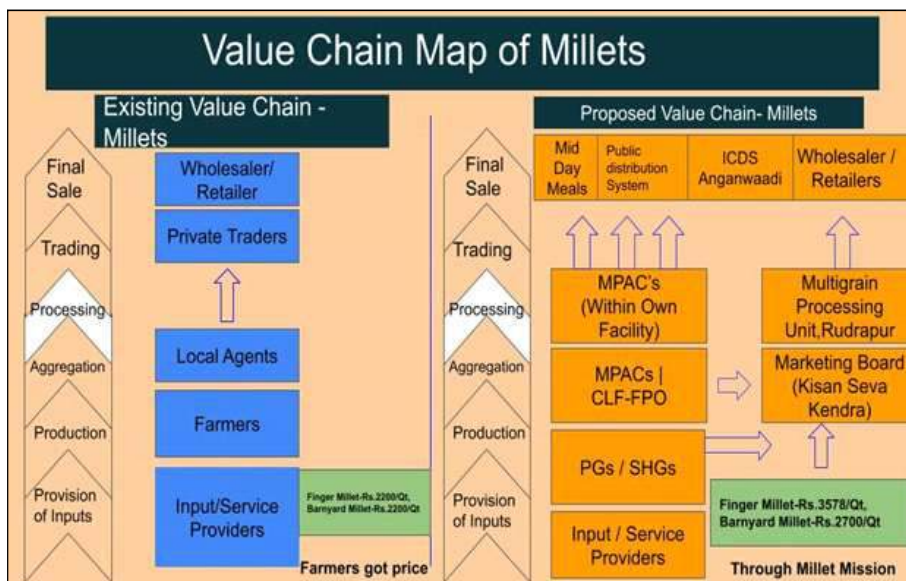


Figure-5 shows the improvised value chain map of the millets in Uttarakhand. This shows that International Year of Millets 2023 has been a comprehensive concept tied up with collaboration of state, market and civil society. The interrelationship of Cultivator, Consumer and Climate involves access to resources and means to improve living conditions.

Climate change, lack of awareness, political-economic scope- Uttarakhand is affected by climate change and is striving hard to keep pace with development goals. Millets provide nutrition, they are resilient to climate change and yield sustainable income to farmers. They are photo-insensitive and resilient to climate change. They are hardy, resilient crops that have low carbon and water foot print. In times of adverse climatic conditions, they are often last crops standing to survive, thereby providing a good risk management option particularly for resource poor small farmers. Almora, Tehri Garhwal and Pauri Garhwal, the hill districts of Uttarakhand are the home to many varieties of millets, the traditional crops of nutritional and medicinal importance. IYM 23 aimed towards bringing about change in attitude of consumers and cultivators of millet. There is a strong need to connect small and marginal farmers of millets with marketing platforms to increase the productivity of quality millets as well as their marketing by entrepreneurs. Establishment of Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) can also enhance the bargaining power of millets producers in both domestic and global markets. The demand for millets,

which provide adequate nutritional security and health protection, is increasing among the rich and abroad. By developing better marketing facilities and processing them locally, more value can be provided to the farmers. These will protect agricultural diversity as well as increase the income of farmers. In this context, the objective of providing input as well as marketing requirements to small and marginal farmers across the state for growing millets becomes important.

IYM 2023 aimed to improve nutrition at the household level through revival of millets in the fields and on plates. But there is a need to focus on area expansion as well as productivity enhancement under target millets crops (Manduva and Sawa) with the introduction of advanced technologies and production of processed food items available for processing and marketing of target millets crops (Manduva and Sawa). Along with this, work needs to be done to encourage the farmer groups/FPOs/farmers associated with it and for capacity development. Millets need to be brought into the mainstream by investing in the productivity, processing and price guarantee of millets crops. Uttarakhand is in the process of sustaining a robust agricultural policy that aims to increase farmers' income by promoting millets.

Conclusion- Uttarakhand has different landforms from mountains to plains. Climate and vegetation keep changing with the altitude of the region in the state. Hilly areas have gravel and light textured soil which does not retain water for long and is suitable for small millet. These crops are known for their resilience, which helps them adapt to diverse ecological conditions. These unique properties of millets make them a suitable crop for rainfed conditions of hill agriculture. Although a number of crops are grown in the state, Manduva and Sawa as millet crops are grown in most of the area which come in the category of nutritious food. The scheme of Year of millets 2023 is just the beginning of an exceptionally good work which benefits the cultivator consumer and the climate. However, the vision behind making these Sri Anna available to each and every household and bring it back to the traditional thali of Indian cuisine will bring phenomenal results in times to come.

Acknowledgement- This paper is a part of ICSSR funded short term empirical research titled "Impact of Year of Millets 2023 in select areas of Uttarakhand" in four districts of Uttarakhand (Dehradun, Pauri Garhwal, Tehri Garhwal & Almora). The authors thank Indian Council for Social Science Research, New Delhi for the research grant without which the project could not have been completed. Authors also thank Centre for Advanced Research on Development and Change, New Delhi for their logistical and secretarial support throughout the research period.

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Criminalisation of Politics in Bihar: A Persistent Challenge

• Lalan Kumar Mandal

Abstract- *The criminalization of politics in Bihar has become an alarming and entrenched issue, undermining the integrity of democratic processes and governance. Data from recent Assembly and Lok Sabha elections reveal a troubling trend: a large proportion of elected representatives in the state possess criminal backgrounds, including serious charges such as murder, rape, kidnapping, and communal disharmony. Reports from the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) and Bihar Election Watch show that in the 2015 Bihar Assembly elections, 57% of serving MPs and MLAs, and 30% of the candidates, had declared criminal charges against themselves. In many cases, multiple candidates on the same seat had criminal records. The trend persisted in Lok Sabha elections, with 87% of elected MPs in 2014 facing criminal charges a 122% increase in candidates with criminal records compared to 2004. All major political parties in Bihar BJP, JDU, RJD, and Congress have relied on tainted candidates to bolster electoral prospects, highlighting the pervasiveness of the issue. Out of 243 MLAs elected in 2015, 142 had pending criminal cases, and 96 faced serious charges. These numbers continue to rise, with 68% MLAs facing criminal cases in the 2019 assembly polls. The prevalence of politicians with criminal backgrounds has made crime appear electorally advantageous. Despite Election Commission regulations and Supreme Court directives mandating disclosure of criminal antecedents, parties often circumvent these rules or ignore them, nominating candidates with questionable histories or their close relatives. Efforts to curb the criminalization of politics in Bihar have been met with limited success. Judicial interventions and calls for legal reforms continue, but the deep-rooted nexus between crime and politics remains an obstacle to genuine change. The need for major reform to weed out criminal elements and restore faith in Bihar's democratic institutions-has never been more urgent.*

Key Words- *democratic, crime and politics*

Introduction- As the largest democracy in the world, India has been grappling with a recurring and complex problem: the widespread menace of Criminalization of Politics. This complex issue not only undermines democratic principles but also harms the difficult process of developing and enacting public policy. A long shadow has been cast over the course of the

country's progress due to the predominance of individuals with criminal backgrounds dominating politics.

The criminalization of politics in Bihar remains a deep-rooted and persistent challenge, with a significant share of the state's political landscape dominated by individuals facing serious criminal charges. This trend undermines democratic governance, public trust, and the effectiveness of political institutions in Bihar.

'Criminalization' of Politics- In India, the term “criminalization of politics” refers to the rise in the number of people with criminal histories participating in politics. According to the [ADR report](#), 306 out of the 763 sitting MPs that were examined (about 40%) had filed criminal complaints against themselves. The [ADR analysis](#) encompassed that out of 4033 MLA's serving in India, 1136 MLA's are having criminal record. Several factors have contributed to the growth of the relationship between politics and crime, including the relationship between politicians and organized crime, the use of coercion during elections, and the abuse of legal loopholes.

Unlike in other states, criminalization of politics in Bihar is well chronicled and has been dealt in parts mostly by political Scientists and journalists covering the state. Beginning in the '50s on narrow caste-based considerations prompted by the state's Founding fathers, it assumed horrific proportions in the '90s. Elected representatives routinely disrupt public life and kill with Impunity. Innumerable cases against them lie 'pending' in courts – probably for all times to come and life goes on. People have seen how kidnapping grew into a multi-million rupee industry in Champaran how; the mass killings in Belchi, Pipra, Dalelchak, Bihta and innumerable such unchartered places happened with political supports of people in power; the coal Mafia operations in south Bihar (now Jharkhand); the vicious communal riots in Bhagalpur not witnessed since Noakhali; the dacoit-Caste gangs in the Kaimur mountain ranges; and the rise of the extreme Left in regions where minimum wages exist only on Departmental files. So where did it all begin? While it is difficult to arrive at a cutoff date, the trends were visible in the early years. In the '50s, the Aiyar Commission examined 189 charges against six prominent politicians– K.B. Sahay, Satyendra Narain Singh, Mahesh Prasad Sinha, Raghavendra Narain Singh, Ambika Sharan Singh and Ram Lakhani Singh Yadav, an important member of the Narasimha Rao Cabinet. The Aiyar proposals never saw the light of the day. Similarly, the Madhokar Commission found serious charges Against the then chief minister Mahamaya Prasad Sinha, which lie tombed somewhere in the Patna secretariat. With time, upper-caste killer gangs were replaced by powerful backward caste ones. By the turn of the '80s, proclaimed offenders Decided that instead of doing the dirty job for politicians, it made sense to contest elections themselves with no comebacks.

1. It is well known that Bihar always had criminals in politics. There are murders, rapists and kidnappers as members of legislative Assemblies and members of parliaments. One such person is Mohammad Shahabuddin supported by the Laloo Prasad Yadav. Although he was no longer allowed to contest, Laloo Prasad Yadav had given his wife a ticket to contest from the Siwan Parliamentary constituency of Bihar in 2009. Call it cynicism if we like, but it was quite unlikely that many were shocked when former Union minister in the NDA Government, Ravi Shankar Prasad, was shot at while addressing an election rally at Sasaram some years ago.
2. He was, after all, campaigning in the badlands of Bihar, where there is not even a semblance of a divide between criminalization and politics. Rather than being an exception, it is the norm now to give tickets to history sheeters, known in local parlance as Bahubalis. But while efforts to put morality and ethics above politics have taken a backseat, all political parties, ironically, have the single Refrain – to rid Bihar of crime. Paradoxical as it may seem, the nexus between politics and crime is there to stay in Lalooland. What Can be more telling than the fact that Pappu Yadav won the Madhapur elections earlier by two lakh votes, even though he contested from jail? So, what prompts all the key players in Bihar to pay lip service to combatting criminalization – even as they hunt with the hounds. Winnability is the key element, concede political observers, pointing out that the compartmentalization of caste politics has forced Political parties to look for other ways to supplement their vote base. Many feel that chances of increasing their tally gets better with the support and backing of such elements. The inter-caste dispute, growing illiteracy, political corruption, population boom, institutional decay, brain drain, and the Growing violence have virtually destroyed the social fabric of the state. The refusal of major political parties to improve things has Further speeded up the decline. The spate of abductions and murders in Bihar and the allegations and counter allegations between the rival political parties here Have brought the debate on the viability of political system at the centerstage.

Prevalence and Trends- Nearly 49 percent of Bihar's current MLAs face serious criminal allegations, with about 160 out of 243 legislators having criminal cases registered against them as of late 2025. Among these, 123 MLAs face charges for offenses such as murder and attempted murder. Some political parties, like the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) and Congress, have up to 73% and 94% of their legislators, respectively, with criminal charges. Analysis over the past two decades reveals a steady rise in politicians with criminal backgrounds, and between 2004 and 2014, MPs from Bihar with criminal cases grew by 122%, reaching 87% in 2014. The major political parties contesting the Bihar Legislative Assembly elections have been

exchanging serious allegations regarding leaders with criminal backgrounds. As the final candidate selection process unfolds, including ticket distribution, confidential and public reports are being reviewed, making it a crucial “trial by fire” for all parties.

Notorious Examples and Party Patterns- The phenomenon is not new. Infamous figures like Mohammad Shahabuddin, Anant Singh, and Pappu Yadav became well-known 'Bahubali' politicians and served as MPs or MLAs while facing grave charges including murder and kidnapping. All major parties- BJP, RJD, JDU, and Congress- have repeatedly fielded candidates with pending serious criminal cases, a pattern observed in both state and national elections. As many as 21 of the winning 40 Lok Sabha candidates from Bihar in the recently concluded general election have declared criminal cases against them, a report of the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) said. The lone independent candidate Rajesh Ranjan alias Pappu Yadav from Purnia, has declared 41 criminal cases against himself. Of the 12 BJP MPs, as many as eight (67%), including Janardan Singh Sigriwal (Maharajganj), Giriraj Singh (Begusarai), Ashok Kumar Yadav (Madhubani), Dr Sanjay Jaiswal (Paschim Champaran), Pradeep Kumar Singh (Araria), Nityanand Rai (Ujjarpur), Radha Mohan Singh (Purvi Champaran) and Gopaljee Thakur (Darbhanga), have declared criminal cases, the ADR report said. All four RJD MPs, including Surendra Prasad Yadav (Jahanabad constituency), Misa Bharti (Patliputra), Sudhakar Singh (Buxar) and Abhay Kumar Sinha (Aurangabad) have declared criminal cases of serious nature. Manoj Kumar (Sasaram constituency) is the lone among three Congress MPs facing serious criminal charges. On the assets front, barring Jitan Ram Manjhi, Gaya MP from the Hindustani Awam Morcha (Secular) (HAM (S) and Sudama Prasad, Arrah MP from the CPI-ML (Liberation), the remaining 38 MPs have declared assets worth over ₹1 crore. Veena Devi of LJP(RV), MP from Vaishali has highest assets of ₹46.71 crore while BJP's Ravi Shankar Prasad (Patna Sahib) is second with assets worth 40.60 crore and Dr Sanjay Jaiswal (Paschim Champaran) rank third with assets of ₹29.05 crore. The average assets of winning candidates is ₹9.60 crore, the ADR report said. Bihar has a total of 56 MPs of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha and 41 of them are facing criminal charges. Among 56 MPs, 16 belong to the Rajya Sabha and 10 of them are facing criminal charges, which means 63 per cent of Rajya Sabha MPs have criminal charges against their names and 38 per cent of MPs have serious criminal charges like rape and murder and attempt to murder. Bihar has 40 Lok Sabha MPs and 31 of them have criminal cases against their names. As far as crimes against women are concerned nationwide, a total of 134 MLAs and MPs are involved in rape, gang rape or outraging the modesty of women in the country. Among 134, twenty-one of them are MPs and 113 are MLAs. When it comes to party-wise data, the BJP is on the top with 44 public representatives facing charges of crime against women and 10 of them are MPs and 34 are MLAs. In the second spot is the Congress, having 25 public representatives including 5 MPs and 20 MLAs. The AAP is in third position

with 13 MLAs facing charges of crime against women and no MP are involved in it. The RJD has 4 MLAs and no MP and JD-U has one MLA and no MP involved in crime against women.

Causes and Impact- Candidates with criminal backgrounds are often given tickets due to their financial clout, local influence, and perceived “winnability” in tough constituencies. This results in criminals entering Parliament and the Assembly, furthering the link between crime and power, weakening the rule of law, fostering corruption, and discouraging honest citizens from participating in politics.

Public and Legal Response- Despite Supreme Court directions and recommendations by bodies like the Second Administrative Reforms Commission to disqualify candidates facing charges for heinous crimes, enforcement remains lax, with parties prioritizing electoral success. The persistence of this nexus fuels disillusionment among voters and damages the image of democratic institutions.

Conclusion- Criminalization of politics has become deeply institutionalized in Bihar, making governance and accountability more challenging. While legal and institutional reforms have been suggested and partially implemented, the continued dominance of criminal elements in politics persists due to systemic issues within political parties and the electoral system.

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Stress and life Satisfaction among Working Women in India: A Psycho-Socio Perspective

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Abstract- *The paper analyzes the psycho-socio perspective view on Indian working women explores the relationship between stress and life satisfaction. It emphasizes that many studies have shown that working women face significant stress because they are balancing multiple responsibilities, including personal, family, and professional roles. This stress often impacts their overall life satisfaction. Additionally, the review of literature highlights the importance of addressing mental health issues and finding effective solutions to improve the well-being of working women, emphasizing that both organizational support and family cooperation are crucial for managing stress and enhancing life satisfaction. How a working woman can reduce her stress and increase her life satisfaction has been discussed in the conclusion. It has been highlighted that a supportive work environment and family cooperation can play a key role in reducing stress and improving life satisfaction. Job satisfaction can also lead to life satisfaction, which in turn can bring significant improvements in a woman's overall mental health and well-being.*

Key word- *Stress, Life satisfaction, working women*

Introduction- A great poet, probably Awadh's famous poet Asrarul Haq Majaz Lakhnawi, once wrote that “the scarf on your forehead is indeed very beautiful, but it would have been even better if you had turned this scarf into a flag.” In today's era of women's empowerment, these lines have proven to be deeply meaningful. When women stepped out of their homes, society thought they had become free- but that was not the complete truth. Since the turn of the century, the status of women in India has undergone significant change. Due to industrialization, urbanization, social mobility, and legal reforms- along with the expansion of education and awareness- women have shifted from kitchen-centered roles to high-level professional activities. The acceleration of traditional value transformations, lifestyle changes, competition, and industrial growth are some of the key factors that have completely transformed the social environment. This transformed environment has encouraged and motivated women to seek employment outside the home, leading to stress among those who are managing three

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roles simultaneously-as homemakers, mothers, and working professionals. Several studies have provided evidence that women experience greater psychological distress compared to men. They still faced many challenges and problems despite this apparent freedom. Now women are becoming educated. An educated woman stands on her own feet, takes up employment, and earns her livelihood. Yet many times, even such a woman does not attain full financial independence, as others consider her salary their own right. This too becomes a major cause of stress. Society is still not used to seeing a woman as a multidimensional personality. It fails to recognize her complete identity, and as a result, she often faces mental strain and pressure at the workplace. Before understanding the problems of working women, we must first understand the definition of stress what stress is, and what is meant by life satisfaction. According to the National Mental Health Survey conducted in India, the current prevalence rate of mental illnesses caused by neurotic and stress-related disorders is approximately 3.53%. Among women, this rate is 4.29%, while among men, it is 2.72%. Both working and non-working women experience different levels of stress based on their individual personality traits. It has been found that women experience different levels of stress depending on their personal nature, their husband's personality traits, the level of support they receive at home and outside, the nature of their work, and their socio-economic status. Studies show that married women perform about 64% of total household tasks, and their contribution is significantly higher compared to married men especially in household chores (78%) and child care (67%).

Stress- Stress is difficult to define precisely. The concept of stress was first introduced in the life sciences by Selye Hans in 1936. It was derived from the Latin word 'Stringere', it meant the experience of physical hardship, starvation, torture and pain. "Stress is the non-specific response of the body to any demand, whether it is caused by, or result in pleasant or unpleasant conditions." Hans Selye, MD (1956) "A dynamic condition in which an individual is confronted with an opportunity, constraints or demands related to what he or she desires and for which the outcome is perceived to be both uncertain and important." Robins & Sanghi (2006). According to the World Health Organization (WHO), work-related stress is defined as "the response individuals may have when job demands and pressures exceed their knowledge, skills, or abilities, making it difficult for them to cope effectively." This type of stress can have both mental and physical consequences and can negatively impact both men and women.

Life Satisfaction-The overall evaluation of a person's feelings and thoughts about their life at any point of time which can range from negative to positive is called life satisfaction. According to Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith (1984) (1999), life satisfaction is one of the three major components of well-being. The other two are positive affect and negative affect. Diener, Suh, Lucas and Smith included the following aspects in life satisfaction such as the desire to change one's life as part of their framework explaining how individuals evaluate their own lives through both affective and

cognitive judgments. Here's a clear and concise rephrasing of both statements, maintaining their original meaning and academic tone. Buetell (2006) Life satisfaction refers to an individual's overall evaluation of their feelings and attitudes toward life at a given moment, which can range from negative to positive. Ruut Veenhoven (1996) Life satisfaction represents the extent to which an individual holds a positive evaluation of the overall quality of their life essentially, how much they appreciate or enjoy the life they are living. When a study was conducted on the various factors affecting employee satisfaction, it was found that organizational development, job security, work culture, salary and benefit-related policies, and career opportunities were included among the key determinants. The study concluded that improving these factors enhances employee performance and productivity, which in turn contributes to greater profitability, customer satisfaction, and customer retention. Organizations should adopt such strategies that empower the work environment and help maintain employee morale and satisfaction, especially among women employees. Researchers have also offered several suggestions to enhance employee satisfaction.

Need and Significance of this issue- The present psycho-socio perspective and review will examine how stress and life satisfaction affect working Individuals who exhibit symptoms of stress often become unable to work or go to their jobs due to a lack of interest, sadness, and low motivation. This condition can adversely affect several aspects of employee performance, such as concentration, decision-making ability, time management, execution of physical tasks, social interactions, and communication skills. All these are symptoms of stress that negatively affect work, health, and relationships, making life dissatisfactory and distressing. A supportive work environment can promote the well-being of employees, in which the organization and her family plays a crucial role. By doing so, not only the affected individuals but also their families can lead a better and happier life. Therefore, the first and foremost need is to understand the problem that working women face stress. If one wishes to lead a happy family life and a balanced professional life, and to strengthen and improve marital relationships, it is essential to first understand this issue. Only then can we take steps toward finding effective solutions. Challenges of working women The question arises who is called a working woman? Is a woman who performs household duties at home considered a working woman? If not, then it becomes necessary to clearly define the term working woman. A working woman is one who receives remuneration or compensation in return for her work. This raises another question-should a housewife who performs endless domestic tasks be excluded from this definition just because she is not paid? In reality, although her work is vital, since she does not receive any wages for it, she is not officially categorized as a working woman. However, if a woman, in addition to her household responsibilities, starts a business or earns an income from home, then she is considered a working woman. The major challenges and problems faced by working

women are many. Every woman has an important role within her family as a mother, as a wife, and as a daughter and she must fulfill all these roles along with her professional responsibilities. Working women are surrounded by various difficulties because they must balance multiple roles simultaneously. At the workplace whether in an educational institution, an office, or any other organization she has her own responsibilities and duties to perform. Likewise, at home, she is expected to manage domestic responsibilities and nurture family relationships. Thus, a working woman constantly strives to maintain equilibrium between her professional and personal life, which often becomes one of her greatest challenges. In her office, a woman may occupy the role of a subordinate or a superior. She strives to do justice to these roles and hopes that her contribution will be recognized and valued. However, she often faces conflicting perceptions at work, people may assume that her attention is divided and that she is not fully focused on her job; at home, family members may complain that she neglects household responsibilities because of her work commitments. Caught between these two expectations, she constantly tries to balance both roles and fulfill them sincerely. The desire to perform well in both spheres and gain fair acknowledgment for her dual responsibilities becomes a major source of stress in her life. Time management is the greatest challenge for a working woman. She works like a machine, constantly running according to the clock. Managing time is a major responsibility she must prepare her own meals, pack her child's tiffin, and take care of her husband's needs, all while fulfilling her professional duties. In this routine, she often fails to take proper care of herself. One might say that she could hire help, but that is not possible for every woman. Her biggest concern remains how to perform all her roles effectively while managing her time in the best possible way. Her greatest concern is fulfilling her various roles and managing her time effectively. Caught between these two pressures, she ends up feeling trapped, like being crushed between two grinding stones, and becomes a victim of stress in her effort to get everything done on time. Men in a male-dominated society are also affected by a mindset that makes it difficult for them to see a woman as an authority figure, to follow her orders, or to face her reprimand in the office. They are unable to accept this situation, and this becomes a source of stress for women as well. Men often talk about equality, but most of them do not want women to progress ahead of them. In order to ensure that women do not surpass them in the workplace, such men continue to create obstacles and indulge in discriminatory behavior. Harassment, gossip, and criticism at the workplace are major causes of stress. The pressure that arises from different work environments, organized work schedules, customer irritation, and complaints also significantly contribute to increasing stress levels. Thus, workplace harassment, idle talk, and constant criticism, along with external pressures and customer dissatisfaction, together become key factors behind mental tension in professional settings. In another study, Sugandhi and her colleagues found that stress has a deep impact on an individual's health, leading to issues such

as disturbed eating habits, digestive disorders, sleep problems, and lack of concentration. The stress that arises within the home can be reduced only through proper communication between husband and wife. Mutual cooperation and support between husband and wife can help protect them from the negative effects of stress. The workplace is an environment where people with different thoughts, emotions, and perspectives come together to accomplish tasks, making it nearly impossible to maintain complete control since many factors are involved. Working women, in particular, should be made aware of the challenges they may face in such environments and of the ways to effectively deal with them. On average, men spend about 23 hours per week on childcare and 9 hours on household work, whereas women spend approximately 58 hours on childcare and 24 hours per week on household tasks. The conflict between work and family life arises from various factors. Work-related conflict occurs when an individual has to perform multiple roles simultaneously. The pressure generated from work affects the person's outlook and behavior in family life, disrupting balance between professional and personal responsibilities. An important experiment was conducted by Khanna and S. in 1992 to study stress in the lives of working and non-working women. The study aimed to determine the extent to which women experience anxiety and depression. A sample of 406 women was selected from two locations- Jalandhar in Punjab and Shimla in Himachal Pradesh. The analysis of the study revealed significant findings regarding the relationship between women's work status and their levels of stress, anxiety, and depression. Among non-working women, anxiety is significantly negatively related to positive life changes. Among working women, depression is significantly positively related to positive life changes, whereas among non-working women, depression is significantly positively related to negative life changes. Khristina and Stephen stated that working women experience higher levels of stress compared to men. The main causes of this stress are performing multiple roles, facing discrimination, and dealing with rigid. These results indicate that among working women in India, positive life changes are associated with depression, whereas among non-working women, positive life changes are related to anxiety and negative life changes are related to depression. In another study conducted in Danabakyam & Malaruizhi (2014), a positive relationship was found between stress and family difficulties among working women. Increasing conflict between work and family was seen to raise occupational stress. Conversely, it was also observed that women engaged in high-demand professional jobs experience greater levels of work-family conflict and work-related stress. Balaji (2014) studied various factors that cause work family conflict and stress among women. He concluded that married female employees experience work family conflict due to factors such as the number of hours spent at the workplace, flexibility of working hours, family size, and the number of dependents. These factors have a serious impact on the mental health and well-being of married working women. In another study,

Bakhshi et al. (2008) found that most women experience high levels of occupational stress. They also stated that this stress arises because working women are often unable to focus on household responsibilities and kitchen needs, and their inability to fulfill these roles becomes a source of stress for them. In a study conducted by Hashmi in 2007, 150 married working and non-working women between the ages of 18 and 50 were examined to assess marital adjustment, stress, and depression. The findings revealed that working women faced more problems in their marital lives compared to non-working women. The results also clearly indicated that working women experience greater challenges and emotional strain in balancing their professional and marital roles. The results clearly showed that highly educated working and non-working married women perform better in their marital lives and remain free from depression. A similar study conducted in Turkey in 2007 examined samples of working and non-working women. It was found that the overall stress levels of working women were higher than those of non-working women. The study showed that Turkish working women experienced greater stress related to their employment conditions. In an international study, Shirin Ahmad and Niya (2002) examined the effect of employment on mothers' health in Tehran, Iran. A survey conducted on 1,065 working and non-working women found that, unlike in Western countries, there was no statistically significant difference in health status between working and non-working women in Tehran. Shivane et al. (2024). conducted a study to examine the relationship between life satisfaction and stress levels among working women. They found that working women experienced a high level of stress, largely due to financial independence. Despite this high stress, these women also reported higher life satisfaction. This suggests that financial independence, while contributing to stress, simultaneously enhances their overall satisfaction with life. This dual effect highlights the complex nature of working women's experiences balancing stress and life satisfaction. The finding aligns with broader research indicating that although working women face significant stress, their life satisfaction can be higher compared to non-working women because of the autonomy and empowerment gained through employment and **financial independence**- Narayana et al. (2023), a study conducted in Hyderabad on working and non-working women found that working women experienced higher levels of stress compared to non-working women. Additionally, the study observed that life satisfaction among working women was lower. A significant negative correlation was found between life satisfaction and stress levels, indicating that as stress increased, life satisfaction decreased in this population. This highlights the challenges faced by working women in balancing stress and maintaining satisfaction in life. Kumar et al. (2022) conducted a study comparing working mothers and non-working homemakers. They found that working mothers experienced higher levels of anxiety, stress, and other mental health issues compared to non-working women, who showed these conditions to a lesser extent. This study highlights the increased mental

health challenges faced by working mothers due to their dual **Responsibilities of work and family**- It is therefore clear that in the modern age, stress has become an increasing problem, as every individual strives for excellence in their respective fields, whether at home or at the workplace. Today, stress has become a universal phenomenon, and its most serious effects are linked to psychological and behavioral disorders. Studies have shown that women face more long-term health problems, and many findings indicate that working women, in particular, suffer from persistent stress due to multiple responsibilities.

Recommendations- In India, several laws exist to deal with workplace harassment and misconduct. Meanwhile, countries like Spain have practically introduced a four-day workweek system to reduce stress and increase productivity. Such initiatives should be implemented globally so that the growing stress within the working population can be effectively managed and controlled.

Knowledge about the problem (Stress): Understand how stress develops and impacts you. Recognize your main sources of stress and prepare for times when stress is likely to increase. Determine your ideal stress levels in different aspects of life, and be truthful about what you can realistically manage. Change life style and develop an effective support system: Having supportive people to talk to and depend on is one of the most important factors in reducing the frequency and impact of stressors in a person's life and improving overall health. Managing time: Effective time management begins with setting clear priorities, deciding what tasks are most important to complete first. Creating a to-do list aligned with these priorities lets you focus on one task at a time, reducing overwhelm. This approach helps prevent stress by avoiding last-minute rush and helps ensure that critical tasks are completed efficiently. The art of saying "No": The "art of saying no" is an essential skill for managing time, setting boundaries, and reducing stress. It involves politely but firmly declining requests or tasks that do not align with your priorities, capacity, or values. Mastering this art helps prevent overcommitment, protects your energy A little time for your self care and mental health: "Exercise, yoga, and meditation are very important for reducing stress. Therefore, it is essential to take out time for yourself."

Conclusion- Balancing work and family roles has become a major personal and family issue for women today. Experts studying employment and family roles agree that changing family structures have made stress and role conflicts significant sources of tension both at the workplace and at home. Women need to feel that their work is important and necessary, but currently, many mothers feel they are not benefiting themselves at the cost of their children's welfare. This situation poses the risk that mothers may start feeling alienated or guilty while working, struggling to maintain harmony between professional responsibilities and family care. In short, the challenge of managing work and family roles simultaneously is a key psychological and social concern for employed women, requiring supportive

environments and awareness to reduce stress and role conflict. As discussed, various studies have confirmed that today's working women are increasingly experiencing stress while trying to prove themselves, devoting full energy to both professional and personal fronts. This continuous struggle often results in high stress and low life satisfaction, affecting their mental well-being. Therefore, maintaining women's mental health is not just an individual but a collective social responsibility. Greater empathy at the organizational level and support and adjustment within the family are essential. Providing understanding, flexible work policies, and shared domestic responsibilities can significantly help women lead healthier, more satisfying lives. An educated woman is essential for economically empowering her family, society, and nation. Only when a woman is adequately educated can she contribute side by side with a man, advancing the family's financial strength and supporting societal and national development. Education equips women with knowledge, skills, and confidence, enabling them to actively participate in economic activities and decision-making processes that catalyze progress at multiple levels.

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The role of innovation and knowledge management in organizations

• **Manjushri Mishra**

Abstract- *In today's competitive business landscape, organizations must continuously innovate and effectively manage knowledge to maintain sustainability and growth. This paper explores the relationship between innovation and knowledge management, examining how organizations leverage these concepts to enhance performance, decision making and competitiveness. The study highlights key framework, challenges, and best practices in integrating innovation with knowledge management.*

Keywords- *Knowledge Management, Knowledge assets, Innovation, Technology strategy, competitive advantage*

Introduction- Importance of knowledge can be seen everywhere whether that is a society or a corporate world. Because knowledge enlightens the human mind, shape up the behaviors, mold the attitude of the humans. So, to make society a more civilized everyone agrees that, to gain the knowledge is the foremost activity or obligation that is to performed or fulfill whilst its importance also recognized for corporate world as well. Prusak and Davenport (1998) defined knowledge is derived outcome of framed experiences, values, contextual information, and experts' insight that provide a framework for evaluating and incorporating new experiences and information.

Knowledge Management KM is an organizational process that aims to create centralize knowledge source within the organization that acquire, assimilate, distribute, integrate, share, retrieve and reuse the internal and external, explicit and tacit to bring innovation in the organization in the form of the product, people and organizational process. Innovation There are several definitions of innovation. Herkma (2003) stated that foremost and basic purpose of innovation is to produce new knowledge which can develop and find out the doable solutions for society. Innovation is a practice and process which capture, acquire, manage and diffuse knowledge with aim to create new knowledge which will support to produce and deliver distinctive and idiosyncratic kind of products and services. (Gloat and Terziovski, 2004). Plessis (2007) delineated innovation as a formation of new knowledge which helps the new business returns, which has purpose to make organization internal business process

and structure more sophisticated that produce the market acceptable products and services. Importance of Innovation The basic objective of innovation is to create value for the business. In today's competitive era innovation is a soul to the business because through innovation organizations produce unique products and services. Innovation is also important because of the rapid change in taste and preferences of the customer of emerging and developed markets. That is why according to a research 75 percent CEO's of fastest growing organizations claim that their strongest weapon to compete in market is their innovative products and processes. The organizations which are not much capable to produce innovative products and services will be wiped out from the industry by the competitors because innovation works as a fuel for the organization to grow in any type of environment. Scope of Innovation Innovation might be radical or incremental. A radical innovation is a product, service and process with entirely unique or significant improvements in existing features which improve the cost and performance (Leifer et.al 2007). Radical innovation is highly risky for the business because radical innovated products are more difficult to commercialize. But on the other hand, radical innovation in product, service or process is crucial for the business because it involves the development and application of new technology. Important aspect of radical innovation is that to what extent new technology is more sophisticated and advance as compared to current technology (Govindarajan and Kopalle:2004, Christenson and Overdorf:2000). Leifer et.al. (2007) presented the idea of different hubs to bring radical innovation. Among those hubs, one important hub is of idea generators. Idea generators are responsible for generating distinctive ideas and there are people who exploit these distinctive ideas, idea hunters, who actually exploit and execute these ideas. Idea gatherers basically are receivers of the ideas. They have skills, expertise, judgment and motivation to respond these unique ideas. The combination of generators, hunters, and gatherers play important role to bring radical innovation in large organization. There are two causes that firms strive to bring radical innovation. First, these radical innovations create barriers for the potential competitors and ruin the market share of existing industry players (Christenson, 1997, Christenson and Bower, 1996). Second, competitors are much capable to develop or produce radical innovated products (Christenson, 1997, Christenson and Bower, 1996, Christenson and Overdorf, 2000, Leifer et. al., 2000, Gopalkrishnan et. al., 2006) Relationship between KM and Innovation Mesas and Testa (2004) stated that organizations must develop the receptors that gain or absorb the external knowledge and this activity is strongly correlated to the innovation capability. Further, they said that through the benchmarking, organizations can acquire explicit and tacit knowledge from external sources. These external sources of knowledge can be integrated with the organizational internal explicit and tacit knowledge and if knowledge gap prevails that can be filled through the new knowledge acquisition which will helpful to bring

innovation. Ju entail. (2006) argued that in order to get competitive advantage organizations should continuously learn from outside sources. Through the proper knowledge distribution and sharing, organizations can bring the innovation. So, organizations must develop such channels within the organizations through which employees share their knowledge with one another. Plessis (2007) stated that innovation depends upon knowledge. So, to bring innovation, organizations must identify knowledge capability, and richness. Organizations that rapidly capture and implement new knowledge across the organization can be able to foster innovation as compared to those organizations that don't focus on this aspect (Cavusgil et.al. 2003). Furthermore, they argued that first and most important aspect of the innovation is to, increase the innovation capability to identify and capture the tacit knowledge of the organization. Tacit knowledge can be acquired from outside the organization like customers, suppliers and bankers etc. This acquisition of tacit knowledge plays significant role to foster the process of innovation. Tacit knowledge becomes more important in those particular industries where explicit knowledge is scarce. Through knowledge management, organization can identify their tacit knowledge which they usually do not know before. Knowledge management also helps the organization to articulate tacit knowledge in the form of explicit knowledge and this is a strong base to bring innovation (Plessis: 2007). Knowledge management integrates different types of tacit and explicit knowledge. Through integration, organizations can discover what type of tacit and explicit knowledge subsists in the organization. Furthermore, knowledge activities like knowledge gathering, managing, sharing, learning, reuse and retrieval play important role in bringing innovation. Through knowledge management activities, organizations find out the distance of knowledge from inside and outside the organizations. Organizations manage this knowledge in the form of data base, so that, they can ensure the availability of right type knowledge to the right person at the right time.

Significance of the Study- Today, the business world is becoming more and more competitive and demand for innovative products is mammoth. Knowledge places an integral role to be productive and innovative in market 125 place. But, unfortunately, organizations don't recognize and take advantage of expertise and skills of the people in the form of knowledge which they possess. Organizations should identify the skills, expertise, creativity and motivation of the people. Knowledge management focuses on this neglected area because in this competitive era organizations compete not only on the basis of efficiency and effectiveness but its success also depends upon how particular organizations identify, gather, manage, integrate, share and disseminate relevant knowledge to their human capital to bring innovation.

Major Objectives of the Study- The focus of the study is to find out the role of different factors of knowledge management to bring innovation. Sub objectives include-

1. To find out the impact of knowledge management activities to enhance the knowledge assets of the organizations.
2. To explore the factors underlying the success of knowledge transformation. To investigate the role of knowledge transformation process to bring innovation.
3. To find out the determinants of innovation those affect the knowledge transformation process.

Literature Review- Shankar et.al, (2003) explored that knowledge management creates long term competitive advantage. JU, Li and Lee (2006) developed a strategic contingency model to identify interrelationships among knowledge characteristics, knowledge management strategy, knowledge integration, organizational learning, knowledge management capability and innovation. They explored that knowledge characteristics with higher modularity and explosiveness could enhance organizational learning and knowledge integration. Furthermore, they found that levels of organizational learning, knowledge integration and knowledge management capability have significant impact on firm's innovation. Drucker (1994) stated that in knowledge economies, knowledge is the primary factor of economic development and conventional factors of production like land, labor and capital have not abolished but these factors have become secondary. In contingent era, the organizations that utilize their knowledge in efficient way will be the industry winners through offering the most innovative products. Neilson (2006) integrated the knowledge management with dynamic capabilities approach by demonstrating that dynamic capabilities could be seen as composed of concrete and well-known knowledge management activities. Massa and Testa (2004) explained the relationship between benchmarking and innovation through knowledge management. They found that organizations can get the explicit and tacit knowledge from outside the organization through benchmarking. To bring innovation, organizations have to integrate the explicit and tacit knowledge which is captured and acquired from inside and outside the organization.

Conceptual Framework- The basic aim of this research is to explore integrated approach about knowledge management and other factors which play important role to bring innovation in any industry which was lacking before. There are several components involved in this model like KM activities, Knowledge transformation, technology and culture and more importantly organizational knowledge assets which comprises of two things 1) Human capital 2) Data Warehouses. All organizations have both type of knowledge Tacit and Explicit. Explicit knowledge is easy to disseminate and share to the people whereas tacit knowledge is very difficult to share, integrate and disseminate to the people (Haldin, Herigard, 2000). The one tool to increase knowledge and enhance the innovation process is open communication within the organization because, open communication and flexible structures urge people to create new ideas and share their tacit knowledge.

ICT Factors- As far as relationship of IT and KM is concerned, there are two schools of thought about it. MeeDermott, O'Dell (2001) and Hubbard, Carilo (1998) stated that KM could be successful without IT. It can be used when it is necessary. On the other hand, Duffy (2000) and Lang (2001) argued that IT has become much more important because of globalization. It is true that technology alone cannot play any role to capture, manage and exploit the knowledge which exists inside and outside the organizations. Rather, it is combination of technology and human capital that leverage the KM activities (MeeDermott: 1999). Today, IT supports the most important tasks of KM. ICT identifies and gathers the knowledge through different tools like web portals, internet and intranet etc. Not only this, knowledge gathering modernize IT tools but also help organization to diffuse the explicit and tacit knowledge. ICT plays important role in organizational communication. Baker et.al. (1997) explored that technology is a tool to support the communication. There must be a proper communication structure through which people can share the knowledge and ideas. One of the major sources to gain the new knowledge is internet (Terrett, 1998).

Knowledge Management Activities- Neilson (2006) made the connection between different knowledge management activities like knowledge creation, acquisition, capturing, assembling, sharing, integration, leverage and exploitation. He further divided these eight KM activities into three dynamic capabilities like knowledge development, knowledge (re)combination and knowledge use. These eight KM Activities contain all important activities that start from the acquiring the new knowledge and end to the exploitation of new knowledge. Through these activities, organizations find out the new knowledge within the organizations as well as from outside the organization that enhances the knowledge capability of the organizations. These knowledge management activities enrich the organizational knowledge assets. This consistent acquisition of new knowledge makes more sophisticated organization process and routines. And, by the application and use of this new knowledge, innovation can be brought into the organization.

Knowledge Assets- Organizational knowledge assets are the soul of innovation as know assets increase the knowledge capability of the organization and knowledge capability leads to innovation. Knowledge assets include two factors: Human Capital and Knowledge Repositories.

Human Capital- Most important factor of the organizational knowledge is human capital. Knowledge and competencies of the workers have become the vital component of developed economies. (Drucker; 1993). Human capital is the most sustainable, inimitable source of competitive advantage. Human capital consists of competencies, skills, knowledge and information possessing by the workers of the organization. (Namasiviyam, Denizci; 2006). Megregor et.al. (2006) defined human capital as the size and quality of broader labor markets, but also as the sum of individual competencies in organizations. Human capital creates the

ideas that are the strongest base of innovation. Role of human capital is not only limited to the idea generation rather its role is also important during distinctive idea execution to deliver the innovative products and services to the customers. Megretta (1999) avowed that customer value creation depends upon idea and information. Organizations must know the type and level of the organizational human capital. In highly dynamic and competitive environment, collective knowledge and expertise of employees must be utilized in effective and efficient way so that they could create optimum economic benefits. It is not only important to discover competent human capital in the organization but organization must create the environment to utilize the competent human capital. **Knowledge Repositories-** Organizational knowledge repositories consist of large databases, data warehouses, internet, intranet etc. Knowledge repositories having complete database of skills, expertise and knowledge of organizational employees due to knowledge repositories it becomes easy to access information and knowledge of the organization. Through knowledge repositories, we can accomplish important task which is managing the explicit knowledge of the organization. This explicit knowledge can be diffused to the person or area where it needed.

Knowledge Transformation- Success and Innovation In this paper we explore and discuss several factors that contribute in bringing innovation but these factors cannot bring innovation itself rather organizations have to make the knowledge transformation/conversion process successful so that these factors may become effectively bring innovation. Cumming and Teng (2003) identified several factors that play important role to transfer knowledge among individuals, groups and in entire organizations. They divided these key factors that make knowledge transfer successful into four broad contextual domains like knowledge context, relational context, recipient context and activity context.

Knowledge Embeddedness- Knowledge use to be entrenched in individuals, tools, processes and in related activities and networks of the organizations (Argote and Ingram, 2000). There is way to transfer knowledge from one place or department to another place or department is to transfer knowledge individuals. The benefit of this is organization can transfer both type of knowledge tacit and explicit at the same time (Allen, 1977; Berry and Broadbent 1984, 87; Starbuck 1992). Whenever there is difference of knowledge and expertise between knowledge recipient and knowledge sender, the knowledge recipient fails to learn (Moreland, et.al.; 1996). Knowledge can be rooted in organizational activities and practices (Levitt & March; 1998, Szulanski; 1996). Finally, knowledge can also be embedded in multiple elements and sub networks (Cumming & Teng; 2003). As Teece (2000) found that it would be difficult to transfer knowledge within the organization without mobility of experts with recognized patterns of working mutually. Knowledge embeddedness is negatively and significantly affecting knowledge transfer success (Cumming & Teng; 2003).

Knowledge Artic lability Knowledge artic lability is an important factor that affects the knowledge transfer success. Knowledge artic lability is, to what extent knowledge is written down, verbalized and articulated (Bressman; 1999). Polanyi (1966) stated that people less explain than whatever they know since individuals have tacit knowledge which is unarticulated, intuitive and can only be observed through application. Articulated knowledge can easily be captured, stored and shared with other employees because it can easily be understood and observed as there is less ambiguity in articulated knowledge. Knowledge testiness is significantly and positively correlated with ambiguity (Simionon; 1999). Transfer of knowledge success is depends upon how much knowledge is tacit and explicit. If knowledge is more explicit and articulated the chances of transfer success will be more. Ambiguous and less articulated knowledge is difficult to share and poor articulated knowledge is difficult to diffuse among the organizational employees as well (Hakanson and Nobel, 1998). There is a negative and significant relationship between knowledge artic lability and knowledge transfer success. Theoretical background does not support the findings of the (Cumming and teng,2003) because they did work on R&D projects which were considered more technical and having more tacit knowledge as compare to explicit knowledge. So, that is why, the findings of (Cumming and Teng, 2001) were not similar to previous studies.

Organizational Distance- the base of organizational distance is the mean through which the source and receiver shares the knowledge. Organizations can get knowledge form within the organization as well as outside the organization. Knowledge transfer within the organization is easier as compared to outside the organization. Knowledge is easy to transfer from selected parties (Cumming and Teng; 2003). Like franchises (Darr et.al.; 1995), chains (Baum and Ingram; 1998), networks (Uzzi; 1996) can transfer knowledge more effectively and efficiently. Cumming and Teng (2003) found that transfer success will decrease with the increase in organizational distance between source and recipient of knowledge. 3.4.4. Knowledge Distance Knowledge distance is to what extent source and recipient having same kind of knowledge. It is found that for organizational learning knowledge gap between source and recipient should not be too much (Haml; 1991). The reason behind this is, if knowledge gap is greater the learning steps will also be more and knowledge transfer will be much complex, difficult and time taking. As Haml (1991) said if the knowledge and expertise gap among source and recipient is much, transfer of knowledge and learning will almost be impossible. To minimize these gaps, there must be some adjustments in knowledge and other factors in order to make knowledge transfer successful. Cumming and Teng (2003) explored that there is significant and negative relationship between knowledge distance and success of knowledge transfer.

Physical Distance- Physical distance is the difficulty, type and expense to get face to face communication and for knowledge transfer. Athanassiou and Nigh (2000) explored that face to face interactions are better as compared to all other modes to deliver strategically important matters. Cumming and Teng (2003) found that physical distance negatively affects success of knowledge transfer. 3.4.6. Project Priority Different projects take different degrees of attention, resources and time. When recipient gives too much priority to the project, he will be much motivated to get new information and knowledge transfer success with rapidity and with much more intensity. Researchers identified different variables to make knowledge transfer successful as motivation and learning intent of the recipient of knowledge. These factors play vital role in knowledge transfer success. (Baughn et.al.; 1997, Haml; 1991, Szulanski; 1996). According to Cumming and Teng (2003), people will support the transfer of knowledge in highly prioritized projects than less ones. 3.4.7. Learning Culture learning culture is also an important factor for success of knowledge transfer. Knowledge transfer has two aspects; first is knowledge velocity and second is knowledge vesocity. Knowledge velocity is the speed of knowledge transfer and knowledge vesocity is richness of knowledge transfer (Davenport and Prusak; 1998). When there is learning routines in organizations, every employee starts to get new knowledge by interacting other people and also by approaching other means like books, journal etc.

Determinants of Innovation- Knowledge Transformation, Collaboration & Integration and Innovation Knowledge collaboration is very important for bringing innovation. Collaboration might be internal or external. Through internal collaboration, organizations come to know about diverse knowledge which exists in the organization in the form of tacit and explicit knowledge. Through strong internal collaboration with the employees, organizations come to know what, where and how much knowledge exists in the organization. This internal collaboration can foster the innovation because when organizations collaborate and integrate with the internal employees this can lead the organization towards the generation of pool of expertise and creativity which are essentials for bringing innovation in the organization. As far as the role of external collaboration to bring innovation is concerned, external organizations play important role to bring innovation like customers (Baker and Sinkula; 2005, Gassman et.al; 2006) and competitors (Hamel et. al.; 1989). Nowadays, to bring innovation, crucial is to make linkages with external organizations to get the knowledge and capabilities which are necessary for innovation (Chesbrough; 2003, Powell, et.al; 1996). To bring innovation, linking with external organization and partners is a core process. Chesbrough (2003) argued that if any firm wants to innovate successfully in a highly complex environment, the innovation process must be supported by the open and flexible structure. Organizations must integrate with external knowledge and capabilities. This integration and collaboration allow the organization to get more innovative ideas which is sole of innovation.

Organizational Learning and Innovation to compete in highly dynamic environment each and every organization must focus continuous learning because customer's needs and preferences are rapidly changing and to meet those requirements organization must seek and learn the new ways. These new ways and methods can only be come into the organization through learning. Organizational learning enhances the organization knowledge capability and knowledge assets. Consequently, organizational learning strengthens the knowledge transformation process because when employees learn they have to share their experiences and knowledge with others who really need current knowledge to fill the knowledge gap. Wijnhoven (2001) states that organizational learning urges the people to enhance the organizational knowledge base. Organizational learning enhances the interaction among the employees so that knowledge sharing, integration and dissemination achieved. Drucker (1993) explained that organizational learning will boost the quality and quantity of the information and accumulation of knowledge in a dynamic environment. Organizational learning will enhance the ability to create new knowledge and its application.

Knowledge Transformation and Knowledge Characteristics Knowledge characteristics also affect the knowledge transformation and innovation. There are two types of knowledge characteristics: Knowledge Tacitness and Knowledge Complexity. The most important characteristic of the knowledge is knowledge tacitness which is human expertise, capabilities and competencies which exist in human mind. To pace up the innovation process, organizations must focus onto the transformation of tacit knowledge into the explicit knowledge because tacit knowledge is difficult to share, capture and disseminate. It can only be observed through application. So, to get benefit and competitive advantage from tacit knowledge, organizations must transform tacit knowledge through mentoring, coaching, formal and informal meetings and seminars so that tacit knowledge can be diffused to the other members of the organization as well. Other characteristic of knowledge is complexity. Knowledge complexity can be a hurdle in knowledge transformation process and so to bring innovation. Complex knowledge is difficult to share with others and this factor can slow down the pace of knowledge transformation and innovation process. Meetu and Perez-cano (2004) believe that knowledge complexity will slow down the knowledge transformation and it is more difficult to apply in organizations and convert in other type of knowledge. Knowledge complexity will increasethe cost of acquiring and exploitation of the knowledge and it will affect the learning efficiency of the organization because individuals cannot have easy access to such knowledge (McEvily and Chakarvarthy; 2002).

Organizational Culture and Innovation- Culture is one of the most important factors to implement the knowledge management system. Delong and Fahey (2002) stated that knowledge management faces the difficulties from corporate culture to be implemented that's why normally

organization do not get maximum benefit from knowledge management. In a study of 453 firms, more than half of them indicated organizational culture was biggest hurdle to implement the KM system in the organizations (Ruggles; 1998). In order to implement the knowledge management system effectively, organizations must create the thirst for knowledge and achievement among the individuals of the organization. So, to implement the knowledge management, organizations need to build the knowledge culture within the organization in which new knowledge acquisition and sharing will be the integral part of the organization strategy and culture. Gold et.al, (2001) stated that encouraging and supportive culture will help to build the knowledge management system in the organizations.

Conclusion- In this paper, we develop an integrated model which includes several factors that plays vital role to bring innovation. ICT factors help the organization to find out and manage the organizational knowledge which increases the organizational knowledge assets and capabilities. Knowledge success factors are vital in diffusing knowledge from individuals to the entire organization which strengthens the organizational knowledge culture. In order to pace up the innovation process, organizations must implement the innovation determinants which are actually the cause of innovation.

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Women Empowerment and Rural Transformation: A Study of MGNREGA

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Abstract- *The National Employment Guarantee Act was brought by the Government of India in 2005, the basic objective of which was to directly attack the poverty prevalent in rural areas. Because the basic objective of NREGA (MNREGA) was to increase the income of unskilled families in rural areas by providing them 100 days guaranteed employment. So that the percentage of poverty can gradually reduce, but in its present form, there is a need for reform to make MNREGA effective and successful in achieving its objectives because with time, the interference of middlemen in it increased. Due to which many problems started arising in this sector like non-payment of wages on time after work and payment of wages at low rates. Work being carried out in unproductive areas etc. due to which a need was felt to make adjustments for economic and social inclusion more effectively. For which the Government of India made it mandatory from 2009 to pay all MGNREGA wages through bank and post office accounts. The result of which is that at present 100 percent payment is being made through bank and post office accounts. There are two sides to inclusion. Economic Inclusion and Social Inclusion. Mainly the concept of inclusive development includes financial inclusion and social inclusion. In most situations, those who are deprived of social inclusion are also deprived of financial inclusion. Social inclusion means that all sections of the society can get their proper representation and the difference in rural and urban facilities can be reduced, income and regional disparity can be reduced. Besides, women can also be connected to the main stream of development. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) has emerged as a landmark social security program aimed at enhancing livelihood security, reducing rural poverty, and fostering inclusive growth in India. Among its transformative impacts, the empowerment of rural women stands out as a crucial dimension of rural transformation. By mandating at least 33% participation of women, MGNREGA has successfully enhanced female labour force participation in rural areas. Recent data from the Ministry of Rural Development (2022–23) shows that women's share of total person-days generated under the scheme has consistently exceeded the legal requirement, reaching 56% at the national level. MGNREGA not only provides income security but also strengthens women's bargaining power within households and communities.*

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Direct wage payments through bank and post office accounts have advanced financial inclusion, reducing dependency on male family members and moneylenders. Further, women's involvement in asset-creating works such as water harvesting structures, rural roads, and plantation projects contributes to long-term rural development. Case studies from states like Kerala (90% women participation) and Tamil Nadu (82%) highlight how MGNREGA has become a tool for both gender equity and community-driven development. The program's impact on rural transformation extends beyond employment by improving infrastructure, natural resource management, and social inclusion. However, challenges remain, such as delayed payments, lack of crèche facilities at worksites, and the undervaluation of women's contributions. Addressing these gaps can further strengthen MGNREGA's role in achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) related to poverty reduction, gender equality, and decent work. Thus, MGNREGA represents not only an employment guarantee scheme but also a catalyst for women's empowerment and rural transformation, reshaping India's rural socio-economic landscape.

Keywords- MGNREGA, Women Empowerment, Rural Transformation, Poverty Reduction, Inclusive Growth. Social inclusion & financial inclusion.

Introduction- Since independence, India has been a welfare nation and the primary goal of all the efforts of the government has been the welfare of the people of the country. Policies and programs have been prepared keeping in mind the goal of eradicating rural poverty. It was felt that a sustainable strategy for poverty alleviation should be based on continuously increasing opportunities for gainful employment in the process of development. Elimination of evil tendencies like poverty, ignorance, diseases and inequality of opportunities and providing better and higher quality/dignified life have been the basic principles on which all plans and development programs have been designed. Under rural development, both strong economic and social transformation of the people has been prepared. Has been taken care of. Among these schemes, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA) has gone through many changes since its inception and has become the lifeline of crores of people. The aim of this Act is to increase the livelihood security of families in rural areas of the country by providing assured daily wage employment to every family for a minimum of 100 days during any financial year. Provided that its adult members are willing to do unskilled labour. The main pillars of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA program include social inclusion, gender equality, social security and equity-based development. Women's empowerment and rural transformation are two critical areas of focus in the development landscape, particularly in India, where gender inequality and rural poverty remain prevalent. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), launched in 2005, has emerged as a transformative program aimed at addressing these challenges. The act guarantees 100 days

of paid wage employment to rural households, primarily in unskilled manual labor, which has the potential to substantially uplift the socio-economic conditions of marginalized groups, particularly women. MGNREGA is not just an employment guarantee scheme, but also a tool for social change. By involving women in labor-intensive projects, MGNREGA has brought them into public sphere work, fostering economic independence and participation in decision-making processes at home and in the community. This has important implications for women's empowerment—enabling them to challenge traditional gender roles, access financial resources, and improve their social standing. However, while the program's design is aimed at poverty alleviation, its actual impact on women's empowerment and rural transformation is complex and multifaceted. The program's success depends not only on employment generation but also on its ability to overcome socio-cultural barriers such as patriarchal norms, limited mobility, and lack of access to decision-making platforms. Furthermore, the kind of work offered, its wage parity, and the actual implementation of the scheme in rural areas are key factors that determine how effectively MGNREGA contributes to both women's empowerment and broader rural development. This study delves into the intersection between women empowerment and rural transformation, analyzing the role of MGNREGA in fostering change. By examining the economic, social, and psychological impacts of women's participation in MGNREGA projects, the study seeks to highlight the nuanced and varying effects of the program on rural women's empowerment and its contribution to the transformation of rural landscapes. This research will also identify the existing challenges and provide recommendations for improving MGNREGA's effectiveness in advancing gender equity and rural development. According to C Rang Rajan Report 2008, financial inclusion means providing financial facilities to the weaker and economically backward section of the society in adequate quantity at the right time and at the lowest cost.

The core aim of inclusive development is to bridge the following three types of disparities-

1. Rural-urban disparity in terms of infrastructure, employment opportunities, education, healthcare, and access to basic amenities.
2. Economic and social inequality, which arises due to unequal distribution of resources, opportunities, and access across different sections of society.
3. Regional disparity, where certain areas lag behind in development due to geographic, administrative, or historical disadvantages.

To address these challenges, various policy measures have been undertaken in India. Among them, the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA) has emerged as a vital instrument in reducing rural-urban disparities and economic inequalities. By guaranteeing 100 days of wage employment to every rural household willing to do unskilled manual work, MNREGA enhances rural livelihoods, empowers

marginalized communities, and reduces the compulsion of migration to urban areas.

1. Rural-urban divide in access to facilities and services,
2. Economic and social inequalities, and
3. Regional imbalances in development.

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA) has played a significant role in addressing the first two disparities. By providing guaranteed wage employment in rural areas, MNREGA has not only improved livelihoods but also reduced migration from rural to urban areas, thereby promoting balanced and inclusive growth. In essence, this exploration not only examines the immediate economic benefits of MGNREGA but also the broader cultural and societal shifts it is fostering in rural communities, where gender norms and socio-economic conditions often present significant barriers to women's advancement.

Research Objective-

1. To increase livelihood security of the rural poor by creating wage employment opportunities in works related to infrastructure development in rural areas.
2. To create rural assets and infrastructure to increase opportunities for gainful self-employment, increase the income of rural families and provide stability to them.
3. Effectively linking financial inclusion with the rural economy.

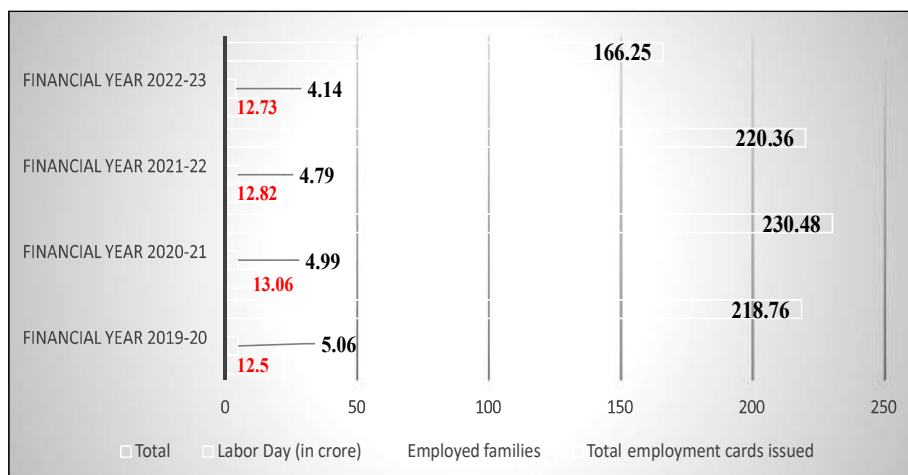
Research Method and Technique- The presented research paper is based on the second set of questions. Analytical research method has been used in this research paper. To compile the data, books, general government reports and the website of the Ministry of Rural Development have been studied.

Data analysis- The concept of inclusive development itself includes financial inclusion and social inclusion. In most of the situations, those who are deprived of social inclusion also want financial inclusion. (Economic Review 2024-2025)

Table-01
Total employment cards issued in MGNREGA

	Financial year 2019-20	Financial year 2020-21	Financial year 2021-22	Financial year 2022-23
Total employment cards issued	12.5	13.06	12.82	12.73
Employed families	5.06	4.99	4.79	4.14
Labor Day (in crore)				
Total	218.76	230.48	220.36	166.25

Source- Department of Rural Development Report 2023-24

Figure 1.1 Total employment cards issued in MGNREGA

Source- Department of Rural Development Report 2023-24

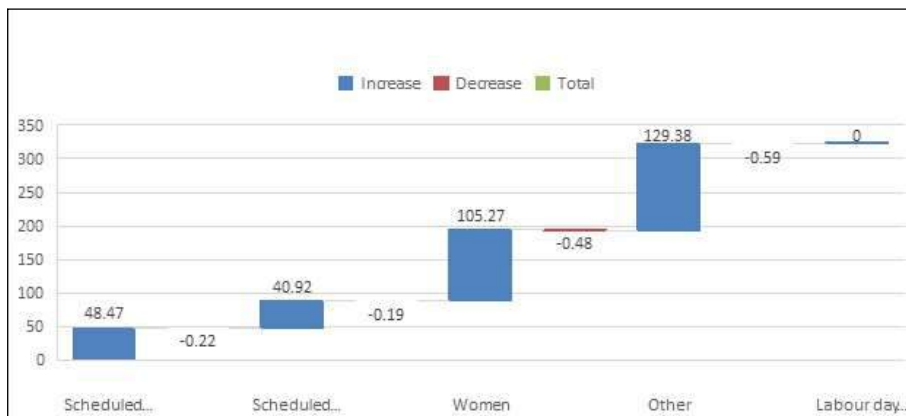
Between the financial years 2019-20 and 2022-23, there was a slight fluctuation in the total employment cards issued, peaking at 13.06 crore in 2020-21 before declining to 12.73 crore in 2022-23. The number of employed families steadily decreased from 5.06 crore in 2019-20 to 4.14 crore in 2022-23. Total labour days generated peaked at 230.48 crore in 2020-21 but dropped significantly to 166.25 crore by 2022-23. This data suggests a decline in employment engagement and labour demand under the scheme, possibly due to economic recovery post- COVID or changes in rural employment patterns

Table-2
Social Inclusion Through MNREGA

	Financial year 2019-20	Financial year 2020-21	Financial year 2021-22	Financial year 2022-23
Scheduled castes	48.47 -22%	51.21 -22%	50.27 -23%	37.19 -22%
Scheduled tribes	40.92 -19%	41 -18%	38.62 -18%	28.28 -17%
Women	105.27 -48%	118.23 -51%	116.4 -53%	91.23 -55%
Other	129.38 -59%	138.27 -60%	131.47 -60%	100.78 -61%
Labour day per family	43 Days	46 Days	46 Days	40 Days

Source- Department of Rural Development Report 2023-24

Figure 2
Social Inclusion Through MNREGA



Source- Department of Rural Development Report 2023-24

From 2019-20 to 2022-23, labour participation under the employment scheme shows a declining trend across all categories. Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes saw moderate decreases in total labour days, with SCs dropping from 48.47 to 37.19 crore and STs from

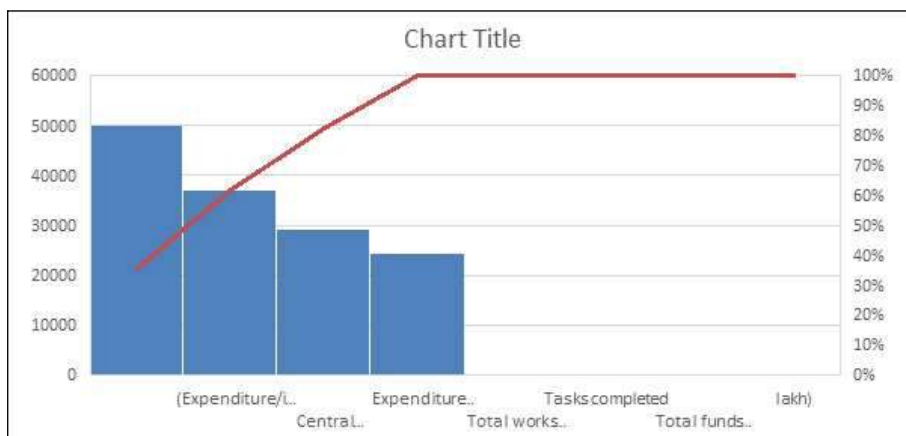
40.92 to 28.28 crore. Women's participation, though initially high at 105.27 crore labour days, declined sharply to 91.23 crore, with a growing percentage decrease each year. The "Other" category showed the steepest decline, from 129.38 to 100.78 crore. Additionally, average labour days per family decreased from 43 to 40, indicating reduced work opportunities and possibly shifting livelihoods or program reach.

Table-3
Financial inclusion through MNREGA

	Financial year 2019-20	Financial year 2020-21	Financial year 2021-22	Financial year 2022-23
Central Release (in Rs crore)	29189.8	30010	32743.7	32476.9
Total funds available (including initial depletion) (in Rs. crore)	48805.7	45630.5	41994.7	38081.2
(Expenditure/in Rs. crore) (percentage of available funds)	37072.8 -76%	39778.3 -87%	38601.6 -92%	35785.2 -94%
	800.21	617.86	986.46	1632.99
Expenditure on wages (in Rs crore)	24306.2 -69.53%	27153.5 -72%	2535.3 -73%	24210 -72%
	457.8	322.32	574.67	878.46
Total works started (in lakh)	80.77	104.62	94.12	99.93
Tasks completed	22.56	25.53	27.37	22.98

Source-Department of Rural Development Report 2023-24

Figure 3
Financial inclusion through MNREGA



Source-Department of Rural Development Report 2023-24

From FY 2019-20 to 2022-23, central releases under the employment scheme slightly increased but plateaued around ₹32,000 crore. Despite declining total available funds—from ₹48,805.7 crore to ₹38,081.2 crore—expenditure rose steadily, reaching 94% of available funds in 2022-23, indicating improved fund utilization. Expenditure on wages remained consistent in percentage terms (~72%), though absolute values fluctuated. The number of works started increased to 99.93 lakh in 2022-23, while completed tasks remained relatively low, suggesting inefficiencies or delays. The sharp rise in liabilities (₹1632.99 crore in 2022-23) reflects mounting payment backlogs, potentially affecting worker participation and scheme sustainability.

Financial inclusion through MNREGA- In order to streamline the money flow system and eliminate delays in the payment of daily wages, the Ministry of Rural Development has implemented National Electronic Fund Management System (NEFMS) in 21 states and 1 Union Territory. Delays in allocation of funds are reduced and stagnation of funds at various levels is eliminated. Under the programme, currently 100 per cent of daily wage is being paid electronically directly into the bank/post office accounts of MNREGA workers through Electronic Fund Management System (EFMS). Till now, 9.46 crore active workers have linked their Aadhar numbers with NREGA Soft MIS. Whereas in January 2014, only 76 lakh Aadhar numbers were linked, currently 6.01 crore workers have been enabled in Aadhar Waste Payment System (ABPS). Looking at the above table, it is seen that when compared from 2013-14 to 2020-21, it was seen that there was an increase of about 1.53 times in the expenditure and an increase of 1.68 times in the wage expenditure. Therefore, we can say that financial inclusion increased through MNREGA.

Challenges before MNREGA- In the recent period, the pace of MNREGA employment generation is slowing down, especially for women and

Scheduled Castes and Tribes. While 46 person days of employment were provided per family in 2016-17, 45.69 person days of employment could be provided in 2017-18, 50.88 person days in 2018-19, 48.40 person days in 2019-20, and only 48.27 person days in 2020-21. And the average wage payment per day is Rs 173.75 in 2016-17 and Rs 200.87 per day in 2020-21, which is an increase of about 14 percent, which is very less as per inflation. Due to essential household work, women were not willing to work in MNREGA away from their place of residence. Apart from this, it was also found that after some man-days of work was done by men and women, the remaining work was done through technical assistance (JCB, tractor) and the man-days were reduced. Complaints have come from many states that wages are not paid within the stipulated period of 15 days. Apart from this, irregularities in the implementation of MNREGA, corruption, falling share of wages and non-payment of unemployment allowance etc. are important challenges before the MNREGA scheme. For MNREGA to have a lasting impact on poverty, many problems need to be solved. When the main objective of rural development programs is poverty alleviation then why should a certain limit of employment days be set. Before MNREGA was enacted, rural India grappled with pervasive structural and socioeconomic issues: Many villagers lacked formal livelihoods and access to paid rural employment. Rural job schemes were top-down, poorly planned, and rarely participatory—for instance, villages mostly adopted obsolete work plans from the Food-for-Work program, with little local input or technical feasibility. Consequently, many assets such as water structures or roads were poorly sited and often abandoned mid-way, wasting public funds and leaving communities without infrastructure. There was no mechanism to ensure completion of works, and wage payments were consistently delayed, discouraging participation. Administrative capacity at the panchayat level was severely constrained: Panchayats lacked the skills and authority to realistically plan, execute, or monitor projects. Staff shortages at block and village levels hampered implementation, and transparency was poor—beneficiary identification, work selection, and cost estimates were opaque, and communities were excluded from decision-making. This landscape was further marred by corruption: inflated muster rolls, fake job cards, wage siphoning, irregular material procurement, and middlemen extracting kickbacks were widespread. This context underscores why MNREGA was conceived as a legally guaranteed, demand-driven employment program aimed at tackling these deep-rooted problems in rural India. Let me know if you'd like a quick overview of how MNREGA addressed these or what challenges it later encountered.

Conclusion and Suggestions- In conclusion, inclusive development is achievable which is possible through MNREGA and other schemes like food Security, Ujjwala Yojana, Prime Minister Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana, Garib Kalyan Rojgar Yojana etc. means Are. We can say that in increasing rural entrepreneurship and bringing to fruition the intention of inclusive development. Some special changes need to be kept in mind like

minimum 180 labour days in MNREGA Provision should be made. Keeping in mind the inflation in wages, it is decided to fix the wage at Rs 400 per day. Needed. Permissible activities with emphasis on rural livelihoods, especially agriculture and rural infrastructure. The list should be expanded so that Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, marginal farmers and The social and economic condition of the neglected sections of the society can improve The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) has proven to be more than just a poverty alleviation program; it has played a pivotal role in empowering rural women and catalyzing transformations in rural economies. Over the years, the scheme has provided millions of rural households with guaranteed employment, creating pathways for women to engage in paid labor, secure economic independence, and challenge traditional gender roles. However, the true impact of MGNREGA on women's empowerment and rural transformation is multifaceted and complex. From the data analyzed, it is evident that women's participation in MGNREGA has been a significant step towards breaking down some of the barriers that have historically limited their economic involvement. The program's focus on manual labor in public works has opened avenues for women to earn wages, which in turn has contributed to their financial autonomy. In many cases, women have used their earnings to improve the well-being of their families, enhancing access to education, health care, and other essential services. These changes not only raise the economic status of women but also foster a sense of independence and self-worth. Yet, despite the substantial progress, challenges persist. Gender disparities in wages, though marginally reduced, remain a concern, with women still earning less than their male counterparts in some regions. The unequal distribution of work opportunities, particularly in leadership and supervisory roles, underscores the persistent social norms that continue to limit women's involvement in decision-making processes. Furthermore, social stigma around women working outside the home, especially in rural areas, continues to restrict their full participation in the program. These barriers, though gradually being overcome, highlight the need for ongoing reforms and targeted interventions. The social transformation fostered by MGNREGA is also evident, particularly in the changes in women's roles within their households and communities. As more women engage in wage labor, they not only gain economic power but also become influential in local governance, family decision-making, and community development. This shift is crucial for broader societal change, as empowered women tend to be catalysts for change in areas like child welfare, health, and education.

On the broader scale of rural transformation, MGNREGA has contributed to the improvement of local infrastructure, with numerous projects focusing on roads, irrigation, and water conservation. These developments have had a ripple effect on rural economies, increasing agricultural productivity, improving market access, and reducing migration to urban centers. Women's participation in these projects has also helped

create more inclusive, sustainable development models, where the benefits are distributed more equitably across gender lines. Despite these positive outcomes, the data also underscores the necessity for policy reforms to address the remaining gaps. Ensuring equal wages for equal work, enhancing women's leadership participation, and providing adequate training for women workers are crucial to maximizing the potential of MGNREGA for fostering gender equality and economic transformation. Furthermore, addressing the structural challenges—such as the lack of awareness, infrastructure, and institutional support—will be key to ensuring that women can fully access the benefits of the program. In conclusion, while MGNREGA has undeniably contributed to women's empowerment and rural transformation, its success is contingent upon a comprehensive approach that not only focuses on job creation but also tackles deep-rooted social, cultural, and institutional challenges. By strengthening implementation, improving awareness, and enhancing women's access to decision-making spaces, MGNREGA can serve as a powerful tool for achieving gender equality and sustainable rural development in India. Ultimately, the study highlights that MGNREGA's success in empowering rural women is a work in progress, and continued efforts are necessary to ensure that it truly becomes a vehicle for lasting change, benefiting both women and rural communities as a whole.

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Ancient India as the Light of Civilization Relevance of the Saga of Ancient Indian Colonization in the Indian Knowledge System Classroom

• Sukanya Som

Abstract- *This paper examines the historiography of ancient Indian cultural expansion beyond the subcontinent and its relevance within the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) framework envisioned by the National Education Policy 2020. Focusing on the concept of Greater India, it analyses French, Dutch, and Indian scholarly interpretations of Indian influence in Southeast and Central Asia, emphasizing cultural, spiritual, and intellectual transmission rather than coercive political domination. By revisiting debates on Indian “colonization” as a peaceful process of assimilation and internationalism, the study argues that this legacy offers valuable pedagogical insights for contemporary IKS classrooms, reinforcing India's historical role as a civilizational connector and promoter of harmony.*

Keywords- *Indian Knowledge System (IKS); Greater India; Cultural Colonization; Ancient Indian Civilization; Southeast Asia; Historiography; Spiritual Internationalism*

Introduction- Indian Knowledge System is an integral part of the National Education Policy 2020. Through the Indian Knowledge System, India's Ministry of Education aims to promote ancient Indian wisdom, customs, traditional knowledge in the spheres of literary creations, philosophy, art, science, medicine and so on and to stress thoroughly on their relevance in today's times. To celebrate India's cultural and spiritual legacy contemporary efforts are welcomed such as establishing IKS centres, introduction of courses integrating ancient Indian tradition and heritage, inspiring research activities, promoting meditation, Yoga, Ayurvedic treatments in modern lifestyle for a healthy well-being etc. As it is important to focus on different aspects of the ancient Indian way of life, I will focus in this paper on a particular area of Indian culture that is hardly spoken of. It is the saga of ancient Indian colonizers beyond the borders of mainland India to the world of South East Asia and Central Asia. I will discuss in this paper about the thousand-year-old legacy of Indians in spreading Indian culture and spiritual wisdom abroad that indeed has contributed immensely in shaping today's Asia and the world at large. From the last decade of the 19th century till the first half of the 20th century, a new arena of historical research became popular. It was motivated by a strain of Indology or Indo-centric historical research which later shaped itself as the historiography

and the ideology of 'Greater India'. As the colonial governments of South East Asian countries (particularly French and Dutch colonial territories) began to explore the history of the regions, they found vast amount of archeological and literary evidences from different sites that clearly indicated a profound influence of ancient Indian socio-cultural traits. These materials included Indian epics, other Indian literary texts, the numerous monuments and religious shrines dedicated to Indian deities and built in both local and Indian architectural style, the local plays depicting Indian mythological characters, many Indian words in local dialects etc. These Indian influences astonished the French and Dutch historians and Indologists of that era. They adopted an Indo-centric attitude towards the South-east Asian regions (Java, Malaysia, Indonesia, Cambodia, Borneo etc). This ideology gave birth to a concept, known as 'Greater India'. In this context we can cite French scholar George Coedes' theory of 'gold rush' whereby he indicated that Indian traders went to those distant lands for prosperous trade purposes and accumulated wealth in terms of gold. He also stated that with these early traders went the group of Brahman scholars who had a great contribution in creating 'cultural colonies' in South East Asia. They carried with them the scholastic enlightenment from India (the knowledge of Vedas, Puranas, Smriti sastras, philosophy etc.). That's why Coedes thought that the Southeast Asian states 'were never political dependencies of India, but rather 'cultural colonies' (252). In his words, Further India, the region gave the Indians the feeling of having been, in the noblest sense of the term, a great colonizing people, in spite of all the ritual obstacles and racial prejudices that would seem to have prohibited them from playing such a role. The expansive power of their culture and the dynamism of their civilization, of which the Indians seem never to have been completely conscious, manifested themselves in all the countries to which they emigrated. (252) According to him India's rich cultural heritage astonished the South East Asians and they adopted the Indianized culture with great enthusiasm and became Indianized states. Dutch historian N.J Krom differed from Coédes and focused on the 'Vaishya' theory, through which he argued that it was the Indian traders or the Vaisya class who were the transmitters of Indian culture in South East Asia. In *Inleiding tot de Hindoe-Javaansche kunst*, Krom mentions that Hindu culture was first discovered in western Java. Indian trading classes established their colonies here and with time they contributed vastly to the Javanese socio-political life. The inscriptions found from there, dated around 4th and 5th century AD, bear Indian way of writing (Pallava script and Sanskrit language). Examining the literary and inscriptional records he believed that the first Indian colonizer of Java was Adi-Saka of Gujrat who established Saka Era in Java in 78 AD (133). Thus, he too believed that it was not the arbitrary colonization by force but a peaceful process of assimilation wherein superior Indian culture gave a new way of life to Java. On the other hand, C.C. Berg talked of the Kshyatriya theory. According to him the Indian Princely class or the Kshatriyas crossed the turbulent seas and reached

South East Asia. There they found their political control and established Indianized states. So, in his view it was the Indian Princes who politically colonized the lands (mentioned in Chong-Guan, XXV). All these theories talked of different processes of Indian colonization and evolved around the idea of colonization. During the 19th and 20th centuries, the western powers like the British, French and Dutch became consistent rivals, competing for supremacy in Asia and especially India. So when the two big powers like French and Dutch found evidences of ancient Indian influence in their colonial territories, they anchored on the theory of colonization. As **Yorim Spoelder says-** European Indology was, by the early twentieth century...contingent on colonial trajectories which not only structured the field of knowledge production but also had a strong bearing on a nation's cultural politics vis-à-vis India. Thus, the theory of 'Indian colonization' of South-East Asia in the ancient times got impetus in the hands of French and Dutch historians for another reason too. That reason lies in the Anglo-French and Anglo-Dutch rivalry in conquering India. As to these western countries India was a land of fortune and power both wanted to have colonial control over India. Though the Dutch never militarily 'colonized' India and mostly they managed to only establish commercial link with India, and though the French could only manage to hold on to only a handful of territories in India the British East India company expanded their political control in a rapid speed since the second half of the 18th century. By 1858, India was declared as part of the British Empire. So the rise of the Britain as the colonizer of India and the failure of France and Netherlands in colonizing India led to an increase of the political rivalry. Blake Smith writes, 'Much of France's fixation with India formed in the shadow of a failed empire' (NP). This rivalry led the French and Dutch historians to look at Indocentric research findings that would talk of ancient India's colonial grandeur. The British colonial government portrayed India as a country of 'splendid isolation', the Indian people as uncivilized and comparable with dogs and monkeys, the rulers of India as Oriental despots whereby it sought to legitimize its means of colonial domination as a part of a 'civilizing' mission. Thus, to control the naturally resourced country and to validate their colonial zeal the British Government preached the theory of 'white man's burden'. French and Dutch group of historians challenged this British notion about India and portrayed India as a carrier of thousand years old colonization legacy. However, according to them this colonization process was not forceful or suppressive in nature; rather it was a peaceful process. According to them, Indian culture was so rich that the locals of South East Asian states adopted them warmly and became Indianized. The Indian princes established Indianized empires there that ruled for centuries. In this way the political rivalry against Britain took the shape of intellectual rivalry. This portrayal of ancient India's enriched history also delegitimized the propagated discourse that said that precolonial Indians were uncivilized. The lands far away from mainland India were regarded parts of India and henceforth the phrase 'Greater India' got popular. Three regions were

considered as Greater India; Indonesia or Dvipantara Bharata, Indo-China and Serindia or areas of Central Asia. Following the works of French and Dutch scholars on Greater India, a group of Indian intelligentsias who were mostly Bengalis founded the Greater India Society in 1926 in Calcutta. The members included great scholars like Kalidas Nag, Suniti Kumar Chattopadhyay, P. C. Bagchi, nationalist historians like R. C. Majumdar, Nihar Ranjan Ray, O. C. Ganguly, young researchers like Himanshu Bhusan Sarkar, Devaprasad Ghosh, B.R Chatterjee etc. South Indian historian N. K. Sastri, Srilankan art historian Ananda Kumarswami were also part of this Calcutta based organization. Another name that needs to be mentioned though he was not a direct member but the 'purodha' of this group was Rabindranath Tagore. An interesting fact is that many of these scholars went to France for higher studies or research activities and while staying there they came in contact with scholars like Sylvain Lévi, Jean Przyluski. They were thrilled to know about their research findings on Indian influence in different areas of Asia and the excavations going on in those areas with French and Dutch governments' initiatives. The historiographical research on ancient Indian saga overwhelmed them and it motivated them to come together and establish a particular organization in India that would work on Greater India ideology on their own soil. The aim of Greater India Society was to promote Greater India ideology among the fellow countrymen and invited scholars, researchers and students to actively participate in Greater India research works. The very idea was also to deny and intellectually counter the British dogma of ancient India's supposed 'splendid isolation' and create a nationalist sentiment among the Indians by awakening them with the knowledge of India's thousand years old history of colonization. In this way not only India's glory could be retained but also it could be used as weapon against oppressive British regime. After all it was pompous to state that if colonization was the standard of civilization, then India reached its pinnacle thousand years ago and that too in a benevolent process. The nineteenth century idea of Colonization was thus countered through the Indian style of colonization. The theoretical support of this Indian style of colonization came from the big European rivals of Britain as a result of which the Greater India research by the Bengali intellectuals got new impetus. Kalidas Nag propounded the idea of India's spiritual colonization. In the Greater India Society's first bulletin titled 'Greater India' he argued that even in the pre-Christian times Indian Gods appeared to preach the idea of universal peace and stopped the fight between Hittites and the Mitannis in the 14th century B.C in West Asia and thus ensured international amity. To him, ancient India was a path-maker of internationalism. The Great Mauryan king Ashoka became the 'spiritual colombus' leaving his policy of digvijaya after the Kalinga War. This spiritual journey of India continued to the faraway lands also when the countries of China, Japan, Korea, Mongolia bowed down to Buddhism, the states of South East Asia adopted Hinduism and Buddhism and became Indianized. According to him the Indian colonizers did not oppress or suppress the natives; rather the Indian way of

life, idea of spiritual upliftment was so benevolent that the natives peacefully submitted to the enriched culture. Thus, waves of Indian colonizers went to those lands and unlike the British, their colonization was welcomed by the locals. Ramesh Chandra Majumdar emphasized on the role of Bengali colonizers while talking about Hindu colonizers of ancient India. While the British used to portray Bengali Bhadrolok class as 'effeminate babus', Majumdar portrays them as courageous people who had navigated the turbulent seas and had colonized the uncivilized savages of Far East territories in the past. He writes in Champa. In short, Indian civilization made a thorough conquest of these lands and a new India was established in that far-off region. The Indian colonists even tried to complete the transformation by importing celebrated place-names of their motherland into their new home, and thus we find new towns and countries called Ayodhyá, Kausambi, Sriksetra, Dvārāvati, Mathurā, Champā, Kalinga, Kamboja and Gandhara springing up hundreds of miles away from their name-sakes. In his article 'The Malay' (1936) he discussed the different theories of Indian colonization by the French scholars and concluded that India from the period of Aryan invasion appeared as colonizer as it threw out the primitive natives of India and forced them to settle colonies crossing the sea. He argued that the tribes of South East Asia were not only civilized by the cultured Indians but also the Indians changed the South-East Asian cultural orientation by creating a Sanskritized literary atmosphere and producing architectural marvels. Phanindra Nath Bose talks of India's cultural empire abroad. He argued that Indians with 'diverse motives' like trading purposes, love for adventure and so on went to South East Asian countries and injected and spread their enriched culture among the inhabitants. He writes, 'There were waves of colonists coming to Cambodia from the mainland of India at certain intervals' (193). This 'wave of colonists' in his view kept India's cultural empire alive. In the political realm of the states also, Indianization was seen in the presence of the Brahmans in the royal courts, the concept of Cakrabartin and adoration of Indian royal titles such as Rajadhiraja, Paramesvara etc. Himangshu Bhusan Sarkar defined India's colonial legacy in the light of south Indian colonists and Bengal missionaries who were actually the 'culture-bearers' of India. Though from 8th century onwards North Indians too participated in the colonizing process, the Sanskritisation of the upper-class culture, prevalence of Pallava-Grantha script, Mahayana Buddhism, the Varna system, amazing presence of Bengal art style etc are indications that South India and Bengal had built cultural colonies in Java, Sumatra, Malaya, Bali etc. Prabodh Chandra Bagchi focused on the Serindia part of Greater India. He discussed in his books that ancient Indians had profound knowledge about Central Asian landscapes and they did not only spread Indian cultural traits there but also assimilated Central Asian culture in theirs. In Bharat O Indo-Chin, he showed that Indians colonized Indochina in such a peaceful manner that it didn't see any forceful penetration. The Indian colonizers didn't exploit the natives and benevolently ruled over them. He discussed

the history of Indian colonization in stages since the beginning of the Christian era. The constant coming of colonists in different periods of time civilized the uncivilized locals and Hindu culture got immortalized through the renaming of the local places, rivers, mountains etc. He thought that through the process of renaming the Indian colonial rulers wanted to cherish the memories of their motherland. There were other scholars in the Greater India Society who actively propagated the idea of Indian colonization through their writings. It's not possible to focus on each one of them within the scope of one article. However, it can be said that the ideas of French and Dutch scholars were totally followed by their Indian followers. Greater India Society regularly published Journals, Bulletins and articles to inform their countrymen about the ancient Indian glory in the form of colonialism. The incorporation of Indian Knowledge system in the NEP syllabus is designed to promote glories of our culture and this system is working wonderfully in bringing out the different glorious sides of Indian tradition and transmitting the same through education of the pupils and the masses. In this respect when ancient Indian polity, social structure, art, scientific inventions are highlighted, we should also focus on this side of the ancient Indian saga. Since, India is a sojourner of freedom and has always prioritized peace and liberty, unity in diversity, assimilation of multiple cultures, for many the celebration of ancient India's 'colonization' of other parts of the world may appear to be contradictory and less glorious. However, we must understand the nature of this colonization that ancient India managed to nurture. After all, as we have earlier discussed, it was not oppressive and guided by thirst of military conquest or material gain, but something that guaranteed greater interconnections, harmony, true development of other foreign lands and people and much of our own mainland contemporary India was influenced by a peaceful and harmonious colonial encounter that ancient Indians could manufacture and facilitate. After all, Tagore, who was a messenger of peace and identified as 'Viswa Kavi' could not have had supported historians dealing with such pasts connected to ancient India's international connection had it been really inglorious and based on violence and violation of morality and humanity especially in the context of being a poet and patriot living in and fighting for the liberty and development of a colonially oppressed India. If the ties between regions of South-East Asia and India were based on coercion and violence inflicted by ancient Indians, Subhas Chandra Bose could have had not operated with such flawlessness from these lands during his fight against the British in the 1940s. Moreover, had Indian colonization of South-East Asia been truly anti-humanitarian, Nehru could have had not had so many countries from these parts of Asia as allies in his non-alignment campaign in the decades just after the Indian independence and during the early period of the Cold War. In today's world, where India must prioritize more on developing a mechanism for better international connectivity and must play its role as truly a 'Viswa-Guru' it must not refrain from looking at its past as a colonial master and a true peace-maker but rather glorify its character and

scope in order to challenge the coercive effects of terrorism and neo-colonial exploitation of third-world countries and to facilitate global peace and progressive coexistence. Therefore, much more focus on 'Greater India' studies should be seen as one of the means of further developing the plan of celebrating the 'Indian Knowledge System' in the Indian classrooms for India's own good and the betterment of the world at large.

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A Comparative Study of Lifestyle Among Higher Secondary School Teachers

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Abstract- *The present study entitled “A comparative Study of Lifestyle among Higher Secondary School Teachers” was conducted to examine the lifestyle of teachers with reference to gender and type of school. The study was carried out on a sample of 200 higher secondary school teachers selected from government and private schools of Durg block in Durg District, Chhattisgarh. A descriptive survey method was employed and data were collected using the Lifestyle Scale developed by S.K. Bawa and Sumanpreet Kaur (2012). The data were analyzed using Mean, Standard Deviation and t-test. The finding of the study revealed a significant difference in the lifestyle of teachers on the basis of gender with female teachers exhibiting a higher level of lifestyle than male teachers. However, no significant difference was found in the lifestyle of teachers working in government and private schools. The results indicated that teacher's lifestyles are influenced more by personal, social and professional factors and the type of school.*

Keywords- *Higher Secondary School Teachers, Lifestyle, Gender, Govt. and Private Schools*

Introduction- Education is the foremost means of all-round development of human life and the progress of any nation depends largely on the quality of its education. Within the educational system, the teacher occupies a central position as he or she is the primary facilitator of the teaching-learning process. In particular, higher secondary school teachers play a vital role in the intellectual, emotional and social development of adolescent and young learners. At this stage, teachers also act as guides in shaping students' personalities, development life values and helping them determine their future goals. In such a context the teachers lifestyle encompassing thoughts, behavior, habits and attitudes directly and indirectly influences students. Therefore the study of teachers lifestyles becomes highly significant from an educational perspective.

In the present era, rapid social changes, technological advancement, increasing work pressure, a competitive environment and growing familial and social responsibilities have profoundly affected the lifestyle of teachers. Higher secondary school teachers along with their academic responsibilities

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also face administrative duties, timely completion of the curriculum, examination and evaluation work, parental expectations and challenges related to personal life. Under such circumstances it is natural to find differences in their lifestyles based on factors such as gender, types of school. These variations have a significant impact on teachers health, mental wellbeing, work performance and quality of teaching, making it essential to understand them in depth.

In view of the above circumstances, the present study is highly relevant. This study undertakes a comparative analysis of teacher's lifestyles on the basis of gender and types of school in order to understand the similarities and differences among various groups of teachers. The findings of this research may prove useful for educational administrators, policy makers and teacher training institutions as they can help in developing effective plan and programs to improve teachers standard of living, job satisfaction and work efficiency. Thus, this study is important not only from an academic research perspective but also from practical and viewpoints.

Related Studies

Yadav *et al.* (2023) performed a comparative analysis of life style and health status among male and female teachers of Delhi University. This study was conducted at the University of Delhi, in which 100 teachers from various colleges were included on a random basis. A self-structured questionnaire was used in the study. For statistical analysis, the percentage method was employed. The findings revealed that most teachers face health problems, which arise as a result of our daily sedentary and unhealthy lifestyle.

Ghatge and Parasar (2022) studies Impact of Modern Lifestyle on Health. The findings of the study revealed that in the modern lifestyle, the prevalence of several unhealthy choices has increased, such as alcohol consumption, substance use, and smoking. Gradually, people are becoming addicted to these habits, which consequently lead to various health problems.

Muchhal (2019) conducted a Study of the Lifestyle of Rural and Urban Student-Teachers. For the sample of the study, all the students enrolled in B.Ed. programmes and the teachers of Baghpat district were selected. As a research tool, the Lifestyle Scale developed by S. K. Bawa and S. Kaur (2010) was used. For the analysis of data, mean, standard deviation, and t-test were employed. The findings of the study revealed a significant difference in the mean scores of socially oriented and family-oriented lifestyles of rural and urban student-teachers.

Veal (2013) studied The concept of lifestyle: a review. Lifestyle is the distinctive pattern of personal and social behaviour characteristic of an individual or a group. The findings of the study revealed that Lifestyle is a distinctive pattern of personal and social behaviours that includes activities related to relationships with one's spouse, family, relatives, friends, neighbours and colleagues, consumption behaviour, leisure, work (paid or unpaid), as well as civic and religious activities, and which expresses the unique identity of an individual or a group.

Objectives Of The Study

1. To study the lifestyle of higher secondary school teachers on the basis of gender.
2. To study the lifestyle of higher secondary school teachers on the basis of type of school.

Hypotheses Of The Study

- H₀₋₁ There will be no significant difference in the lifestyle of higher secondary school teachers on the basis of gender.
- H₀₋₂ There will be no significant difference in the lifestyle of higher secondary school teachers on the basis of type of school.

Delimitations Of The Study

- The present study is confined only to the Durg Block of Durg District in the state of Chhattisgarh.
- The study is delimited to a total of 200 teachers working in government and private higher secondary schools located in the Durg Block of Durg District.
- In the present study, only male and female teachers of higher secondary schools have been included on the basis of gender.
- For Collecting Data only those teachers were taken who were teaching class 11th in Higher Secondary Schools.

Population

In the present research study, all teachers teaching in higher secondary schools of the Durg Block in Durg District have been selected as the population.

Sample

For the present study, a sample of 200 higher secondary school teachers from the Durg Block of Durg District was selected using the disproportionate stratified random sampling method.

Tools

For measuring the level of lifestyle of teachers, the Lifestyle Scale developed by S. K. Bawa and Sumanpreet Kaur (2012) has been used.

Statistical Analysis

For the analysis of data, Mean, Standard Deviation, and t-test have been used.

Analysis And Interpretation

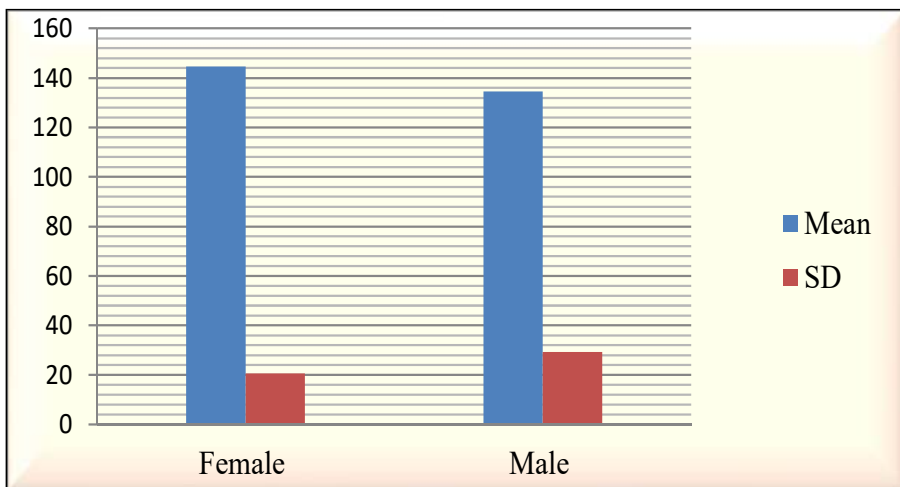
- H₀₋₁ There will be no significant difference in the lifestyle of higher secondary school teachers on the basis of gender.

Table No. - 1
Table of the Lifestyle of Higher Secondary School Teachers Based on Gender

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-value
Female	100	144.60	20.60	2.805*
Male	100	134.57	29.22	

* - Significant at the 0.05 level of significance

Graph No. - 1
Bar Graph of the Lifestyle of Higher Secondary School Teachers Based on Gender



The above table clearly shows that the mean score of lifestyle among female teachers is 144.60 and standard deviation of 20.60, while the mean score of lifestyle among male teachers is 134.57 with a standard deviation of 29.22. The t-value for the difference in lifestyle between female and male teachers was found to be 2.805, which is significant at the 0.05 level of significance with $df = 198$. This indicates that there is a significant difference in the lifestyle of female and male teachers based on gender. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and it is observed that the lifestyle level of female teachers is higher compared to that of male teachers.

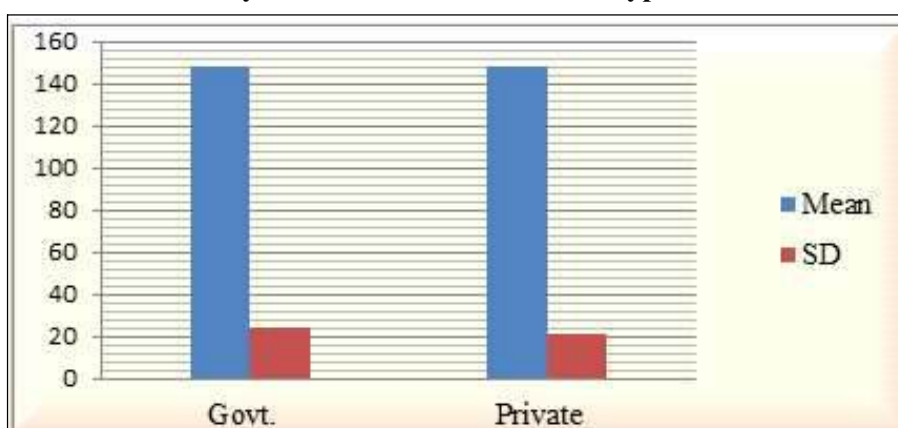
H_{0-2} There will be no significant difference in the lifestyle of higher secondary school teachers on the basis of type of school.

Table No. - 2
Table of the Lifestyle of Higher
Secondary School Teachers Based on Type of school

Type of school	N	Mean	SD	t-value
Govt.	100	148.12	24.15	0.067*
Private	100	147.90	21.74	

• - Not Significant at the 0.05 level of significance

Graph No. - 2
Bar Graph of the Lifestyle of Higher
Secondary School Teachers Based on Type of school



The above table clearly shows that the mean score of lifestyle among teachers of government schools is 148.12 with a standard deviation of 24.15, while the mean score of lifestyle among teachers of private schools is 147.90 with a standard deviation of 21.74. The t-value for the difference in lifestyle between teachers of government and private schools is 0.067, which is not significant at the 0.05 level of significance with $df = 198$. This indicates that there is no significant difference in the lifestyle of teachers based on the type of school. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Result

The present study, reveals that the lifestyle of teachers is influenced by various personal and institutional factors. Based on the findings of the study, it was observed that there is a significant difference in the lifestyle of teachers based on gender. The lifestyle level of female teachers was found to be higher than that of male teachers, indicating that female teachers possibly adopt a more conscious and disciplined approach toward health, time management, family balance, and daily life. As a result, the null hypothesis regarding equality of lifestyle based on gender was rejected.

Furthermore, no significant difference was found in the lifestyle of higher secondary school teachers working in government and private schools. The lifestyle levels of teachers in both types of schools were almost similar, suggesting that the type of school does not decisively influence

teachers' lifestyles. On this basis, the null hypothesis related to the type of school was accepted. This indicates that teachers' lifestyle is more strongly affected by personal habits, social environment, family responsibilities, and professional commitments rather than the type of institution they work in.

Overall, it can be concluded that the lifestyle of teachers not only affects the quality of their personal life but also plays a crucial role in teaching effectiveness and the holistic development of students. Therefore, educational administrators and policymakers should give special attention to programs related to health, stress management, counseling, and welfare to promote balance and positivity in teachers' lifestyles. In this way, the findings of the present study provide useful guidance for future researchers as well as educational institutions.

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Exploring Digital Tools for Creating and Sharing E-Content: from Canva to Google Classroom

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Abstract- *In the era of digital transformation, higher education has witnessed a paradigm shift from traditional teaching methods to technology-driven learning environments. E-content-electronic educational material developed and delivered through digital media-has become an essential tool for effective teaching and learning. This paper explores various digital tools used for creating and sharing e-content, with special reference to Canva, Google Classroom, PowerPoint, YouTube, and H5P. These tools enhance the learning experience by integrating multimedia, interactivity, and collaboration. The study also highlights the importance, advantages, challenges, and emerging trends in e-content development. It concludes that the effective use of digital tools can make higher education more engaging, inclusive, and student-centered, provided that proper training and infrastructure are ensured for educators and learners alike.*

Keywords- *E-content, Digital tools, Higher education, Canva, Google Classroom, Technology integration, Interactive learning.*

Introduction- Education in the 21st century is no longer confined to chalk and talk. The integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has transformed the way knowledge is created, shared, and consumed. The growing importance of digital literacy, online learning, and blended classrooms has made E-content a vital component of modern pedagogy. In higher education, where independent and flexible learning is essential, e-content provides an innovative platform that enhances student engagement and understanding. Teachers now act as content creators and facilitators, using digital tools such as Canva, Google Classroom, PowerPoint, YouTube, and H5P to design interactive lessons that meet the needs of diverse learners. This paper aims to examine these tools and their educational impact in the context of higher education.

Objectives of The Study- The present study aims to explore the use, effectiveness, and significance of digital tools in creating and sharing e-content for higher education. The specific objectives are as follows:

- To understand the concept and importance of e-content in the context of modern higher education.

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- To identify and analyze the major digital tools (such as Canva, Google Classroom, PowerPoint, YouTube, and H5P) used for developing and sharing e-content.
- To examine the role of these tools in enhancing teaching efficiency, student engagement, and learning outcomes.
- To explore the advantages and limitations of using digital tools in e-content development.
- To study the challenges faced by educators in integrating technology into teaching and learning.
- To highlight emerging trends and innovations in e-content creation and digital pedagogy.
- To suggest recommendations for effective use of digital tools and the promotion of digital literacy among teachers and students.

Meaning and Nature of E-Content- E-content (Electronic Content) refers to learning materials developed and delivered through digital media. It includes:

- Text (study notes, e-books, handouts)
- Visuals (infographics, charts, presentations)
- Audio (podcasts, recorded lectures)
- Video (tutorials, documentaries)
- Interactive materials (quizzes, simulations, animations)

E-content is any digital information, including text, audio, and video, that is created, distributed, and accessed electronically. Its nature is multi-sensory, interactive, and learner-centric, allowing for flexible, self-paced learning that can be accessed anytime, anywhere. E-content refers to "electronic content," which includes all forms of digital information created, shared, and stored using electronic devices and digital platforms. It is used across various fields like education, entertainment, and marketing, and can take the form of e-books, videos, presentations, online articles, and interactive modules.

Nature of E-Content-

eable- E-content can be assembled from various sources or created from scratch and can be shared easily. This has led to the growth of Open Educational Resources (OER) which are available under open licenses.

5. Adaptable- It can be used as a resource to supplement or support different teaching methods, rather than being a method in itself.

The purpose of e-content is not just to convey information but to enhance the learning experience through interactivity, flexibility, and personalization. It supports distance learning, MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses), teacher education, and blended classrooms.

Importance of Digital Tools in Higher Education- Digital tools are important in higher education because they enhance accessibility,

personalize learning, and improve collaboration and engagement. They break down geographical barriers through remote learning, offer flexible access to resources, and provide interactive and immersive learning environments through simulations and multimedia content. These tools also help prepare students for the digital future by developing skills necessary for the modern workforce and offering new methods for evaluation and feedback.

Key benefits of digital tools in higher education-

- **Improved accessibility and flexibility-** Remote learning options allow students to study from anywhere, breaking down geographical barriers. Flexible access to materials like recorded lectures, e-books, and online libraries is available anytime and anywhere. Assistive technologies can be tailored to meet the needs of students with disabilities, making education more inclusive.
- **Personalized and engaging learning-** Digital tools enable educators to create personalized learning paths, allowing students to learn at their own pace. Interactive content like videos, simulations, and gamified learning makes lessons more engaging and fun. Analytics can track student progress, helping educators identify learning gaps and provide targeted support.
- **Enhanced collaboration and communication-** Tools like video conferencing and shared documents allow for real-time collaboration on projects, preparing students for teamwork in their future careers. Online platforms facilitate instant communication between students and with instructors.
- **Preparation for the future workforce-** Using digital tools in education builds students' digital literacy and competencies, which are essential for success in a tech-driven world and job market. Students gain practical experience with the types of collaborative and remote work common in today's professional environments.
- **Better evaluation and feedback-** Learning Management Systems (LMS) and other digital tools can provide ongoing assessment and immediate feedback to both students and teachers. Students can take online exams and view their results, making the evaluation process more efficient.

Major Digital Tools for Creating and Sharing E-Content-

- **Canva-** Canva is a graphic design and presentation platform that allows teachers to design visually engaging content such as infographics, posters, flashcards, and slides. It offers free educational templates and collaborative design options. Example- A science teacher can create a colorful chart on "Photosynthesis" using Canva.

Benefits-

1. Visually rich and appealing content
2. Easy drag-and-drop interface
3. Encourages creativity and teamwork
 - **Google Classroom-** Google Classroom is a free learning management system (LMS) that simplifies assignment distribution, grading, and feedback. It connects seamlessly with other Google tools such as Docs, Drive, and Forms.
Example- Teachers can upload lecture videos, post assignments, and interact through class discussions.

Benefits-

1. Paperless teaching
2. Real-time communication
3. Supports hybrid and distance learning
 - **PowerPoint / Google Slides-** PowerPoint and Google Slides are widely used tools for presentation-based learning. Teachers can integrate text, audio, animation, and hyperlinks to make concepts clearer.
Example- A mathematics teacher can show animated problem-solving steps through slides.

Benefits-

1. Enhances lecture clarity
2. Easy customization and sharing
3. Encourages visual and auditory learning
 - **YouTube / Loom-** YouTube allows educators to upload or curate educational videos, while Loom enables screen recording with voice explanations. These tools support flipped classrooms, where students watch lessons before class and discuss during sessions.
Example- A history teacher can create short video lectures on historical events.

Benefits-

1. Encourages self-paced learning
2. Global sharing and collaboration
3. Builds teacher-student connection

Advantages of Using Digital Tools-

- Enhances Engagement- Visuals, videos, and games attract attention and sustain interest.
- Encourages Self-Learning- Students can learn independently and revisit lessons.
- Facilitates Collaboration- Easy sharing and group projects via online platforms.
- Supports Inclusivity- Accessible for students with disabilities (e.g., captions, screen readers).

- Time and Cost Efficient- Saves paper, reduces administrative workload.
- Improves Evaluation- Online quizzes and automated grading provide instant feedback.

Challenges in E-Content Creation and Usage-

Despite its numerous advantages, there are several challenges-

- Digital divide- Unequal access to devices and internet connectivity.
- Technical limitations- Lack of training among educators.
- Time constraints- Creating quality e-content requires extra effort.
- Quality assurance- Not all digital materials meet academic standards.
- Copyright and plagiarism issues- Content misuse without proper citation.
- Student distraction- Excessive screen time may reduce concentration.

To address these, institutions should provide ICT workshops, funding for technological infrastructure, and policy support for content sharing and copyright protection.

Emerging Trends in E-Content Development-

- Artificial Intelligence (AI)- Personalized learning and automated content generation.
- Augmented & Virtual Reality (AR/VR)- Immersive 3D learning experiences.
- Gamification- Learning through badges, points, and challenge Read more 6:10 AM
- Microlearning- Short, focused learning modules for quick understanding.
- Open Educational Resources (OER)- Free global sharing of educational materials.
- Mobile Learning- App-based access for on-the-go education.

These trends are reshaping the future of education by making it more interactive, inclusive, and learner-centered.

Conclusion- The use of digital tools such as Canva, Google Classroom, PowerPoint, YouTube, and H5P marks a revolutionary step toward modernizing higher education. These tools empower teachers to create interactive, creative, and accessible learning materials, while students gain opportunities to learn through self-paced and collaborative methods. However, the success of e-content integration depends on teacher training, institutional support, and equitable access to digital resources. By combining innovation with pedagogy, e-content tools can transform higher education into a space that promotes creativity, inclusivity, and lifelong learning

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Translation of Socio-Cultural Realities in Film Adaptations: A Comparative Study of Slumdog Millionaire and The White Tiger

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Abstract- *This research paper focuses on how poverty, class relations, and globalization are portrayed in India in the film adaptations of Slumdog Millionaire (2008, directed by Danny Boyle, based on Vikas Swarup's Q & A) and The White Tiger (2021, directed by Ramin Bahrani, based on Aravind Adiga's novel). The study examines how narrative decisions and filmmaking methods either mirror or alter these sociocultural representations for viewers around the world. It uses a comparative methodology that integrates socio-cultural theories, adaptation, and textual and visual study. The results show that The White Tiger's grim, pessimistic realism and Slumdog Millionaire's upbeat, optimistic tone emphasize different cultural representations and viewer effects. With ramifications for film studies and postcolonial discourse, the study highlights how these adaptations influence how people throughout the world view Indian sociocultural issues. It also offers ideas about the relationship between narrative, aesthetics, and cultural translation in cinema.*

Keywords- *Film Adaptation; Indian Cinema; Poverty; Caste and Class; Globalization; Postcolonial Representation*

Introduction- Through visual and narrative techniques that appeal to a wide range of viewers, film adaptations are a dynamic medium for transmitting socio-cultural realities and reinterpreting literary narratives. Filmmakers frequently alter viewers' impressions of the communities they portray by balancing the need to preserve cultural quirks with the need to appeal to a global audience. Through a comparison of Slumdog Millionaire (2008, directed by Danny Boyle, based on Vikas Swarup's Q & A) and The White Tiger (2021, directed by Ramin Bahrani, based on Aravind Adiga's novel), this research article investigates this process. Though their tone, styles, and reactions vary, both films-which are based on well-known Indian novels-address sociocultural issues including caste, poverty, and globalization. While The White Tiger received accolades for its realistic indictment of class inequality, albeit with a more specialized audience, Slumdog Millionaire received international acclaim for its vivid

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depiction of Mumbai's slums. The main focus of the research is how these movies balance cinematic reinterpretation with respect to their original texts while adapting socio-cultural topics for a range of viewers. This poses important queries: How do the movie's narrative and visual techniques portray socio-cultural realities? What disparities show up in the way they depict Indian society? What effects do these changes have on how the world views India? The study uses a comparative approach to address issues, utilizing socio-cultural frameworks to assess depictions of poverty, caste, and globalization, as well as adaptation theory (Hutcheon, 2006) to investigate narrative integrity and transformation. The structure of the paper is as follows: The methodology describes the qualitative approach; the analysis contrasts narrative, visual, and cultural elements; the conclusion summarizes findings and implications; and a literature review examines adaptability and sociocultural theories. This research is important for film studies because it sheds light on how adaptations transform intricate socio-cultural realities into cinematic tales. Additionally, it advances cultural studies by examining the portrayal of India in international cinema and postcolonial discourse, specifically focusing on how these films address authenticity and stereotypes. This study demonstrates how cinema adaptations have the ability to both reflect and influence cultural perceptions by contrasting the A positive outlook on *Slumdog Millionaire* is presented alongside a critical viewpoint of *The White Tiger*. This offers observations about the relationship between art, culture, and viewers around the world.

Literature Review- Postcolonial frameworks, adaptation theory, and sociocultural analyses of Indian cinema are all used in the study of film adaptations as a means of conveying sociocultural realities. The foundation for comprehending how stories translate from literature to film is provided by adaptation theory. Hutcheon (2006) challenges the idea of integrity in the source text by emphasizing adaptation as a process of reinterpretation rather than simply copying. She argues that, despite employing cinematic techniques to generate fresh interpretations, adaptations are inherently intertextual, maintaining a connection to their literary origins. Stam (2000) enhances this perspective by viewing adaptations as cultural translations, where changes in medium and situation reshape socio-cultural representations. A crucial factor in examining *Slumdog Millionaire* (2008, directed by Danny Boyle) and *The White Tiger* (2021, directed by Ramin Bahrani), which adapt Indian literature for a worldwide audience, is how adaptations balance local identity and international appeal. Both experts underscore this point. Sociocultural analyses of Indian cinema illuminate the portrayal of caste, poverty, and globalization. Ganti (2012) looks at how parallel and Bollywood films portray India's socioeconomic reality, frequently striking a balance between realism and commercial appeal. She points out that to appeal to a worldwide audience, movies that address caste and poverty run the risk of being overly simplistic. Dudrah (2012) examines how Indian cinema depicts urban modernity and enduring inequality in

response to globalization. These analyses place *Slumdog Millionaire* and *The White Tiger* in the context of navigating India's sociocultural terrain; the former uses a colorful style to portray Mumbai's slums, while the latter critiques class distinctions in an increasingly globalized India. Specialized scholarship highlights the controversial reception of *Slumdog Millionaire*. Mendes (2010) criticizes the movie as "poverty porn," contending that its realistic depiction of slums exoticizes India for Western viewers and puts spectacle above structural criticism. This viewpoint runs counter to arguments in favor of the film's upbeat story as a universal example of perseverance. On the other hand, research on *The White Tiger* concentrates on its criticism of neoliberalism and class. Sengupta (2021) highlights the film's departure from idealized storylines and commends its unapologetic depiction of systematic inequity. Despite receiving less praise for its visual aesthetic than *Slumdog Millionaire*, the film's emphasis on Balram's ethically dubious ascent highlights the grim reality of India's economic development. Despite these revelations, the literature fails to adequately compare *Slumdog Millionaire* and *The White Tiger* as socioculturally realistic adaptations. Most studies do not look at how these films translate the images of poverty, caste, and globalization in their source texts or how the decisions made by the directors affect perceptions around the world, even as individual studies address their thematic issues. This study addresses the gap by contrasting the narrative and visual techniques in the two films and analyzing their cultural implications and fidelity to the original texts.

The theoretical framework examines cultural representation by fusing postcolonial theory with adaptation theory. The study of how narrative and aesthetic decisions adapt socio-cultural reality is guided by the ideas of intertextuality and cultural translation put out by Hutcheon (2006) and Stam (2000). The postcolonial theory of Bhabha (1994), in particular his concepts of hybridity and cultural negotiation, provide a prism through which to evaluate how these movies depict India within the framework of both local and global dynamics. By shedding light on the intricacies of cross-cultural cinematic representations, this framework facilitates a nuanced examination of how *The White Tiger*'s critical realism and *Slumdog Millionaire*'s optimistic outlook influence socio-cultural portrayals, advancing postcolonial discourse, cultural studies, and film studies.

Methodology- The translation of socio-cultural realities in *Slumdog Millionaire* (2008, directed by Danny Boyle) and *The White Tiger* (2021, directed by Ramin Bahrani), which are based on Aravind Adiga's novel and Vikas Swarup's *Q & A*, respectively, is examined in this study using a qualitative comparative analysis. Comparing how these movies modify the representations of poverty, caste, and globalization in their original novels while examining narrative and visual techniques is the main goal of the research design.

To contextualize reception and socio-cultural ramifications, cinema reviews, academic papers, and cultural critiques are added to the primary texts—the films and their corresponding novels that serve as data sources. The analytical approach combines three techniques: textual analysis, which compares thematic focus, character development, and narrative structures between novels and films (e.g., rags-to-riches vs. systemic critique); visual analysis, which evaluates socio-cultural depictions through mise-en-scène, sound, and cinematography (e.g., Boyle's vibrant visuals vs. Bahrani's muted palette); and a socio-cultural lens, which examines how poverty, caste, and globalization are portrayed through adaptation and postcolonial frameworks (Hutcheon, 2006; Bhabha, 1994). The *White Tiger* and *Slumdog Millionaire* were chosen because they both dealt with socioeconomic inequality and globalization, but they took different methods to directing (Bahrani's gritty, critical realism against Boyle's hopeful, globalized style) and had a big worldwide influence. This selection enables a focused analysis of how various cinematic visions depict Indian socio-cultural realities. The study's limited applicability to other adaptations or Indian cinema is due to its focus on only two films. Furthermore, depending solely on English-language media could limit cultural subtlety by ignoring vernacular viewpoints. Notwithstanding these limitations, the approach offers a strong foundation for examining how sociocultural, narrative, and visual components influence how Indian realities are translated in these widely regarded adaptations.

Analysis and Discussion- Socio-Cultural Realities in *Slumdog Millionaire*—*Slumdog Millionaire* (2008, dir. Danny Boyle) is based on Vikas Swarup's novel *Q & A* (2005). It uses a colorful cinematic lens to show how Indian society and culture really are. The book centers on Ram Mohammad Thomas, a young guy from various religious origins who uses his experiences growing up in India's slums to win a quiz show. While keeping the novel's fundamental idea, the movie simplifies its episodic format into a linear, emotionally charged story by recasting the protagonist as Jamal Malik, a Muslim young man from Mumbai's Dharavi slum. This version navigates the conflicts between authenticity and exoticization for audiences around the world while shifting the focus toward a universal rags-to-riches tale that emphasizes poverty, social mobility, and globalization. Mumbai's slums serve as both the background and the main character in *Slumdog Millionaire*, which vividly and centrally depicts poverty. With pictures of kids negotiating trash-filled alleys and busy marketplaces, Boyle uses vivid imagery—saturated colors and dynamic camera work—to capture the frenetic energy of Dharavi. The "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire" game show structure frames poverty as a setting for a successful story by contrasting the protagonist's poor upbringing with the appeal of wealth. But there is controversy about this portrayal. Mendes (2010) contends that by prioritizing visual spectacle above structural critique, the film's style runs the risk of "poverty porn," glamorizing suffering for Western consumption. Jamal's transformation from slum dweller to millionaire exemplifies the

fundamental concepts of class and mobility. With each quiz question connected to a formative experience, the movie romanticizes his rise, portraying it as a victory of personal fortitude and love. This narrative decision downplays structural impediments like caste and corruption while simplifying the novel's social commentary and maintaining its upbeat tone. Critics point out that this idealized optimism obscures the deeply ingrained injustices in Indian society, providing a sentimental conclusion that appeals to people everywhere but can fall short in tackling class immobility. Through the impact of Western media, the game-show format-a representation of globalized entertainment infiltrating Indian culture-emphasizes how globalization permeates the movie. To appeal to a worldwide audience, the movie also uses tourism imagery, such as expansive views of the Taj Mahal and busy urban settings. For viewers from other countries who are not familiar with India's complexity, this portrayal of the country as a land of contrasts blending tradition and modernity-runs the risk of feeding preconceived notions.

Boyle's cinematic approaches amplify these socio-cultural depictions. Rapid cuts and handheld shots in his energetic editing capture the hectic speed of slum life, while vibrant cinematography juxtaposes the ugliness of poverty with its aesthetic appeal. The film's worldwide popularity is increased by AR Rahman's soundtrack, which combines Western and Indian musical components to produce an emotional resonance that cuts across cultural barriers. Although these decisions make the movie more approachable, they also fuel criticisms of exoticization because the stylized representation may put aesthetic appeal ahead of complex sociocultural understanding. Critics remain divided regarding the film's realism. Advocates contend that, based on Jamal's personal experiences, it portrays the tenacity and vitality of Mumbai's underworld. However, critics argue that it exoticizes India, ignoring more profound systemic problems like caste oppression or economic inequality in favor of portraying poverty and slums as vibrant spectacles for Western audiences (Mendes, 2010). Notwithstanding these conflicts, *Slumdog Millionaire's* worldwide popularity highlights its capacity to convey India's sociocultural realities in a story that appeals to a wide audience, even when its methodology calls into question how to strike a balance between accessibility and authenticity in adaptation.

Socio-Cultural Realities in *The White Tiger*- Based on Aravind Adiga's 2008 novel, *The White Tiger* (2021, directed by Ramin Bahrani) presents a stark depiction of India's sociocultural reality, emphasizing globalization, poverty, and class. The book exposes India's structural injustices by following a servant's ascent to business success through scheming and criminal activity, disguised as a letter from Balram Halwai to a Chinese premier. Through voice-over narration, Bahrani's adaptation preserves the novel's epistolary format and Balram's pessimistic viewpoint while adapting the tale into a dialogue-driven, visually restrained movie. In contrast to more romanticized portrayals in international film, this method emphasizes the stark realities of class inequality and neoliberal India.

The White Tiger portrays poverty with realistic grit, highlighting the interactions between servants and masters as well as the gap between rural and urban areas. In stark contrast to Delhi's glittering skyscrapers, the film opens in Balram's poor Bihar hamlet, including dusty roads and run-down houses. By depicting Balram's subservience to his boss, Ashok, Bahrani exposes the degrading servant-master relationship and the caste- and class-based power disparities. In contrast to the lively slums of *Slumdog Millionaire*, poverty is unadorned here, with small, poorly lit areas highlighting the lack of opportunity and structural oppression that India's poor suffer. Balram's cynical ascent from servant to entrepreneur exemplifies class and mobility. As Balram kills Ashok to break free from slavery, the movie rejects the rags-to-riches optimism of other stories and instead presents mobility as only possible through moral compromise and criminal activity. This story challenges structural inequality by showing how economic systems, caste, and corruption impede upward mobility. Balram's voyage is presented in both Adiga's book and Bahrani's adaptation as a sinister parody of India's social structure, dispelling the notion of meritocracy in a culture where the privileged still hold the majority of the power. Neoliberal India critiques globalization, portraying urbanization and call centers as emblems of economic inequality. The absence of the lower classes from India's prosperity story is highlighted by Balram's exposure to Delhi's globalized economy, complete with opulent malls and Westernized elites. By exposing Balram's "success" as the result of exploitation rather than creativity, the movie debunks entrepreneurial myths and casts doubt on the exalted portrayal of India's economic growth that is spread by international media. Bahrani's cinematic methods further support these concepts. His understated images, which avoid artistic embellishment in favor of unadulterated honesty, capture the desolation of Balram's environment with a subdued color scheme of grays and browns. Balram's inside critique of society is emphasized by the emphasis on dialogue and voice-over, which are taken straight from the book and give narrative depth precedence over visual spectacle. Close-ups depict Balram's growing disillusionment, firmly anchoring the sociocultural critique in the author's personal experience. Sengupta (2021) highlights *The White Tiger's* sharp criticism of neoliberalism and class injustice, while critics commend it for its realistic depiction of India's disparities. Some contend that the film is less approachable than more sentimental adaptations because of its cold tone and dependence on Balram's pessimism, which restricts emotional connection with the characters. Nevertheless, Bahrani's unwavering attention to structural problems provides a realistic perspective of India's sociocultural reality and serves as a counterweight to romanticized portrayals. Though its unique popularity reflects its uncompromising approach, *The White Tiger* encourages audiences worldwide to confront the dark side of India's international image by highlighting the brutal realities of poverty and class.

Comparative Analysis- *The White Tiger* (2021, directed by Ramin Bahrani) and *Slumdog Millionaire* (2008, directed by Danny Boyle),

which are based on Aravind Adiga's novel and Vikas Swarup's *Q & A*, respectively, present opposing strategies for interpreting India's sociocultural reality. Divergent international perspectives of India are shaped by their narrative, visual, and cultural methods, which offer unique interpretations of poverty, class, and globalization. *Slumdog Millionaire*'s narrative tone is optimistic, depicting Jamal's ascent from Mumbai's slums to game-show success as a romanticized story of rags-to-riches. The quiz-show format ties each question to a life event, prioritizing love and resiliency over structural obstacles. *The White Tiger*, on the other hand, uses cynical realism, criticizing India's class system through Balram's ascent from servant to businessman by murder. *The White Tiger* uses voice-over to preserve Adiga's epistolary cynicism while highlighting systemic corruption and inequity, whereas *Slumdog* compresses the episodic intricacy of *Q & A* into a linear, uplifting plot. Their socio-cultural representations are shaped by these narrative contrasts—optimism vs critique with *Slumdog* providing hope and *The White Tiger* revealing harsh reality. The films are further distinguished by their visual methods. Boyle's vivid style in *Slumdog Millionaire* portrays Mumbai's slums as lively and visually arresting with dynamic camera work, kinetic editing, and saturated colors. Although it runs the risk of exoticizing the subject, this strategy, when combined with AR Rahman's varied soundtrack, produces an engrossing, almost joyous depiction of poverty (Mendes, 2010). On the other hand, Bahrani's subdued color scheme in *The White Tiger*—grays, browns, and sharp lighting emphasizes how depressing Balram's rural and urban environments are. Although they are in line with the novel's gloomy critique, the dialogue-driven sequences and restrained graphics reduce emotional vibrancy in favor of authenticity over spectacle. These aesthetics shape sociocultural representations. While the austerity of *The White Tiger* emphasizes systematic injustice, the exuberance of *Slumdog* universalizes India's hardships. Cultural translation differs greatly for audiences around the world. Using the well-known game-show premise and tourist imagery (such as images of the Taj Mahal) to appeal to Western viewers, *Slumdog Millionaire* transforms Indian realities into a universally relatable story, frequently at the expense of oversimplifying caste and class nuances. *The White Tiger* challenges international notions of progress by highlighting the inequalities of neoliberal India through urban disparities and call centers. Because of this, *The White Tiger* is more sharp in its cultural critique. This critique is less acceptable to mainstream audiences, which aligns with postcolonial readings of hybridity (Bhabha, 1994). The audience's reaction reflects these variations. *Slumdog Millionaire* won eight Oscars and received widespread praise for its approachable storytelling and emotional impact, despite facing attacks for exoticizing India. Critics praised *The White Tiger*, but its unwavering focus on class criticism only appealed to a specific audience. This discrepancy demonstrates how narrative and visual decisions shape perceptions around the world, with

The White Tiger calling for an examination of India's injustices and Slumdog creating an easily digestible India.

Slumdog theoretically departs from Q&A's subtle social critique to appeal to a wider audience, supporting Hutcheon's (2006) theory that adaptation is more about reinterpretation than faithfulness. The White Tiger supports Stam's (2000) idea of cultural translation by closely adhering to Adiga's tone. In a postcolonial sense, Slumdog runs the risk of perpetuating stereotypes, but The White Tiger confronts them by addressing Bhabha's hybridity and pointing out the inconsistencies of globalized India. With Slumdog providing a hopeful viewpoint and The White Tiger serving as a critical mirror, these adaptations influence viewers' attitudes and demonstrate the ability of cinematic decisions to convey sociocultural reality.

Conclusion- This comparison of Danny Boyle's 2008 film Slumdog Millionaire and Ramin Bahrani's 2021 film The White Tiger demonstrates different methods for interpreting India's sociocultural reality. By depicting poverty and class mobility through colorful imagery and an upbeat rags-to-riches story, Slumdog Millionaire romanticizes sociocultural problems and frequently simplifies complex issues for a worldwide audience. On the other hand, The White Tiger exposes the brutal reality of caste, poverty, and neoliberal globalization by using gritty realism and cynical storytelling to challenge systemic injustices. These opposing narrative and visual approaches—optimism vs critique, vibrancy versus austerity—create disparate representations of Indian society and have varying effects on how the world views it. Film adaptations are crucial in influencing how audiences throughout the world view India because they may either challenge stereotypes with critical viewpoints or reinforce them with relatable stories. Given that Bahrani's uncompromising criticism and Boyle's universalizing aesthetic produce different socio-cultural effects, this emphasizes the significance of directing decisions in cultural representation for film studies. To evaluate patterns in cultural translation, future research could broaden to comparative studies and include more Indian adaptations. Integrating perspectives from Indian filmmakers may augment the understanding of representation and authenticity. The White Tiger and Slumdog Millionaire ultimately demonstrate how adaptations both mirror and shape sociocultural realities. They actively create global narratives while reflecting India's complexity, underscoring the necessity of nuanced techniques to avoid reductive portrayals and the ability of film to mediate cultural understanding.

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Echoes of Enlightenment: Buddhist and Indian Philosophical Streams in Swami Vivekananda's Vision of National Humanism

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••Kishori Soni

Abstract- *Swami Vivekananda, a visionary ambassador of Indian philosophy, tapped into the depths of his spiritual and philosophical heritage to introduce the transformative wisdom of Vedanta and yoga to the world. His spiritual teachings were rooted in the empowering conviction that within every individual lies a dormant divine potential, waiting to be awakened and realized. Swami Vivekananda's vision of India was deeply rooted in the ancient philosophical traditions of the country, notably Vedanta and Buddhism. His vision of national humanism reflects a unique influence of Buddhist compassion, Advaitic non-dualism, and the deep undercurrents of Bhartiya Jnana Parampara. His utopian dream for India was not merely a political awakening but a spiritual revolution grounded in dharma, service, and self-realization. This paper explores how Swami Vivekananda harmonized Buddhist and Indian philosophical traditions to envision a model of national humanism rooted in spiritual awakenin and social justice. Drawing from Vedanta, the moral compass of Buddhism, and the values of Bhartiya Jnana Parampara. His synthesis offers a framework for national rejuvenation through spiritual unity, ethical action, and service-oriented nationalism. The paper also examines his reinterpretation of key concepts such as Atman, Dharma, Karuna (compassion), and Tyaga (renunciation) in light of humanistic principles. Through a qualitative analysis of his writings and speeches, this research highlights the enduring significance of his philosophy in fostering a holistic, inclusive worldview.*

Keywords- *Buddhist Philosophy, Indian Philosophy, National Humanism, Vedanta, Bhartiya Jnana Parampara, Compassion, Karma yoga.*

Introduction- The philosophical evolution of modern India cannot be fully understood without acknowledging the contributions of Swami Vivekananda. As one of India's most prominent spiritual thinkers and national reformers, redefined the meaning of nationalism by infusing it with the ideals of humanism, service, and spiritual awakening. Vivekananda's vision of India's future was deeply rooted in the philosophical and spiritual traditions of both Hindu Vedanta and Buddhist ethics. His idea of “National

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Humanism” emerged not as a political ideology but as a moral and spiritual call for unity, dignity, and service to humanity. In his speeches and writings, Vivekananda invoked both *Buddha's Karuṇā* (compassion) and the Advaitic vision of oneness to shape a unique nationalistic framework. This paper examines the intersection of Buddhist philosophy and the broader Bhartiya Jnana Parampara in Vivekananda's works, especially how these streams illuminate his vision of national humanism.

Objectives-

- To explore the influence of Buddhist philosophy on Vivekananda's concept of natural humanism.
- To analyze the integration of Indian philosophical streams, particularly Vedanta, in his vision.
- To examine the role of Bhartiya Jnana Parampara and spiritual inquiry in shaping his humanistic ideals.
- To assess the interplay of nationalism, spirituality, and science in Vivekananda's philosophy.
- To evaluate the contemporary relevance of his vision in fostering global unity and moral awakening.

Literature Review- Existing scholarship on Swami Vivekananda highlights his role as a proponent of Vedanta and a bridge between Eastern and Western thought (Sen 2006, Gokhale 2015). Studies on Buddhist influences in his philosophy, such as compassion and non-attachment, underscore his engagement with universal ethical principles (Bhattacharya1999). The Bhartiya Jnana Parampara, encompassing diverse traditions like Nyaya, Sankhya, and Yoga, is recognized as a foundation for his holistic worldview (Paranjape 2012). However, limited research explores the synthesis of these streams with his vision of nationalism and humanism. This paper addresses this gap by analyzing Vivekananda's works through the lens of spiritual oneness and moral awakening.

Methodology- This study employs a qualitative approach, analyzing primary sources such as Vivekananda's lectures, letters, and writings, including (Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda). Secondary sources, including scholarly articles and books, provide contextual insights. Thematic analysis is used to identify key sub-themes, such as Buddhist influences, Indian philosophical streams, and the integration of science and spirituality. The research synthesizes these themes to construct a comprehensive understanding of Vivekananda's natural humanism.

Discussion and Analysis-

1. Echoes of Buddhist Philosophy in Vivekananda's Thought
2. Swami Vivekananda held Buddha in the highest regard, often calling him “the greatest man born in India.” For him, the Buddha's message of selfless service, inner discipline, and compassion formed the foundation of ethical life. He declared,
"If India wants to raise herself once more, it is on the Buddha's message alone she must stand,"

Karuṇā (Compassion) and Seva (Service)- The Buddhist ideal of *Karuṇā* (compassion) is central to Vivekananda's ethics. Buddha's emphasis on compassion deeply influenced Vivekananda's call for service to the poor and downtrodden: "Daridra Narayana"- seeing God in the poor.

For Vivekananda, compassion was not mere emotion but active engagement. This is rooted in Buddhist values of *Karuṇā* and *Upaya-kaushalya* (skillful means), encouraging a compassionate yet pragmatic approach to social reform.

Śūnyatā and Renunciation- Though Vivekananda upheld the Upanishadic view of an eternal self, he resonated with Buddhist non-attachment and the critique of materialism. He saw renunciation as a common spiritual thread across Indian thought.

"Buddha is the fulfilment of the Indian mind. He gave up everything for humanity. Renunciation and service- these are the twin ideals he lived."

Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda-

- The Middle Path and Practical Vedanta- Just as Buddha taught the *Madhyama Marga* (Middle Path), Vivekananda's "Practical Vedanta" called for balancing spiritual pursuit with action. This is evident in his lectures such as "My Plan of Campaign" and "The Future of India."
- The Bodhisattva Ideal and Service- Vivekananda's idea of "service to man as service to God" closely mirrors the Bodhisattva ideal - a being who delays personal salvation to alleviate the suffering of others. He urged monks of the Ramakrishna Mission to be "servants of the Daridra Narayana (God in the form of the poor)."
- Rational Inquiry and Non-Dogmatism

Buddha's encouragement of reason and self-examination (*ehipassiko*) found resonance in Vivekananda's rejection of blind faith and superstition. His call for man-making education emphasized inquiry, critical thought, and experiential learning. Indian Philosophical Streams in Vivekananda's Vision Swami Vivekananda was a powerful exponent of **Advaita Vedanta**, which proclaims the fundamental unity of all existence. His guru, Sri Ramakrishna, emphasized that all paths lead to the same truth, which deeply influenced his inclusive approach to spirituality.

"Each soul is potentially divine." -Swami Vivekananda

- **Vedanta as the Soul of India-** Vivekananda identified Advaita Vedanta as the central philosophical current of India. The idea that all beings are one, that divinity resides in everyone, was the moral foundation of his call for national unity. This Vedantic vision dismantles caste divisions and promotes dignity for all — a fundamentally humanistic approach.
- **Karmayoga and Lokasangraha-** He reinterpreted the Gita's idea of Karmayoga (selfless action) to motivate youth for national service. Drawing on Bhagavad Gita and Patanjali's Yoga Sutras,

Vivekananda emphasized disciplined action, detachment, and selfless work.

“They alone live who live for others.”

-Swami Vivekananda

- **Bhakti and Universal Brotherhood-** While deeply immersed in Vedantic monism, Vivekananda also drew from Bhakti traditions- especially the universalism of the Sant tradition, which was inclusive, emotional, and anti-caste.

Bhartiya Jnana Parampara and the Spiritual Continuum- In the Bhartiya Jnana Parampara, knowledge is not merely intellectual but experiential (*anubhava*). Vivekananda drew from the *Upanishads*, *Gita*, *Patanjali's Yoga Sutras*, and *Bhagavad Gita* to formulate a practical spirituality:

“The Atman is the same in all beings... therefore serve the poor, the sick, the ignorant as God.”

This was not mere charity; it was a revolutionary re-imagining of service (*seva*) as spiritual discipline. His phrase “शिव ज्ञान से जीव सेवा” (Serve man as God) exemplifies how Vedanta becomes actionable through karma yoga- action without attachment.

Tradition of Inquiry (Jijñāsa)- Indian philosophy, especially systems like Nyaya, Sankhya, and Mīmamsa, emphasized rational inquiry. Vivekananda honored this critical spirit. He often said that Indian thought must be revived not through blind faith but through introspective questioning.

“Religion is not in books; it is being and becoming.”

-Swami Vivekananda

Interreligious Dialogue and Tolerance- Vivekananda's speech at the 1893 Parliament of World Religions demonstrated his commitment to spiritual pluralism- an outcome of both Buddhist tolerance and Vedantic synthesis.

Synthesizing Sankhya, Yoga, and Vedanta- Vivekananda integrated multiple Indian schools of thought. From Sankhya he adopted the theory of duality (Purusha-Prakriti), from Yoga the discipline of mind and body, and from Vedanta the non-dual realization of oneness. This synthesis enriched his spiritual-humanist ideal.

Dharma and Svadharma- Vivekananda redefined Dharma not as a rigid ritual duty but as ethical responsibility. He spoke of Svadharma (one's own path/duty) as a key to national development, linking individual morality with collective wellbeing.

Knowledge as Liberation- He believed that true Jnana (knowledge) leads to Moksha (liberation), both spiritual and societal. In this view, education was not merely about literacy but about awakening the soul to its true nature and responsibilities.

Humanism Rooted in Spiritual Oneness- Unlike Western humanism that often disconnects itself from metaphysics, Vivekananda's humanism emerges from a deep spiritual realization: that the divine resides in all.

“Wherever there is a human being, there is an opportunity to serve God.”

This humanism is inclusive, universal, and rooted in dignity. The core idea that **service to humanity is service to divinity** places the poor, downtrodden, and marginalized at the center of spiritual life. Buddhist *Metta* (loving-kindness) and Vedantic *Atmavat sarvabhuteshu* (seeing oneself in all beings) merge in his worldview. Vivekananda vehemently criticized ritualistic religion that ignores the sufferings of people. He said-

“What use is religion to us if it cannot bring bread to the hungry and dignity to the humiliated?”

His humanism challenges casteism, superstition, and sectarianism, calling instead for a Dharma of Compassion.

Nationalism as a Moral Awakening- Vivekananda's nationalism was neither jingoistic nor exclusive. He called for the **moral regeneration** of India through education, discipline, and spirituality. Drawing from both Buddhist and Vedantic traditions, he believed in **inner transformation as the basis of national freedom**.

“It is character that cleaves through adamant walls, not mere political machinery.” His emphasis on *Atmashakti* (self-power) echoes the Buddhist stress on **self-effort** (Pali: *viriya*). Rather than waiting for external saviors, Vivekananda encouraged youth to awaken their dormant strength:

“उठो, जागो और तब तक मत रुको जब तक लक्ष्य की प्राप्ति न हो जाए।”

This awakening, however, is not for personal gain but for **Lokasangraha**-the welfare of the world.

Man-Making Education- Vivekananda believed education must foster character, strength, and self-confidence, not merely literacy. His vision echoes both the Upanishadic ideal of self-knowledge and the Buddhist ideal of wisdom and compassion. “We want that education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, the intellect is expanded, and by which one can stand on one's own feet.”

Social Reform and Anti-Caste Thought- Influenced by the egalitarianism of Buddhism, Vivekananda condemned the caste system and untouchability. He envisioned an India where human dignity transcended all artificial divisions. “What I want is muscles of iron and nerves of steel, inside which dwells a mind of the same material as that of which the thunderbolt is made.”

5.8 National Unity through Spiritual Consciousness Rather than Western nationalism based on race or territory, Vivekananda's idea of nationhood was spiritual, Based on shared culture, moral values, and universal humanity.

Humanism in National Awakening-

- Upliftment of the Masses

Swami Vivekananda's nationalism was inclusive. He stressed the empowerment of the downtrodden, women, and peasants.

"There is no chance for the welfare of the world unless the condition of women is improved."

- Harmony of Religions

He declared in Chicago:

"We believe not only in universal toleration, but we accept all religions as true."

This pluralistic ethos is rooted in India's philosophical legacy and forms the basis of his national humanism-unity in diversity.

- Youth as the Bearer of Dharma

He believed in transforming youth into spiritual warriors not in the sectarian sense but as enlightened citizens committed to national service.

"Give me 100 energetic young men and I shall transform India"

The Utopian Vision- Merging Ancient Light with Modern Fire

- Science and Spirituality

Vivekananda admired Western science but warned against its soullessness. His utopia merged *Bharatiya adhyatma* (Indian spirituality) with *Vijnana* (scientific temper)- a society driven by compassion and reason.

- Ideal State- Lokasangraha

Borrowing from the *Bhagavad Gita*, he promoted *Lokasangraha*- the well-being of all. His envisioned society was free of casteism, poverty, and exploitation, guided by enlightened minds and awakened hearts.

- From Moksha to Lokanugraha

Instead of individual liberation (*Moksha*) alone, he emphasized *Lokanugraha* — grace and benefit to the world. This echoes both Buddhist *Mahayana* and Indian dharmic ethics of working for global welfare. As well as Vivekananda envisioned a utopia not structured by political ideologies but governed by **Dharma** the eternal law of righteousness. This society would uphold:

- **Equality**- All castes, classes, and genders having equal dignity.
- **Education**- Not just literacy, but character-building rooted in Indian values.
- **Service**- Institutions and individuals working for collective welfare.
- **Harmony**- Synthesis of science and spirituality, East and West, ancient and modern.

He wrote-

"The future India must be a Vedantic brain with a Buddhist heart."

In this synthesis, the sharp logic of *Advaita* and the deep compassion of *Buddhism* combine to form a **Dharma Rajya** not a theocracy, but a society where truth, compassion, and unity prevail.

Relevance in the Contemporary Age-

Universal Values and Global Crises-

- In today's world afflicted by war, terrorism, racism, and consumerism, Swami Vivekananda's concept of *National Humanism* grounded in spiritual unity and compassion—offers a **universal moral direction**.

- The Buddhist ideal of *Karunā* (compassion) and the Vedantic vision of "*Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma*" (All this is Brahman) can help restore a **shared human consciousness**.

Spirituality vs. Consumerism-

- In the current materialistic and fast-paced age, where inner peace is increasingly absent, Vivekananda's Vedanta and Buddha's Middle Path guide us towards **spiritual humanism**.

- These ideas offer **serious solutions** to modern issues like mental health crises, isolation, and depression. *Education and Moral Values-*

- Vivekananda's vision of "**Man-making Education**" critiques the rote and job-oriented system, promoting **character-building and social responsibility**.

- Integrating Buddhist and Indian philosophical traditions can breathe new life into **value-based education**, also aligning with recent reforms like India's NEP 2020. *Nationalism vs. Inclusiveness-*

- Vivekananda's nationalism was rooted in **cultural pride, inclusivity, and compassion**, not aggression or divisiveness. This offers a **balanced ideological framework** in today's polarized political environment.

- His approach supports **intellectual nation-building**, which remains deeply relevant.

Climate Change and Eco-consciousness-

- The Indian idea of *coexistence with nature* and the Buddhist extension of non-violence to all beings is highly relevant to the current **ecological and climate crisis**.
- Their philosophical ethics support a shift from exploitation to sustainability.

Dialogue and Global Thought- Vivekananda's philosophy is not just confined to India. It provides a **universal humanistic framework** for East-West dialogue, intercultural harmony, and **global peace-building**. Swami Vivekananda's philosophical vision, deeply rooted in the confluence of Buddhist compassion and Vedantic idealism, continues to offer profound relevance in the complexities of the contemporary world. His idea of National Humanism is not merely a historical ideal but a living philosophy that speaks directly to the ethical, social, and spiritual challenges of our times.

Conclusion- Thus, Swami Vivekananda's National Humanism, rooted in Buddhist and Indian philosophical streams, remains an urgent and actionable philosophy for the 21st century—guiding not only India but the world towards a more just, compassionate, and awakened civilization. Swami Vivekananda remains a radiant example of how India's philosophical streams- both Buddhist and Vedantic- can converge into a vision of **national**

humanism that is ethically grounded, spiritually inspired, and socially transformative. His dream of a utopian India was not a fantasy but a call for awakening not only of the nation but of each soul. “We are the children of light, heirs to immortal wisdom. Let us rise in love and service.” Today, in an era marked by division and alienation, Vivekananda's harmonization of Indian and Buddhist thought offers a pathway not just to national resurgence but to global compassion.

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***Acacia nilotica* *Acacia nilotica* as traditional uses in local area of jodhpur district of Rajasthan**

• Meenu Singh
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Abstract- *Acacia nilotica* (commonly known as gum arabic tree, Egyptian thorn, or babul) is a widely distributed leguminous tree valued for its ecological, medicinal, and economic importance. Native to Africa and the Indian subcontinent, the species thrives in arid and semi-arid regions and plays a significant role in soil stabilization, nitrogen fixation, and rangeland sustainability. Various parts of the plant—including bark, pods, leaves, and gum—are rich in phytochemicals such as tannins, flavonoids, saponins, and phenolic compounds, contributing to its broad spectrum of pharmacological activities. Traditionally, *A. nilotica* has been used for treating inflammation, diarrhea, respiratory infections, skin diseases, and wounds. Modern studies indicate antimicrobial, antioxidant, antidiabetic, antiparasitic, and anti-inflammatory properties, supporting many of its ethnomedicinal applications. Additionally, the tree provides economic benefits through its use in timber, fuelwood, tannin extraction, and fodder. Despite its versatile applications, sustainable harvesting and cultivation practices are necessary to balance its ecological value with increasing medicinal and industrial demand.

Keywords- *Acacia nilotica* , Babul , Egyptian thron , Gum Arabic tree , Tannin , Traditional medicine Antidiabetic , Leguminous tree , Flavonoids , Nitrogen fixation , Sustainable utilization

Introduction- *Acacia nilotica*, commonly known as gum arabic tree, babul, or Egyptian thorn, is a medium-sized, thorny leguminous tree native to Africa, the Middle East, and parts of the Indian subcontinent. It belongs to the family Fabaceae (Leguminosae) and is well known for its ecological, medicinal, and economic importance, *Acacia nilotica* is evergreen, usually medium sized that is 2.5 – 25 m tree with a short, thick and cylindrical trunk. Bark is grey, reddish- brown or black and rough. Flower many, crowded, stalkless , 6-8 mm long , many yellow , thread like stamen , anther and ovary present. The tree has significant and ecological value. It is a source of gum arabic a natural exudate obtained from its bark, which is used in the food, pharmaceutical and cosmetic industries as a stabilizer and thickener. This species thrives in arid and semi-arid climates, tolerating poor soils and harsh environmental conditions. The tree has distinctive bipinnate leaves, yellow spherical flower heads, and pods that vary in shape among subspecies.

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Because of its deep root system and nitrogen-fixing ability, *A. nilotica* plays a valuable role in soil improvement and erosion control. Traditionally, different parts of the tree-bark, leaves, gum, pods, and seeds-have been widely used in folk medicine for treating infections, inflammation, digestive disorders, and skin diseases. Its durable wood is used for fuel, timber, and charcoal, and the bark is a source of tannins for leather processing. Overall, *Acacia nilotica* is a versatile, resilient species that contributes significantly to environmental sustainability, traditional medicine, and rural economies across its native range. Its hard wood is used for construction and fuel. In many african cultures, the acacia holds cultural and spiritual significance and its various parts are used in traditional rituals and ceremonies. It has also been referenced in ancient texts and play a role in historical narratives. It also impacts the environment through solid reclamation, soil enrichment, protect against fire and wind and as for biodiversity is widely used in ethnomedicine.

Culinary Uses-

1. Edible Gum (Gum From Bark)-

Although *Acacia senegal* and *Acacia seyal* are the main sources of commercial gum arabic, the gum exuded from *Acacia nilotica* is also sometimes consumed locally in traditional preparations. Typical uses include:

- Ladoos / Sweets- In India and Pakistan, the gum (gond) from *A. nilotica* is used to make gond ke laddu, often combined with wheat flour, ghee, and nuts. These are believed to strengthen bones and provide energy.
- Health tonics- Gum is dissolved in warm milk or water and consumed as a nutritive supplement, especially postpartum or during winter.

2. Pods (Immature Pods in Some Regions)-

In certain African regions-

- Young pods are occasionally boiled and eaten as a famine food or emergency food.
- They may be cooked into stews when other resources are limited.

3. Seeds (Traditional or Survival Foods)

The seeds can be-

- Roasted and ground into flour in some traditional communities.
- Used as a protein supplement when other sources are scarce.

4. Fodder for Livestock (Indirect Food Use)-

While not a direct culinary use for humans, the tree plays a major role in the food chain-

- The pods and leaves are important livestock feed.
- This indirectly supports dairy and meat production in many rural

agroecosystems.

Agricultural and Environmental Benefits

1. Soil Fertility Improvement (Nitrogen Fixation)-

Acacia nilotica is a nitrogen-fixing tree, forming symbiotic associations with *Rhizobium* bacteria in its root nodules.

Benefits-

- Converts atmospheric nitrogen into forms usable by plants
- Enriches soil fertility naturally
- Reduces need for chemical fertilizers
- Enhances productivity of nearby crops and grasses

2. Erosion Control and Land Rehabilitation

Its deep taproot and extensive lateral roots help-

- Stabilize soil on riverbanks, degraded lands, and dry regions
- Prevent wind and water erosion
- Restore soil structure in arid and semi-arid areas

3. Agroforestry Use-

Widely used in agroforestry systems due to its resilience.

Benefits-

- Provides shade for crops and livestock
- Improves microclimate (humidity, temperature moderation)
- Leaves and pods fall as natural mulch
- Compatible with intercropping systems (e.g., millet, sorghum, grasses)

4. Fuelwood and Charcoal Production-

***Acacia nilotica* wood-**

- Burns hot and clean
- Produces high-quality charcoal
- Provides a renewable energy source for rural communities
This reduces pressure on non-renewable or slow-growing forest species.

6. Support for Biodiversity-

The tree supports various life forms-

- Flowers provide nectar and pollen for bees (important for honey production)
- Dense canopy offers habitat for birds and insects
- Protects understory vegetation from harsh conditions

Medicinal Uses-

1. Antimicrobial and Antiseptic Uses-

Acacia nilotica bark and leaves contain tannins, flavonoids, and phenolic compounds that give them strong antibacterial, antifungal, and antiviral properties.

Traditional applications-

- Bark decoction used to wash wounds and ulcers
- Leaf paste applied to skin infections
- Gargles for mouth sores, sore throat, and gum infections

2. Astringent Action-

Because of its high tannin content, the bark is a powerful astringent.

Traditional uses-

- Treating diarrhea and dysentery
- Reducing internal bleeding
- Tightening tissues (helps in oral hygiene and skin treatments)

3. Oral and Dental Health-

One of the most widely recognized uses.

Benefits-

- Bark chew sticks used as natural toothbrushes (miswak-type)
- Helps strengthen gums and reduce gum bleeding
- Bark decoction used as a mouthwash to manage:
 - Gingivitis
 - Toothache
 - Mouth ulcers

4. Respiratory Health-

Its pods, gum, and leaves are used in folk medicine for respiratory problems.

Traditional uses include-

- Managing coughs and colds
- Soothing sore throat
- Helping in bronchial irritation

The gum is sometimes mixed with hot milk or herbal mixtures for this purpose.

5. Digestive System Support-

Different parts of the plant are used for digestive health.

Uses-

- Bark decoction for diarrhea and dysentery
- Tender pods used to soothe intestinal inflammation
- Gum used as a mild laxative in some traditions
- Bark powder sometimes taken to reduce stomach pain or indigestion

6. Anti-inflammatory and Pain Relief-

Preparations made from bark, leaves, or seeds are used for:

- Joint pain

- Swellings
- Local inflammations
- Body aches

Leaf poultices are commonly applied to inflamed areas.

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Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Human Development Coordinated: Challenges & Opportunities

• Arvind Puri
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Abstract- *The concept of sustainable and inclusive development has gained global prominence with the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by the United Nations in 2015. Parallely, the Human Development Index (HDI), conceptualized by Mahbub ul Haq and Amartya Sen, provides a comprehensive framework to assess human well-being through health, education, and standard of living indicators. This research paper examines the interlinkages between the SDGs and HDI, highlighting how human development outcomes both influence and are influenced by progress toward sustainable development. Using secondary data from global SDG Index reports and Human Development Reports, the study adopts a descriptive and analytical approach to explore correlations between HDI scores and SDG achievements across regions. The analysis reveals a positive association, suggesting that higher investments in human capital—particularly education and health enhance a nation's capacity to achieve SDGs. However, the study also identifies critical challenges such as regional disparities, persistent poverty, resource constraints, climate change, and policy inefficiencies that hinder inclusive progress. At the same time, opportunities emerge through technological advancement, decentralized governance, public-private partnerships, and the integration of human development priorities with sustainable development planning. The paper concludes that aligning SDGs with HDI frameworks is essential for holistic development and emphasizes the need for effective governance, equitable resource allocation, and inclusive participation to achieve sustainable human development by 2030.*

Introduction- The Human Development Index (HDI), refined by Mahbub ul Haq and Amartya Sen, is a modified framework that presents the multidimensional nature of inclusive development. The HDI integrates socio-economic indicators to highlight the concept of overall human well-being. Understanding the inherent connection between the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Human Development Index is crucial, as both represent the process of inclusive and sustainable development. While the HDI focuses on enhancing human capital capabilities, the SDGs work towards providing a policy roadmap to achieve this goal.

In 2015, the United Nations recognized the concept of the

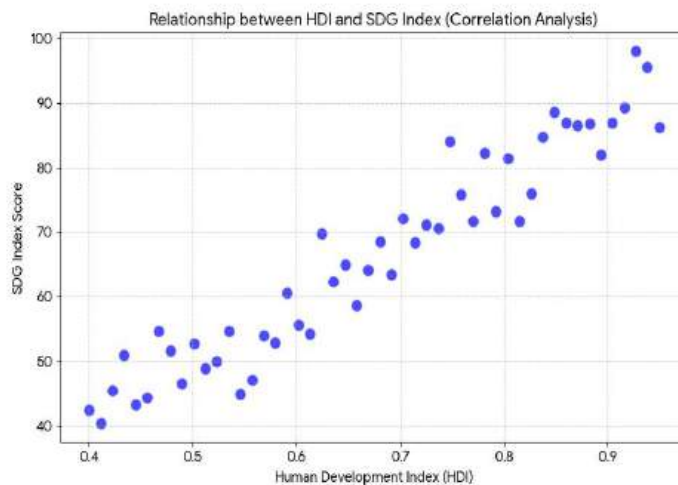
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Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), marking the beginning of a new era in the socio-economic reconstruction of nations. The SDGs primarily recommend 17 goals aimed at eradicating poverty, addressing educational inequalities, strengthening healthcare infrastructure, and creating synergy between environmental and economic development within one to two decades. These goals are based on increasing citizen participation and making development universally inclusive. Persistent poverty and low income, regional disparities, government policy shortcomings, and the unsustainable use of environmental resources create challenges in achieving development goals, while conversely, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) create new pathways to enhance and improve the sustainability of human development. This research paper explores the interconnectedness of the SDGs and the HDI, sharing an analysis of the forces that drive sustainable development and human capital enhancement at the global level. It also provides an opportunity to understand the structure of challenges and opportunities.

Correlation between HDI and SDG - This graph shows a positive correlation, meaning that as human development improves, achieving the Sustainable Development Goals becomes easier.

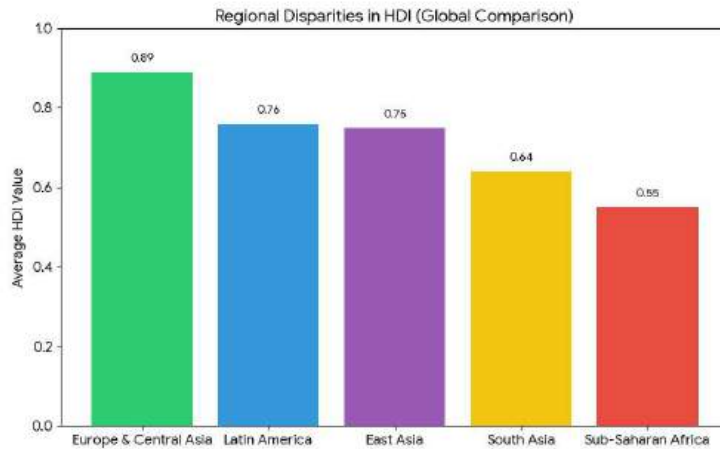
X-axis (Human Development Index - HDI)- This axis represents a country's average achievement in three key dimensions—health, education, and standard of living. **Y-axis (SDG Index Score)**: This axis shows how successful a country has been in achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (such as poverty eradication, climate action, gender equality, etc.).

Upward sloping line- The points in the graph move from the bottom left to the top right. This clearly indicates that countries with a higher HDI score (such as developed countries) also have a higher rate of achieving the SDGs.

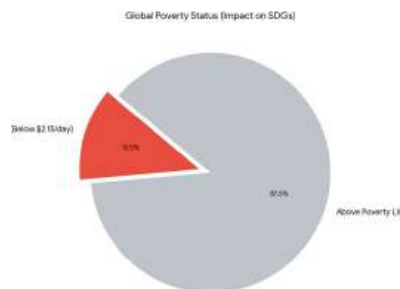


The relationship between HDI and SDGs (Correlation Analysis)- This graph shows that as a country's Human Development Index (HDI) increases, its capacity to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

decreases. This paper argues that investing in human capital (education and health) is fundamental to achieving the SDGs.



Regional Disparities- As mentioned in your paper, there is a significant development gap between regions such as Europe and Africa. This bar chart clearly illustrates the varying levels of HDI across different regions, making the achievement of global goals a major challenge.



Global Poverty Levels- Your research paper mentions that approximately 10-15% of the world's population still lives in poverty. This pie chart depicts this situation, which is a major obstacle to achieving the "Zero Poverty" goal (SDG 1).

Study Objectives- This research paper is guided by the following objectives:

1. To analyze the inherent relationship between Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Human Development Index (HDI).
2. To identify the progress and challenges of the Sustainable Development Goals and align them with human development goals.

3. To present policy suggestions for long-term development in relation to SDGs and HDI.

Methodology- This research paper adopts a descriptive approach by reviewing secondary data. The entire study evaluates findings from global and national sources to understand the relationship between Sustainable Development Goals and Human Development Goals (HDI).

The SDG charts released globally are used to analyze the progress of a nation, and data from the Human Development Report is analyzed to understand human development outcomes. Finally, it reviews the correlation analysis for the sustainability of economic and human development.

Challenges- Linking Sustainable Development Goals and Human Development Indices and making them inclusive for every nation and region is a challenging process, requiring overcoming several obstacles, which are as follows:

1. Regional Disparities- Studies of Human Development Report data show that there are differences in indicators such as income, education, and health between different nations and even within different regions of a single country. European countries are more advanced, while African countries are plagued by poverty and hunger.

2. Availability of Resources- There are differences in productive units in each nation, which depend on the availability of resources. Maintaining Sustainable Development Goals requires significant funding, which affects investment in human development.

3. Climate Change and Nature Conservation- Preventing environmental degradation in the pursuit of development is a major challenge. Increased pressure on resources negatively impacts biodiversity and tree cover. While regulations exist to prevent this, their implementation is challenging.

4. Illiteracy and Poverty- According to statistics, approximately 10 to 15 percent of people worldwide are living in extreme poverty. In many countries, income inequality has increased rather than decreased, and people are struggling to access basic necessities.

5. Lack of Effective Policies- Often, governments fail to develop effective strategies for development. Policy inaction hinders the achievement of sustainable development goals, and many aspects related to human development weaken the potential for satisfactory progress.

Opportunities- Although big goals come with certain challenges that are necessary for long-term clarity, despite these challenges, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) represent opportunities to promote human development.

1. Foundation of Inclusive Development- Development in all sectors should be based on a balanced and forward-looking approach. Adhering to the standards of inclusivity makes it possible to easily achieve larger goals.

2. Technological Development and Participation- The use of technology is essential for the overall development of various enterprises and human development. The use and expansion of technology in all sectors, including

agriculture, services, and investment, can contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

3. Decentralized Governance System- The implementation of governance schemes should extend to remote areas. This increases participation in economic and human development. Decentralized governance creates new pathways for the future.

4. Integration of Sustainable Development Goals and Human Development - By combining both indicators, the foundation for development promotion can be strengthened. This can give concrete form to the concept of a holistic approach. It balances economic development with social development.

5. Public-Private Partnership- Government and private institutions can together mobilize the resources necessary for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Therefore, participation from both the private and public sectors is essential.

Conclusion- This research paper supports the global goal of poverty eradication by 2030. It reiterates the need for joint action by nations and robust governance. Addressing structural inequalities related to human development should be the top priority. Systemic challenges in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals are being strengthened through public and private partnerships. In the context of India, aligning state-level human development priorities is crucial for balanced progress in Sustainable Development Goals and human development.

Globally, many challenges exist, such as economic inequality (poverty), lack of opportunities, resource and capital mismanagement, climate change, and pollution. However, solutions are possible through a decentralized and inclusive model for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Environmental sustainability and effective policy implementation can lead to success across various dimensions of sustainable development goals and human development. Many countries need to allocate more resources to education and healthcare to foster human capital development. Public institutions should be strengthened to enhance their capacity for policy implementation. The participation of youth and women should be encouraged to achieve the sustainable development goals. In this era of knowledge-based economies, nations should collaborate on technology transfer, financial management, and policy discussions.

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