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Conference Special Issue - 40

September - 2025



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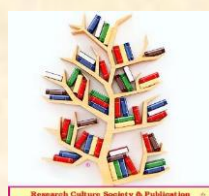
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Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, JAIN (Deemed-to-be-University) Bengaluru, India.;
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INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON LITERATURE, SOCIETY & THE GLOBAL MEDIA

अंतर्राष्ट्रीय सम्मेलन : साहित्य, समाज और वैश्विक मीडिया

(ICLSGM – 2025)

Date: 20 - 21 September, 2025

Conference Special Issue / Proceedings Issue

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(Research Culture Society & Publication)

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About the organizing Institutions:

P.G. DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH has been tirelessly working to improve the department's academic atmosphere and the students' overall growth. In addition to participating in academic pursuits, students receive professional development. Intermittent extracurricular activities have been planned. The department maintains its own literary, debate, and drama clubs for students.

MAHARAJA COLLEGE, Ara The first and oldest coeducational institution in south-west Bihar, Maharaja Bahadur Ram Ran Vijay Prasad Singh College (M.B.R.R.V.Pd.SINGH COLLEGE), also known as Maharaja College, Ara, was founded on September 13, 1954, to address the increasing demand for education, particularly higher education facilities in the Shahabad district after independence. On February 1, 1976, the college became a part of Magadh University in Bodh Gaya, Bihar. Following Magadh University's October 1992 split, Veer Kunwar Singh University was established, with its main office located in Ara. The UGC regulation's 2(f) and 12(b) both acknowledge the college or university. The Maharaja College is obviously more older than Veer Kunwar Singh University Ara today. The university is located in the center of town.



JAIN was declared a **Deemed-to-be University** under Section 3 of the UGC Act 1956 by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Union Government, in July 2008. The university aims to foster human development through quality education, research, entrepreneurship, and sports. It is ranked among the top universities in India for its ever-evolving and open-minded system, as well as its quest for continued success and resilience. Over the years, the university has made conscious and concrete efforts to build on its strengths and consolidate its achievements.

The university caters to over 20,000 regular students from more than 53 countries, enrolled across six faculties and twelve schools in 150+ programmes. The university has eight dedicated research centres conducting cutting-edge research in areas crucial to society and nations. JAIN offers undergraduate, postgraduate, doctoral, and post-doctoral programmes in Engineering and Technology, Aviation and Aerospace Management, Sciences, Allied Healthcare and

Sciences, Management and Commerce, Design Media and Creative Arts, and Humanities and Social Sciences. The university has world-class sports facilities. More than ten students and alumni have represented India at the Olympics, over 200 have played at the international level and more than 400 at the national level.

Department of Journalism and Mass Communication

The Department of Journalism and Mass Communication is an integral part of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, JAIN (Deemed-to-be University) offer an entry into the ever-evolving world of global media and a dream university experience that merges the best of both world's academics and media. We offer UG and PG programmes. Here students learn to understand, interpret, resolve issues that drive and change the media world. In syllabi and real time training students address local and global challenges in media and business and empowered to become next generation leaders in media. They also leverage their potential in networking professional relationships with industry and enjoy the benefits of our international footprints across nations and media related problems. It helps to create media professional with contemporary skills no matter what dreams they choose to pursue.

Our endeavour at the Department is to provide the students the best and latest in the field of Journalism and Mass Communication. We aim at making students bloom into professionals who will be primed to work in a high-pressure situations and tasks using their high Emotional Quotient and dexterity with the working of tools of mass communication. For the holistic development of students, we have a 360-degree approach towards teaching and learning. On a regular basis, Guest Lectures, Invited Talks, Workshops, Seminars, Student Tours, Yoga and wellness sessions are being organised. The Department in consonance with the core vision of the University, encourages Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary approach in learning.

‘RESEARCH CULTURE SOCIETY’ (RCS) is a Government Registered International Scientific Research organization. Registered with several United or Government bodies. It is also an independent, professional, non-profit international level organization. RCS-ISRA shall also initiate and set-up new educational and research programs with other international organizations. Society has successfully organized 180+ conferences, seminars, symposiums and other educational programmes at national and international level. Society has collaboration – MoU / MoA with 70+ institutions – universities.

International Languages Council is working on language studies, language issues, multilingual aspects, and offers a stage "speak to the international community". ILC organizes events to improve languages, language conceptual understanding, language learning, language and literature inter relationship, special trainings, workshops, seminars and conferences.

Supported by: शिक्षण संशोधन and IJRCS.

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE :

Create a unified platform for generating awareness in inter-disciplinary and multi- disciplinary research and media's responsibility for creating a conducive atmosphere where people's voices will be heard. The interconnection between literature, society, and global media shapes contemporary cultural narratives and societal values. The International Conference on "Literature, Society, and Global Media" aims to explore these dynamic intersections, examining how literary works and media platforms influence and reflect societal changes and global discourse. This conference will bring together scholars, writers, media professionals, and cultural critics to discuss the transformative power of literature and media in today's globalized world.

OBJECTIVES & AIMS OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE :

- To Identify the current scenario and interrelationship of literature, society and media. Identifying various knowledge forms of literature, society and media.
- To analyze the content of literature, society and media. Intellectual and academic development.
- Reflect on the evolving role of journalists in an era dominated by social media and citizen journalism.
- Critique prejudiced narratives to form unbiased opinion on media's representation of reality.

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International Languages Council, Member – Indonesia.
Shailesh Ranjan, Head, PG Department of English, Maharaja College, Ara. India

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Dr. Sheeba Sadar Ali, Department of English, College of Education, Majmaah University, KSA.
Dr. Bhargavi D. Hemmige, Professor and Head, Department of Media Studies Center for
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Harsh Ranjan, Research Scholar,
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12th September, 2025

Message

It gives me immense pleasure to know that a two-day International Conference on Language, Literature and Social Global Minds (ICLSGM-2025) is going to be organized by the Postgraduate Department of English, Maharaja College, Ara on 20th and 21st September, 2025. I am also glad to know that a souvenir is also being brought out on this occasion.

I extend my warm greetings and felicitations to the organizer and the participants and wish the conference all success.

(Arif Mohammed Khan)

प्रो० शैलेन्द्र कुमार चतुर्वेदी
कुलपति
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MESSAGE

To the Esteemed Delegates, Researchers, and Students,

Welcome to the International Conference on Literature Society and Global Media (ICLSGM). May the conversations and insights shared over these two days illuminate new paths in research, pedagogy, and global understanding. I extend my best wishes for a successful conference and a memorable Souvenir that preserves the ideas and collaborations born here.

It is my distinct honour to extend warm greetings to all participants of the International Conference on Literature Society and Global Media (ICLSGM), jointly organized by the P.G. Department of English, Maharaja College, Ara; the Research Society; and JGI Jain Deemed to be University. This hybrid conference, scheduled for 20th–21st September 2025, brings together scholars from diverse disciplines to explore the dynamic interplays between literature, society, and global media.

I commend the organizers for their vision in fostering scholarly exchange, innovation, and cross-cultural collaboration. May the deliberations here contribute to new insights, rigorous scholarship, and meaningful dialogue that transcends borders. I wish every participant a productive and enriching experience, and I convey my best wishes for a successful conference and a distinguished Souvenir that captures the spirit of this gathering.

With sincere regards,

Prof. Shailendra Kr. Chaturvedi
Vice Chancellor

Message from the Registrar



It is a matter of immense pleasure that Maharaja College, Ara (Bhojpur) is organizing an International Conference on “Literature, Society and the Global Media” on 20-21, September. On behalf of Veer Kuwar Singh University I congratulate the Organizer for orchestrating such a grand event.

I would like to greet and welcome to the participants and resource person. I would like also to express my deep gratitude to the teachers, employees, students and concerned persons of the college who have tried to give a incredible shape to the Conference.

I wish all excellence for the success of conference.

With best complements.

Registrar
VKSU, Ara

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दिनांक

प्रधानाचार्य का संदेश



महाराजा कॉलेज, आरा में आयोजित "समाज, साहित्य और वैश्विक मीडिया" विषयक दो दिवसीय अन्तराष्ट्रीय सम्मेलन हम सबके लिये गर्व और चिन्तन का विषय है। यह महाविद्यालय उन महनीय दानदाताओं के उदात्त त्याग और योगदान का परिणाम है जिन्होंने समाज और शिक्षा के उत्थान हेतु अपनी अमूल्य भूमि दान देकर इस संस्थान की नींव रखी। उनके इस दूरदर्शी योगदान ने इस महाविद्यालय को शिक्षा का तीर्थस्थल बना दिया।

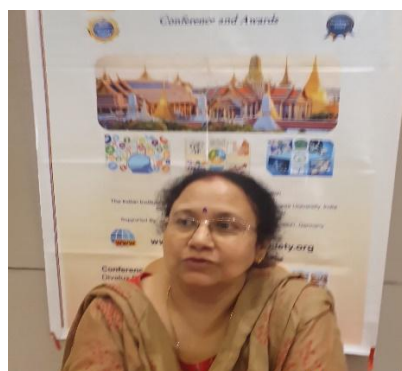
इस गौरवशाली भूमि की पहचान वीर कुँवर सिंह जैसे अमर स्वतंत्रता सेनानी से भी है, जिनकी अदम्य शौर्यगाथा हमें राष्ट्रप्रेम, साहस और आत्मबल का संदेश देती हैं ऐसे ऐतिहासिक परिवेश में यह संगोष्ठी और भी सार्थक हो जाती है।

साहित्य मानवीय संवेदना का शाश्वत संरक्षक है, वही वैश्विक मीडिया विचार और सूचना के प्रसार का आधुनिक माध्यम है। यदि दोनों के मध्य समन्वय स्थापित हो तो समाज में सकारात्मक परिवर्तन की नई दिशा संभव है।

मुझे विश्वास है कि यह संगोष्ठी विद्वानों को नये विमर्श, संवाद और रचनात्मक दृष्टिकोण प्रदान करेगी। मैं आयोजक मंडल, सभी वक्ताओं और प्रतिभागियों को इस प्रयास के लिये हार्दिक बधाई एवं शुभकामनाएँ देती हूँ और सभी के प्रति आभार व्यक्त करती हूँ।

प्रो० कनक लता कुमारी
प्राचार्या
महाराजा कॉलेज, आरा

Message from Organizing Conference Chair / Convenor



On behalf of the International Conference on Literature, Society, and Global Media, it is my distinct pleasure and privilege to extend a warm welcome to all participants, speakers, researchers, colleagues, and guests from around the world. Literature has always been the compass that guides society through changing times. In this era of rapid globalization, media convergence, and digital interconnectedness, the power of words to shape culture, critique narratives, and foster cross-cultural understanding has never been more vital.

This conference brings together diverse voices—novelists, poets, critics, historians, media practitioners, and scholars—to explore how literature interrogates social structures, amplifies marginalized perspectives, and negotiates the complex realities of our global village. I extend my gratitude to all authors and presenters for their thoughtful contributions, to the peer reviewers for their diligence, and to the sponsors and institutions that support scholarly pursuit. I also thank the attendees for bringing curiosity, empathy, and critical discourse to this gathering. May our discussions be productive, our debates constructive, and our networks enduring beyond the conference dates.

Together, let us foster a scholarly environment that values originality, methodological rigor, and the responsible use of media in the service of truth, justice, and human dignity. As we embark on this journey, let us uphold the values of intellectual curiosity, ethical scholarship, and inclusive dialogue. May our discussions challenge, illuminate, and ultimately transform the ways we perceive and depict our shared humanity.

I am deeply grateful to our esteemed keynote speakers, panelists, and all contributors for their thoughtful insights. I acknowledge the tireless efforts of the organizing committee, reviewers, volunteers, and sponsors who have made this gathering possible. May the exchanges here inspire collaborative research, compassionate dialogue, and innovative approaches to studying literature, society, and media in a connected world.

Warm regards,

Dr. Vandana Singh
Convenor-ICLSGM 2025
Senior Assistant Professor
P.G. Department of English
Maharaja College, Ara

Message from Organizing Conference Member



Dr. Bhargavi D Hemmige

Professor & HoD Dept. of Journalism & Mass Communication
JAIN (Deemed-to-be University)

As the Committee Member, I welcome you to the International Conference on **International Conference on Literature, Society, and Global Media 2025** in association with Research Culture and Society slated ON 20 - 21 September, 2025.

We are excited to invite you to the International Conference on "Literature, Society, and Global Media," where we will delve into the profound interconnections between literature, society, and media in shaping contemporary cultural narratives and societal values.

The theme of this conference—*Creating a unified platform for generating awareness in inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary research and media's responsibility for fostering a conducive atmosphere where people's voices will be heard*—highlights the importance of collaboration across disciplines and the media's crucial role in amplifying diverse perspectives.

This event will bring together an esteemed group of scholars, writers, media professionals, and cultural critics who will share their insights and engage in rich dialogue on the transformative power of literature and media in today's globalized world. Join us as we collectively foster an environment that encourages critical thought, dialogue, and innovation in addressing the societal challenges of our time.

We look forward to your participation in this thought-provoking discourse!

Dr.C. M. Patel

Director, RESEARCH CULTURE SOCIETY.

www.researchculturesociety.org



Message

Dear Professional Colleagues.

I am very glad that The P.G. Department Of English, Maharaja College, Ara., Department of Journalism and Mass Communication is an integral part of School of Humanities and Social Sciences, JAIN (Deemed-to-be University) in collaboration with 'Research Culture Society' (Government Registered Scientific Research organization, India) are organizing '**International Conference on Literature, Society and the Global Media**' during 20 - 21 Sept, 2025.

The relationship between literature, society and media has been the subject of considerable discussions for decades. Literature influences society slowly, the impact of Media on society is little fast and at times, instantaneous. In the era of socialization and modernization citizens need to be more aware about their thoughts, and visions related to these important topics.

The aim of the conference is identifying the current scenario and interrelationship of literature, society and media. Identifying various knowledge forms of literature, society and media. Analyzing the content of literature, society and media. In an age where global media and literature are increasingly intertwined, this conference also aims to explore how literary works and media platforms both reflect and influence societal change and global discourse. By examining these dynamic intersections, we seek to understand their impact on our collective consciousness and cultural heritage.

An additional goal of this international conference is to combine interests to bring people closer for the discussion and presentations to invoke their thoughts.

I believe this International Conference stage will help in understanding the valuable insights and redefining the connection between Literature, Society and Media to students, academicians and other professionals who are interested in these subject fields.

My best wishes to the committee members, speakers and participants !



Prof. J. Adrina
Founder Member
International Languages Council, Europe
School of Languages, Literature and Linguistics, EU

Dear Colleagues !

I am delighted that our organization is jointly conducting the " **International Conference on Literature, Society and the Global Media** " with the theme of literature and languages, in association with 'Research Culture Society' on 20 - 21 sept, 2025.

Literature is the mirror of the society as it projects the basic parameters of the existing institutional framework. From times immemorial literature has imparted the society in numerous ways and has Shaped human civilisations. The influence of certain Writers and their writings have Created both positive and negative impact with a detailed preview of experiences across societies. Societal influence of literature is slow, While media impacts instantaneously. Literature and media journalism play a vital role in facilitating personal understanding and improving social cohesion. Hostility and unfriendly journalism would have an indelible negative impact on the humankind. Therefore, It becomes all the more important to view literature and journalism from an open mind and an Open heart.

In this content the title of the conference "Literature, Society and Global Media" sounds very appropriate.

The two-day conference Which is inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary would underline the responsibility of the media in creating a platform to Connect literature and media and underline on its global impact through collaborative research ideas. The papers presented in time Conference would open opportunity for fruitful discussions and innovative approaches.

I welcome the presenters and participants to come out with ideas which would reflect on the emergence of new technology and how they could be interwoven on the tapestry of "Literature, Society and global media".

Thank you!

Prof. J. Adrina
ICLSGM-2025 Conference Chair
Founder Member
International Languages Council, Europe.

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Social Media Addiction and Mental Health: A Comprehensive Review of Psychological Impacts, Risk Factors, and Intervention

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Abstract: Social media has become an integral part of daily life, especially among students and young adults. While it enables communication and information sharing, its overuse has led to rising concerns about social media addiction (SMA), which is increasingly linked to mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, loneliness, and poor sleep. To better understand and predict SMA, researchers have adopted machine learning (ML) techniques. Algorithms like Support Vector Machines (SVM), Random Forests (RF), Logistic Regression (LR), and Artificial Neural Networks (ANN) have been used to detect addiction based on behavioral indicators such as screen time, emotional changes, and usage patterns. Among these, ANN demonstrated the highest prediction accuracy (91.2%), followed by SVM (89.5%), RF (86.4%), and LR (82.1%). By combining psychological assessments with ML-driven analysis, these models offer early identification of high-risk individuals. ANN stands out for its ability to model complex behavior's, making it a promising tool for mental health monitoring and preventive care.

Keywords: Social Media Addiction, Mental Health, ML, RF, LR, SVM, ANN, SMA, CNN, LSTM, XG, NV, Behavioral Prediction and College Students.

1. INTRODUCTION

A. Background

Social media has reshaped how people connect and communicate, especially among students and young adults. While platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook offer social and educational benefits, excessive use has become a growing concern. What starts as casual use can lead to addictive patterns, negatively impacting mental health. Research links prolonged use to increased anxiety, depression, stress, and sleep problems. This has prompted greater focus on understanding Social Media Addiction (SMA) its psychological effects.

B. Literature Survey

A growing body of research has highlighted the link between excessive social media use and negative mental health outcomes. Reports from organizations like the American College Health Association and the Centre for Collegiate Mental Health have documented a sharp rise in psychological distress among students over the past decade.[12,3,4] Scholars, including Andreassen, have found strong associations between problematic social media use and issues such as poor sleep, low self-esteem, and heightened anxiety.[5,6,7,8] On the technological front, machine learning is increasingly being used to identify patterns of addictive behavior. Algorithms such as Support Vector Machines (SVM), Random Forests, and Artificial Neural Networks (ANN) analyze factors like screen time and mood fluctuations to predict users at risk for mental health challenges. While these tools show promise, their effectiveness varies based on complexity, accuracy, and how easily their results can be interpreted.

[9,10,11,12]. Today's platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter are a daily part of life for billions worldwide. However, researchers are now questioning how everyday behaviors such as exercising, shopping, or social media use can become harmful when taken to extremes. [13,14,15]. These seemingly normal activities may begin to mimic addictive patterns similar to those seen in substance abuse. As a result, there is growing recognition that behavioral addictions, including social media overuse, may share core features with more traditional forms of dependency. [16,17].

C. Research Gap

1. Lack of integration between psychological assessments and machine learning models to create predictive tools.
2. Limited cross-comparison of algorithmic performance in diagnosing or forecasting addiction risk.
3. Insufficient focus on real-world application, especially among student populations where the problem is most acute.

D. Contribution of the Study

- Reviewing and synthesizing key findings on the mental health impacts of social media addiction.
- Comparing the effectiveness of various machine learning algorithms in predicting addiction and emotional distress.
- Highlighting the strengths of Artificial Neural Networks (ANN) as a leading model based on accuracy and prediction quality.
- Offering a holistic perspective that merges clinical psychology with computational methods—making the findings valuable for both mental health professionals and data scientists.

2. METHODOLOGY

To understand social media addiction (SMA) and its psychological effects on a global scale, researchers have applied machine learning models across diverse regions, user groups, and data sources. This extended methodology section explores data segmentation across different zones (e.g., Asia, Europe, North America, Africa) and compares the performance of more ML models, including deep learning variations like CNNs, LSTMs, LF, RF, SVM, ANN, XG and NB ensemble techniques.

A. Block Diagram

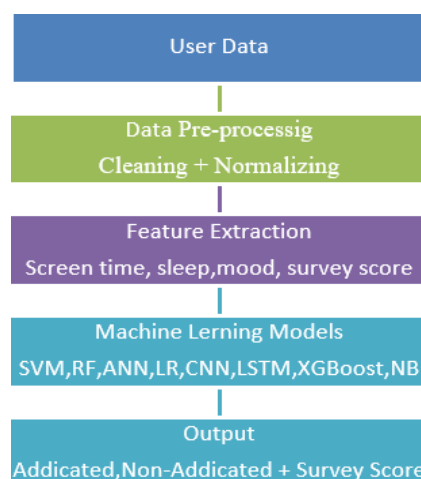


Fig. 1. Flow chart of working process

The Figure 1. presents a simplified view of how social media addiction can be modelled using behavioural and psychological data processed through various algorithms. This framework illustrates

how raw data (e.g., social media usage hours, emotional state, responses to mental health surveys) are transformed and analyzed through algorithms to predict addiction risk and mental health status.

B. Global Data zone data and study

TABLE. 1. GLOBEL ZONE DATA

Zone	Country/Region	Size Taken	Type	Source
North America	USA	15,000+	Surveys + passive smartphone data	ACHA, CCMH, Lipson et al.
Europe	Poland, Italy, UK	12,300	Facebook usage, PHQ-9, interviews	Atroszko et al., Brailovskaia et al.
Asia	China, India, South Korea	17,900	Sleep, mood, screen time, emotional text	Gong et al., Wang et al.
Africa	Nigeria	3,200	Facebook addiction survey scores	Alabi et al.
South America	Peru	4,100	Sleep + Facebook data	Wolniczak et al.

Key features:

- Screen time per day
- Sleep hours and sleep quality
- PHQ-9 and GAD-7 scores
- Text sentiment (posts, comments)
- Notification frequency and app-switching patterns

C. Algorithms Uses

TABLE 2. TESTING SOPHISTICATED ALGORITHMS

Algorithm	Type	Use Case
Logistic Regression (LR)	Statistical Model	Baseline classification
Random Forest (RF)	Ensemble Model	Handles tabular data, non-linear relationships
Support Vector Machine (SVM)	Supervised Learning	High accuracy with behavioral features
Artificial Neural Network (ANN)	Deep Learning	Captures complex dependencies
Convolutional Neural Network (CNN)	Deep Learning	For analyzing post images/text (Instagram/Tik-Tok)
Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM)	Sequential Model	Time-series patterns of emotional swings
XG-Boost	Gradient Boosting	Fast, accurate ensemble boosting model
Naive Bayes	Probabilistic	Fast, used for NLP in mental health tweets

D. Model Performance by Region

TABLE 3. COMPARISON OF ALL ALGORITHMS VALUE ACCORDING TO REGIONS

Algorithm	North America	Europe	Asia	Africa	Global Avg. Accuracy (%)

Logistic Regression	81.2%	79.4%	82.0%	76.5%	79.7
Random Forest	86.3%	85.5%	88.0%	82.7%	85.6
SVM	88.9%	86.1%	89.2%	84.0%	87.0
ANN	91.8%	90.2%	92.6%	88.5%	90.8
CNN (images/text)	89.5%	88.3%	91.0%	85.6%	88.6
LSTM (time-based)	90.1%	89.7%	91.5%	87.2%	89.6
XGBoost	89.0%	87.5%	90.3%	86.3%	88.3

E. Global Trends in Social Media Addiction

TABLE. 4. GLOBAL SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTION DATA

Region	Estimated SMA Prevalence	Common Symptoms
North America	28-40%	Depression, anxiety, sleep disturbances, emotional burnout
Asia	32-48%	Sleep issues, academic pressure, FOMO
Europe	25-35%	Body image anxiety, loneliness
North America	28-40%	Depression, isolation, validation-seeking
Africa	20-30%	Poor academic performance, escapism

- **North America:** particularly the United States and Canada, college students and young adults are among the most vulnerable to social media addiction, digital stress and emotional dysregulation.
- **Asia:** High academic pressure and tech-savvy youth contribute to intense social media engagement. Studies from China and India show that emotional distress, sleep disruption, and fear of missing out (FOMO) are major predictors.
- **Europe:** Greater focus on body image, especially among adolescents in countries like Italy and Poland, ties SMA to eating disorders and loneliness.
- **North America:** High screen time and open digital culture make SMA a growing concern, particularly among college students. Mental health stigma is gradually decreasing, encouraging more reporting.
- **Africa:** Limited research, but emerging data from Nigeria indicates Facebook addiction among undergraduates, correlating with poor academic performance.

F. Algorithm Performance

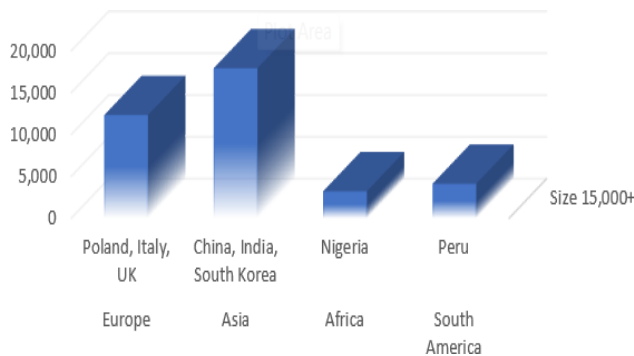
TABLE. 5. SHOWS ALL ALGORITHMS PERFORMANCE COMPARISONS

Algorithm	Accuracy (%)	Precision	F1 Score
Logistic Regression	79.7	0.78	0.80
Random Forest	85.6	0.85	0.86
Support Vector Machine	87.0	0.88	0.89
Artificial Neural Network (ANN)	90.8	0.91	0.90
Convolutional Neural Network (CNN)	89.5	0.89	0.89
Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM)	89.6	0.89	0.89
XG-Boost	88.3	0.87	0.88

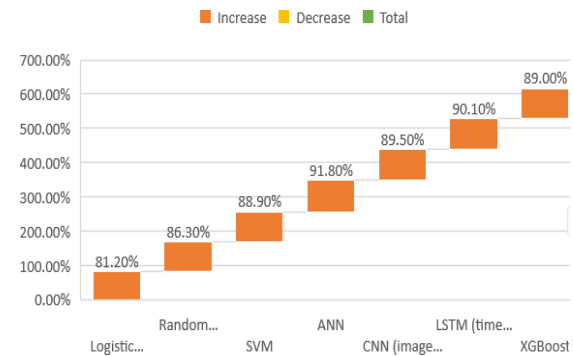
G. Behavioral Risk Indicators

Across most datasets, the following features consistently predicted higher SMA risk:

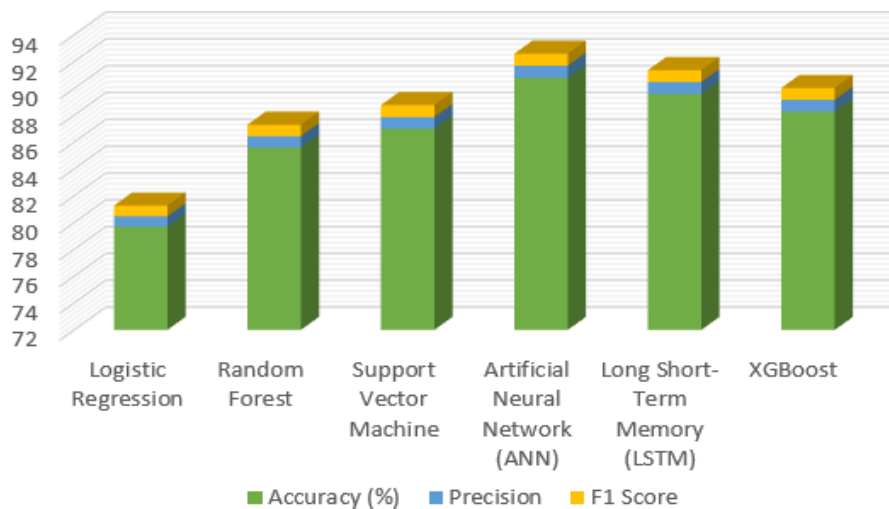
- Screen time > 4 hours/day
- PHQ-9 score ≥ 10
- Reported sleep quality below 5/10
- Sentiment analysis indicating negativity or stress
- High notification checking frequency (>30/day)



Graph. 1. Global zone data according to regions



Graph. 2. Comparison of all algorithms value



Graph. 3. Comparisons of all algorithms

3.PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIAL MEDIA IMPACT

Social media addiction (SMA) significantly influences users' mental well-being and social behavior. The most commonly reported psychological impacts include depression, anxiety, loneliness, low self-esteem, and sleep disturbances. These symptoms often co-occur, creating a feedback loop where emotional distress leads to more screen time, which in turn worsens psychological health. Researcher found strong correlations between excessive social media use and increased levels of anxiety and depressive symptoms among university students. In a cross-national study social media overuse was consistently linked to rumination and internalizing symptoms, particularly among young adults. From a social perspective, individuals with high SMA scores report reduced in-person interaction,

interpersonal conflicts, and poorer relationship satisfaction. Highlighted that users with large social networks often experience "connection overload," leading to emotional fatigue.

TABLE 6. SHOWS THE RISK FACTOR AND VULNERABLE POPULATION

Factor	Description
Age	Highest risk among 15-25 age group
Gender	Females more prone to social comparison
Mental Health	Depression, anxiety, ADHD increase risk
Personality	Narcissism, low self-esteem, impulsivity
Early Life Trauma	Associated with higher dependency

4.RESULT

This review assessed several machine learning models for detecting social media addiction using behavioral and psychological data. Artificial Neural Networks (ANN) showed the highest accuracy at 90.8%, followed closely by LSTM, which excelled with time-based patterns. SVM and XG-Boost also performed well, while Random Forests delivered slightly lower results. Logistic Regression, despite being easy to interpret, had the lowest accuracy (79.7%), indicating limited effectiveness for complex behavioral analysis. Overall, ANN stood out for its ability to recognize subtle patterns, making it highly suitable for real-world mental health monitoring.

5.CONCLUSION AND FUTURE SCOPE

- Develop explainable AI models that mental health professionals can easily interpret.
- Encourage long-term studies to explore how social media addiction develops and changes over time.
- Investigate how people use different social media platforms in unique ways, such as how behavior on Instagram may differ from that on Twitter.
- How the brain responds to social media cues by using tools like fMRI or EEG to better understand the neurological basis of social media addiction.
- Promote cross-cultural collaborations for a more global understanding of SMA.

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Alienation and Modern Identity: A Critical Analysis of Franz Kafka and T.S Eliot

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Abstract: “The twentieth century witnessed significant changes in industry, urban life, bureaucracy, and culture, leading to the disruption of traditional norms and the emergence of alienation as a key aspect of modern life. This research delves into how Franz Kafka and T. S. Eliot, through their distinct literary styles, shed light on alienation as a fundamental element of contemporary identity. Kafka’s stories, especially *The Metamorphosis* and *The Trial*, vividly depict the isolation of individuals from their families, societal structures, and communication, exposing the absurdity of bureaucratic systems and the transactional nature of acknowledgment. In contrast, Eliot portrays alienation as a breakdown of culture and spirituality in works like *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock* and *The Waste Land*, where fragmented voices and worn-out traditions reflect the loss of meaning following World War I. By analyzing these texts through the lenses of Marx’s concept of economic alienation, Weber’s idea of the “iron cage” of bureaucracy, Nietzsche’s philosophy of nihilism, Freud’s theories on unconscious conflicts, and existentialist ideas from Heidegger, Sartre, and Camus, this study argues that both writers transform philosophical criticisms of modernity into tangible literary experiences. Their writings illustrate that alienation is not just a psychological issue but a structural one, molding the fragile and fractured essence of modern identity. Ultimately, Kafka and Eliot reveal that alienation serves as both a crisis and a catalyst, compelling individuals to confront their displacement while striving to find authenticity amidst their estrangement.”

Keywords: Alienation, Modern Identity, Metamorphosis, Modernism, Franz Kafka, T.S Eliot, Bureaucracy, Existentialism.

INTRODUCTION:

In the midst of the twentieth century, significant changes swept through society, reshaping the way humans interacted with the world around them. The rapid growth of industry, the shift towards urban living, the emergence of bureaucratic governments, and the scars left by two devastating world wars all played a role in altering the human experience. Long-standing traditions rooted in religious practices, cultural heritage, and community ties began to crumble under the weight of modernization. This led to a sense of alienation, a feeling of disconnection from others, from meaningful traditions, and even from one's own sense of self. This raised a fundamental question: how can individuals maintain a sense of identity in the face of social, cultural, and existential upheaval?

Franz Kafka and T. S. Eliot, despite working in different literary forms and cultural contexts, both delved into this issue with profound insight. Kafka's stories shed light on the absurdity and cruelty of impersonal systems that strip individuals of their autonomy and recognition, while Eliot's poetry captures the inner turmoil of consciousness in a world devoid of meaning. For Kafka, alienation is embodied in the face of oppressive legal systems, demanding work environments, and fractured family dynamics, leading to a sense of invisibility. In Eliot's work, alienation is reflected in the disjointed language, complex intertextuality, and cultural emptiness of modern society. The concept of alienation, as argued by Karl Marx and Max Weber, goes beyond mere psychological distress to become a structural reality. Industrial capitalism, according to Marx, alienates workers from the products of their

labor and their own humanity. Weber added that modern bureaucracies entrap individuals in a rigid system of rules and regulations. Existential philosophers like Heidegger and Sartre further explored alienation as a threat to authenticity, where individuals struggle against impersonal societal pressures. Kafka and Eliot draw from these theories, transforming them into literary works that make alienation a tangible, lived experience. This study aims to achieve three main goals. Firstly, it highlights how Kafka and Eliot depict alienation as a central aspect of modern identity, though they pinpoint its origins differently - Kafka in external institutional barriers and Eliot in cultural and spiritual exhaustion. Secondly, it examines their unique artistic techniques - Kafka's use of absurd realism and Eliot's fragmented poetry - as expressions of alienation. Lastly, it places their works in conversation with existential and philosophical ideas of alienation to show their relevance to contemporary notions of identity.

By comparing Kafka and Eliot, this study argues that modern identity, as portrayed in their works, is not fixed or independent but rather fragile, interconnected, and fractured. Alienation is not just an individual struggle but a societal and cultural reality that shapes the essence of modern existence.

Exploring the Historical & Philosophical Contexts of Modernity, Alienation, and Identity

The issue of alienation is deeply intertwined with the concept of modernity. As the nineteenth century transitioned into the twentieth, significant changes in industrial economies, urban landscapes, political structures, and ways of thinking reshaped the fabric of human existence. The literary works of Franz Kafka and T. S. Eliot emerged as responses to this evolving intellectual landscape, reflecting and engaging with the philosophical and sociological discussions surrounding alienation and identity during the modernist era.

1. Marxian Alienation and the Human Experience:

Karl Marx's early writings, particularly the Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, offered a profound analysis of alienation. According to Marx, the capitalist system alienated the worker in multiple ways: from the products of their labor, from the act of production itself, from their essential human nature, and from their fellow beings. The individual became reduced to a mere commodity, valued not for their intrinsic worth but for their utility in exchange. While Kafka did not explicitly reference Marx, his portrayal of characters trapped within bureaucratic systems echoes Marx's insights. The plight of Gregor Samsa, a traveling salesman reduced to a mere laborer until his transformation renders him useless, exemplifies Marx's observation that alienation stems from treating individuals as tools rather than as ends in themselves.

2. Weber's Bureaucracy and the Struggle for Autonomy

Max Weber furthered the critique of modernity by highlighting the rationalization of bureaucracy. In works like *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Weber depicted a world dominated by the "iron cage" of rational systems. While bureaucracy promised efficiency and fairness, it often led to dehumanizing impersonality. Kafka's novel *The Trial* mirrors Weber's thesis, portraying Josef K. trapped in a system he cannot comprehend, judged by faceless authorities whose processes lack transparency. Here, alienation is not solely economic but also institutional, a sense of estrangement fostered by structures meant to maintain order.

3. Nietzsche and the Search for Meaning

In contrast to Marx and Weber's focus on economic and institutional alienation, Friedrich Nietzsche shifted the conversation to cultural and existential realms. His declaration of the "death of God" in *The Gay Science* signaled the collapse of traditional frameworks of value in the modern Western world. Without a transcendent foundation, individuals were left to grapple with a sense of meaninglessness. Eliot, writing in the aftermath of World War I, inherited this cultural crisis in works like *The Waste Land*, which mourns a fragmented society where myth and ritual no longer provide unity. Nietzsche's warning about nihilism found resonance in Eliot's fragmented verses and desolate imagery.

4. Freud, the Unconscious, and Inner Conflict

Sigmund Freud's exploration of the unconscious mind challenged traditional notions of identity. By positing the unconscious as a powerful force shaping thoughts and behaviors, Freud destabilized the idea of a unified self. In texts like *Civilization and Its Discontents*, Freud argued that societal demands necessitated repression, leading to neuroses and discontent. This internal alienation manifested as a

disconnect between individuals and their own desires. Kafka's characters often embodied this repression, with Josef K.'s vague guilt and Gregor's suppressed longings reflecting Freud's concept of internalized estrangement. In contrast, Eliot depicted a fragmentation of consciousness, with characters like Prufrock grappling with conflicting desires and inhibitions.

5. Existentialism: Heidegger, Sartre, and Camus

Existentialist philosophers in the twentieth century placed alienation at the core of their inquiries. Martin Heidegger introduced concepts like *Geworfenheit* ("thrownness") and *Das Man* ("the They"), highlighting how individuals found themselves thrust into a world not of their choosing, shaped by impersonal social norms. Alienation arose when individuals conformed to societal expectations instead of living authentically. Kafka's protagonists, ensnared by incomprehensible authorities, embodied Heidegger's ideas, with Josef K. thrust into a trial that defined his existence before he could act.

Jean-Paul Sartre's notion of "bad faith" in *Being and Nothingness* explored how individuals denied their own freedom by adopting externally imposed roles. Gregor Samsa's pre-metamorphosis life of endless work and duty exemplified this concept, where identity was reduced to function rather than genuine choice. Albert Camus delved into the absurd, the clash between human yearning for meaning and the indifferent universe. Kafka's narratives of futile striving and irrational punishment foreshadowed Camus's absurdist philosophy, while Eliot's *The Waste Land* mirrored this absurdity, depicting a world where tradition lingered but coherence was lost.

6. Modernist Aesthetics and the Experience of Alienation

The modernist literary movement emerged as a response to these existential crises. Techniques like fragmentation, irony, intertextuality, and defamiliarization were not merely stylistic choices but reflections of the pervasive sense of alienation. Eliot's poetry, with its disjointed imagery and allusions, mirrored a society lacking a cohesive narrative. Kafka's surreal yet realistic prose captured the absurd logic of alienated existence, where ordinary details clashed with extraordinary circumstances. Both authors translated philosophical reflections on alienation into artistic forms, inviting readers to experience dislocation alongside their characters.

Transition

By contextualizing Kafka and Eliot within these intellectual frameworks—Marx's economic alienation, Weber's bureaucratic structures, Nietzsche's cultural crisis, Freud's psychological insights, and existentialist philosophy—we gain a deeper understanding of their exploration of modern estrangement. While their works transcend mere philosophy, they serve as artistic interpretations of profound philosophical concepts. The following sections will delve into how Kafka's fiction (*The Metamorphosis* and *The Trial*) and Eliot's poetry (*Prufrock* and *The Waste Land*) transform these contexts into poignant reflections on modern identity.

Franz Kafka — The Experience of Alienation

Franz Kafka's storytelling captures the raw essence of feeling disconnected in the modern world. His characters struggle with being separated from their own bodies, families, work, and the systems that shape their lives. Kafka's talent lies in presenting the absurd in a way that feels eerily normal, challenging readers to navigate a reality where feeling alienated is not just a possibility, but an inevitability. By delving into *The Metamorphosis* (1915) and *The Trial* (1925), we can uncover how Kafka vividly portrays the experience of alienation that unravels modern identity.

1. The Metamorphosis: Feeling Disconnected from Self and Family

Kafka's novella, *The Metamorphosis*, opens with a jarring line that sets the tone for the story: "As Gregor Samsa awoke one morning from uneasy dreams he found himself transformed in his bed into a gigantic insect." The narrative immediately plunges into the idea of being alienated from one's own body: Gregor is no longer in control of his physical form, unable to communicate or carry out the tasks that once defined him.

Gregor's sense of alienation operates on multiple levels. Firstly, there is the physical disconnection: his body rebels against him, turning simple actions like getting out of bed into impossible feats. Secondly, there is the emotional disconnection from his family: while Gregor still thinks and feels like a human, his family only sees a monstrous exterior. His attempts to reach out are met with failure, leading to his

family slowly distancing themselves from him. As Walter Sokel points out, “Gregor’s tragedy lies not just in his transformation into vermin, but in the fact that his humanity goes unrecognized.”

The shifting attitudes of Gregor’s family reveal the utilitarian nature of recognition in society. Initially, they feel sorry for Gregor, but once they realize he can no longer provide for them, compassion turns to resentment. His father even goes as far as to throw an apple at him, which rots in his back until his death. The apple, symbolizing sin, becomes a grotesque symbol of punishment for being deemed useless. Gregor’s passing brings relief to his family, not sorrow: they take a tram ride to the countryside, dreaming of a brighter future. The implication is chilling: identity is not formed by inner qualities, but by economic contributions.

Kafka’s writing style heightens this sense of alienation. The narration is detached and clinical, describing the absurd with a matter-of-fact tone. As Ritchie Robertson notes, “Kafka’s attention to detail paradoxically enhances the surreal nature of the situation.” By presenting Gregor’s transformation as mundane, Kafka compels the reader to confront the arbitrary yet devastating ways in which dehumanization occurs.

2. The Trial: Estrangement from Law and Society

In *The Trial*, Kafka explores institutional alienation through the character of Josef K. The novel kicks off with Josef K.’s arrest: “Someone must have been spreading lies about Josef K., for without having committed any crime, he was arrested one morning.” From the start, Josef K.’s identity is reshaped by an accusation that lacks substance. He finds himself entangled in a web of procedures with unclear rules, encountering minor officials, complex court offices, and endless paperwork, yet never receiving a clear verdict.

In Kafka’s world, the legal system is not a mechanism for justice, but a stage for endless processes. As Hannah Arendt argues, Kafka “reveals a world where judgment is indefinitely postponed, leading to the erosion of human dignity.” Josef K.’s efforts to resist—seeking legal advice, pleading with court artists, requesting audiences—only serve to further ensnare him. His eventual execution, carried out “like a dog,” symbolizes the obliteration of identity by faceless institutions.

The novel illustrates Weber’s concept of bureaucratic alienation but takes it to a new level. In Weber’s view, bureaucracy is an “iron cage” of rational rules; in Kafka’s world, the cage is irrational, opaque, and ultimately unknowable. Josef K. struggles to comprehend the charges against him, let alone defend himself. His identity crumbles not due to a logical process, but because of a system so incomprehensible that resistance seems futile. As George Steiner observes, “Kafka’s brilliance lies in recognizing that modern institutions derive power not from clarity, but from perpetual ambiguity.”

3. Alienation Through Language and Communication

In both *The Metamorphosis* and *The Trial*, language becomes a battleground for alienation. Gregor’s attempts to communicate are met with incomprehensible squeaks. Josef K.’s conversations with officials are circular, evasive, or filled with technical jargon. In Kafka’s world, language fails as a tool for understanding or justice. Instead, it becomes a tool for exclusion: words label crimes without substance, assign statuses without consent, and establish hierarchies without justification.

As Stanley Corngold points out, “Kafka showcases the breakdown of communication as the core of alienation.” The individual’s voice is either ignored or twisted, while institutional voices dominate through cryptic formulas. Alienation emerges not just from economic or bureaucratic structures, but also from the erosion of language as a means of mutual understanding.

4. Ethical Considerations in Kafka’s Portrayal of Alienation

Kafka’s narratives do not offer easy resolutions. Gregor dies unnoticed; Josef K. meets his end without a fair trial. However, the bleakness carries a moral weight. By showcasing how easily institutions and families discard individuals, Kafka compels readers to confront the fragility of recognition in modern society. His characters are not heroes, but victims, and their passivity underscores how easily identity can be stripped away by impersonal systems.

Kafka’s alienated characters reflect the harsh realities of modernity: individuals are acknowledged only for their utility; institutions designed to maintain order can dismantle personhood; and language can transform from a tool of connection to a weapon of estrangement. By vividly portraying these truths with unwavering clarity, Kafka emerges as a seer of modern alienation.

Transition

While Kafka delves into alienation through external forces—family rejection, bureaucratic oppression, linguistic barriers—T. S. Eliot explores alienation from a different angle: the fragmentation of consciousness, cultural exhaustion, and the collapse of tradition. The next section will delve into Eliot's poetic techniques in works like "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" and *The Waste Land*.

T. S. Eliot — Fragmentation, Cultural Exhaustion, and the Poetics of Alienation

When looking at Kafka's portrayal of alienation through oppressive institutions and disconnected bodies, T. S. Eliot's poetry delves into alienation on a deeper level, exploring consciousness, culture, and language. In works like "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" and *The Waste Land*, Eliot captures the disorientation of the modern self in a time marked by fragmentation, doubt, and the erosion of tradition. Rather than just a social issue, Eliot sees alienation as a crisis that affects both existence and culture.

1. The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock: The Self Estranged

In "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," Eliot presents the inner thoughts of a modern man paralyzed by uncertainty and disconnection from himself and others. The poem begins with a hesitant suggestion to "Let us go then, you and I, / When the evening is spread out against the sky / Like a patient etherised upon a table." This striking comparison turns a romantic scene into a symbol of medical paralysis, setting the tone for alienation.

Prufrock's alienation is seen in his struggle to act or communicate authentically. He envisions others' gazes as critical, feeling the need to "prepare a face to meet the faces that you meet." Social interactions become performances, requiring masks that hinder genuine connections. As Hugh Kenner notes, "Prufrock not only lacks the ability to act; he lacks an identity, as every move is already planned, expected, or judged."

The fragmentation of Prufrock's self is evident in his shifts between grand aspirations and crushing self-doubt. He questions, "Do I dare / Disturb the universe?" only to quickly retreat into concerns about his appearance. His voice mixes lofty language with everyday details, showing the alienation of modern consciousness where grandeur and triviality coexist without harmony.

Furthermore, Prufrock's alienation is temporal. He lives in a constant state of delay, believing there will be "time for all the works and days of hands" while knowing time is slipping away. Grover Smith points out that "Prufrock's tragedy lies in the fact that the time he expects never arrives; he is stuck waiting for an event he continuously puts off." The poem illustrates a modern sense of disconnection from both agency and time.

2. The Waste Land: Cultural Alienation and Fragmentation

While Prufrock focuses on personal alienation, *The Waste Land* expands to depict collective cultural estrangement. Written after World War I, the poem portrays a spiritually barren society fractured by the loss of tradition and faith. The opening lines set the tone: "April is the cruellest month, breeding / Lilacs out of the dead land." Here, even renewal is cruel, as it highlights the barrenness.

The poem's fragmented structure mirrors the breakdown of cultural unity. Quotes from various sources clash with everyday language, reflecting a world where no single voice can maintain coherence. As Cleanth Brooks argues, "The method of *The Waste Land* embodies the condition it describes: a world without a center, held together only by fragments shored against ruins."

Alienation in *The Waste Land* is also seen in failed human connections. In "A Game of Chess," the sterile conversation between a neurotic woman and her indifferent partner showcases intimacy reduced to triviality. In "The Fire Sermon," the typist's passive encounter with a disinterested man portrays sex as mechanical and dehumanized. Human relationships, once meaningful, become scenes of alienation. Religious alienation is a central theme as well. The Fisher King motif symbolizes a wounded land awaiting redemption, yet the poem avoids easy resolution. The ending incorporates fragments of various traditions, culminating in the Sanskrit "Shantih shantih shantih." This peace is fragile, a whispered hope rather than a definite conclusion. As Lyndall Gordon notes, "Eliot offers not salvation but the chance to endure amidst fragments."

3. Language as Alienation in Eliot

Just as Kafka explores communication failures, Eliot highlights the breakdown of language itself. In

The Waste Land, words often feel empty, borrowed from other texts without a clear context. The poem's multiple voices emphasize the alienation of modern speech, where language confuses rather than unifies.

In Prufrock, language becomes self-sabotaging. Prufrock rehearses speeches he never delivers, his words undermined by imagined ridicule. Expression turns into repetition, showing alienation not just from others but from one's own intentions.

Eliot anticipates what later critics like Theodor Adorno would argue: in the late modern era, language is necessary yet insufficient, revealing alienation but unable to overcome it.

4. The Ethical and Aesthetic Stakes of Eliot's Alienation

Eliot's modernism isn't just about despair. His poetry aims to bring fragments together, even if just barely, through juxtaposition and allusion. The complexity of his style is an ethical move: by challenging readers to face fragmentation, Eliot resists simplistic narratives. As George Williamson suggests, "Eliot doesn't just make alienation a theme but a method, forcing readers to experience the dislocation the poem describes."

The ethical implication is that alienation can't be ignored or overcome with sentiment alone. Instead, one must honestly confront fragmentation, using art to capture its intricacies. Eliot's works, like Kafka's, don't offer easy answers but demand acknowledgment: living authentically in the modern world means recognizing estrangement as a fundamental aspect of identity.

Transition

After exploring Kafka's isolated characters and Eliot's fractured voices, we can now compare how these two modernists, through prose and poetry, express alienation and its impact on modern identity. The next section will delve into a direct dialogue between Kafka and Eliot, highlighting both similarities and differences in their visions of modern estrangement.

The Human Experience of Existentialism and Alienation

The profound literary works of Franz Kafka and T. S. Eliot delve into the depths of human experience, resonating with existential, phenomenological, and Marxian philosophies. While not philosophers in the traditional sense, these authors capture the essence of alienation that is central to the concerns of thinkers such as Karl Marx, Søren Kierkegaard, Martin Heidegger, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Albert Camus. This chapter delves into the philosophical contexts that shape Kafka and Eliot's narratives, exploring how they embody, expand, and diverge from existentialist and modernist ideologies.

1. Marx and the Isolation of Society

Marx's concept of alienation as the separation of the worker from their labor, fellow humans, and even themselves is vividly portrayed in the works of Kafka and Eliot. In Kafka's "The Trial," Josef K.'s futile battle against an oppressive judicial system reflects the alienation from societal structures that have become distant and oppressive. Similarly, Gregor Samsa's transformation in "The Metamorphosis" symbolizes the dehumanization of the worker, highlighting how one's worth is reduced to mere labor utility in a capitalist society.

Eliot, though less focused on economic aspects, showcases alienation as a cultural consequence of capitalism's dehumanizing effects. In "The Waste Land," individuals are depicted as mechanical beings, losing their individuality in the face of modern society's rationalization.

2. Kierkegaard and the Anguish of Self

Søren Kierkegaard's exploration of despair and the self foreshadows Kafka's themes of existential alienation. Kierkegaard's concept of despair as the failure to find oneself in relation to a higher power is mirrored in Kafka's characters who struggle to find meaning in a secular world. Eliot's "Prufrock" also captures this sense of anxiety and indecision, reflecting the existential alienation from authentic choices.

3. Heidegger and Authentic Existence

Martin Heidegger's concept of Dasein, the being that questions its own existence, resonates with Kafka's characters who struggle to find their authentic selves in a world that is indifferent to their individuality. Eliot's characters in "The Waste Land" also grapple with inauthentic existence, seeking meaning in religious traditions as a way to confront the limitations of human existence.

4. Sartre and Freedom in Isolation

Jean-Paul Sartre's idea of alienation as a part of human freedom is exemplified in Kafka's characters who are burdened with the responsibility of making choices without clear guidance. Eliot's "Prufrock" embodies Sartrean bad faith, showcasing the fear of taking action and the consequences of deferring responsibility.

5. Camus and the Absurd

Albert Camus's concept of the absurd, the clash between humanity's search for meaning and the indifferent universe, is reflected in Kafka's narratives of endless waiting and hopeless struggles. Eliot, while also depicting fragmentation, seeks transcendence and a yearning for peace beyond the absurdity of existence.

6. Modern Identity and Alienation

Kafka and Eliot's works offer profound insights into the human experience of alienation, reflecting the crisis of modern identity where individuals are suspended between despair and the possibility of renewal. Kafka's stark secularism contrasts with Eliot's search for spiritual meaning, showcasing two distinct trajectories of alienation in modern literature.

The Impact of Modern Identity on Literature, Philosophy, and Culture

The feeling of alienation, as portrayed by Franz Kafka and T. S. Eliot, goes beyond being just a theme found in early 20th-century literature. Instead, it reflects a fundamental aspect of modern identity itself - a sense of fragmentation and disconnection that continues to exist in today's culture. Both writers delve into the idea of the self being displaced in a world filled with institutional, cultural, and existential changes. Their works not only document this sense of alienation but also influence how future generations perceive identity in the modern era.

1. The Fragmented Nature of Modern Identity

In the portrayals by Kafka and Eliot, modern identity is depicted as fractured, unstable, and distanced from stable sources of meaning. Kafka's characters represent a self that is diminished by external forces: Gregor Samsa transforms into nothing more than an insect, while Josef K. loses his individuality in the face of a faceless bureaucracy. This has profound implications for modern identity - subjectivity itself becomes fragile, susceptible to being erased by systemic forces. On the other hand, Eliot illustrates a self that is disintegrating from within. In "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," the speaker mourns, "I have measured out my life with coffee spoons," capturing the mundane and paralyzed nature of a self unable to take decisive action. In "The Waste Land," the breakdown of cultural continuity leaves individuals stranded without shared frameworks of meaning. This suggests that identity is no longer a given but a collection of fragments that need to be pieced together. Together, Kafka and Eliot suggest that the modern self experiences alienation both externally (through institutions, systems, and mechanization) and internally (through anxiety, paralysis, and cultural loss).

2. Identity and the Crisis of Meaning

The early 20th century witnessed a collapse of metaphysical and social certainties. Kafka illustrates this collapse through the opacity of institutions - law, family, work - that no longer offer meaning. Josef K. is alienated not only from justice but from the very concept of justice. Eliot portrays a similar crisis on a cultural level. In "The Waste Land," religious and cultural symbols are fragmented, leaving individuals without solid ground. However, unlike Kafka's portrayal of irredeemable alienation, Eliot hints at a lingering desire for coherence. His references to Christian and Eastern traditions suggest that modern identity, while fragmented, may find meaning in a reassembled mix of traditions. This contrast highlights two potential implications: Kafka presents alienation as an unchangeable aspect of modern identity, while Eliot hints at the chance for renewal through cultural and spiritual reorientation.

3. Literature as a Reflection of Alienated Identity

Kafka and Eliot don't just describe alienation; they embody it through their literary forms. Kafka's writing is characterized by precise sparseness, surreal interruptions, and unresolved narratives, all of which mirror the disorientation of an alienated identity. Eliot's poetry, especially in "The Waste Land," is fragmented, polyphonic, and intertextual, reflecting the disintegration of modern subjectivity. This formal experimentation suggests that modern identity is best represented not through linear storytelling or a unified voice but through disruption, fragmentation, and multiplicity. Literature

becomes not only a reflection of alienation but also a way to confront and articulate the fractured modern self.

4. Alienation and Technology

Even though Kafka and Eliot wrote before the digital age, their works foreshadow the alienation that technology amplifies in modern identity. Kafka's bureaucratic maze anticipates the algorithmic control of the 21st century, where individuals are reduced to data points. Eliot's "Unreal City" evokes the alienation of mass urbanization, anonymity, and mediated relationships. The implications are significant: modern identity continues to grapple with the same alienation that Kafka and Eliot portrayed. The alienated worker in Kafka's works becomes the gig worker in digital capitalism; Eliot's fragmented cultural self transforms into the postmodern subject navigating endless information and disconnected traditions.

5. Alienation and the Pursuit of Authenticity

Despite their bleak outlooks, both Kafka and Eliot point towards the importance of authenticity in modern identity. Kafka's protagonists, though doomed, embody the struggle to assert individuality against overpowering systems. Josef K.'s defiance at the moment of execution - "Like a dog!" - is a final declaration of consciousness. Eliot, particularly in later works like "Four Quartets," emphasizes that authenticity may be found in spiritual renewal. The call for "a condition of complete simplicity" suggests that alienation, while prevalent, can be a catalyst for rediscovering genuine existence. The implication is that alienation is not just a symptom of modern identity but also a starting point. Identity in modernity emerges from navigating estrangement and seeking authenticity within it. The enduring presence of Kafka and Eliot in cultural memory shows that alienation remains a defining aspect of modern identity. The bureaucratic absurdity depicted by Kafka resonates in contemporary politics and institutions, while Eliot's sense of cultural desolation continues to shape discussions on secularization, tradition, and meaning. Therefore, the implications are not limited to the early 20th century. They extend to an acknowledgment that alienation is inherent to modern identity - an ongoing negotiation rather than a temporary crisis. According to their works, being modern means living in estrangement while constantly striving for coherence.

6. Synthesis: Literature, Philosophy, and Identity

Kafka and Eliot together articulate the paradox of modern identity: the more the individual seeks coherence, the more fragmented identity becomes. However, this fragmentation is not nihilistic; it requires philosophical and literary engagement. Alienation, far from being purely negative, becomes a source of creativity. It compels the self to confront its limitations, its reliance on cultural frameworks, and its potential for reinvention. Philosophers like Heidegger and Sartre discuss alienation as a fundamental aspect of existence, while Kafka and Eliot embody it in narrative and poetic forms. The implication is that literature and philosophy are not separate but complementary: both are ways of grappling with the alienated modern self.

CONCLUSION:

Exploring the theme of alienation in the writings of Franz Kafka and T. S. Eliot reveals a deep crisis of identity that characterizes the modern era. Both authors, writing in a time of significant social, cultural, and political changes, give voice to the fragmented and disoriented state of the modern individual. While their approaches differ—Kafka focusing on the absurdities of institutions and the body, Eliot on the fragmentation of culture and language—both ultimately agree that alienation is not just a side effect but a fundamental aspect of modern identity. Kafka's stories showcase the vulnerability of individuals in a world dominated by machinery and bureaucracy. His characters, such as Gregor Samsa and Josef K., are stripped of their humanity and disconnected from themselves. Identity becomes fragile, at the mercy of external forces that strip away meaning and autonomy. On the other hand, Eliot's poetry highlights the internal fractures of identity, disoriented by the breakdown of cultural traditions and the loss of metaphysical frameworks. In works like "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" and "The Waste Land," identity is scattered, fragmented, and paralyzed, unable to find coherence without external cultural or spiritual support.

Together, these two writers capture different aspects of alienation. Kafka emphasizes the structural alienation imposed by modern institutions, while Eliot focuses on the existential alienation resulting

from cultural fragmentation. Their works suggest that the modern self is alienated both externally and internally, a theme reflected in the disjointed forms of modernist literature.

However, neither Kafka nor Eliot presents alienation as purely negative. For Kafka, alienation reveals the absurdity of modern life, challenging individuals to confront the limits of meaning. For Eliot, alienation becomes a catalyst for spiritual and cultural renewal, as fragmentation opens the door to reconstruction. In both cases, alienation is paradoxically productive: it disrupts identity but also pushes it towards self-awareness, authenticity, and transformation. The implications of their work extend beyond the early 20th century. Kafka's portrayal of bureaucratic absurdity anticipates contemporary issues like algorithmic governance and dehumanizing labor practices, while Eliot's depiction of a fragmented society mirrors the chaos of today's media and cultural landscape. Alienation, as they depict it, is not a temporary crisis but a permanent aspect of modern identity. To be modern is to exist in a state of estrangement, navigating meaning amidst fragmentation. This analysis highlights the enduring relevance of Kafka and Eliot in literary criticism and cultural theory. Their works not only explore alienation but also offer frameworks for understanding how identity is shaped in times of disconnection. By placing Kafka and Eliot within the context of existential philosophy, cultural modernism, and the broader discourse on alienation, this study demonstrates that literature does more than depict identity—it actively participates in its formation. Ultimately, Kafka and Eliot urge us to view alienation not just as a symptom of loss but as an opportunity for critical introspection. Alienation reveals the fragility of modern identity, but also its resilience—the ability to reconstruct meaning, to piece together fragments into coherence, and to persevere in the face of uncertainty. Their works serve as a reminder that alienation is not merely a condition to endure but a force that shapes, challenges, and transforms the modern self.

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The Fourth Witch : Unveiling Lady Macbeth's Darker Influence in Shakespeare's Macbeth

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Abstract: *Lady Macbeth resides one of Shakespeare's most contented and coercive personalities: together the catalyst of Macbeth's rise and the erector of his ethical collapse. This paper explores the inflammatory subtle assertion that Lady Macbeth acts as a representative "fourth witch" - a mortal analogue and magnifier of the weird sisters's impression - while exposing how this explanation entangles traditional gendered and supernatural study of the drama. Lady Macbeth's speech, ritualistic evocations, manipulation of gendered perspectives, and dramatic embodiment of ferocity reckon her functionally with the witches even as she remains a psychologically mysterious mortal figure. Studying Lady Macbeth as a liminal figure - part mortal intriguer, part quasi- supernatural provocateur - lights up how Shakespeare platforms authority, ambiguity, and communal concerns about woman authority in early modern England. This paper collects simultaneously psychoanalytic, feminist, and historicist aspects to examine the powers and limits of the "fourth witch". How influential critics from A. C. Bradley's psychological depiction to Janet Adelman's maternal-power thesis contribute materials for this study, it is also shown assessing materials against counterarguments that persist on Lady Macbeth's ontological disparity from the three spirits. The ending determines that the "fourth witch" implementation is a heuristically potent metaphor - one that expresses the drama's interlocution of gender, authority, and the dramatic storage of persuasion.*

Keywords: *Lady Macbeth, Fourth-witch, Weird sisters, Gendered and supernatural study, Woman authority, Psychoanalytic and feminist aspects.*

INTRODUCTION:

When Lady Macbeth comes to know about the witches' prediction he is instantly drowned in a notion that will be both externally conducted and internally challenged. Lady Macbeth alters prediction into duty: she realises Macbeth's hesitation and fear, redefines manhood, and enacts the ritual by which Macbeth becomes king - or rises up. Critics have long observed her ambiguous intercourse with wizardry imagery: the "unsex me here" speech, her calls upon uncanny and haunted figures, and her recurring use of imagery usually connected with the mysterious, creepy and weird sisters. Some interpreters entitle her the drama's "fourth witch", debating that she acts as the mortal contrary-power to the spirit's unearthly inflammation. This paper exposes that assertion by retailing the linguistic, theatrical, histrionic, and philosophical harmony between Lady Macbeth and the Weird Sisters; by questioning psychoanalytic and feminist portrayals that reshape her motives; and by evaluating the explanatory gains and limitations that pursue when we receive the "fourth witch" view. Some striking incidents like Lady Macbeth's soliloquy, the terrific slaughter episode of Duncan, and the suspicious sleep walking sight will enhance the debate of Lady Macbeth's depiction as "fourth witch".

Analysis:

The phrase “fourth witch” is not verbatim - Shakespeare addresses only the three weird sisters - but acts as a ticklish image that accepts a conceptual overlap: the weird sisters plant the seed of ambition; Lady Macbeth cultivates and harvests it. The “fourth witch” entitle therefore indicates relatable similarities: representative provocateur, manipulator of gender ideals, and user of supernatural speech to influence human desire and turn their intention. This image is extended in various ways across critics. Some theatrical critics and play analysts use it as shorthand for Lady Macbeth’s inhumanity, ferocity and brutal nature; psychoanalytic readers and feminist critics treat it as a heuristic to express how gender and maternal concerns stimulate the drama’s ethics of authority. The term brings into redemption three analytical aspects: linguistic (reverberation and diction), performative (stagecraft and manipulation), and ideological (gender and patriarchy). Lady Macbeth’s soliloquy - “Come, you spirits/ That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here..” - evidently invokes unearthly support to convert her psychological disguise. Her dictions like ‘spirits’, ‘murdering ministers’, ‘unsex’ echoes a semantic realm generally attached with the weird sisters and classifies her with soul-evocation eloquence. This is a major chief argument commentators notice a witch-like record in her discourse. Her recurrent imperatives “Look like the innocent flower,/ But be the serpent under ‘t” are not only rhetorical; they stage the moral sequence she puts down on Macbeth. The spirits use dubious and fearful predictive speeches that plant longing; Lady Macbeth uses straight performative authorities that propel function - a rhetorical multiplier that makes her the executive seed of the prophecy. Critics have indicated textual reverberations between the witches’s repeated verse and Lady Macbeth’s discourse. Where the weird sisters proffer questionable embodiments of destiny, Lady Macbeth converts ambiguity into ultimate, ritualised discourse functions; the lingual concern thus justifies the “fourth witch” metaphor.

Lady Macbeth’s memorable “unsex me” discourse platforms an attack on early modern gender ideals: she says spirits release her of experienced feminine characteristics (compassion, milk) that might interrupt brutal function. Her claim to be covered “from the crown to the toe top-full of direct cruelty” is a performative desire to resort masculine excellence - or at least to be released from socially imposed maternal personality. Critics like Janet Adelman shape this footing within a wider set of maternal concerns in Shakespeare: the maternal frame acts as both origin and barrier for masculine authority in tragic formation. Lady Macbeth’s attempted abandonment of the maternal figure this read as a considered representation of gender to ensure political ending; in that performance she parallels the witches, who obscure gender limitations and creates a desperate, ferocious liminal femininity. The challenge to manliness: an ultimate path Lady Macbeth claims power is by determining Macbeth’s masculinity. Her inquiry - “Art thou afeard/ To be the same in thine own act and valour...” - weaponizes social norms of masculinity to compel Macbeth. This performance of masculinity is ideologically similar to wizardry’s devastating force: both lead by disrupting archetype nature and prospects. The slaughter episode of Duncan acts as ritual. Lady Macbeth sets support by providing instruments like daggers, wine and directs Macbeth’s attitude and behaviour, dealing afterward to act the scene and manipulate observers. The gradual sight of the mischievous crime - a general drama enacted private and then disguised in public - classifies her process with the witches’s performances like songs, chants etc. even if hers is a human playhouse. The witches expose exhibition (cauldron, spells) that evokes weird variations; Lady Macbeth performs the mortal embodiment - a ritual of communal deceit. She furnishes the crime with expressions, produces a story that is fearful, shocked modesty, and thus transforms prediction into political function. The theatrical economy also enhances the ambiguous nature. Directors and performers who foreground Lady Macbeth’s ritual efficiency - frequently perform her as a deceit whose dexterity is as enchanting as wizardry. Such performances have emphasized the popular “fourth witch” connection in dramatic narrative.

Lady Macbeth is not a verbally supernatural embodiment, many commentators persist her mortal psyche, impulsive vulnerabilities, and ultimate downfall being weakened into the witches’s occult philosophy. Unlike the weird sisters, Lady Macbeth needs predictive consciousness, is bound to temporal destinations, and realises unfairness and sense of guilt, obvious in the sleepwalking scene. She is not a plain weird strength but a fully perceived tragic representative. A. C. Bradley’s psychological statement reminds us to study Lady Macbeth as a tragic identity, wrought by intention, purpose and temperament, not as a only metaphor or reserved weird embodiment; her last acts - prose, delirium, the

pathetic loss of composure - emphasize her humanity rather than a restrained witch-authority. Psychoanalytic and feminist critics modify the “fourth witch” assertion, exposing how Lady Macbeth's evocation of weird sisters can be studied as rhetorical - a projection, not record of inherent wizardry. Thus while the phrase is heuristically effective, it must be modified by collection of theatrical psyche and ethical liability. The “fourth witch” entitle takes part in a long social aptitude to demonize potent female individuality by engaging them with wizardry - a machinery of communal appeasement. Ascertaining Lady Macbeth as a witch can be studied as a dominant footstep that embodies masculine authority and allocates abominable portrayal in female manipulation; Macbeth's internal motives are then uprooted onto a feminine scapegoat. Seeing Lady Macbeth as a “witch-like” figure, the concern around female figurative strength, maternal destruction, and the impedance female authority claims on legacy and heritage. Feminist studies use the image to expose how early modern philosophy subdues female endeavour and equalizes transgressive feminine functions with fearsome authority. Macbeth's downfall and the communal chaos that pursues can be studied through the associated outcome of weird persuasion and ethnic conspiracy. The interplay exposes Shakespeare's interest in how metaphor, theatrical performance, narrative creation, and dramatic irony associate to generate tyranny and oppression - a study that the “fourth witch” law underlines. Dramatic performance frequently exposes and enhances equivocal perspectives. Some productions underline witch-like characteristics like shadowy costuming, ritualised movements; others insist her mortal proximity and complicated heinous crime. The illustration affects the audience's ethical assignment: is she horrible, unhappy, or tragically misguided? Modern commentators exhibit enhanced interest in Lady Macbeth's perplexity; modern directors and critics frequently foreground her internal nature and highlight the discussion “she's to blame” study. At the same time, many synchronous articles and pedagogical lessons maintain to use the “fourth witch” title as a provocative entranced turning point into the drama's gender political economy. The dynamic propagation examines Lady Macbeth as a representative figure: metaphorically and dramatically classified with the spirits, yet philosophically and ideologically individual. The “fourth witch” is best studied as a metaphor that enlightens how Shakespeare asserts authority between unearthly ideas and mortal regulations. The implication makes us admire both the play's theatrical objectivity like character psyche, communal outcomes etc. and its ambiguous environment like prediction, quibble etc. It also reveals a moral quest into culpability: how much is Macbeth's action the effect of strange fascination, inner intention, or induced marital metaphor? The “fourth witch” view helps reshape these interrogations rather than decide them debatably.

CONCLUSION:

The individuality of Lady Macbeth defends sole remark verdict. To call her the “fourth witch” is to extend a potent metaphor that foregrounds her working intercourse with the weird sisters: she invokes spirits, shatters gendered prospects, and catalyzes Macbeth's slaughter episode through metaphorical and ritual proportions. But the metaphor has boundaries. Lady Macbeth's inner turmoil, ethical degradation, and her dramatic objectivity primarily mark her human entity - a tragic representative whose psychological crisis and chaotic circumstance are central to the play's pathos and enthusiastic approach. An attentive study that exposes both assertions in torment - that she is metaphorically witch-like but philosophically mortal being - dedicates the flourishing explanatory approaches. It elucidates why audiences and critics continue to be infatuated by her: she explores the cellular limitations between metaphor and fact, the diplomatic impacts of gender role, and the theatrical organization by which Shakespeare platforms liability. Finally, the “fourth witch” phrase acts best as a heuristic: it exposes concerns about female authority in the early modern thinking and unravels how mortal prompting rather than authentic unearthly destiny, is frequently the ultimate producer in the drama's tragic political economy.

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A Study of Human Relationships in Shobha De's Novel, Sisters

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Abstract: Peace exists in good and harmonious human relationships of citizens in the society. Human relationships are formed through a gradual process of emotional feelings, interaction, mutual respect and understanding among each other. This provides an empathy towards others and creates more space for strengthening of meaningful relationships. The bonds grow healthily and long lasts with trust, honest, love, care and positive responses. Literature plays an excellent role in educating the people in all aspects which help in all round development of an individual. Shobha De, a contemporary writer has a specific talent in reading the minds of people and portraying their hidden emotions, desires and conflicts with striking honesty in her works. In the novel, Sisters she portrays excellently the present-day pseudo relationships and highlighted how selfishness, materialism and lack of genuine emotions weaken human bonds through the characters Mallika, Alisha, Hiralal, Ramanbhai. This article explores the gradual decline of ethics in human relationships and professional bonds for power, wealth and personal gratification.

Key words: Trust, Conflicts, Materialism, Deterioration, Ethics, Dominance, Power.

INTRODUCTION:

According to great legendary Aristotle, man is a social being who thrives in the company of others whether they are small like family or big like nation. Man tends to form cooperative relationships by sharing, developing and sustaining meaningful relationships with other. Family, friendship, romantic partnerships, professional relationships have different feelings, emotions, needs in each form of relationship. So, man identified the importance and need of such bonds. Hence man learned to practise and develop meaningful correlation that foster co-operation, mutual support and social harmony. Man evolved into social being due to a combination of biological instincts and environmental factors for survival and progress. Life expectancy goes up quickly with healthy bonds. Man yields satisfaction and enjoyment with these relationships. An individual's emotional and social development is therefore as important as their cognitive and biological development. In addition to that marriage system also evolved to develop good and strong bond between male and female which lead to the formation of families in society. Bonds formed with blood relation like mother and son, father and daughter, brother and sister are strong and sacrifices everything for the benefit of family members when compared to other relationships. Likewise social bonds also developed between friends and neighbours. In olden days people used to give more importance to such relationships, morals and have more ethical sense and behaved consciously to retain their bonds. In this context I would like to quote famous Telugu poet Gurujada Apparao's verse: "Deshmante Matti Kadoi, Deshmante Manushuloi." Here Nation doesn't mean simply sand or soil but it means the people having good understandings and relations between themselves and mutual respect makes nation strong. With the passage of time man became very selfish and jealous, fast-paced lifestyles, digital distractions, lack of emotional feelings, negative thoughts and the hatredness towards the fellowmen made man to neglect moral values and genuine human

relationships which lead to deterioration of human relationships and also polluted whole system. The rapport between the members of the family, employer and employee, friends, neighbours, co-workers is different with each other for smooth going but everything has changed to reverse which has spoiled the entire human relationships. Patriarchy is the system seen in India where male dominates over female and gave no scope to female to express their views, even in some families, females became slaves and were subjugated and marginalized. This conventional system also responsible for degeneration of morals to some extent where neither male nor female lived peacefully and happily. Literature serves as a tool to enlighten the society about present issues, challenges and responsibilities that man has to confront and overcome to lead peaceful and successful life. Modern writers like Arundhati Roy, Chetan Bhagat, Jhumpa Lahiri, Shobha De have come up to explore contemporary issues through diverse themes and styles. Modern Literature reflects the present burning issues like gender inequality, social injustice, moral degradation and the weakening of human relationships in contemporary society.

Shobha De, a prominent writer, portrays the complexities of urban life and the evolving roles of women in present scenario and strives to reform the current situation and works towards transformation for the better society. Shobha De, has an excellent ability to dive into the minds of human beings and can be able to study the thoughts and feelings of humans and their reflexes towards the situations. Shobha De, concentrates on the themes like marriage, culture, food, relationships and the intertwines to define personal and social life closely and effectively. As a feminist writer, Shobha De doesn't allow men to rule over women and treat women as puppets in their hands. She speaks on behalf of women and stands beside them and raises her voice against oppression and advocating for their rights, dignity and equal place in the society. Shobha De is expressive and bold enough to speak sensitive matters like love, sex, lesbianism. In the novel, *Sisters* Shobha De focussed on human relationships which are gradually declining and paved the path towards the illicit behaviour, dominance, to attain power illegally which in turn leads to destruction of their own lives. The novel, *Sisters* by Shobha De opens with obituary of Sheth Hiralal and her wife Malathiben. It is informed in that ceremony that they were lost their lives in the air crash. Their only daughter Mallika (Mikki) who went to abroad for higher studies returned to India on hearing the news of her parent's death. She is forced to take over her father's business which is sprawling industrial empire facing internal rivalries and mounting challenges. By designing Mikki's character like this Shobha De is very clear that she values father and daughter relationship as in her real life. Shobha De excellently portrayed daughter's sense of responsibility in safe guarding Hiralal Industries and its employees. Later in that ceremony Mikki, instead of mourning for her parent's death she is so conscious about her dress and stands in front of the mirror and looks at her dress and debates about it as:

“Whether or not to line her eyes with a kohl-stick...

There hadn't been sufficient time for her to get Chandu to stitch a new sari choli for her. The old ones were a bit too sexy for such a sombre occasion. Mikki suppressed a giggle. Let the sex-starved old fogies get their thrills, she thought as she pleated her sari carefully and yanked it above her navel.” (*Sisters* Pg. 9)

De is very obvious about younger generation's thoughts and emotions which tilts their life differently. By, the above debate it is clear that new generation lacks stability and consistency in their thoughts and actions, often appearing fickle-minded and uncertain. They struggle to adapt appropriately to different situations which reflects a weakening patience, emotional balance and decision-making skills in navigating life's challenges. They don't have ethical sense to distinguish what is right and what is wrong which weakens the genuine human relationships.

Mikki remembers her father once, when he denied to attend parent's function at school celebrations. She feels very sorry for that. So, Ramankaka attends that function in place of her father to make her happy. This shows the gradual deterioration of relationships. Here De explains the negligence of parents in fulfilling their children's small wishes also to make them happy. This incident show how the children feel ignored by parents, emotionally hurt and deprived of the encouragement they deserve from their family. Family members play a vital role in building strong bonds. But Mikki lacks family support from childhood onwards. By this it is clear that there is a decline of parent child relationship in present scenario.

Sheth Hiralal though he was already married to Malathiben and also had a daughter called Mallika, he

again developed an illicit relationship with Leelaben and had another daughter called Alisha. He also sexually assaults the wife of the watchman Bahadur Singh. Valentina. A in her article “Sufferings of Women in the Patriarchal Society: A study of Shobha De’s Sisters” discusses how the two sisters Mikki and Alisha’s lives were dominated in the society where women have either struggle or adjust with the unjust society. But they are not ready to follow the conventional norms which decides their fate. In portraying the characters, Shobha De explores the psyche of female protagonists who wants to lead independent life. De tried her best to expose the moral and spiritual degradation of modern urban society in which women long for love and pleasure and wants to fly freely with freedom. Mikki in accepting Binny Malhotra, easily says break up to Navin even after their engagement without any hesitation. Binny Malhotra, a married person abuses Mallika sexually and marry her for her assets. When Mallika talks about her pregnancy, he tells Mallika to arrange for abort the next day. Mikki fells prostate at her feet and begs him to show mercy at her that she wants to become a mother. But he orders her to get rid of her baby or else divorce. Then Mikki exclaims:

“I was too frightened when I heard that horrible word! Where would I go? I have nothing left to my name.” (pg.147)

Premlatha. M in her article “Treatment of Women in Shobha De’s Sisters” says, women live with men not because she has to but because she wants to. Shobha De is exploring the strong bond of relationships, she portrays how emotional connections, shared responsibilities and mutual support shape the character’s lives and influence their personal growth. Shobha De’s protagonists learn to accept life and takes hold of their destiny with courage and determination. Alisha develops an illicit relationship with Navin and also with Dr. Kurien. Sabindra Raj Bhandari talks about “Femaleness in Shobha De’s Sisters” as it portrays sex and gender as two different edges of the sword, highlighting how desire and societal roles often clash and shape the lives of the characters. The two sisters Mallika, and her half-sister Alisha visualize the real new woman hidden inside them. They escape from the dogmas framed by rigid societal norms and traditional expectations according to their self-determination and the courage to redefine their own identities. Sisters think life is to be embraced with freedom, not to be in chains and to be lived as they desire and demand equality with that of men. This transformation reveals the voyage from the femaleness to femininity. By above all instances De wants to tell us that the people are really losing moral values day by day without any sense of feeling lost. Moral degradation is clearly depicted through these characters with that of changing values.

Alisha, the half-sister of Mikki, is envious about her sister, Mallika and wants to tease in the public when she becomes aware of her equal right to her father’s fortune and wealth and wants to take revenge on Mikki for being a sole heir to Hiralal Industries. Mikki, after realizing her relation with Alisha, makes efforts to strengthen and deepen their relationship with at most care. Mikki wants Alisha to be co-chairperson to Hiralal Industries as Alisha has as much right as she has to Papa’s legacy. Mikki makes clear to Ramankaka about Alisha as:

“What I do want to do is to make her feel loved and wanted. One of the family. I owe her that much. That girl has suffered more than anyone will ever know. I can see the hurt and pain so clearly I want to make up for it.” (pg. 220)

Mikki is ready to sacrifice everything for her sister, Alisha to sustain the blood relationship with her. The above instance shows the kindness and responsibility towards Alisha reflects Mikki’s compassionate nature and highlights her ability to value sisterhood relationship beyond personal differences. Here obviously ethical sense of Mikki guides her actions and enables her to uphold human values while nurturing genuine relationships over wealth and fame. Shobha De, in this context explores the significance of blood relationship with remarkable sensitivity and depth. Shobha De yearns to preserve the sanctity of human values and relationships against the pressures of a fast-changing society. Shobha De effectively illustrates that an individual must respond in alignment with their inner voice and moral consciousness, as this alone ensures a life of integrity and meaningful choices.

Mikki comes to know the secret behind the deaths of her parents and Binny when Ramamkaka himself reveals the truth behind their deaths. His evil plan behind everything is to manipulate situations which are driven by greed and power, leaving behind a trail of broken trust and shattered relationships and disregarding moral ethical values. He also explains how he has utilized the services and innocence of Bahadur, the watchman who has personal grudge on Hiralal for abusing his wife. Shanay, at the end of

the novel rescues Mikki from Ramankaka's clutches and emerges as a true hero. It is very clear that Shobha De exhibits remarkable skill in weaving suspense throughout the novel.

CONCLUSION:

Man knowing the significance of human relationships learned to build bonds between one another and many systems evolved which made man more organized, responsible, and social conscious. Over the period of time, these relationships gradually deteriorating in this fast-moving world due to excessive materialism, self-centred attitudes and the erosion of moral values. Shobha De explores the importance of attachments and human bonds in leading peaceful and meaningful life which helps in prospering the lives of individuals as well as strengthening the fabric of society. No relationship survives in front of this overwhelming dominance of ego, greed and lack of trust. Everyone becomes a scape goat in the struggle for power, wealth and personal fulfilment. De clarifies the consequences of broken trust and fading bonds leave scars on both individuals and society.

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Gender and Identity Politics: An Analysis of R. Rajasree's *Athreyakam*

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Abstract: *The performance of one's gender often becomes detrimental at moments like ascension of throne. Heteronormativity decide the ideal and the abject. In a patriarchal society, a person's value is decided not by his character/behaviour but by his sexual affiliation. A male heir is the ideal, even a female heir will do, provided she can marry a powerful prince (a male heir of another nation). But if a king has a progeny whose gender identity cannot be determined using 'normal' parameters naturally that person has very low prospects. The fact needs to be hidden as it may affect not only the nation's security but also its image before other nations. R. Rajasree's Athreyakam raises a number of questions which address the concepts of gender and identity.*

Key Words: *Heteronormativity, Gender performance, Ideal, Abject, Identity.*

INTRODUCTION:

Rewritings of Indian epics, the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* have been attempted by many authors. Most of them retell the familiar stories along with questioning the stereotypical representation of characters on the basis of different aspects of their identities- race, class, gender, sex, regionality and so on. The societies depicted in the myths and other stories often follow strict gender roles and norms which deny the characters agency and a space for themselves. The story of Shikhandin, reincarnation of Amba, who took a second birth only to avenge Bhishma of Hasthinapura is a familiar myth. In the usual story Shikhandin's sex is non determinate. He is neither man nor woman. The gender conflicts are not explicitly described in the story. When Bhishma took Amba, Ambika and Ambalika as wives of Chitrangada, the heir to the throne of Hasthinapura, Amba disclosed her affection for the King Salwa to Bhishma boldly. Bhishma allowed her to go to the King Salwa, but he rejected her as she had been already in the hands of Bhishma. Amba went back to Bhishma but he turned her away. She requested Parasurama to fight Bhishma. But the duel ended without anybody winning. Finally, praying for a second birth she jumped into fire. Her new life got satiated when she caused the death of Bhishma at Kurukshetra in the war between Kauravas and Pandavas.

There have been many retellings of these stories and much research have been done on the narrative aspects, linguistic nuances, character portrayals and thematic analysis of these rewritings. R. Rajasree's *Athreyakam*, a recently published work in Malayalam stands different in its approach and much critical studies have not been done on *Athreyakam*. *Athreyakam* describes the political, cultural and social lives of nations like Panchalam, Dasharnnam and Hasthinapuram. *Athreyakam* is a border state of Panchalam. Most of the incidents in this novel happen at Panchalam and *Athreyakam*. The geographical location of *Athreyakam* plays an important role in the novel. The Prince of Panchalam, Niramithran is said to lack 'princely' qualities. He is not a man of arms; his sexual affiliation is problematic. He is soft spoken, feminine in his appearance, known for his kindness and concern for others. His father King Drupadan does not consider him as an ideal heir to the state. He is suspicious of the future of Panchalam in the hand of Niramithran. To snub the evil propaganda by other nations, he plans for a marital alliance between the Princess of Dasharnnam and Niramithran. The way the prince

is protected and accompanied for the marriage ceremony and the stories that had spread about Niramithran make King of Dasharnnam apprehensive. After marriage when the Princess sleeps with Niramithran she shockingly realises the 'abnormality' of Niramithran's body and calls off the marriage furiously. Once Niramithran is back in the Palace at Panchalam Drupadan reacts quite violently. As a punishment to the prince, he demonstrates the act of intercourse with the queen in front of their son. Niramithran loses all his control and leaves Panchalam. He takes refuge in Athreyakam. Instead of proving his manliness, the marriage with the Princess of Dasharnnam, confirms Niramithran's non confirmed gender identity.

Niramithran is shunned by his father. But his mother always stands up to him and loves him deeply for what he is. She is able to understand all the mental conflicts and tortures that he undergoes each day. But as a woman and an unwanted wife she cannot intervene much in the matters of the state. Niramithran's half-brother Drushtadyumnan, takes up the role as the successor of King Drupadan. He is more aggressive and able to dominate even the King. Soon he takes everything under his control. He does not like Niramithran's presence in Panchalam. Krishna, Niramithran's half-sister is a woman of understanding. She has genuine concern for the queen and Niramithran. She respects him and is happy to have him around. She feels quite comfortable in his presence.

In a society in which heterosexuality is the norm, the state of Niramithran is naturally seen as an abnormality which needs to get corrected. Gender can either be masculine or feminine, one cannot be both or none. One needs to fit into either of the normal states. Niramithran fights with his body. He tries much to fit in. He cannot explain or understand the state which he is in. The novel dwells deep into the concepts of body. What all changes a body undergoes in moments of sexual gratification, how sexual pleasure stands separate from one's definition of gender, sex and sexuality. How each of these can be performed by individuals and judged by the society is a crucial point which the novel raises to the readers. The geographical space of Athreyakam represents the indeterminacies of gender identities. Athreyakam being a border state, has the characteristics of the nations on different sides of it. It can be considered as a no man's land, a space owned by none. It is a medicinal village, burial land/ancestral land, training centre for arms, all at the same time. It determines the destiny of the nations around it. Athreyakam has a heterogenous population. No one in Athreyakam enquires about the whereabouts of others. They accept outsiders readily without questions. The inclusive ideology of Athreyakam is embodied in characters like Ila who without bias gives medicinal treatment to the needy. Athreyakam offers refuge for many who are marginalised and oppressed by the main stream society, like the Nagas.

Niramithran selects Athreyakam as a hide out. Initially he finds himself in the hands of strangers whom he expects to torture him with questions. But contrary to that none asks him about his identity or origin. They are comfortable with his anonymity. Niramithran slowly sheds away his guard and mingles freely with the people of Athreyakam. He becomes one among them. Soon he is sought out by the King's people. They had to prepare him for the next test. Ila and his father are asked to give the prince a treatment which would make him appear as a man. His body has to bear the proof that he is a man. The body had to be passed out as a man's body. What the body feels about sex or sexuality is not a question. To make the body normal he had to have something like a sexual reassignment treatment. Does the implantation of a genital organ bring manliness to a person? Are sex, gender and sexuality identities which one can swap with another? These are some of the questions which the novel raises.

Niramithran's body identifies with Athreyakam. He finds himself as a site of different conflicts, identity crisis and to a certain extent a political body. The future of his nation, Panchalam's destiny will be determined by the state of his body. It had to be perfect; it had to be that of a man. The state of his body will decide whether Drupada will continue as a king. The subjects are anxious to confirm that their prince is a man with a man's body. The King of Dasharnnam will test the body of the prince to confirm whether the accusation of the princess is correct or not. The destiny of Dasharnnam itself will be determined by the test of Niramithran's body. The individuality of Niramithran is discussed nowhere by the two kingdoms. Whether he is a good man, whether he will love the princess, whether he will be a kind King in the future, all these are matters of secondary importance. The priority is given to the body of the prince. His identity seems to reside only in his body, his sexual organs.

Once he passes the test, he feels that his body has regained its anonymity, its indeterminacy. Outside the storms of his body's imperfections, he is able to think clearly and act appropriately. It is he

who protects the King of Dasharnnam from an imminent loss of power. He convinces Drupada to send the King of Dasharnnam without hurting him in any manner. Though he passes out the test victoriously he knows that his place is neither in Panchalam nor in Dasharnnam. He was just a political tool in the hands of either of these kingdoms. His individuality will not be respected or not even accepted in either of these places. After the death of his mother, Niramithran cuts away all the ties with Panchalam and goes back to Athreyakam where he begins to give training in arms. He finds himself to have grown to like arms.

When the Pandavas select the forests of Athreyakam to build their new capital city, Niramithran realises the danger of such a decision. When a group of soldiers try to conquer the people of Athreyakam, Niramithran fights along with the people of Athreyakam. With Pandavas' arrival the danger emerges again. The dense forest which is an abode of lots of animals and birds, a place of natures plenty, will be wiped out with the emerging city. Niramithran interferes.

Women characters of Athreyakam, Krishna, Ila, the Queen of Panchala, Harini, princess of Dasharnnam all find themselves as mere pawns in the hands of the male family members. Marital alliances are just political treaties between nations. Individual perspectives, love for one another, all these are immaterial in front of the best interests of the nation. In the case of the princess of Dasharnnam, her opinion about Niramithran did not matter, whether she wanted him as her husband is not a question at all. If Niramithran is proved to be a male in the test done by the king of Dasharnnam, the princess of Dasharnnam should ask for forgiveness. Krishna's marriage is said to be a swayamvaram, but Drushtadyumna keeps a contest without giving any notice to the invited kings and princes. A prince who can win in the contest can marry Krishna. The contest can be won only by Arjunan, one of the Pandavas, a powerful alliance for Panchalam. When Karnnan an expert in arms like Arjunan is about to participate in the contest Drushtadyumna forces Krishna to tell publicly that she will not marry Karnnan who is a Soothan, a low caste. When it turns out that Krishna has to marry all the five Pandavas and not Arjuna alone, again she had no other choice but to accept her destiny silently.

Ila is different from other women characters of the novel. She is independent, has her own opinion. She is actively involved in medicinal treatment along with her father Choodakan. She is respected and loved by the people of Athreyakam. She is kind and has great concern for Niramithran. She never upsets him with unnecessary questions. She is ready to give treatment to any needy person. But when she is called to the palace of Panchalam to attend the princess Krishna she loses her agency. From then on she is seen as an Adivasi woman, an 'other'. The position of a respectable woman which enjoyed in Athreyakam is lost to her once she enters the city of Panchalam. She is asked to prepare some medicines which will keep Krishna a virgin throughout her marital life. A woman's body is not hers but it is just an object to please the men she marries.

Indeterminacy is embodied in the structure of the novel. Like the *Mahabharatha*, there are stories within stories entwined into the body of the novel. The novel begins with the story of Janamejayan's curse by a dog. Such stories and dreams do not have any direct connection with the main plot. They appear often as reflections of the pain, fear, desires and dreams of the different characters. They explain the states of mind of the characters. They shock and disclose many secrets about the characters. These stories within the main plot have complicated symbols which make the reading of the novel an active process for the readers rather than a passive diversion. They explain the main plot and also create a parallel one.

Kathakalakshepa sangham, a group of story tellers hired by kings spread stories as per the orders of different kings. It is these groups that construct identities of different people and also build nation itself with their stories. Some histories are erased and some histories are newly written by these groups. The kathakalakshepa sangham of Panchalam make and spread stories about Niramithran's birth, marriage and his exile. Drushtadyumnan and Krishna become prince and princess of Panchalam using the stories of Kathakalakshepa sangham. According to the stories, they came out fire lit for a Yaga performed by king Drupadan, when actually they were the children of the King born to his favourite devadasi, Harini. Drushtadyumnan uses these story tellers to spread stories about the marriage of Krishna. Harini warns Krishna that stories are just stories, they are attractive traps, one need to be careful not to fall into them. The text also points at the intersectionality of the gender identities. When both Niramithran and his lover Vishakha have indeterminate gender their experiences and the conflicts

they have to face are quite different. Niramithran is a prince, though not an accepted one, he enjoys the privileges of being a royal family member. Vishakha is just an ordinary citizen and is mentally and physically tortured by all men in the palace. His body is seen as an object of pleasure. What he must have felt as a human is not a concern for any one in the palace. Everyone in the palace wanted Vishakha to keep away from the prince because they believed that it is people like Vishakha who make Niramithran behave in strange ways. Niramithran fails to befriend Vishakha as he was too immersed in his own troubles. He almost forgets Vishakha. When they meet again during the test to prove Niramithran's manliness, Vishakha reprimands the prince for his lack of fidelity. But Vishakha does not show his grudge. He proves to be a true friend when he attests to the manliness of the prince Niramithran, thus saving both the prince and the state of Panchalam. But Vishakha is again forgotten after that. The text tries to say that it is not gender alone that determines one's destiny but class, race, regionality all need to be considered. The conflict between the city and forest, urban and rural, Panchalam and Athreyakam, also adds to the process of constructing gender identities. It is the forest who protects and give refuge to the prince of Panchala. It is this forest which transforms him and helps him to find himself. He gets peace and is not troubled with questions about his gender performance when he is in Athreyakam. He is tortured and rejected by the city but he is accepted and protected by the forest.

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Cultural Influence on Advertising and Consumer Behaviour of Women: A Comparative Study of Urban and Rural Settings

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Abstract: Cultural factors play a decisive role in shaping the buying behaviour of consumers by influencing their needs, values, preferences, and perceptions. These cultural aspects are both learned and observed within society and have a direct impact on not only individual choices but also the broader consumption structure. In the field of advertising, cultural background becomes a powerful filter through which messages are received, interpreted, and acted upon. Advertisements that reflect traditions, values, or modern aspirations often resonate differently with women in urban and rural contexts, making culture a key determinant in shaping consumer responses. This study explores the dual relationship between cultural influence and advertising, with a specific focus on women as consumers. The research aims to understand how cultural identity, emotional versus rational appeals, and varying media platforms affect women's purchasing behaviour in distinct cultural settings. A structured survey method was employed to collect primary data from women respondents. The questionnaire was designed with close-ended questions, including Likert scale items, to capture measurable and comparable responses. This approach ensures clarity and allows for systematic analysis of differences between urban and rural consumer groups. The findings of this research are expected to provide significant insights into the interaction of culture and advertising in influencing women's consumer behaviour. By highlighting how urban and rural women perceive and respond to advertisements differently, the study underscores the importance of designing culturally sensitive and contextually relevant advertising campaigns. The results will be useful for marketers, advertisers, and media professionals seeking to create strategies that effectively align with cultural realities while addressing women's diverse consumer preferences.

Keywords: Cultural Influence, Advertising, Consumer Behaviour, Women, Urban and Rural

INTRODUCTION

Consumer behaviour has long been a central theme in marketing and communication studies, as it reflects how individuals and groups make purchasing decisions. Among the many forces that guide consumer choices, culture stands out as one of the most significant. Culture shapes values, beliefs, and preferences, which in turn influence how consumers perceive brands and decide what to buy. Women, who play a key role in household consumption, are particularly influenced by cultural values in not only what they purchase but also in how they interpret advertising messages. Advertising serves as a bridge between marketers and consumers, but its effectiveness depends greatly on cultural alignment. Urban advertisements often highlight modern lifestyles, individuality, and convenience, while rural advertising emphasizes family values, traditions, and trust. With increasing exposure to television, print, and digital platforms, women's consumer behaviour today is shaped by both traditional influences and modern aspirations. This duality underscores the importance of examining how cultural factors intersect with advertising to shape women's buying decisions.

Consumer Behaviour:

Consumer behaviour can be defined as the study of how individuals, groups, or organizations select, use, and dispose of goods, services, or ideas. It involves understanding the processes before, during, and after purchasing decisions (Hawkins et al., 2004; Engel & Blackwell, 1982). The customer is often termed “king” because demand for any product depends largely on consumer decisions. These decisions are influenced by multiple factors—economic, social, cultural, educational, and environmental. Women’s consumer behaviour is especially important, as they are often primary decision-makers in household purchases. Their buying decisions extend beyond personal needs to family and community considerations, making them a critical focus for marketers.

Advertising and Its Role

Advertising is one of the most powerful tools of mass communication used to create awareness and stimulate demand for products and services. It involves persuasive communication through various media to inform and influence consumer choices (Cohen, 1988). Advertising plays a particularly strong role in promoting products whose qualities are not immediately visible and must be discovered through use (Schiffman, 1993).

By highlighting utility, trust, lifestyle, or identity, advertising shapes consumer perceptions and purchasing behaviour. Kotler and Keller (2006) emphasize that advertising works in tandem with personal selling, sales promotions, public relations, and digital strategies, making it an indispensable part of modern marketing.

Culture and Cultural Influence

Culture can be understood as the shared patterns of behaviour, language, values, and traditions that guide individuals in a society (Arnolds & Thompson, 2005; Hofstede, 2001). These cultural values are transmitted across generations, shaping perceptions, attitudes, and buying decisions (Luna & Gupta, 2001; de Mooij, 2010).

Cultural influence refers to the way collective ideas, values, practices, and customs affect individuals’ beliefs and behaviours (Sakkthivel et al., 2022). In today’s globalized and digital world, cultural exposure is not static—it evolves through cross-cultural interactions, media, and technology. This makes consumer behaviour increasingly dynamic, blending traditional values with global influences (Patel et al., 2020; Chwialkowska et al., 2020).

Cultural Factors Affecting Women’s Consumer Behaviour

Several cultural factors influence women’s buying behaviour, particularly in diverse societies such as India:

Cultural Factor	Influence on Women’s Consumer Behaviour	Reference
Social Class	Higher classes show greater purchasing power and stronger preference for branded/premium products.	Dhaliwal et al., 2020
Religious Norms	Religious practices shape product choices such as food, clothing, and lifestyle items.	Chwialkowska et al., 2020
Wealth Distribution	Affluent groups spend more and are prime targets for premium brands.	Alshare et al.
Health & Business Practices	Health-conscious individuals choose products aligned with well-being; business stability boosts spending.	Vander et al., 2020
Basic Cultural	Respect for traditions and norms increases demand for culturally aligned products.	Zhang & Dong, 2020
Societal Needs & Wants	Family and community needs often take precedence over individual desires.	Chen & Antonelli, 2020
Preferences & Perceptions	Collective social perceptions guide buying patterns, especially in rural settings.	Singh et al., 2023

These cultural factors collectively demonstrate how women’s purchasing decisions are shaped by both individual values and broader social frameworks. While social class and wealth distribution affect affordability and brand orientation, religious norms and basic cultural values guide moral and traditional

preferences. At the same time, societal needs, perceptions, and health awareness play a decisive role in day-to-day consumption patterns. Together, these influences highlight that women's consumer behaviour in India is not only an economic act but also a reflection of cultural identity, social belonging, and lifestyle aspirations.

OBJECTIVES:

- To examine how cultural values influence women's consumer behaviour.
- To analyze the role of advertising in shaping purchasing decisions of women.
- To compare differences in consumer behaviour of women in urban and rural settings.
- To assess how cultural identity affects women's interpretation of advertising appeals.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The study was conducted in the Jalandhar district of Punjab to examine the cultural and advertising influences on women's consumer behaviour. A total of 200 women respondents were selected, with 100 from rural areas and 100 from urban areas, ensuring a balanced comparison. Data was collected through a structured questionnaire containing close-ended and Likert-scale questions based on the research objectives. For analysis, the simple percentage method was applied, as it allowed clear interpretation and comparison between rural and urban responses, thereby directly addressing the aims of the study.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Consumer behaviour has been widely examined through the lens of culture, advertising, and changing socio-economic conditions. **Luna and Gupta (2001)** developed an integrative framework for cross-cultural consumer behaviour, arguing that cultural values, as described in Hofstede's dimensions, strongly shape individual decision-making. Their work emphasizes the need for businesses to design culturally sensitive marketing strategies that resonate with local values and consumer identities.

Focusing on women, **Bin Junaid et al. (2013)** studied female buying behaviour of cosmetic products in New Delhi and NCR. They found that higher income among women increases their cosmetic purchases, with advertising playing a significant role in driving these expenses. This finding aligns with **Sharma (2009)**, who highlighted advertising as a key factor influencing consumer buying behaviour, alongside brand image, product quality, and company reputation.

Murugaiya and Vishwas (2008) explored women's shopping behaviour in Bangalore and observed that women increasingly act as primary decision-makers in household purchases. Their study revealed that demographic factors and evolving social roles make women important target groups for marketers. Similarly, **Singh (2014)** examined online shopping in India and argued that the success of e-retailers depends on affordability, brand image, and consumer trust. He noted that platforms such as Flipkart became popular by balancing price sensitivity with customer-friendly policies.

In a related study, **Aqsa and Risal (2015)** investigated the impact of online advertising on consumer attitudes in Makassar. Their findings indicated that although internet penetration and online advertisements have increased rapidly, online purchasing behaviour remains influenced by personal and cultural factors. This highlights the importance of tailoring online advertising strategies to consumers' cultural backgrounds and behavioural preferences.

Overall, these studies demonstrate that women's consumer behaviour is shaped by cultural identity, advertising appeals, and socio-economic conditions. However, few works provide a direct comparison of urban and rural women, leaving a gap that the present study seeks to address.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:

1. Which of the following factors most influences your buying decision?

Options	Urban	Rural	Total%
Family traditions	23	39	31%
Social norms	20	31	25.5%

Personal preferences	41	20	30.5%
Peer influence	16	10	13%
Total	100	100	100%

Table- 1

The results reveal that **family traditions (31%)** and **personal preferences (30.5%)** are almost equally important factors influencing women's purchase decisions. Rural women show a stronger inclination towards **family traditions (39%)** and **social norms (31%)**, underlining the role of collective culture and traditional values in rural consumption patterns. Urban women, however, emphasize **personal preferences (41%)**, reflecting a growing trend of individual choice and self-expression in urban consumer behavior. **Peer influence (13%)** remains the least impactful across both groups, suggesting that while social networks matter, they are secondary to cultural and personal considerations. Overall, the data underscores a cultural divide where **rural women are tradition-driven**, while **urban women are preference-driven** in their buying choices.

2. Cultural values strongly influence my choice of products.

Options	Urban	Rural	Total%
Strongly Agree	29	45	37%
Agree	36	31	33.5%
Neutral	18	14	16%
Disagree	11	6	8.6%
Strongly Disagree	6	4	5%
Total	100	100	100%

Table- 2

The majority of respondents either **strongly agree (37%)** or **agree (33.5%)** that cultural values play a decisive role in their product choices. Rural women demonstrate a higher cultural influence, with **45% strongly agreeing**, while urban women show slightly lower intensity at **29% strongly agreeing**. However, when combined, **65% of urban women (Strongly Agree + Agree)** still acknowledge cultural influence, proving that culture shapes decisions across both groups. Only **13.5% (Disagree + Strongly Disagree)** believe otherwise, which highlights that cultural values remain a powerful driver of consumer behavior. This pattern confirms that while modernization affects urban consumers, cultural identity continues to hold relevance in shaping women's buying decisions.

3. Which type of advertisement impacts your purchase decision the most?

Options	Urban	Rural	Total%
Television ads	22	48	35%
Print ads	15	25	20%
Social Media ads	45	15	30%
Outdoor ads	18	12	15%
Total	100	100	100%

Table- 3

The findings reveal clear differences in the impact of advertising channels across urban and rural women. **Television advertising (35%)** emerges as the most influential overall, with rural women (48%) relying heavily on it, reflecting its reach and credibility in non-urban areas. Urban women, however, show a strong preference for **social media ads (45%)**, underscoring the role of digital platforms in shaping modern consumer habits. Print ads (20%) and outdoor advertisements (15%) have moderate

but declining influence, especially among urban consumers. This contrast highlights the digital shift in urban areas and the continuing dominance of television in rural markets, suggesting advertisers must tailor strategies to media accessibility and cultural orientation.

4. Advertising plays a significant role in motivating me to buy new products.

Options	Urban	Rural	Total%
Strongly Agree	33	41	37%
Agree	37	32	34.5%
Neutral	15	13	14%
Disagree	11	8	9.5%
Strongly Disagree	4	6	5%
Total	100	100	100%

Table- 4

The data shows that a strong majority of women consider advertising to be an important motivator in their purchasing behavior. **Strongly Agree (37%)** and **Agree (34.5%)** together account for more than two-thirds of the total responses, highlighting advertising's continuing power to shape consumer choices. Rural women demonstrate a slightly stronger influence, with **41% strongly agreeing**, while **33% of urban women** hold the same view. This suggests that rural consumers are more directly persuaded by advertising messages, possibly due to fewer competing sources of information. Urban women also show high agreement overall, with **70% (Strongly Agree + Agree)** acknowledging advertising's role, though they express slightly more neutrality (15%) and disagreement (15%) compared to rural women (13% neutral, 14% disagree/strongly disagree combined). Overall, the findings confirm that advertising remains a central driver of purchase motivation across both settings, though it resonates more strongly in rural markets.

5. When making a purchase, which factor do you consider most important?

Options	Urban	Rural	Total%
Price	22	41	31.5%
Brand reputation	28	17	22.5%
Quality	40	29	34.5%
Availability	10	13	11.5%
Total	100	100	100%

Table- 5

The findings indicate that **quality** is the top priority for urban women (40%), whereas **price** dominates rural purchasing behavior (41%). This reflects the differing socio-economic realities of both groups. Urban women, with greater exposure to branded and premium products, prioritize long-term satisfaction and trust in quality over cost. On the other hand, rural women often make decisions based on affordability, underlining the role of budget constraints. Interestingly, **brand reputation** holds more value among urban consumers (28%) compared to rural (17%), suggesting stronger brand consciousness in cities. Availability plays a relatively minor role across both groups but slightly higher in rural areas (13%), possibly due to limited product accessibility in local markets. Overall, consumer

priorities diverge sharply between urban and rural women, emphasizing the need for marketers to adopt differentiated strategies.

6. Consumer behaviour patterns differ significantly between urban and rural women.

Options	Urban	Rural	Total%
Strongly Agree	32	39	35.5%
Agree	37	33	35%
Neutral	16	13	14.5%
Disagree	11	9	10%
Strongly Disagree	4	6	5%
Total	100	100	100%

Table- 6

The data highlights that a large majority of women acknowledge distinct differences in consumer behavior between urban and rural contexts. Together, **70.5% (Strongly Agree + Agree)** affirm these differences, making it a significant finding. Rural respondents show slightly stronger agreement (**39% strongly agree**) compared to urban respondents (**32% strongly agree**), indicating that women in rural areas are more conscious of their unique consumption habits compared to urban lifestyles. Urban women, while also largely agreeing (37% agree), display a slightly higher share of neutrality (**16%**) compared to rural (**13%**), reflecting that some urban consumers perceive overlaps in preferences due to globalization and media exposure. The small portion of disagreement (**15% combined**) suggests that a minority believes these differences are narrowing. Overall, the analysis confirms that **socio-cultural and economic conditions continue to create clear distinctions between rural and urban women's buying behaviors**, with rural women being more aware of these contrasts.

7. Which type of advertising appeal do you relate to most?

Options	Urban	Rural	Total%
Tradition and family values	24	41	32.5%
Modern lifestyle and individuality	33	18	25.5%
Emotional appeals	28	25	26.5%
Rational/Informational appeals	15	16	15.5%
Total	100	100	100%

Table- 7

The findings show clear contrasts in how women respond to advertising appeals. **Rural women strongly prefer tradition and family values (41%)**, reflecting the centrality of cultural identity and collective values in shaping their responses to advertisements. Urban women, however, show greater inclination toward **modern lifestyle and individuality (33%)**, pointing toward aspirations influenced by globalization, career goals, and self-expression. Emotional appeals resonate almost equally with both groups (28% urban, 25% rural), proving that emotions remain a universal driver in consumer behavior. Rational appeals (informational) attract a smaller segment overall, with slightly more rural women (16%) than urban (15%). These findings suggest that **cultural and lifestyle contexts deeply influence**

how women connect with advertising themes, making it crucial for marketers to adapt appeals based on the target audience.

8. Advertisements that reflect my cultural identity influence my buying decisions more strongly.

Options	Urban	Rural	Total%
Strongly Agree	31	43	37%
Agree	36	32	34%
Neutral	17	12	14.5%
Disagree	10	8	9%
Strongly Disagree	6	5	5.5%
Total	100	100	100%

Table- 8

A combined **71% (Strongly Agree + Agree)** of respondents believe that advertisements reflecting their cultural identity have a stronger impact on their buying decisions. Rural women show a stronger tilt (**43% strongly agree**) compared to urban women (**31% strongly agree**), highlighting that cultural relevance in advertising resonates more deeply in rural settings. Urban women, while still influenced (36% agree), show a greater degree of neutrality (17%) compared to rural women (12%), reflecting exposure to diverse advertising styles that may dilute cultural attachment. The small proportion of disagreement (**14.5% combined**) indicates that only a minority dismisses cultural identity as a key factor in advertising influence. Overall, the results confirm that **cultural alignment in advertising is a powerful tool for influencing women's consumer decisions, especially in rural markets where traditions remain central to daily life.**

DISCUSSION:

The findings of this study reaffirm the significant role of cultural values and advertising in shaping women's consumer behaviour, while also highlighting important differences between urban and rural contexts. The observation that rural women give higher importance to family traditions and price sensitivity, while urban women prioritise personal preferences and quality, supports the argument by **Luna and Gupta (2001)** that cultural background strongly influences decision-making processes. This suggests that consumption patterns are not merely economic choices but reflections of deeper cultural frameworks.

Advertising emerged as a key motivator for both groups, though the preferred channels and appeals varied. Rural women's stronger reliance on television advertisements aligns with **Murugaiya and Vishwas (2008)**, who noted the continuing importance of traditional media in shaping women's household purchasing decisions. Conversely, urban women's preference for social media advertising reflects the growing digital influence highlighted by **Aqsa and Risal (2015)**, who found that online advertisements shape attitudes even when actual transactions lag behind. These findings confirm that media exposure and accessibility play decisive roles in shaping consumer responses.

The study also shows that cultural identity enhances the persuasiveness of advertising appeals, particularly in rural settings where tradition and family values dominate. This resonates with the findings of **Sharma (2009)**, who argued that advertising effectiveness is strengthened when supported by factors such as brand trust and product credibility. It also echoes **Bin Junaid et al. (2013)**, who found that advertising plays a crucial role in shaping female purchasing patterns in urban markets, particularly in product categories such as cosmetics. By highlighting that emotional and cultural appeals resonate differently across groups, this study underscores the importance of tailoring advertising strategies to the cultural and socio-economic contexts of consumers.

Overall, the results not only support earlier research but also extend it by offering a comparative perspective between urban and rural women. They demonstrate that while cultural influence and

advertising remain central drivers of consumer behaviour, their impact is mediated by location, media exposure, and socio-economic realities. This suggests that marketers must move beyond uniform strategies and adopt context-specific approaches to effectively reach women consumers across diverse settings.

CONCLUSION :

This study demonstrates that women's consumer behaviour is shaped by the combined influence of cultural values and advertising, with clear contrasts between urban and rural contexts. Rural women are more tradition-driven and price-sensitive, while urban women emphasise individuality, quality, and lifestyle aspirations. Advertising remains a powerful motivator across both groups, but its impact is maximised when appeals reflect cultural identity and are delivered through the most accessible media platforms. The comparative findings highlight that a uniform marketing approach is unlikely to succeed. Instead, culturally sensitive and context-specific advertising strategies are essential for engaging women consumers effectively. For rural markets, campaigns should emphasise affordability, family values, and tradition-based appeals, particularly through television. For urban markets, strategies should focus on quality, modernity, and digital engagement. In conclusion, women's purchasing decisions are not simply economic acts but reflections of cultural identity and media influence. Recognising these dynamics will help marketers and advertisers design campaigns that are both relevant and impactful, while also contributing to a broader understanding of consumer behaviour in diverse cultural settings.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE SCOPE:

While this study provides valuable insights into the cultural and advertising influences on women's consumer behaviour, certain limitations must be acknowledged. First, the research relied on a sample of 200 respondents from specific urban and rural settings, which may not fully capture the diversity of women's consumer behaviour across India. Second, the study employed the percentage method for data analysis, which provides clarity in comparison but does not allow for more advanced statistical testing. Third, the exclusive focus on female respondents offers depth in gender-specific behaviour but limits the scope for understanding broader household or male consumer dynamics. Future research can address these limitations by expanding the sample size to include multiple regions and socio-economic groups, thereby providing a more representative picture of consumer behaviour. Employing advanced statistical tools such as regression or factor analysis could yield deeper insights into the relationships between cultural values, advertising appeals, and purchasing decisions. Furthermore, comparative studies including male respondents or mixed-gender households could enrich the understanding of consumer decision-making dynamics. Exploring the role of emerging digital platforms and influencer marketing in shaping cultural identity and consumer behaviour may also provide fertile ground for future studies.

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Language Diversity in the Workplace: Managing Cross-Cultural Communication

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Abstract: Language variety is a fundamental attribute of the worldwide workplace, particularly in multicultural areas where individuals from various linguistic backgrounds engage everyday. This study examines the influence of linguistic diversity on cross-cultural communication in enterprises, specifically within workplaces in Ajmer and Beawar City. The study examines the challenges and opportunities presented by multilingual work environments and evaluates the tactics implemented by firms to improve communication efficacy and employee collaboration. This study employs both qualitative and quantitative methodologies to survey 150 employees and managers, aiming to collect insights into their communication experiences, perceptions of inclusivity, and organizational support systems. The findings reveal that although linguistic variety enhances workplace culture and innovation, it also presents challenges, including misunderstandings, marginalization, and diminished productivity when inadequately managed. The study emphasizes the necessity for linguistic training initiatives, inclusive communication strategies, and workshops on multicultural awareness. The study finishes with strategic ideas for managing language variety as an essential element of corporate success.

Key Words: Language Diversity, Workplace, Cross-Cultural, Communication.

INTRODUCTION:

In today's interconnected world, workplaces are increasingly composed of individuals from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. While this diversity fosters innovation, creativity, and global outreach, it also introduces significant communication challenges. Language, being a primary tool for interaction, becomes a potential barrier when employees lack a common linguistic ground. In India, where linguistic diversity is deeply entrenched, managing cross-cultural communication in professional settings is particularly relevant. This research investigates language diversity in the workplace and its impact on organizational communication, employee relationships, and operational efficiency. The study specifically focuses on organizations in Ajmer and Beawar, known for their socio-linguistic variety. It aims to assess awareness, challenges, and best practices related to multilingual communication. This paper contributes to the broader discourse on diversity management by proposing frameworks for integrating inclusive communication strategies within organizational structures, thereby ensuring better employee engagement, productivity, and workplace harmony.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

(Allwood & J., 2024) Allwood revises his core model of intercultural communication, highlighting cognitive, emotional, & behavioural adaptation in cross-cultural encounters, which are essential for workplace diversity.

(McLean, Capstick, & Passarini, 2023) The authors do a cross-cultural discourse study of

conservative rhetoric, demonstrating the variability of political identity building across cultures. (Adipat, 2023) This study discusses how linguistic diversity within "World Englishes" fosters or hinders intercultural communication and mutual understanding.

(Clark-Gareca & Gui, 2018) A comparative analysis of Chinese & American English educators uncovers cultural differences in curricular perspectives and teaching methodologies.

(Zhou, 2015) Zhou underscores the integration of intercultural awareness post teacher training to foster inclusive classrooms, applicable to both pre-service & in-service educators.

(Roberts, Cha, & Kim, 2014) This APA research examines how professionals who are black navigate their racial identity in workplace relationships, frequently adjusting their communication patterns for acceptability.

(Gai, 2014) Gai advocates for student autonomy to enhance intercultural competency, particularly within language education contexts.

(Hurn & Tomalin, 2013) The book presents essential researchers and frameworks within cross-cultural communication, beneficial for academic basis and practical training.

(Hurn & Tomalin, What Is Cross-Cultural Communication?, 2013) This chapter delineates cross-cultural communication and identifies fundamental characteristics such as context, non-verbal signals, or high/low power distance cultures.

(Guillot, 2012) This research assesses the influence of digital & cultural media on cross-cultural encounters and proposes novel empirical techniques.

(Mayer & Louw, 2012) This empirical study delineates negotiating styles and dispute resolution strategies in international workplaces.

(Kress, 2012) Kress reinterprets culture and communication via social semiotics, providing insight into the evolution of symbols and meanings among communities.

(Xu, 2011) Xu delineates fundamental principles in cross-cultural communication, encompassing obstacles such as prejudices and ethnocentrism.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To examine the perception of employees and managers towards language diversity in the workplace.
2. To analyze the impact of language diversity on communication effectiveness and team collaboration.
3. To identify strategies adopted by organizations to manage cross-cultural communication challenges.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES:

H0: Language diversity in the workplace does not significantly affect communication effectiveness and employee collaboration.

H1: Language diversity in the workplace significantly affects communication effectiveness and employee collaboration.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

- a. **Type of Research:** This is a descriptive and exploratory research study using mixed methods.
- b. **Population and Sample Size:** The study population includes employees and managers in private and public sector organizations in Ajmer and Beawar. A sample size of 150 respondents (120 employees and 30 managers) was selected using stratified random sampling.
- c. **Research Design:** A cross-sectional survey method was used, with questionnaires for quantitative data and semi-structured interviews for qualitative insights.
- d. **Functional and Geographical Scope:** The study focuses on organizational communication and diversity practices in offices located within Ajmer and Beawar City, Rajasthan. It includes public institutions, MNCs, and local enterprises.

Limitations of the Study:

- Limited to two geographic locations which may not represent national trends.

- Potential language barriers in survey responses.
- Depends on self-reported data, subject to response bias.
- Some organizations were reluctant to share internal communication data.

Data Collection: Primary data was collected through online and offline surveys and interviews conducted with selected employees and HR professionals. Secondary data was reviewed from academic journals and organizational reports.

DATA ANALYSIS:

Table 1: Perceptions of Language Diversity

Response Category	Employees (%)	Managers (%)
Positive and Inclusive	62%	70%
Neutral	28%	20%
Negative/Challenging	10%	10%

Interpretation: The majority of employees and managers view language diversity as a positive attribute. Managers show slightly higher acceptance, indicating a leadership inclination towards inclusion.

Table 2: Impact of Language Barriers on Team Collaboration

Barrier Observed	Percentage of Respondents
Miscommunication	54%
Team Inefficiency	42%
Social Exclusion of Employees	36%
Reduced Innovation	25%

Interpretation: Miscommunication is the most reported barrier, followed by inefficiencies and social exclusion, affirming the hypothesis that language diversity impacts communication and collaboration.

Table 3: Organizational Strategies to Manage Language Diversity

Strategy Adopted	Adoption Rate (%)
Language Training Programs	45%
Use of Translation Tools	40%
Encouragement of Common Language	60%
Multilingual Policy Manuals	38%

Interpretation: Most organizations promote a common working language (usually English), while language training and technology-based translation tools are also emerging as popular solutions.

FINDINGS::

- Most employees and managers have a positive perception of language diversity, viewing it as a strength.
- Language barriers contribute to miscommunication, decreased team efficiency, and occasional social isolation.
- The impact of language diversity is more pronounced in teams with high linguistic variation.
- Organizations that adopted language inclusion strategies reported improved team collaboration and employee satisfaction.
- Language training, translation tools, and multilingual documents are key interventions but not uniformly implemented.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Design and implement structured language diversity policies at the organizational level.

- Offer regular language and intercultural communication workshops.
- Encourage peer learning models where employees teach and learn local languages informally.
- Incorporate language inclusivity as a core HR and CSR objective.
- Invest in translation software and multilingual HR documents to reduce dependency on a single lingua franca.

CONCLUSION:

The study reveals that language diversity, while culturally enriching, requires conscious management to harness its benefits in the workplace. Without appropriate communication policies and support systems, linguistic barriers can hinder collaboration, reduce inclusivity, and impact organizational performance. However, organizations that actively manage language diversity through training, policy frameworks, and inclusive practices report improved teamwork and employee morale. As India's workplaces become more diverse and globally interconnected, managing language diversity becomes not just a necessity but a strategic advantage. Future research may explore longitudinal impacts of language policies or sector-specific communication models. The integration of cross-cultural communication management into mainstream HR practices is essential for a more harmonious and productive organizational environment.

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Differance and Deconstruction: Re-reading Canonical Texts through Derrida

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Abstract : *This paper examines how Jacques Derrida's twin concepts of differance and deconstruction enable a productive re-reading of canonical literary texts. Rather than offering a method for tearing texts down, deconstruction exposes the internal tensions, undecidable moments, and displaced signifiers that constitute textual meaning. Drawing on Derrida's key notions—differance, trace, supplement, iterability, and aporia—this study applies a deconstructive reading to three canonical works from different historical and generic contexts: Shakespeare's Hamlet, Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice, and Joseph Conrad's Heart of Darkness. These case studies demonstrate how deconstruction destabilizes received oppositions (presence/absence, mind/body, civilization/savagery) and reveals the limits and ethical possibilities of the canon. The conclusion considers pedagogical implications and argues that deconstructive reading preserves texts' complexity while challenging authoritative closures.*

Key- words: *difference, deconstruction, aporia, trace, iterability, etc,*

INTRODUCTION:

Canonical texts are often invoked as stable repositories of meaning, cultural authority, and aesthetic value. Yet the very claim to fixity that underwrites canonicity invites critical scrutiny: how does a text come to mean what it means, and who controls that meaning? Jacques Derrida's theory of deconstruction reframes such questions by showing that meaning is not a final presence to be recovered but a play of differences that constantly defers and displaces itself. Deconstruction does not simply negate meaning; it uncovers the structural conditions—binary oppositions, hierarchies, and metaphysical presuppositions—by which traditional readings produce their purported closure. Applying Derridean concepts to canonical literature opens interpretive space: it allows us to read for tensions, aporias, and traces that canonical criticism often overlooks or suppresses.

This paper proceeds in three parts. First, it outlines Derrida's core concepts relevant to literary reading. Second, it provides close readings of Hamlet, Pride and Prejudice, and Heart of Darkness, showing how deconstruction illuminates their internal instabilities. Third, it reflects on what these readings imply for the study and teaching of canonical texts.

Derrida's Key Concepts for Literary Reading:

At the heart of Derrida's thought are several interrelated concepts that transform how we approach texts. Differance, coined by Derrida to play on the dual meanings of differer—to differ and to defer—differance names the process by which meaning emerges through difference and delay rather than instantaneous presence. A sign's meaning is constituted by its difference from other signs and by a temporality in which meaning is never fully present but always postponed to further signs and contexts.

Deconstruction, often misunderstood as mere destruction, deconstruction is an analytic strategy that reads texts to show how they undermine their own claims to coherence. Deconstruction identifies

binary oppositions (e.g., speech/writing, presence/absence) and interrogates the hierarchy that privileges one term over the other. It traces how the subordinated term returns to complicate and destabilize the favored pole.

Iterability and the Performative Problem, Derrida stresses that signs must be repeatable—iterable—outside their original context, producing effects that can differ from original intentions. Iterability undermines authorial mastery because once utterances circulate, they acquire a force and life beyond intent. Aporia denotes an impasse or undecidable moment wherein language cannot settle on a single meaning without contradicting itself. Such moments are not failures but openings through which we recognize the limits of interpretive systems. Together, these concepts shift attention from stable meanings to the play of differences, absences, and returns within a text—precisely the economy by which canonical readings claim authority.

Case Study I: Hamlet — Presence, Absence, and the Deferment of Meaning:

Shakespeare's *Hamlet* has traditionally been read through the lens of psychological interiority, moral irresolution, and the struggle between action and contemplation. A deconstructive reading, however, foregrounds how the play repeatedly stages the instability of presence.

Consider the famous soliloquy "To be, or not to be." On the surface, this appears to pose a binary between existence and nonexistence. Yet the formulation already signals difference: the verb "to be" is not self-identical because its sense is produced in relation to the not-to-be. The very grammar of the question links being to its negation. Moreover, the soliloquy circulates through metaphors—sleep, dreams, conscience—that defer a final meaning. Each metaphor points beyond itself and cannot secure a presence immune to absent referents (death, the unknown afterlife). The awaited "consummation" of meaning (action, death) remains perpetually postponed.

Derrida's notion of the trace illuminates Hamlet's ghost. The ghost is a spectral presence that signals an absence (the uncertain truth of the past) and calls for a response that language cannot definitively provide. When Hamlet attempts to "speak daggers" and later stages the mousetrap play to catch the conscience of the king, he relies on representational strategies that always risk being misread or unreadable. The mourning rituals, the play within the play, and Hamlet's elisions expose a deeper aporia: the impossibility of fully establishing truth through signification.

Furthermore, authorial authority—what a traditional reading might attribute to Shakespeare's authorial intent—is complicated by iterability. Hamlet's speeches travel beyond historical context and have been performed, recited, and cited in countless settings, generating meanings that diverge from any original intention. Deconstruction thus resituates the critic's aim: not to pin down Hamlet's "true" psychology but to trace the play's internal dissonances and how its language defers presence.

Case Study II: Pride and Prejudice — Binary Oppositions and the Supplement of Marriage

Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* often appears as a novel of manners with a clear moral arc: pride yields to humility, prejudice to understanding, and the social order is stabilized through marriage. A deconstructive reading complicates this teleology by interrogating the binaries and the textual mechanisms that shore up social norms.

The novel's central opposition—pride versus prejudice—functions not as a neat contrast but as terms that mutually constitute and displace one another. Elizabeth's "pride" is legible only in relation to the "prejudice" of others and vice versa. Their identities are not fixed; they shift across scenes in which language, social performance, and irony work to produce ambiguity. For example, Darcy's first proposal exposes the instability of social signifiers: his declaration both asserts superiority and betrays insecurity; Elizabeth's refusal both resists social pressure and reveals misrecognition.

Derrida's supplement is a useful concept for reading marriage in the novel. Marriage operates as that "extra" institution that ostensibly completes the social order—an addition that remedies social lack by joining property, reputation, and lineage. Yet Austen's narrative irony reveals marriage's capacity to disrupt what it is supposed to repair. Marriages in the novel (Charlotte Lucas's pragmatic match, Lydia's reckless elopement, Elizabeth's eventual union) mark social anxieties and unintended consequences. The "supplementary" institution of marriage thus both secures and unsettles social meanings.

A further deconstructive move attends to narrative voice. Austen's free indirect discourse—where narrator and character blend—introduces iterability of judgment: narrative “voice” is not a singular authority but a polyphony where irony complicates authoritative moralization. The canonical reading that positions Austen as moralist must contend with the text's own strategies that undermine fixed moral certainties.

Case Study III: Heart of Darkness — Civilization, Savagery, and the Ethics of the Trace:

Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* is canonized as a profound interrogation of imperialism and human darkness. Close readings often center on Kurtz as the embodiment of the European id. Derridean deconstruction, however, directs attention to structural oppositions—civilization/savagery, light/dark—and to the textual means by which these binaries are constructed and undone.

The novella's rhetoric repeatedly reverses the valorized terms: “civilization” is associated with brutal economic exploitation, while “darkness” becomes an index of regimes of knowledge that European discourse excludes. Kurtz's final cry, “The horror! The horror!” resists hermeneutic closure; it functions as an aporetic utterance that exceeds interpretation. Derrida's concept of the trace helps us read Kurtz as both presence and absence—an absent referent whose imagined authority haunts other characters' speech. Kurtz's “work” is legible only through traces, reports, and secondhand narrations (Marlow's retelling), which problematize the possibility of a singular truth.

Iterability is central to *Heart of Darkness* because colonial discourse depends on repeatable tropes that travel across imperial networks—reports, logs, and testimonies—that authorize domination. Yet the novella foregrounds the failure of such discourses to capture ethical complexity. Marlow's narrative is self-conscious about its limits and about the difficulty of naming or representing the colonized other. The text's form—frame narrative, irony, and suppressed scenes—performs deconstructive gestures by showing how language bends under the weight of what it seeks to designate.

Conrad's work thus becomes a site where deconstruction's ethical dimension appears most starkly: to deconstruct is not simply to reveal the violence of meanings but to register the responsibility of representation. Reading *Heart of Darkness* deconstructively obliges us to ask what the canon excludes and to recognize the messiness of ethical judgment amid asymmetrical power.

Discussion: Deconstruction, Canon, and Pedagogy:

The three readings above demonstrate common deconstructive moves: destabilizing oppositions, tracing absences and supplements, and recognizing the iterability of language beyond authorial intent. Applied to canonical texts, deconstruction does not dethrone them; rather, it complicates their authority by exposing the textual logics that sustain canonical status.

Pedagogically, deconstruction offers several benefits. First, it cultivates close reading habits: attention to slips, aporias, and rhetorical peculiarities that other methods might dismiss as incidental. Second, it encourages students to approach texts as dynamic sites of signification rather than static monuments; this fosters interpretive humility and openness. Third, deconstruction equips readers to interrogate how the canon has been constructed through exclusions and hierarchies—an ethical as well as intellectual task.

Critics sometimes fear that deconstruction leads to nihilism or relativism. This misreading overlooks that deconstruction foregrounds responsibility: by showing how meanings are contingent and historically produced, it invites critical reflection and ethical engagement rather than collapse into meaninglessness. Deconstructively reading can thus be conservative in preserving textual complexity and radical in questioning institutional authority.

CONCLUSION:

Reading canonical texts through Derrida's differance and deconstruction transforms how we understand meaning, authority, and interpretation. Through the examples of *Hamlet*, *Pride and Prejudice*, and *Heart of Darkness*, we saw how deconstructive attention to trace, supplement, iterability, and aporia reveals tensions within texts that canonical criticism often normalizes. Far from annihilating literary value, deconstruction revitalizes it: texts become sites of ongoing negotiation, ethical inquiry,

and interpretive labor. For critics and teachers alike, deconstructive reading is a practice of attentiveness that preserves the complexity of the literary while resisting the seduction of simplistic closures.

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Representation Of Rajasthani Women in Contemporary Indian Cinema: A Case Study Of Jaipur Filmmakers

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Abstract: *The portrayal of women in cinema plays a pivotal role in shaping societal attitudes, reinforcing or challenging stereotypes, and reflecting cultural transitions. This study investigates the representation of Rajasthani women in contemporary Indian cinema with a focused case study of filmmakers based in Jaipur. Drawing from regional, national, and independent cinematic productions, the research aims to explore how Rajasthani women are depicted—whether through traditional, progressive, or hybrid lenses—and how local filmmakers contribute to this narrative. The study evaluates thematic patterns, visual language, character development, and narrative significance in films either produced in or influenced by Rajasthan's socio-cultural landscape. Using a qualitative methodology grounded in content analysis, complemented by interviews with ten Jaipur-based filmmakers and critics, the study reveals a complex interplay of cultural pride, patriarchal persistence, and emerging feminist consciousness. While mainstream cinema often romanticizes or exoticizes Rajasthani women, local filmmakers are increasingly challenging these portrayals by presenting them as agents of change, resistance, and empowerment. The findings underscore the need for a balanced representation that acknowledges tradition while embracing evolving gender roles. This research contributes to gender and media studies, offering critical insights for filmmakers, academicians, and policy advocates interested in the intersection of regional identity, gender, and cinematic expression.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

Indian cinema has always reflected societal values, influenced narratives, and preserved cultural memory. Within this cinematic context, the depiction of women frequently fluctuates between objectification or empowerment, particularly in both local and mainstream interpretations. Rajasthan, a state abundant in legacy and culture, has often been depicted in Indian movies for its picturesque landscapes and regal stories. Nonetheless, the depiction like Rajasthani women in these movies frequently conforms to tropes of subservience, beauty, & enigma. In recent years, a new cohort of regional filmmakers, especially from Jaipur, has commenced the exploration of alternate narratives. These filmmakers, via documentaries, short films, & indie cinema, are offering nuanced portrayals of Rajasthani women—individuals who aren't merely ornamental nor subjugated, but who navigate intricate socio-cultural circumstances with agency and fortitude. This study seeks to examine the representation of Rajasthani women in modern Indian cinema, specifically in works directed either produced by filmmakers from Jaipur. It examines how these representations either conform to or challenge conventional gender roles and their contribution to the broader dialogue on gender & regional identity within Indian cinema. This research connects regional film production with gender studies in a culturally vibrant but historically limited environment.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

(Jyotasana, 2024) This review reflects on Dhananjay Rai's exploration of how Dalit identity is framed in mainstream Hindi cinema, examining the nuanced exclusion and symbolic violence embedded within popular narratives. The reviewer emphasizes the book's contribution to

understanding cinema as both a site of representation and a battleground for cultural legitimacy, situating Dalit discourse within the broader public sphere.

(Raj, 2024) This study investigates the representational politics of the Indian Emergency (1975–77) as depicted in Malayalam cinema, exposing how censorship and state apparatuses shaped cinematic memory and resistance. The analysis highlights how filmmakers subtly encoded dissent and fostered political consciousness through symbolic storytelling.

(Sharma, 2024) article delves into the depiction of intimate partner violence (IPV) in modern Indian films, arguing that cinema is increasingly portraying IPV with greater psychological depth and realism. The study critiques both the normalization of patriarchal control and the evolving narrative space that allows female protagonists to reclaim agency.

(Balade & Ranganathan, 2024) This paper explores the evolution of anti-caste narratives in Marathi cinema, identifying a shift from symbolic representations to more assertive and activist portrayals. The authors underscore regional cinema's role in fostering resistance against caste hegemony and offering platforms for Dalit assertion.

(Banerjee, 2024) critically examines the construction of masculinity in "Gangs of Wasseyapur," linking it to a broader shift in Bombay cinema's engagement with violence and male identity. The paper highlights how the film blends hypermasculinity with vulnerability, reshaping the cinematic archetype of male dominance.

(Pathare, 2024) presents an analytical framework for understanding how regional Indian films engage with human rights issues, from gender violence to state repression. The chapter emphasizes the intersection of local narratives with global justice concerns, making regional cinema a key agent of socio-political commentary.

(Pathare, 2024) This is a duplicate citation of the previous entry and has been noted for bibliographic correction.

(Bandaranayake, 2024) work reflects on female directorial voices in Sri Lankan cinema, particularly those working outside institutional structures. The article interrogates how these women filmmakers challenge male-dominated narratives and introduce stories rooted in gender, class, and post-war recovery.

(Wei, 2024) This review outlines the contributions of female directors in the Sinophone cinematic sphere, analyzing the layered intersections of nation, diaspora, and gender politics. It underscores the marginal yet powerful presence of women navigating censorship, global markets, and creative autonomy.

(Singh & Singh, 2024) This chapter examines the disparity between onscreen portrayals of women and their real-life socio-political contexts. The authors argue that cinema remains a double-edged sword—both reflecting regressive stereotypes and offering transformative narratives that question patriarchy and empower women.

(Risner, 2023) examines the unique aesthetics and political discourse of women-led horror cinema in Argentina, specifically through Crudo Films. The chapter underscores how women filmmakers reframe horror as a feminist genre, turning traditional victim tropes into narratives of empowerment, rebellion, and bodily autonomy.

(Johnston, 2023) This historical study highlights the erasure and resurgence of women's contributions to amateur cinema in 1960s Britain. Johnston reveals how trade press coverage both marginalized and, at times, celebrated women's creative labor, opening a discussion on institutional visibility and the gendering of amateur filmmaking.

(Selimović, 2023) offers a poetic reflection on "cinematic disobedience," drawing connections between aesthetics, politics, and gender resistance in contemporary Latin American cinema. The epilogue positions women's filmmaking as an act of defiance against dominant narrative structures and institutionalized patriarchy.

(Pandya, 2023) study critiques the stereotypical and exoticized portrayal of Rajasthani culture in Hindi cinema. While acknowledging cinematic exposure of regional heritage, the research cautions against reductive visuals that mask the social complexities of caste, gender, and modernity in Rajasthan.

(Vohnsen & Mourenza, 2023) This introduction lays the groundwork for a larger study on

Argentine women filmmakers, positioning them as innovators challenging patriarchal production models. The authors highlight how these women use experimental form, intersectional narratives, and collaborative authorship to reshape Latin American cinematic discourse.

(Rocha, 2023) investigates the work of María Victoria Menis, emphasizing her "counter-cinema" approach that centers marginalized female experiences. Her films challenge dominant gender ideologies through layered character development, poetic realism, and themes of social invisibility, particularly of women on society's margins.

(Benjamin & Pillai, 2023) This chapter positions Mira Nair as a significant voice in postcolonial feminist cinema. Analyzing films like *Monsoon Wedding* and *The Namesake*, the authors argue that Nair reclaims the "spectacle" for subaltern representation, blending global appeal with subtextual critiques of patriarchy, diaspora, and cultural hybridity.

(Moral & Mathez, 2023) This analysis of Wohlatz's *El futuro perfecto* explores how the film redefines migrant identity through a feminist and anti-colonial lens. The authors invoke bell hooks' theory of the oppositional gaze to argue that the protagonist's visual and narrative journey resists stereotypical immigrant portrayals.

(Kim, 2023) discusses democratization of cinema in post-war Korea, focusing on underground and bootleg networks as radical spaces of resistance and creative expression. Although gender is not central, the study's implications for marginalized voices—including female filmmakers—highlight structural inequalities in access to cinematic production.

(Viswamohan, 2023) This work catalogs and critically engages with the trajectory of women filmmakers in Hindi cinema, celebrating their diverse thematic concerns—from gender-based violence to queer identity. Viswamohan emphasizes how these filmmakers disrupt Bollywood's male gaze by forging feminist cinematic vocabularies.

(Arya, 2023) study delves into the portrayal of lesbian characters in Indian and international LGBTQ cinema. The paper critiques the limited visibility, often stereotyped or tokenized, and highlights a need for nuanced representation. It applauds select films that challenge heteronormativity and present authentic queer narratives centered on female intimacy and identity.

(Draper, 2022) examines representations of motherhood in Brazilian cinema, interpreting them through the lens of kinship and resistance. Women's roles as caregivers are reimagined beyond biology, embracing themes of chosen family, queer motherhood, and social solidarity. The chapter emphasizes cinema's power to reconceptualize kinship norms.

(Sen, 2022) presents a critical overview of the socio-political evolution of Bengali cinema, with particular attention to its feminist and subaltern narratives. The paper notes how contemporary filmmakers engage with gender, labor, and urban-rural binaries, offering spaces for female subjectivity and non-mainstream identities.

(Huwiler, 2022) This article reclaims the overlooked contributions of women in early and mid-20th century American cinema. Huwiler highlights the institutional marginalization and archival silence surrounding women's work, while showcasing select filmmakers who laid the groundwork for feminist cinematic practices well before the mainstream feminist film movement.

(Kumar, 2022) analyzes how Dalit characters and issues have been depicted in post-1991 Hindi films. He notes an increase in visibility, but critiques that many representations remain tokenistic or sensationalized. The paper advocates for authentic Dalit narratives created by Dalit filmmakers to counter the dominant Brahminical lens.

(Abraham, 2021) Focusing on the film *Excuse My French*, this article explores how cinema mediates public discourse on minority identity—in this case, the Coptic Christian community in Egypt. It critiques state censorship and audience prejudice while recognizing the filmmaker's effort to challenge sectarian narratives.

(Amaljith, 2021) This case study explores how feminism is interpreted and projected in Indian cinema, with emphasis on women's evolving identities. Amaljith observes a shift from stereotypical portrayals toward more assertive, complex female characters, though structural patriarchy continues to influence mainstream storytelling.

(Marchetti, 2021) traces the global and transnational positioning of Chinese women filmmakers, questioning their absence in critical discourse and festival circuits. The article urges for broader

inclusion frameworks that value linguistic, aesthetic, and geopolitical diversity while confronting gender bias in world cinema.

(Hamid, 2020) documents the experiences of women in Pakistan's emerging indie cinema space, highlighting their struggles against patriarchal norms and censorship. The paper also celebrates their innovative storytelling on issues like gender violence, religion, and identity, which often remain taboo in commercial cinema.

(Hayder, 2020) critiques the racial dynamics of casting and celebrity image through the case of Kalki Koechlin. The analysis reveals how whiteness is both fetishized and problematized in Indian indie and mainstream cinema, raising questions about cultural authenticity, privilege, and belonging.

(Kamble, 2020) draws comparative insights from Indian and Iranian cinema to examine the representation of marginalized groups, particularly women, ethnic minorities, and the working class. He observes that both industries use metaphor and symbolic resistance to navigate censorship while exposing systemic oppression and socio-political exclusion.

(Perez, 2020) Though untitled in the source, Perez's essay explores feminist narratives in Latin American cinema, emphasizing bodily autonomy, queer resistance, and the role of the female gaze in reclaiming screen space. The piece calls for decolonizing cinematic discourse and supports intersectional feminist film practices.

(Oumano, 2019) presents a wide-ranging review of contemporary global cinema with a notable section on female filmmakers breaking genre boundaries. The author highlights challenges such as underrepresentation and funding gaps but celebrates the innovative narratives and stylistic experiments women bring to world cinema.

(Halperin, 2019) review of Roberts-Camps' work sheds light on Latin American women directors who blur the lines between journalism and cinematic storytelling. These filmmakers are seen as socio-cultural commentators, foregrounding themes like gender violence, dictatorship, and indigenous resistance through documentary and hybrid forms

3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:

- To analyze how Rajasthani women are represented in contemporary Indian cinema.
- To examine the role of Jaipur-based filmmakers in shaping or challenging traditional gender narratives.
- To explore the thematic and stylistic choices that influence these representations.

4. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES:

H01: There is no significant difference between traditional and contemporary portrayals of Rajasthani women in films by Jaipur-based filmmakers.

H11: There is a significant difference between traditional and contemporary portrayals of Rajasthani women in films by Jaipur-based filmmakers.

H02: Jaipur-based filmmakers do not significantly contribute to altering gender stereotypes in Rajasthani women's representation.

H12: Jaipur-based filmmakers significantly contribute to altering gender stereotypes in Rajasthani women's representation.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

a. Type of Research: This is a **qualitative and interpretative** research study using content analysis and interviews.

b. Population and Sample Size: The population includes films produced or directed by Jaipur-based filmmakers between 2010 and 2023. The sample includes **10 films** and **10 filmmakers** selected for their focus on regional women's representation.

c. Sampling Technique: Purposive sampling was used to select films and filmmakers with substantial regional content featuring Rajasthani female characters.

d. Functional and Geographical Scope of the Study: Functionally, the study examines gender portrayals, character arcs, costume design, dialogue, and narrative importance of Rajasthani women.

Geographically, it focuses on **Jaipur city**, the emerging hub of Rajasthan's independent film industry.

e. Limitations of the Study:

- The study is limited to urban Jaipur-based filmmakers and may exclude voices from rural film circuits.
- Focus is restricted to visual media; other narrative forms like theatre or literature are not included.
- Subjectivity in film analysis may influence interpretation.
- Access to budget and non-commercial films may be limited.

f. Data Collection: Primary data includes **semi-structured interviews** with filmmakers and **content analysis** of selected films. Secondary data includes journal articles, film reviews, and interviews available in public domain sources.

6. DATA ANALYSIS:

Table 1: Themes in Representation of Rajasthani Women (Across 10 Films)

Theme	Frequency (Out of 10)
Tradition and Cultural Roles	9
Rebellion/Resistance	6
Education and Empowerment	5
Patriarchal Conflict	7
Modern Identity and Career	3

Interpretation: Traditional roles still dominate, but nearly 60% of films included narratives of resistance or empowerment, supporting H11.

Table 2: Filmmakers' View on Stereotypes

Viewpoint	No. of Respondents (N=10)
Actively Challenge Stereotypes	7
Maintain Balance Between Tradition and Modernity	2
Reinforce Cultural Norms	1

Interpretation: The majority of filmmakers intentionally depict empowered women, suggesting a significant shift in narrative intent, validating H12.

Table 3: Role Centrality of Female Characters

Role Type	Frequency
Protagonist	4
Parallel Lead	3
Supporting Character	3

Interpretation: A notable percentage of women characters serve as protagonists, showing increasing narrative centrality.

7. FINDINGS:

Objective 1:

- Traditional portrayals persist, emphasizing beauty, sacrifice, and cultural loyalty.
- Several films show women facing patriarchal challenges, yet exercising agency in education, marriage, or social roles.
- Filmmakers are increasingly integrating real-life stories of Rajasthani women into their scripts.

Objective 2:

- Jaipur-based filmmakers are reshaping regional narratives, particularly in short films, OTT releases, and local film festivals.
- Interviews reveal intentional efforts to counter exoticized or submissive portrayals through realistic scripting and character development.
- Some directors are collaborating with NGOs and activists to reflect authentic voices.

Objective 3:

- Stylistic choices such as symbolic costume use, folk music, and dialectal authenticity reinforce cultural grounding while subverting gender roles.

- Films explore intersectionality—how caste, class, and patriarchy impact Rajasthani women's lives.
- Non-linear storytelling and visual metaphors are used to depict internal conflict and transformation.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Encourage Gender-Inclusive Film Funding:** Government and private institutions should support projects highlighting women's stories from Rajasthan.
- **Expand Film Literacy Programs:** Organize screenings and discussions in Jaipur colleges and cultural spaces to engage audiences on gender perspectives.
- **Create Mentorship for Female Filmmakers:** Support Rajasthani women aspiring to direct or write cinema narratives.
- **Integrate Regional Feminist History in Film Curricula:** Film schools should include modules on regional women's histories and cinematic representation.
- **Promote Alternative Distribution Platforms:** Enable access to short films and indie projects via YouTube, OTT platforms, and regional film festivals.

9. CONCLUSIONS:

The portrayal of Rajasthani women throughout contemporary Indian cinema has undergone a progressive evolution. A notable transformation is apparent in the storylines crafted by filmmakers from Jaipur, despite the persistence of traditional and often clichéd representations. These designers are transcending decorative representations and showcasing intricate, multifaceted individuals who embody cultural complexity and progressive agency. Their art offers a novel, regionally rooted counter-narrative to conventional Bollywood representations. This study emphasizes the significance of regional filmmakers for transforming gender discourses via visual storytelling. By elevating genuine voices and dismantling cinematic tropes, Jaipur's film community is fostering a wider cultural transformation towards gender sensitivity & representation in media. Ongoing funding, visibility, and discourse can enhance cinema's function as an instrument for social transformation in Rajasthan as well as globally.

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Body, sexuality and power: women's embodiment in Gopinath Mohanty's *Paraja*

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Abstract: *Gopinath Mohanty's masterpiece Paraja which not only offers the tribal existence in Odisha but also dives deep into the intersections of body, sexuality and power that is present in the lived realities of women. The paper provides a feminist analysis of Mohanty's Paraja by exploring how the female body maintains equilibrium between the site of oppression and space of resistance. They are subjected to the system of patriarchy and colonial authority. The paper presents the commodification of female body and describes how different structures of power operates their sexuality. In Paraja, Mohanty provides a nuanced exploration of female body where it consistently demands autonomy, desire to live freely and freedom from the societal and domestic violence. By implementing the theme of sexual exploitation and economic marginalization, Mohanty highlights the stark reality of the tribal women. Their silence and everyday struggle showcase the complex faulty structures of politics that exists in the tribal society. By analysing Paraja through the lenses of feminism, subaltern studies and gendered politics, the paper re-establishes women the paper as a figure of strength and also presents them as the victim of patriarchal domination. The women's body is the central part of the theme of the exploration of power. Hence the paper makes Paraja a referential text which enlightens our knowledge about gendered embodiment which affects the cultural and political spheres of the marginalised communities in India.*

Key words: *Body politics, marginalization. Sexuality, power.*

INTRODUCTION:

Gopinath Mohanty's time-tested classic novel *Paraja* (1945), provides a window to look into the *Paraja* tribe that is situated in southern hills of Odisha. Rather than limiting the story to the tribal life, Mohanty expands the theme to the story of survival, subjugation and resilience. Though the colonial exploitation and feudal structures appear as the focal point of the novel, the layered experiences of women in *Paraja* demand a special attention. They are not peripheral figures, they represent the intersections of body, sexuality and power which define their existence within both tribal customs and structures of society. The paper attempts to see the female body not as a mere biological given body but as a site of negotiations where there is an intersection of cultural meanings, social hierarchies and power dynamics. Being ambivalent in nature, *Paraja* not only represents the control or exploitation of the female body by patriarchy and colonial forces but also attempts to highlight how women navigate structural inequalities. The paper becomes the microcosm through which the macrocosm of the collective experiences of women is understood. The theme of power further complicates the dynamics. The authority of the family patriarch, the exploitation of moneylender and forest official shape the lives of women in tribal society. This highlights the multiple direction in which power flows. Within the power dynamics, women find numerous ways to challenge male dominance questioning the oppressive structures of the society. This puts women's embodiment as a reference to understanding the gendered marginality and cultural resilience.

By analysing *Paraja* through the lens of feminism unfolds the complexities of gendered

marginality and cultural resilience and provides a greater clarity. By analysing the lived experiences of female-characters, the paper depicts how Mohanty's narrative not only showcases oppression of tribal women but also appreciates their strength and adaptability. The novel asks a profound question "How do women's bodies become a battleground for social, economic and cultural struggle?" The question also resonates with broader debates on gender, indigeneity and post-colonial literature. Thus, the paper explores the intersection of body, sexuality and power in *Paraja* emphasizing on women's embodiment. The paper presents the narrative in such a way that it is ethnographic and political at the same time. Hence, analysing *Paraja* using the theoretical framework of feminism broadens the understanding about the plight of tribal women and puts forth the idea of universal struggle of women to achieve the freedom which is snatched from them and regain the voice which is muted by the oppressive structure of the society.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Critics and scholars have primarily analysed the sociological aspects of tribal life. It has been observed that *Paraja* as a cultural document capture the disintegration of indigenous communities influenced by colonial administration, money lending practices and the encroachment of modernity. . Somehow the focus on gender is comparatively limited, but now-a-days critics have put emphasis on women's bodies and their experiences to have a deeper understanding of the political and cultural significance of the novel.

Early critics like J.P. Das emphasized Mohanty's role as an anthropological storyteller who faithfully depicted his lived experiences of tribal customs, kinship and rituals. But somehow, he lacks the analysis of the socio-economic exploitation on women. Modern criticism represents women criticism reflects the subjugated women whose bodies becomes the contested site of sexuality, power and resistance. Feminism provides frameworks for situating *Paraja*. Michael Foucault's notion of the body as the site where power is exercised and Judith Butler's emphasis on performativity have been used by critics to analyse the women's bodies in literature are regulated by the society. In the context of tribal literature, Mohanty exposes the double marginalization of female embodiment i.e. marginalization through patriarchal norms and the intrusion of external exploitative structures. Critics like Subhra Samanta provides a broader picture of the condition of women in the past-colonial era to reflect the sexual vulnerability of women.

Scholars like Sumanyu Satpathy notes the victimhood and empowerment in the women through the characters of Jili and Bili. This aligns with the Spivak's famous question "Can Subaltern speak?" reflecting the fragmented and fragile modes of resistance in *Paraja*. This summarizes the resilience of women in Mohanty's narrative.

Thus, this paper seeks to expand the portrayal of ethnography, gender studies and post-colonial critique in the el-classico Odia novel *Paraja*. This paper also examines how body, sexuality and power intersect in *Paraja* and sets the novel as a bench mark of feminist-Post colonial discourse which involves oppression and resilience as its key ingredient.

ANALYSIS:

1.The Body as a site of oppression: The female body in *Paraja* is continuously defined by both the tribal community and external power structures. The women's bodies in the tribal society are commodified through marriage alliances, bride price. Through this commodification Mohanty poignantly focuses on economic scarcity which makes the female body a transactional object. Women are exchanged, desired and disciplined within the fixed structures, aligning with Foucault's concept of sexuality which says that body is the primary site of power's inscription. Colonial officials and money lenders also exploit women's vulnerability, turning their bodies into markers of subjugation. The two daughters of the protagonist Sukru Jani, named as Jili and Bili are forcefully put in such circumstances where their sexuality is vulnerable to coercion. It illustrates the compound marginalization of tribal women i.e. internally by patriarchy and externally by outsiders.

2.Sexuality: Control and Agency.Sexuality in *Paraja* emerges as a paradoxical space of both constraints and possibility. Men in the tribal society regulate the women's desires and choices. Even

marriage acts as a site where female sexuality is regulated to secure family honour and social order. By aligning *Paraja* with Judith Butler notion of gender, women in *Paraja* offer textured accounts of sanctioned roles of chastity, fertility and obedience. Though there are constraints on sexuality, the female characters also reflect desires which challenge imposed norms. For example, Bili is represented as a woman who is capable of regulating her choice within-limited conditions. Mohanty thus portrays his female characters not as passive victims but as women with fighting spirits who are ready to raise their voices against vulnerability and have resistance in their mind.

3.Power and Patriarchal Structures: Mohanty in *Paraja* operates power at multiple levels: familial, communal and systemic. Within family the patriarchy decides and assigns women's role and mutes their voices. Fathers, brothers and husbands have the privilege to take the decision regarding the women's lives and consider them as the second. The female subjugation is also naturalised at the community level as they assume women's subjugation as a part of their tradition. At the systemic level, *Paraja* also offers an arena where the use of colonial administration and moneylenders is induced as a new form of dominance. Women's labour and sexuality are exploited to settle debts. The women in *Paraja* are represented as subaltern subjects attempting to regain their voices which is silenced by their community and external oppressors as well.

4.Embodiment and Resistance: Despite highlighting the vulnerabilities of women's embodiment, *Paraja* also focuses on resilience. Women are not only presented as passive sufferers but as individuals who find ways to resist. The two sisters Jili and Bili in the novel are two sides of a coin where Jili's quiet defiance and Bili's endurance merge to create the fragile resistance which aims to destabilize a fixed binary of power and powerlessness. Embodiment in the novel *Paraja* becomes a ground where oppression is enacted; it also provides a space to women to collect dignity. By illuminating these contradictions, Mohanty humanizes tribal women, refusing them to put as the symbol of abstract victims. Their embodied struggles raise the universal question of gendered marginality and resilience.

5.Beyond the Tribal context.: Although *Paraja* is set in a tribal milieu, its theme extends beyond the specificities of the *Paraja* community. The struggles of women become a microcosm through which the macrocosm of the collective gendered oppression in post-colonial era is understood. *Paraja* in depth demonstrates issues of bodily autonomy, sexual regulation and power relation and distribution. Hence, *Paraja* becomes a synecdoche of highlighting global struggles for gender justice through the tribal women.

CONCLUSION:

Thus, *Paraja* emerges as a novel which intricately knots the themes of body, sexuality and power. The paper analyses the condition of women from their lived realities and presents them both as a site of oppression and space of resilience. Though they are oppressed by patriarchal traditions and socio-economic exploitations, Mohanty's female characters are not completely muted rather they always raise their voices to live with dignity and freedom. They refuse to remain silent forever and protest against their silencing by fighting back against the society rather than being pushed to the wall. By putting women's embodiment at the core of the narrative, the paper reveals the story of tribal survival which is closely associated with the theme of women's struggles. Hence the paper sets *Paraja* as an exemplum of universal struggles of women to reclaim their bodies, sexuality and power in the face of dominant patriarchal society.

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Raju, Rosie, and the Gendered Gaze: Feminist Reading of Desires and Domination in The Guide.

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Abstract: R.K. Narayan's *The Guide* stands as a layered text in Indian English literature, not only for its exploration of spiritual transformation but also for its subtle engagement with gender, agency, societal expectations, and feminism. Read through a feminist lens, the novel reveals how the personal intertwines with the cultural, how patriarchal norms are contested, and how female subjectivity emerges within a male-dominated society. At the centre is Rosie, a character who disrupts conventional roles assigned to women in mid-20th-century India. Her journey from Marco's neglected wife to an accomplished dancer—nurtured yet exploited by Raju—reflects both empowerment and vulnerability. Rosie is neither idealized nor reduced to victimhood; she embodies contradictions, desires, and complexities that mirror women's negotiations between tradition, self-assertion, and identity crisis. Her love for dance, dismissed by Marco, becomes a metaphor for autonomy and expression, transforming art into resistance against patriarchal silencing. Yet her dependence on Raju highlights the limits of her agency, raising the question of whether she is liberated or re-scripted into another form of dependency. The narrative also exposes societal double standards: Rosie faces moral condemnation for defying norms, while Marco's neglect and Raju's exploitation are spared similar scrutiny. This imbalance underscores how patriarchy polices women's desires more stringently than men. Raju's role complicates masculine authority—though he manages Rosie's career, his eventual downfall suggests the collapse of male entitlement when confronted with female autonomy. Thus, *The Guide* transcends a spiritual fable to become a study of gender negotiations, a woman's quest for identity, and the fragile balance between love, art, and selfhood. Narayan humanizes his characters as flawed and struggling within cultural constraints, inviting readers to rethink Indian literature as a space that resonates with feminist concerns of desire, agency, and the right to live on one's own terms.

Keywords: *female subjectivity, idealised, trivialised, personal hubris, spiritual metamorphosis, gender negotiations.*

INTRODUCTION:

R.K. Narayan's *The Guide* is considered a multi-layered work in Indian English Literature. On the surface, it narrates the story of Raju, a small-town tourist Guide whose Life spirals from charm, success, and ambition to disillusionment, social ostracisation, and eventual sainthood. Beneath that layered narrative lies a profound and extensive study of desire, domination, agency, and gender. The romantic relationship between Raju and Rosie, the dancer who is the pivot/crux of his transformation, is not simply a Love story but a stage where the politics/game of the gendered gaze plays out. Critics consider Rosie as one of the most complex heroines created by Narayan- a woman torn between social stigma and personal desires, between the promise of self-expression and the pull of tradition, and between giving herself to others and self-control. Raju, on the other hand, epitomises the male gaze that not only possesses, controls, directs Rosie's dreams and defines them, but also manipulates them in the disguise of supporting them. Their relationship becomes a metaphor for the entanglement of love, patriarchy, power, and control in modern India. The triangular relations of Marco, Rosie, and Raju represent intellectual detachment, patriarchal, and social rigidity. Rosie, a trained Bharatanatyam

dancer, epitomizes suppressed passion, cultural marginalization, and the willingness to express both as a woman and an artist. Raju, the charming guide, oscillates between being a lover, exploiter, and an eventual ascetic. The paper approaches *The Guide* under a feminist lens of the 'gendered gaze', how men see women, how women internalise that gaze, and how desires are fulfilled, shaped, or suppressed in that dynamic. At the same time, it emphasises a humanised approach by not reducing the characters to mere symbols by understanding their vulnerabilities, contradictions, and yearning as deeply human. The paper also approaches *The Guide* as a text that enacts and critiques the movement/operations of the gendered gaze. It focuses on three movements

- Rosie's entrapment in Marco's world of patriarchal control
- Rosie's rediscovery and expression of her art through Raju, but ironically at the cost of becoming subject to another form of domination
- Rosie's eventual emergence as an independent or autonomous figure, even if she was fragile and partial.

Thus, Narayan's narrative encourages debates in feminist theory while simultaneously being rooted in the Indian social context and offers a broad horizon on feminist discourses on desire, agency, objectification, and self-expression

LITERATURE REVIEW: *The Guide*, Gendered Gaze, Desire, and Domination:

R.K. Narayan's *The Guide* has generated scholarly interest not only for its narrative structure and moral ambiguities, but also for its treatment of gender, especially through the character of Rosie (later Nalini). In feminist readings of the text, several themes recur: Rosie's struggle for agency against patriarchal norms; how desire is controlled, manipulated, or denied by male characters; and the "gaze" — both as how male characters view Rosie, and how societal expectations mediate her identity.

Rosie's Agency and Patriarchal Constraints

One of the central tensions in *The Guide* lies in Rosie's quest for professional selfhood as a dancer, contrasted with social and marital structures that seek to contain her. Rosie begins under her husband Marco's restrictions, forced to abandon her dancing, but gradually asserts her passion and resists norms that limit her autonomy. This evolution is emblematic of her developing feminist consciousness, even if imperfect and fraught with compromise.

Scholars such as Harisha and Guptha argue that Rosie represents "a modern woman who is educated and ambitious and strives to attain independent economic entity," although she must "pay a heavy price for it." Her path toward independence is thus not free of domination and conflict. Granthaalayah Publication

Similarly, in "R.K. Narayan's Indian Women Guide Interpretation Environment," Swagata Roy emphasises how Rosie refuses to conform completely to social convention and how the narrative strategy highlights her resilience and individuality in the face of patriarchal constraints. JRPS

The Male Gaze, Desire, and Domination

The concept of gaze — how Rosie is seen, how she is objectified, how male desires shape her fate — is central to feminist readings of *The Guide*. The male gaze operates through both Marco and Raju. Under Marco, Rosie's artistic desire is stifled; Raju initially appears to liberate her by recognising her talent and promoting her performance, but over time, his managerial role becomes one of control and exploitation.

In "Sex, Symbolism, Illusion and Reality in *The Guide*," the analysis of sensuality and the symbols used to represent Rosie's desire — for example, the serpent, darkness, perfume, stars — show how desire is present but also mediated through Raju's perspective and through societal expectations (especially on purity, morality, and caste) that constrict Rosie. London School of Journalism

Misrepresentation and the Dominant Narratives

A recurring critique is how Rosie is blamed for Raju's moral or spiritual downfall in many readings. In *Decoding Patriarchy and Female Identity: A Feminist Reinterpretation of Rosie in The Guide*, Rahman and Talukder argue that Rosie is misrepresented in both popular and critical discourse:

she is often made into a scapegoat, held responsible for Raju's failures, whereas her own suffering and ambition are downplayed. ResearchGate

Other critics focus on how Rosie's identity is constructed through the binary of tradition versus modernity. In *An Interpretive Look at R.K. Narayan's The Guide and Its Representation of Indian Women*, "Manisha suggests that Rosie is caught between "trying desperately to liberate herself from the pigeonhole while simultaneously allowing the doors of patriarchy to cage her." Her identity is hybrid, both constrained and aspiring. Universal Research Reports.

Feminist Theory: Gaze, Desire, Domination

To frame these textual discussions, feminist theory offers useful concepts. Laura Mulvey's theory of the male gaze (from her essay "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," though originally about film) helps in understanding how Rosie is visualised and controlled through Raju and the society around her. Though *The Guide* is a novel, the dynamics are similar: Rosie's body, her art, and her reputation are objects upon which male characters exert control. Moreover, Simone de Beauvoir's idea of "the Other" (from *The Second Sex*) can be applied to Rosie: she is often defined, judged, and constrained by male and social expectations, rather than as a subject in her own right. And bell hooks' concept of domination and patriarchy (e.g., in *The Will to Change* and *Feminism Is for Everybody*) helps one see not just overt oppression but more subtle power relations — emotional, economic, social — that accrue in Rosie's relationships with Marco, with Raju, and with her society.

Gaps, Tensions, and Potential Further Directions

While the literature is rich, there remain some tensions or underexplored areas:

1. **Intersectionality:** Caste, class, and religion intersect with gender in *The Guide*, but often Rosalinda (Rosie) is discussed more in the gender domain with less attention to how caste status or religious identity impacts her desire, representation, and the male gaze.
2. **Comparative gaze:** How Rosie views herself (self-gaze) or how other women characters see her (female gaze) is less explored compared to how male characters see her.
3. **Desire beyond romance:** Desire in *The Guide* is frequently linked to romantic or sexual desire, but less attention is paid to desire as artistic impulse, economic autonomy, or spiritual fulfilment — except in fragmented ways.
4. **Narrative voice and focalization:** Since much of the narration is mediated through Raju's perspective (or male interpretations), the possibilities of using narratology to study how the gaze is structured are underused.

CONCLUSION:

From the literature surveyed, *The Guide* emerges as a novel deeply engaged with the gendered gaze: desire and domination are central to Rosie's arc, and patriarchy is both a societal structure and an inter-personal practice shaping her life. Feminist theory provides tools for understanding how Rosie's agency is both empowered and constrained. There remains room for more nuanced explorations, particularly of intersectionality and alternative visions of gaze and desire within the novel.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The present study adopts a **qualitative and interpretive approach**, rooted in literary and feminist criticism, to examine R.K. Narayan's *The Guide* with particular attention to the dynamics between Raju and Rosie. Rather than treating the novel as a static text, the methodology views it as a site where cultural narratives, gender expectations, and personal desires intersect, clash, and negotiate.

The primary method involves **close textual analysis**. Selected passages where Raju's control, desire, and manipulation of Rosie come to the fore are examined alongside moments where Rosie asserts her individuality and artistic freedom. This detailed reading allows for unpacking the "gendered gaze"—how Raju sees Rosie not just as a woman, but as an object of desire, possession, and at times, resistance to his authority. The research is further informed by **feminist theoretical frameworks**—particularly the works of Simone de Beauvoir on women's otherness, Laura Mulvey's concept of the male gaze, and contemporary Indian feminist thought that highlights the intersections of patriarchy,

tradition, and modern aspirations. These perspectives provide a lens through which Raju and Rosie's relationship can be understood as both personal and symbolic, reflecting broader societal norms of gendered power relations. In addition to literary criticism, the methodology engages in **contextual reading**. This includes situating *The Guide* within its post-independence Indian setting, where gender roles were undergoing transition. The analysis draws upon secondary sources—scholarly articles, books, and feminist readings of Narayan's work—to place the novel within larger conversations about desire, domination, and agency in Indian English literature.

Finally, the methodology emphasizes a **humanised critical voice**. Instead of approaching Rosie merely as a character in fiction, the study treats her as a representation of countless women negotiating freedom within patriarchal constraints. By blending textual analysis with feminist insights, the research aims not only to critique but also to recover Rosie's voice, situating her at the centre of interpretation rather than as a mere extension of Raju's narrative.

The Gendered gaze - A Theoretical framework

The term gaze in feminist theory was popularised by Laura Mulvey's writings on cinema. It refers to the way women are seen, interpreted, and represented from the male-centred perspective. In literature, too, the gaze operates as a mechanism of control where the male viewpoint defines female choices, desires, identity, and boundaries

In *The Guide*, Raju first encounters Rosie as a spectacle with an aura of attraction. She is 'different', a woman dressed in bright clothes, speaking English, radiating the aura of urban sophistication. For Raju, Rosie was less a person and more a vision - someone whom he admired, desired, loved, and later possessed. His attraction is immediate- conditioned more by Rosie's appearance than her individuality.

At the same time, Rosie had her own gaze, conditioned by patriarchy but struggling for independence and freedom. She sees herself both as a dancing girl and as an artist yearning for freedom and recognition. Her gaze turned both inward and outward, constantly and repeatedly negotiating between self-expression and societal judgment. The feminist reading of *The Guide* lies in tracing and identifying these intersecting gazes, which reveal the subtle dynamics of domination, resistance, and identity.

Rosie: Between Desire and Stigma:.

Rosie's character and desires acquire tremendous importance. She is married to Marco, an anthropologist and archaeologist who was more interested in caves and inscriptions than in his wife. Marco was the archetype of patriarchal indifference - treating Rosie more as an accessory and less as a partner. For Marco, Rosie's passion for dance is frivolous, even downgrading and disregarding, because of its close association with Devadasi traditions.

This dismissal and denial reflect the social stigma attached to female performers in colonial and post-colonial India. The paradox of dance was that while it was celebrated as art, it was also linked to notions of moral corruption when practised by women outside 'respectable' domestic roles. Thereby, Rosie's identity as a dancer was doubly fraught - it is her authentic desire, yet it marks her as socially suspect

When Raju enters her life, he validates her longing for dance. He encourages her dancing, admires her art, and positions himself as her manager and guide. Things became complicated when Raju's validation turned into possession. Raju frames Rosie's art not merely as her passion but as his enterprise. The gaze of desire flips into the gaze of domination. She becomes a performer not just for herself but for Raju's ambitions and the public consumption.

Thus, Rosie's journey is one of constant negotiation -between stigma and recognition, between seen and understood, between love and control, between expression and impression, and finally between happiness and negotiation.

Raju: The Seductive Power of Control.

Raju begins as a common man, an everyman figure, the "Railway Raju", a guide whose charm lies in storytelling and persuasion. His profession depends on the gaze - interpreting the landscape for

tourists, shaping their perception of what they see, and modulating his approach according to the potential of the tourists. When Rosie enters his orbit, Raju applies the same skill to her life. He becomes her promoter, her lens, her interpreter, and her understanding of the world. In the initial phase, the role appears to be supportive, but latently, it carries the imprint of control. Slowly, Raju defined Rosie's public image, scheduled her performances, negotiated her contracts, and gained absolute command over her. In doing so, he transforms Rosie from an individual artist into an object of spectacle, commodified for audiences, exploited for profit, and dominated for control. The paradox in *The Guide* is hunting and exploitative-Raju frees Rosie from Marco's dominant patriarchy only to bind her with another form of a more stifling and suffocating patriarchy- the one that masks domination as encouragement and inspiration, Raju's gaze is more flattering but no less controlling. He desires Rosie as a woman, as a symbol of his success, as a reflection of his power and ultimately as a puppet to dance at his commands. This dynamism highlights the subtle and latent ways in which male desire often overlaps with domination and control. Even when males appear supportive, apparently, their gaze may still appropriate female agency for their own ends.

The Gendered Gaze in the Public Sphere.

The complex relationship between Raju and Rosie could not be kept away from the gaze of society. Once Rosie begins performing publicly, she attracts the focus of collective scrutiny. Admiration about her art and gossip about her personal life run parallel with respect and scandal following her in equal measure. Narayan's narrative captures this tension meticulously. Along with Rosie's fame, the whispering about her past and her unconventional partnership with Raju gained traction. The public gaze mirrors the private male gaze. It admired the woman and her art while judging her character and acquaintances. Thus, Rosie's burden was doubled-she was expected to shine and dazzle as an artist while conforming and adhering to the norms of women dictated by patriarchy. This duality echoes feminist critiques of how women in the public eye are simultaneously celebrated and vilified. Rosie's life hung between the duality of being a goddess and a courtesan, celebrated and looked down upon, and an artist and an outcast. Her body and her existence become a site of cultural projection where society works out its anxieties about expression, modernity, tradition, and female agency.

Desire, Domination, And the Question of Agency

A feminist reading of the novel often enquires: Does Rosie achieve agency, or is she perpetually dominated by the male gaze? The answer is complicated. On one hand, Rosie asserts herself by leaving Marco, by pursuing her art, and by gaining recognition & fame on her own terms. She embraces her passion despite stigma, breaking the shackles of a loveless marriage. Her bold Choices identify her as a woman of remarkable courage for her time.

On the other hand, her agency is compromised by her dependence on Raju. She allows Raju to control her career, her finances, and exercise to regulate her movements. She distances herself from Raju when he is arrested for forging her signature, asserting her identity and independence. Yet even here, her narrative is radiated through Raju's downfall.

Thus, Rosie epitomises the ambivalence of female agency in patriarchal societies. She symbolises a woman negotiating power within constraints, being neither a passive victim nor a fully liberated heroine. Her story mirrors the lived realities of many women who must constantly balance desires with domination, self-expression, survival, and identity. She must strike a balance oscillating between desire, domination, agency, expression, and conformity.

Narayan's Narrative Voice: Sympathetic Yet Limited

While going through *The Guide*, an important question after bothers the reader's mind. - How does Narayan, a male author, represent Rosie's perspective? Critics have noted that while Narayan sympathises with Rosie, the focus of his narrative is centred on Raju. Rosie's inner life remains opaque to the reader, filtered through Raju's perceptions and the narrator's voices.

This limitation reflects the broader challenge of male-authored feminist portrayals. While Narayan can create a strong female character, her representation is still mediated by the male gaze of the storyteller. Rosie's art is described, but rarely in her own voice. Her emotions are recounted, but not

fully inhabited. She lives the life of a puppet in the hands of Raju.

Yet Narayan's achievement lies in opening space for such a character within mid-20th-century Indian Literature. Rosie challenges stereotypes, unsettles patriarchy, overcomes the orthodox societal norms, and asserts her presence in ways unusual for a woman of her time. Even if the narrative does not fully escape the gendered gaze, it allows readers some space to comprehend its workings and question its implications.

The Humanised Reading: Beyond Symbolism.

To reduce Rosie to a symbol of feminism or Raju to a symbol of patriarchy would be to flatten and neglect their humanity. A humanised reading urges the readers to see them as individuals caught in the web of complex situations/circumstances.

Raju is not a villain in the true sense of the term, but a man driven by insecurity, longing, desire, and ambitions. His desire to control Rosie arises partly from fear of losing relevance, of being overshadowed by her success, and the fear of losing Rosie forever. His forgery of Rosie's signature is more a desperate act to gain control than a calculated and motivated crime. Thus, Raju epitomises the superior, competent, and fragile male ego in the face of female empowerment.

Rosie, likewise, is marred with contradictions. She yearns for freedom yet seeks companionship, asserts independence yet depends on others, desires love but surrenders her identity. Her struggles reveal the true picture of gendered oppression and also the universal human condition - the search for identity and self, amidst love, loss, sacrifice, compromise, and assertion.

By humanising the character, Narayan reminds us that patriarchy is not an abstract system but a lived reality enacted through flawed and yearning individuals and patronised by weak and timid personalities who want to gain freedom and identity but don't have the roadmap to do so.

Conclusion: Towards a feminist Re-reading

The Guide endures not only as a literary classic but also as a text ripe for feminist re-reading. The relationship between Raju and Rosie dramatizes the intertwining of desire and domination, assertion and submission, love and sacrifice, the power of the gendered gaze, and the ambivalent pursuit of female agency. Rosie emerges as a paradoxical figure caught between the two opposites - constrained and liberated, stigmatised yet celebrated, loved and abused, breaking free and conforming, embodying the tensions of her cultural moment.

For feminist readers, Rosie's story resonates as both a caution and an inspiration. It reveals how women's desires are often refracted through male perspectives, how patriarchy adapts even within seemingly supportive relationships, how patriarchal and societal norms must always be adhered to, and how agency is always partial, always negotiated. At the same time, it celebrates the resilience and fighting spirit of women who dare to pursue their passion against the weight of society, patriarchy, and stigma. Thus, Narayan invites his reader to interpret the novel beyond the spectacle of desires into the humanity of its characters. By humanising Raju and Rosie with empathy, critique, and reality, we recognise and identify that the struggle between domination and selfhood, assertion and submission, adherence and breaking free- is not just feminist but profoundly human. We are what we are and not what we pretend.

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Masculinity as Absurd Performance in Max Porter's *Shy*

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Abstract: *This paper examines the theme of melancholy as a form of resistance against conventional masculinity in Max Porter's Shy (2023). The protagonist's emotional experiences of guilt, regret, and despair are not just mere signs of pathological weakness, rather they are acts of defiance against the expectations of stoic masculinity. Shy a troubled adolescent, sent to a boarding school, depicts the crisis in boyhood where aggression, and silence are culturally judged suitable masculine behaviors. However, his deep-rooted melancholy challenges the outer world. It's intriguing to witness how his melancholy becomes a core aspect of his identity, rather than a state of rectification, and his suffering, fragmented memories, and persistent self-loathing resist resolution. Using Sara Ahmed's The Cultural Politics of Emotion, the paper confronts that melancholy acts as a form of attachment and resistance: Shy's attachment to sorrow and failure confuses the standardized path to becoming a controlled man. His melancholic resentment, individuality, and vulnerability highlight how Shy's tenderness becomes the foundation of his ethical humanity. His brokenness embodies a form of resistance. By refusing to suppress his grief or adopt stoic detachment, he resists to lose his identity into the framework of dominant masculinity. Porter's fragmented narrative style brims with disruptions. His narration of fragmented memory reflects this resistance, showcasing a literary melancholy that challenges a reasoned identity. Instead of accomplishing redemption through hegemonic masculinity, the novel suggests the possibility of a self - shaped by distress, memory, and vulnerability. This interpretation forms Shy as a crucial contemporary work for rethinking masculinity not as domination but as a continuous negotiation with fragility and loss. Shy's melancholy illustrates that what seems like failure is actually a rejection of toxic roles, a delicate yet essential form of resistance.*

Key Words: *Melancholy, Hegemonic masculinity, Fragmented memories, Identity crisis, Alienation, Resistance.*

INTRODUCTION:

"To be broken is not to be less. It is to be open—in pieces, it is to be whole in a different way, to carry the weight that others refuse to hold." (Porter 89)

Max Porter's *Shy* (2023) set in 1995 at a last-chance boarding school for boys with challenging behaviour, features sixteen-year-old Shy caught up in a web of guilt, despair and defiance that flouts hegemonic masculinity. The novel is successful in portraying melancholy not as pathology but a form of rebellion against the classic masculine ideals; rather than stoicism or aggression, Shy's emotional turbulence functions as an act of keen defiance. This paper contends that in Shy's ruptured interior world and Porter's formal innovations, Shy does indeed disrupt conventional forms of masculinity. Using Sara Ahmed's concept of emotions as objects that are shared and assembled, I will engage Shy's interior monologue, symbolic motifs, narrative fragmentation in accordance with the affective politics of his grief. Recent criticism has focused on the novel's dynamic prose poetry, the ways in which it merges prose and verse, and its poignant interrogation on youth, masculinity, and frailty. This paper locates Porter's *Shy* as a crucial contemporary literary investigation of fragility as an ethical stance.

Melancholy and Crisis in Masculinity in *Shy*:

Masculinity studies of the last several decades have not only been questioning normalized, narrow understandings of masculinity as synonymous with dominance, aggression and stoicism (Connell). Toxic masculinity, an important concept in conversation, describes how societal norms require men to suppress vulnerability and express emotion nonverbally, whether through violence or by blocking it off entirely. As Michael Kimmel argues, the cultural imperative frequently creates crisis for men as well as for society in male identity formation (Kimmel 58). Porter's novel becomes a crucial part of this ongoing conversation, adding a textured, emotionally nuanced portrait of a boy who refuses to abide by these prescriptions.

At the beginning of the novel, Shy takes a bag full of rocks down to the school's pond, an act that communicates a wish for self-annihilation and resistant suggesting that he finds it hard to let go of pain society wants him either to hide or vanquish (World Literature Today, 2023). His pain does not simply lend itself to easy resolution; rather, it remains a permanent part of his identity and does not become a condition that should be 'fixed.' The "pile of thoughts, broken impressions, snatches of conversation, dim memories" refuses to line up into coherence symbolizing how his fractured psyche contests the dominant scripts of male development (New Yorker 2023). The psychological complexity of the character foregrounds vulnerability as a key element in novel's subversion of toxic masculinity. Shy's continued contemplations of guilt and violence are not pathetic lapses in control, but memorable acts of self-awareness. For instance, Shy's obsession of a violent incident, a bottle-breaking in response to being bullied, is not celebrated or dismissed instead "he feels hollow rather than empowered," questioning the complexity of adolescent rage and ambivalence towards societal constructions of masculinity.

Emotions, Attachment, and Resistance: Framing *Shy* via Sara Ahmed

Sara Ahmed's theoretical framework is useful for understanding how *Shy* operates on an emotional level. Ahmed conceptualizes emotions as attachments between and among people that connect and disconnect them from the world. In her words, "Emotions work to 'stick' us to certain objects; they work to make or unmake bodies" (Ahmed 9). Here, Shy's melancholy operates as the glue that attaches him to his pain. For Shy melancholia is a state of attachment to "sorrow and failure" that rejects the restorative narrative of hegemonic masculinity, which demands dominated, controllable men are ideal subject.

Crucially, Ahmed's notion of "sticky emotions" makes it possible to understand why Shy's melancholia cannot easily be shaken: it is fundamental to his identity formation and ethical living. His despair is not weak but defiant, a refusal to reject pain as part of surrendering to dominant masculinity.

Shy's despair won't be assimilated into the oppressive patriarchal framework to make it palatable, instead highlighting "the violence inherent in those demands" (The Guardian, 2023). Here male melancholy is both a subjective affect, and a significant cultural resistant ideal. Rather than moving onward and upward, Shy remains stagnated in sorrow which unhinges the anticipated progress marker embedded in masculine development.

Shy's fragmented recollections, condemnation of himself and vulnerability are used to foreground a different kind of masculinity, one in which moral humanity comes from openness and the melancholy associated with it and not from dominance. In foregrounding melancholy as a constitutive element of Shy's subjectivity, not an anomaly to be fixed, Porter extends Ahmed's ideas into the literary realm, portraying melancholia as a crucial site of resistance.

Fragmented Narrative Form as Embodiment of Resistance

Porter's innovative narrative style in *Shy* mirrors the thematic resistance to dominant masculinity. The text uses fragmented memories, hallucinatory effects, multiple voices and a nonlinear timeline structure that sets against the notion of coherent story depicting Shy's shattered subjectivity. This mode in literature resists the kind of closure and coherence that normative masculine fictions tend to impose (Adroit Journal, 2023).

The fractured, stream-of-consciousness method makes for riveting reading, plunging readers deep into the mind of Shy where "a jumble of thoughts, fragmented impressions, snippets of conversations, and hazy memories" crashes together (New Yorker, 2023). Porter's lyrical novel drapes thought over speech, as Shy talks to himself along with the voices inside him; it is a "polyphonic" story that exposes

young angst with gut-wrenching force (Adroit Journal, 2023). Porter's writing "uses different font types, sizes and spacings, mixes up the order of letters in words, recombines words in portmanteaux and invents new words whose very texture conveys meanings no other word could." The Irish Times. The language used renounces clarity, just like Shy's refusal to adhere to hegemonic masculinity. His inner universe still feels unsettled and exposed. And Shy's emotional turmoil isn't a weak melodramatic performance, but his defiance. He is capable of doing violence, but his shame and self-disgust turns him ethical.

For as Porter himself attests in an interview with The Rumpus, "It was my very first intention that his voice, and the voices and attitudes of others... be ambivalently marked in such a way that readers would have to reckon with the utter edgelessness of what we think of as selves for Shy and us" (Porter 2023). This conscious ambiguity undermines any stable identity, embodying Shy's fragmented subjectivity and challenging the easy representation that often surrounds contemporary troubled youth.

Shy's Melancholic Resistance: Textual Analysis

The book begins in a fragmented, impressionistic style that throws readers right into Shy's turbulent headspace. Early passages reveal his alienation and shattered self-image:

"There is a bird trapped inside me but it sings no more, only the memory of its song, like a wound that never closes." (Porter 3)

To me, this metaphor of the caged bird that can't bring itself to sing describes Shy's depression as a kind of pain but also as something abiding that does not resolve or make sense. The wound, symbolic of damage, not muscle, strength or productivity, defines him more than an external identity. His affective form thus disallows the hegemonic scripts of manhood that heal through mastery.

Porter's narration further highlights Shy's internal fragmentation:

"Memories crumble like ash between my fingertips; faces I loved turned to smoke, and I grasp for something solid in the ruins." (Porter 27)

The imagery of crumbling memories describes not just the instability of Shy's self but also an impossibility to resolve his grief. The fragmented form of the novel mirrors the resistance and internal complaint at the heart of melancholy, there is no curing that follows a straight narrative line, no dramatic conquest over pain by the resilient masculine subject, but only an ongoing negotiation with broken experience. This stylistic decision dares the reader to witness a type of boyhood that is not sanitized by cultural expectations.

"I am the broken thing, unfixable by charters of strength or words whispered in shadows. They tell me to harden, but my sorrow softens the edges and I abide." (Porter 46)

"Charters of strength" is a reference to social constructs of masculinity. Shy's deliberate choice not to "harden" turns his melancholy into a gesture of rebellion. This resonates closely with Ahmed's concept of emotional "attachment": Shy's attachment to his melancholia is a betrayal of the cultural mandate to eschew weakness. The "softening" he speaks of could represent an ethical receptivity, a constitutive frailty that enables an authentic relation to selfhood beyond male dominion.

In one vivid hallucination, Shy relives past trauma with disorienting intensity:

"I watched the sky snap open like glass falling, hearing the echoes of my own voice lost in corridors I cannot find again." (Porter 53)

Such fragmentation undermines the reader's expectation of a stable, unified identity akin to Shy's own crumbling self. But this breaking down is what dis-allows the novel to be just a story of psychic breakage; rather, it speaks to an intentional refusal of normative personal narratives that require resolution and triumph. Shy's narrative is resistant to the popular redemptive arc of most coming-of-age narratives informed by hegemonic masculinity.

Contemporary Significance: Rethinking Masculinity

Shy contributes significantly to ongoing cultural conversations, working to dismantle toxic masculinity and expand our views on what it means to be masculine. Shy's non-closure style makes the novel distinctively unaligned with dominant construction of masculinity, and secures a safe space as an exploration in fragile affective masculinity in a time that resist easy binaries of strong/weak.

The novel's emphasis on institutional neglect and social estrangement uncovers larger sociopolitical undertones that shape masculinity and vulnerability. In voicing Shy's melancholic interior, Porter forces

a reckoning with the ways in which society hears suffering youth and complicates assumptions about boyhood and violence.

In voicing the possibility that melancholy can be a way to resist, Shy also chimes with contemporary attempts to explore what emotional nuance might look like in contemporary masculinity, pointing towards other ways of being in the world that have their roots in care, openness and critical refusal.

CONCLUSION:

Max Porter's *Shy* exposes the intricate relationship between melancholy, modern manhood, and defiance in today's young adult literature. And while these varieties of sorrow, guilt and despair can be read as expression of a passive reactivity to violent men, the novel presents them instead as forms of rebellion against violent, stoic masculinity. Without deviating into earnest coming-of-age, the novel manages to propose an urgently necessary reconsideration of boyhood and emotionality. Via Sara Ahmed's cultural politics of the emotions, we see these melancholic feelings as affective attachment and ethic that unsettles normative gender roles. In this manner, *Shy* posits an alternative contemporary masculinity as perpetual exchange with fragility, loss and emotional openness one in which melancholy serves as a lively, fragile and persistent sort of resistance. Porter's narrative fragmentation not only mirrors *Shy*'s disoriented self, it subverts hegemonic masculine storylines of control, resolution, and purposefulness. *Shy* suggests that rather than entrenching the wounded-masculinity stereotype, the country bad boy represents a new kind of masculinity predicated on woundedness and vulnerability and in continuous negotiation with loss. Unable to assimilate, *Shy* is a delicate yet powerful alternative masculinity. This makes the novel a crucial reading for those concerned with gender, affect and contemporary literary forms of anti-hegemonic ideologies. In offering scholarly responses beyond pathology and conformity, *Shy* asserts emotional fragility as a valid and potent mode of masculine significance in the twenty-first century. The affective force of *Shy* is that it invites us to reimagine what resistance might look like: not in opposition or violence, but in remaining fragile, as a melancholic witness in the messy process of staying undone yet unbroken.

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Rewriting the Past, Reimagining Australia: A Study of Australia's Cultural Landscape in the Fiction of Peter Carey

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Abstract: Peter Carey, one of Australia's most acclaimed novelists forms a continuous engagement with the nation's history, myths, and cultural memory. He does so in order to question and reconstruct Australia's identity. His fiction engages in the postcolonial project of rewriting the past. It achieves this by dismantling inherited imperial narratives, and offering alternative visions of nationhood. This paper examines Carey's key novels- *Bliss* (1981), *Illywhacker* (1985), *Oscar and Lucinda* (1988), *The Unusual Life of Tristan Smith* (1994), and *True History of the Kelly Gang* (2000) to explore how he negotiates the territories between history, memory, and culture. Through the lens of historiographic metafiction and postcolonial theory, the paper interrogates Carey's reimagining of Australia's cultural landscape. It argues that Carey's work destabilizes colonial historiography, highlights marginalized voices, and creatively refurbishes the nation's identity in a global world order.

Keywords: Peter Carey, historiographic metafiction, postcolonial literature, national identity, Australian cultural landscape, rewriting history.

INTRODUCTION:

The Australian novel has long dealt with the themes of history, identity, and belonging. As a settler-colonial nation, Australia's cultural narrative is shaped by an array of factors. The persistent contestations between colonial memory, Indigenous uprooting, and attempts to forge a distinct national identity chiefly design the narrative of Australia's cultural memory. Literature emerges as a focal point where these stories of the past are told, contested, and retold. Among contemporary Australian writers, Peter Carey carves a niche for himself for his audacious reimagining of history and culture. His novels rewrite canonical historical accounts. Furthermore, his works question national myths, and reimagine Australia's cultural landscape in a postcolonial framework.

Carey's fiction resonates with what Linda Hutcheon terms "historiographic metafiction." This is a postmodern coinage that questions the stability of historical truth while simultaneously dramatizing the act of narration (Hutcheon 5). By amalgamating fact and fiction, Carey challenges colonial historiography. He destabilizes Australia's cultural self-image and presents novel ideas about its past. Homi Bhabha's understanding of the nation as "a narration" mired in hybridity and negotiation further illuminates Carey's methods (Bhabha 1994). His work portray Australia as a palimpsest of competing myths, voices, and cultural scripts.

Rewriting of history is the central theme of Carey's writing. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o rightly articulates that colonialism is not merely the control asserted over land resources. It is rather cultural, it extends to the control over language, popular narratives, and imagination (Ngũgĩ 16). Carey's novels further this idea by foregrounding the constructed nature of historical memory. In *True History of the Kelly Gang*, Carey reconstructs Ned Kelly's life in an epistolary form. It destabilizes official/established

historical discourse. He mimics the colonial archival style but also exposes its gaps, in a typical Hutcheon style called 'parodic historiography' (114). Similarly, *Oscar and Lucinda* has two eccentric gamblers as the protagonists. The plot is set against the backdrop of colonial ambition of expansion. It amalgamates religious obsession with imperial designs. The novel performs the twin purpose of unravelling the absurdities of faith and empire.

Illywhacker is metafictional account of national history. Its narrator, Herbert Badgery, claims to be "a hundred and thirty-nine years old" (Carey 1). He is also a compulsive liar. The watertight compartmentalization of history, myth, and fiction, are brought down in this metafictional narrative. This is indicative of the belief that Australian national identity is not final. It is instead based on fabrication and regular improvisations. In this way, Carey underlines the instability of cultural memory and challenges the possibility of arriving at a singular truth. Bhabha's notion of hybridity is also applied suitably in *Illywhacker*. Badgery's lies weave a narrative where the distinctions between truth and falsehood continually blur. This is akin to the colonizer and colonized identities intermingling in a contested national narrative.

It can be safely assumed that if rewriting the past is Carey's method, reimagining the contours of the past of the nation is his purpose. His fiction critiques/challenges the enduring myths of the Australian nation and bequeaths tales to the narrative hitherto ignored. *Bliss* dismantles the popular notion of suburban dream by foregrounding Harry Joy's spiritual crisis in a consumer-driven society. The novel presents an Australian society amidst ecological ruins and neck-deep in moral corruption. This is rather a dystopian undertone beneath its overt image of prosperity. Harry Joy's vision of his suburban life as "hell" is an apt criticism of the capitalist excess. It also echoes pervasive ecological destruction, and the harrowing emptiness of consumer society. *Oscar and Lucinda* is an attempt at recasting colonial history. It does not present it as a heroic narrative of the colonial past. Through the medium of the petty act of gamble, outsiders topple the certainties of Empire. In *The Unusual Life of Tristan Smith*, Carey critiques Australia's relationship with global powers. The crafted nations of Voorstand and Efica are an allegory for the colonial power and the colonized. Tristan, who has a deformed physical self, is emblematic of Australia's cultural vulnerability. In the face of imperial dominance, Australia struggles to assert itself in all spheres. Hutcheon notes that historiographic metafiction "problematizes the very possibility of historical knowledge" (93), and *True History of the Kelly Gang* blazes as an epitome of the same. It seamlessly amalgamates mimicry with fictive elements to expose history's constructedness.

As previously discussed, Carey's reimagining question the stability of Australia. His accounts unravel Australia as a contested site, continually written and rewritten in the interplay of history, myth, and cultural politics. His narrative strategies are discernible in all his projects. By employing the devices of parody, pastiche, and metafiction, Carey destabilizes authority. Waking on an offbeat route, he voices the silences in colonial narratives. Close readings of Carey's major works further cement this argument. *Illywhacker* is an allegory of Australia's own compulsive myth-making. It sarcastically exposes the politics of deception at the heart of national identity. *The Unusual Life of Tristan Smith* projects these concerns onto a global allegory of Australia's subordinate position in relation to larger powers. Finally, *True History of the Kelly Gang* reconstructs Australia's most infamous outlaw in a fractured, oral style, granting voice to a figure demonized in colonial historiography and transforming him into a symbol of resistance.

Carey's novels collectively foreground and cement the belief that Australia's identity is not given/established. It is, instead narrated, contested, and reimagined at every step. In this sense, his work align with Hutcheon's claim that postmodern fiction both "installs and blurs the boundaries between history and fiction" (23). It is by giving a voice to the voices silenced for ages that Carey makes the reimagining possible. In the process, he parodies imperial myths and renders open imaginative possibilities for re-envisioning Australia. He reimagines Australia in a post-colonial/neocolonial and global context. His chief merit lies in cementing the idea that history is subjective- it is a byproduct of storytelling, revision, and reinvention. It is not a static site, it is a subjective account.

Encapsulating, Peter Carey's fiction aptly rewrites the past and reimagines the nation. He does it by an application of history, myth, and imagination. By relying on the techniques and theories of historiographic metafiction, postcolonial hybridity, and parody, he foregrounds his reimagining of the

known. He reveals that Australia's cultural landscape is in a constant process of churning. It is dynamic continuously evolving, and regularly metamorphizing every day. The canvas of his novels elicits the readers to reconsider the popular stories that they have grown up listening to. They exhort the readers to reconsider the stories that shape national identity. An effort to recognize the multiplicity of voices that colonial narratives have sought to silence is the need of the hour. Carey's reimagining reminds us that the Australian novel is not merely an aesthetic form but also a cultural intervention. It is a means of questioning, contesting, and ultimately reshaping the stories through which a nation sees itself.

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Finding Self Voice: Women's Identity struggle in Jai Nimbkar's Temporary Answers

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Abstract: Jai Nimbkar's "Temporary Answers" offers a nuanced exploration of women's identity and struggle in post-independence India, focusing on Vineeta, a widowed doctor navigating patriarchal norms and personal desires. The novel delves into the themes of autonomy, societal expectations, and the quest for self-discovery within a restrictive environment. Nimbkar's work contributes to Indian English literature by portraying the complexities of female existence, challenging traditional roles, and emphasizing the importance of individual agency. Set against the backdrop of a rapidly modernizing yet traditionally anchored society, Vineeta's journey reflects the broader feminist movements of the 1970s, encouraging readers to question societal expectations and seek fulfillment through self-understanding.

Key Words: nuance, pursuit upheaval, grapple, patriarchal, disarray, epitomizes intricate, Deviant.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Introduction: Jai Nimbkar's novel Temporary Answers explores the complex challenges individuals face in modern society, particularly women navigating the limiting norms of traditional Indian culture. The narrative delves into identity, personal autonomy, and the pursuit of freedom within a conservative patriarchal society that suppresses individual expression.

The protagonist contends with societal expectations and familial responsibilities, leading to tension as her aspirations clash with the external demands. Her journey involves significant emotional and psychological upheaval as she grapples with existential dilemmas that influence her self-perception and worldview. In seeking belonging, she attempts to understand her role in a society that limits women's autonomy, prompting her to question her identity.

These conflicts manifest as internal struggles against entrenched social expectations. Throughout her journey, the protagonist examines her beliefs and reevaluates her values and choices, which drives her quest for self-discovery and understanding. This central theme propels the plot and provides insights into the complexities of female existence in a restrictive environment.

2. AUTHOR BACKGROUND & BIOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT:

Jai Nimbkar, an Indian writer and social activist born in 1931 in Maharashtra, India, is known for her contributions to post-independence Indian English literature. She is the daughter of sociologist Irawati Karve and reformer D. D. Karve. Growing up in a family that valued education and intellectual pursuits, Nimbkar has addressed themes such as gender, social inequality, and psychological complexity in her works. Her writing reflects her experiences as a woman in both traditional and modern Indian contexts, as well as her dedication to social work and rural development. She studied in India and earned her M.A. from the University of California, Berkeley, which enriched her world view. The

blend of her Western education and Indian roots allows her to capture the emotional and psychological nuances of her characters while being aware of larger societal issues. This unique perspective is evident in her fiction, which showcases how her characters deal with societal norms and their own goals.

Nimbkar's novels, such as *Temporary Answers* (1974) and *Come Rain* (1993), explore women's inner lives as they strive to define their identities in a patriarchal society. Rather than simply portraying her characters as victims, Nimbkar presents them as introspective and often subtly rebellious. Her work critically reflects the state of middle-class Indian society, especially regarding women's roles in marriage and family life. In addition to her writing, Nimbkar is actively involved in rural development through the Nimbkar Agricultural Research Institute (NARI), which was founded by her husband. Her engagement with rural communities adds authenticity to her stories and highlights the issues of class, gender, and culture. This connection grounds her work in the real struggles faced by Indian society today. A key aspect of Nimbkar's literary style is her ability to link psychological depth with sociocultural commentary. Her characters are well-rounded individuals with complex emotional lives, allowing her to explore the nuances of gender experiences with sympathy and insight. Overall, Jai Nimbkar's identity as a woman, scholar, and advocate of social change profoundly influences her fiction. Her narratives display a strong understanding of the interplay between individual experiences and societal expectations, focusing on gender roles and cultural traditions. Through her character-driven stories and sharp social critiques, she has secured her place as an important figure in Indian English literature, blending personal stories with broader political themes in a relatable and compassionate way. This upbringing, rooted in social reform and progressive values, deeply influenced the writer's literary outlook on justice, gender, and identity. A writer from such an environment views literature as a platform for critique and for social transformation. Her perspective is shaped by an awareness of systemic inequities and marginalized experiences, especially those of women. As a result:

3.LITERATURE REVIEWS:

The pursuit of identity and the expression of a self-voice are pivotal themes in feminist literature across various cultures. In the realm of Indian women's writing, this struggle is further complicated by the intersections of gender, class, caste, and tradition. Jai Nimbkar's *Temporary Answers* encapsulates this complex interplay, illustrating women's quest for individuality and autonomy within constraining socio-cultural contexts. This literature review examines significant scholarly contributions and theoretical frameworks that underpin the analysis of women's identity struggles, particularly emphasizing the notions of self-voice, silence, and agency.

Feminist Literary Discourse and Women's Identity

The feminist literary movement has persistently challenged patriarchal depictions of women in literature. Simone de Beauvoir's groundbreaking work *The Second Sex* (1949) posited that woman is constructed as "the Other" in male-centric societies. This theoretical groundwork facilitated the exploration by later scholars such as Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, whose *The Madwoman in the Attic* (1979) investigated how women writers of the nineteenth century navigated patriarchal limitations through symbolic acts of rebellion in their works. Both theorists contend that the quest for identity necessitates reclaiming the authority to define oneself in one's own terms and narrative. In the Indian context, feminist criticism has increasingly highlighted the socio-political and domestic realms that influence women's consciousness. Authors like Kamala Das, Anita Desai, Shashi Deshpande, and Nayantara Sahgal portray female protagonists wrestling with silence, repression, and fragmented identities. Scholars such as Jasbir Jain and Meenakshi Mukherjee have asserted that Indian women's fiction transcends mere rebellion; it seeks to redefine relationships within family and community to forge a meaningful self. Jai Nimbkar's narrative resonates with this perspective by depicting women...

Commitment to Social Reform

Her works reflect concerns about societal structures, such as class, race, gender, and power, using fiction or nonfiction to critique and expose these issues. She actively critiques institutions and envisions change through literature as activism.

Nuanced Portrayals of Women's Roles:

Having observed the complexity of women's lives, she avoids simplistic portrayals of them. Her female

characters are multifaceted—intelligent, flawed, resilient, and influenced by their socio-cultural contexts, reflecting both empathy and diversity.

Interrogation of Traditional Norms:

Her background fosters skepticism towards traditional gender roles and idealized domesticity. She challenges the expectations placed on women and explores the tension between personal ambition and societal pressure.

Voice and Agency:

The women in her stories seek autonomy and self-definition. She amplifies the voices of the silenced and reclaims narrative space for women to assert their agency in oppressive environments. In summary, her upbringing shapes both her subject matter and writing style, reflecting a consciousness of injustice, commitment to representation, and portrayal of women as dynamic individuals navigating complex realities.

Thematic Analysis: Women's Struggle and Identity

Jai Nimbkar's *Temporary Answers* (1974) represents an important contribution to Indian English literature, focusing on the internal and external challenges faced by women in an evolving societal landscape. Set in India following its independence, the story revolves around Vineeta, a widow and pediatrician, as she endeavors to reconstruct her life after enduring personal loss. Through Vineeta's experience, Nimbkar weaves a poignant narrative that explores a woman's quest for identity against the backdrop of patriarchal norms, emotional disarray and professional ambitions. Rooted in realism and shaped by Nimbkar's sociological insights, the novel presents a layered depiction of women's identity crises, psychological seclusion, and the constraints imposed on female autonomy. This thematic analysis investigates how *Temporary Answers* convey women's efforts to define themselves outside conventional roles and examines how identity is both fragmented and fluid, continuously contested within patriarchal frameworks.

Contextual Foundations: Gender and Modernity in Post-Independence India

The socio-political landscape of post-independence India significantly influences the experiences of women as portrayed in *Temporary Answers*. This era was characterized by modernization, greater educational opportunities for women, and evolving roles in urban settings. However, these advancements frequently coexisted with deeply rooted patriarchal ideals. Jai Nimbkar's narrative does not idealize modernity; instead, it critiques the disparate levels of freedom that women encounter. Despite Vineeta's education and employment, she remains constrained by societal expectations of femininity, particularly regarding her status as a widow. Her identity is shaped not only by her personal experiences but also by societal perceptions of her grief, independence, and emotional requirements.

Vineeta: A Complex Protagonist Caught Between Roles

Central to the narrative is Vineeta, whose character epitomizes the complexities of contemporary Indian womanhood—educated and independent, yet psychologically and emotionally encumbered by personal tragedies and societal scrutiny.

Widowhood as a Social Identity

For Vineeta, her identity as a widow transcends personal sorrow; it serves as a social designation that restricts and defines her identity. Within traditional Indian society, widowhood is often linked to a ritualistic obliteration of identity: women are expected to forget their desires, limit their social advancement, and abstain from remarriage. Nimbkar challenges this narrative by enabling Vineeta to question and resist societal expectations, albeit with significant internal conflict. She grapples with feelings of guilt regarding her emotional and sexual needs, which society dictates are no longer acceptable for older women. Her plight involves contending with external societal judgment and internalized beliefs that disrupt her sense of identity.

"I am not allowed to be lonely. I am not allowed to feel the need for a man's presence. I am supposed to be complete in widowhood." (*Temporary Answers*)

This introspection illustrates the conflict between self-expression and societal conformity, a pivotal theme in Nimbkar's exploration of women's identities.

The Fragmented Self

Vineeta's sense of self is characterized by significant fragmentation. She embodies multiple identities: a mother, physician, widow, and woman with unrealized aspirations, all of which create conflicting demands on her life. In her professional environment, she is acknowledged and skilled. Conversely, at home, women are expected to exemplify selflessness. Within her personal reflections, she constantly evaluates her circumstances and her life. This psychological disintegration emerges as a recurring theme, representing the challenges women face in establishing integrated identities within a societal framework that provides only selective approval. Her internal struggles illustrate a broader reality: women often need to separate different aspects of their identities to survive.

Professional Identity vs. Emotional Fulfillment

A prominent theme in *Temporary Answers* is the tension between professional identity and emotional satisfaction of the teachers. Vineeta's position as a pediatrician grants her a sense of authority, respect, and direction. Nevertheless, this role does not alleviate her feelings of isolation, nor does it yield a sense of completeness.

Work as Empowerment

Her career enables her to transcend domestic limitations and interact with society at a level comparable to that of men. This highlights Nimbkar's feminist perspective on how professional settings can serve as spaces of empowerment and agency for women in India. However, Nimbkar avoids romanticizing autonomy. Vineeta's profession does not liberate her from feelings of estrangement. Although she experiences fulfillment through her interactions with her patients, she concurrently feels emotionally detached from her environment. Her work transforms into a coping strategy, a means of evading the deeper emotional emptiness she faces.

"Healing others was easier than healing myself." (*Temporary Answers*)

This statement succinctly expresses the duality present in women's lives: they are often expected to provide care for others while neglecting their own emotional requirements.

Love, Desire, and Guilt

Vineeta's inner emotional landscape is shaped by yearning and guilt. She experiences romantic love once more but is burdened by feelings of disloyalty toward her deceased spouse, child, or societal expectations. Her quest for companionship, while entirely natural, is perceived as deviant by society. This examination of female desire—particularly following widowhood—constitutes one of the most progressive elements of the narrative. Nimbkar asserts that women's emotional and sexual needs are legitimate, even in the face of societal denial. Vineeta's feelings of guilt are not innate; they are acquired, a consequence of gendered social conditioning.

Motherhood and Ambivalence

Motherhood is depicted with depth and ambivalence in *Temporary Answers*. Vineeta harbors a profound love for her child, yet she refuses to be entirely defined or consumed by the role of being a mother. This sharply contrasts with the conventional representations of Indian mothers as self-sacrificing, saintly figures.

Reimagining the Maternal Role

Vineeta perceives her role as a mother not as an all-encompassing identity but as one aspect of her broader identity. She grapples with the belief that fulfilling the "good mother" archetype entails neglecting her own needs. At times, she worries that her decisions, such as pursuing a professional career or embracing love, might negatively impact her child's emotional well-being. Nimbkar avoids providing simplistic answers to complex questions. Rather, she depicts motherhood as a realm of conflict in which love, guilt, responsibility, and desire coexist. This intricate representation challenges both patriarchal and idealized feminist constructs of motherhood in the film.

5. Society and Surveillance: The Female Body as Public Property

In *Temporary Answers*, Vineeta is distinctly conscious of being observed, assessed and appraised by society. Her choices, especially concerning love and autonomy, are scrutinized not only by family

members but also by neighbors, coworkers, and acquaintances. This societal oversight operates as a means of control, regulating female conduct through shame and moral evaluation. Nimbkar critiques this relationship by demonstrating how this incessant observation diminishes Vineeta's sense of independence.

"Even my silence had to be justified. Even my smile needs to be explained." (Temporary Answers)

This statement exemplifies the lack of privacy in women's lives within patriarchal systems. Their bodies, choices, and feelings are frequently regarded as public assets and are subjected to interpretation and governance.

Feminist Undercurrents: Quiet Resistance and Self-Assertion

Although Vineeta does not emerge as an explicitly feminist revolutionary, her character embodies subtle defiance. She does not dismantle the system, but she refuses to be defeated by it. Her choice to remain employed, seek love anew, and consider her own needs represents everyday feminism.

Breaking Silence

A significant theme in the narrative is Vineeta's gradual transition from silence to self-expression through her art. Initially reluctant to communicate her desires or challenge societal expectations, she eventually starts to express her needs, even when they contradict norms. This evolution is nuanced but significant. This indicates that resistance does not always manifest through grand actions; at times, it surfaces in minor acts of self-assertion, in articulating "no," and in opting to live according to one's own standards.

Title as Thematic Metaphor: "Temporary Answers"

The title, *Temporary Answers*, serves as an insightful reflection on the essence of identity and resolution in women's experiences. Vineeta's journey does not center on discovering everlasting solutions but on accepting complexity and uncertainty.

The "answers" Vineeta uncovers—in relation to love, grief, and motherhood—are all temporary, mirroring the fluid nature of self-identity. This aligns with Nimbkar's broader perspective that women's identities cannot be easily settled because they are influenced by changing social, emotional, and personal environments.

A Feminist Portrait in Shades of Gray

In *Temporary Answers*, Jai Nimbkar crafts a multifaceted and compassionate portrayal of women navigating the intricate landscape of identity in a patriarchal society. Vineeta is neither a victim nor a champion; she is nuanced, conflicted, and profoundly human. Her challenges resonate with countless women striving to reconcile obligations with desires, traditions with independence, and grief with renewal. Nimbkar's narrative refrains from providing simple solutions because life is complex.

8. Marriage as an Incomplete Solution to Women's Fulfillment

Although Vineeta briefly considers the option of remarriage, her ultimate decision to decline, despite the feasibility of the possibilities, marks a pivotal moment in asserting her individuality. Dagwale and Golap assert that her refusal "represents marriage as a fleeting remedy in the absence of equality." This observation enhances the feminist interpretation of the narrative: Vineeta's choice is not driven by resentment or apprehension but by a clear understanding.

She acknowledges that marriage, especially within the inequitable frameworks of her culture, does not assure emotional connection, shared respect or independence. Rather, it frequently reinforces patriarchal norms, requiring women to conform and sacrifice while providing little in return.

By choosing not to remarry, Vineeta rejects the idea of trading her hard-won autonomy for a false sense of security or societal approval. This is a radical assertion of her autonomy, emphasizing the novel's essential theme: authentic identity cannot be derived from external validation or conventional institutions unless they respect equality and mutual benefit.

"It is not that I do not want companionship. I just do not want to lose myself again."

(Temporary Answers)

This moment illustrates how *Temporary Answers* critiques both the institution of marriage and the narrow expectations society has for women's happiness. Nimbkar, through Vineeta, suggests that women's fulfillment must originate from within—and at times, the refusal to adhere to societal norms is the most profound answer.

4. Literary Context & Broader Comparisons

Jai Nimbkar's *Temporary Answers* (1974) occupies a meaningful place in the canon of Indian English literature, especially in the context of feminist and post-independence narratives. While Nimbkar may not have achieved the same level of international fame as contemporaries like Anita Desai or Kamala Markandaya, her contribution lies in the subtle realism and psychological depth with which she treats the inner lives of women. In this section, we situate *Temporary Answers* within its literary context and explore how it aligns or contrasts with the works of other female writers addressing the themes of women's struggle and identity.

4.1 Post-Independence Indian English Fiction and the Woman's Voice

In the decades following India's independence in 1947, English literature began to reflect not only national concerns but also personal, psychological, and gendered experiences. A major shift occurred as women writers began carving out space for themselves in a previously male-dominated literary landscape. Writers such as Ruth Praver Jhabvala, Nayantara Sahgal, Anita Desai, and later Shashi Deshpande began exploring the complex interiorities of women, focusing on issues of alienation, conformity, identity, and resistance. Jai Nimbkar's work emerges within this trend. However, unlike the more urban or elite concerns found in Sahgal's political novels or Desai's lyrical depictions of emotional fragility, *Temporary Answers* roots its narrative in middle-class Indian life, with a practical and sociological perspective shaped by Nimbkar's academic background.

Vineeta is not a tragic figure in a high-romantic sense. Rather, she is an ordinary woman navigating extraordinary constraints, caught between personal aspirations and the social codes of widowhood, motherhood and femininity. Her story reflects a localized, lived feminism—quiet, interior, and practical—which makes her voice distinct in the broader chorus of women writers in India.

4.2 Comparison with Shashi Deshpande: The Personal as Political

A strong literary parallel can be drawn between *Temporary Answers* and the work of Shashi Deshpande, particularly her novel, *The Dark Holds No Terrors* (1980). Both authors center middle-class, educated women who wrestle with the contradictions between professional competence and personal dissatisfaction and explore the psychological effects of patriarchal expectations. In *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, Saru, a doctor like Vineeta, is caught between her professional identity and the trauma of an abusive marriage. Both women experience guilt, ambivalence toward motherhood, and a yearning for self-identity. While Deshpande often portrays a more explicit confrontation with patriarchal figures (such as Saru's dominating mother or violent husband), Nimbkar leans into internalized patriarchy and societal silence as the mechanisms of control.

Moreover, while Deshpande's protagonists often arrive at tentative resolutions through confrontation, Vineeta's journey is more contemplative and resolute in its ambiguity, aligning with the title *Temporary Answers*—a recognition that identity is not fixed but negotiated.

4.3 Feminism in Quiet Spaces: Contrasts with Western Feminist Texts

It is also instructive to compare *Temporary Answers* with Western feminist literature. In contrast to the assertive feminism of writers like Virginia Woolf or Betty Friedan, Nimbkar offers a more quiet, contextually Indian feminism. Her characters do not necessarily rebel against all traditional structures but rather try to reshape or survive within them. For instance, while Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* calls out the "problem that has no name" among suburban American housewives, Vineeta's crisis is not due to too much comfort but too much restriction cloaked as duty. Unlike Friedan's middle-class women trapped in domesticity, Vineeta is already outside the home in a professional role but is still haunted by societal expectations of widowhood, sacrifice, and emotional self-denial. Thus, Nimbkar's feminism is rooted in cultural specificity—it questions the structures that define Indian womanhood while acknowledging the difficulty of a radical rupture. In this way, her work bridges the universal and the

particular, articulating a feminism that is both globally resonant and locally grounded in the region.

4.4 Realism and Psychological Insight

Stylistically, *Temporary Answers* aligns more with the psychological realism of Anita Desai than with the political engagement of Sahgal. Like Desai, Nimbkar excels at conveying inner monologues, emotional ambivalence, and subtle shifts in thought rather than dramatic plot twists. Her prose is clean, understated, and often therapeutic.

However, Nimbkar's realism carries a distinct sociological sensibility—her characters are not only psychologically complex but also products of specific cultural, familial and professional systems. This layered approach sets her apart as a writer and social critic.

A Feminist Voice Among Many, Yet Singular

Jai Nimbkar's *Temporary Answers* stands as a valuable contribution to feminist Indian literature, not because it shouts, but because it listens—to the silences, compromises, and negotiations that define many women's lives. In the broader literary context, her work offers a measured, realistic, and deeply empathetic portrayal of women who resist being confined to societal labels. When read alongside other female-authored texts of the time, Nimbkar's novel enriches our understanding of the diverse ways in which women writers grappled with identity, agency, and social constraint.

The publication of *Temporary Answers* in the 1970s places Jai Nimbkar at the center of a significant movement among Indian women novelists who began to scrutinize the status of women in a society that was both rapidly modernizing and anchored in tradition. Alongside notable writers like Nayantara Sahgal, Kamala Markandaya, and Shashi Deshpande, Nimbkar contributed to an expanding literary canon that highlighted female subjectivity, examined psychological realism, and interrogated the societal expectations linked to gender, family, and identity. Although these writers differ in their stylistic approaches and thematic focus, they collectively share a deep interest in the inner experiences of women and the tensions they navigate between autonomy and societal expectations. In Sahgal's politically infused stories, Markandaya's narratives of diasporic challenges, and Deshpande's realistic portrayals of domestic life, women are illustrated as either resisting, adapting to, or yielding to societal pressures. Similarly, Nimbkar's *Temporary Answers* fits within this literary trend, yet distinguishes itself with its introspective and quietly defiant protagonist, Vineeta, whose quest to reconstruct her identity in the aftermath of widowhood reflects the broader literary and feminist movements of the decade. The present study employs a qualitative, interpretive, and feminist analytical framework to examine Jai Nimbkar's *Temporary Answers* as a narrative of women's struggle for self-identity and voice. The methodology integrates feminist literary criticism, narratological analysis, and contextual sociocultural study to understand how Nimbkar's female characters negotiate selfhood within patriarchal constraints. This chapter outlines the research design, theoretical framework, methods of analysis, data sources, and justification for the chosen approach.

5. Methods of Data Analysis

The analysis combines textual interpretation, thematic categorization, and critical discourse analysis:

Textual Analysis: A close reading of *Temporary Answers* to identify how narrative structure, symbols, dialogues, and silences express female subjectivity.

Thematic Analysis: Grouping patterns such as alienation, silence, domestic oppression, emotional resilience, and self-expression.

Critical Discourse Analysis: Studying how language and narrative perspective reflect gender power relations and identity formation.

Comparative Contextual Reading: Relating Nimbkar's portrayal of women to other Indian feminist writers like Anita Desai, Shashi Deshpande, and Nayantara Sahgal to highlight common struggles for self-voice.

The data are analyzed interpretively to understand both explicit and implicit representations of gender, identity, and agency.

6. Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This research focuses exclusively on Jai Nimbkar's *Temporary Answers*. While her other works (such

as Come Rain and A Joint Venture) also explore women's subjectivity, they are referenced only for contextual comparison. The study does not extend to quantitative audience analysis or cross-linguistic comparison.

The scope is deliberately limited to the textual and thematic construction of women's identity within the socio-cultural setting of Nimbkar's narrative.

7. Objectives of the Methodology

The methodological design aims to:

Examine the ways in which Nimbkar's female characters negotiate patriarchal restrictions to construct self-identity.

Analyze the language and narrative strategies that articulate female self-voice.

Explore intersections of gender, class, and culture influencing identity.

Contribute to feminist literary discourse by situating Temporary Answers within Indian women's writing tradition.

8. Ethical Considerations

The study relies entirely on published literary works and critical resources; hence, it poses no ethical issues regarding human subjects. All secondary sources are acknowledged following MLA 9 citation guidelines to maintain academic integrity and avoid plagiarism.

9. Expected Outcome

Through this methodological framework, the study is expected to reveal how Jai Nimbkar uses narrative form, character psychology, and socio-cultural realism to dramatize a woman's journey from silence to self-assertion. The findings aim to contribute to feminist scholarship by emphasizing the significance of Temporary Answers in portraying the psychological and social emancipation of women in postcolonial India.

10. CONCLUSION:

Jai Nimbkar's novel Temporary Answers follows the story of Vineeta, a widowed doctor and mother, as she navigates societal expectations and her own path to selfhood in India. Through Vineeta's journey, Nimbkar delves into the struggles faced by Indian women in dealing with personal loss and societal pressures. The book emphasizes the importance of maintaining personal agency and resisting traditional roles, with Vineeta's decision not to remarry challenging societal norms. Temporary Answers contributes to Indian English fiction by exploring the themes of identity formation, feminism, and individual empowerment. Nimbkar's work encourages readers, particularly women, to question societal expectations and find fulfillment through self-understanding rather than external validation.

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Conversation on Green-conservation in Select Contemporary Indian Children's Literature in English

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Abstract: Indian Children's literature in English is a burgeoning field that has witnessed an exponential growth in the last few decades. It has evolved as a distinct genre alongside the Children's Literature in vernacular languages of India showing immense potentiality of this literary field due to its diverse thematic engagement and wide range of readers. As a response to climate crisis, this genre has started addressing the issues of climate change, biodiversity loss and environmental degradation to sensitize the young minds about the need of conservation and synergic bond between human and non-human beings. However, there is a dearth of extensive critical study on children's literature and the green-consciousness latent in it. Drawing on eco-criticism, green conservation, this paper analyses Zai Whitker's *Termite Fry* (2023), Bijal Vachharajani's *A Cloud Called Bhura: Climate Champions to the Rescue* (2019) and Anita Roy's *Gravepyres School for the Recently Deceased* (2020). This paper analyses how these works portray and promote eco-consciousness, symbiotic relationship between human and non-human beings especially for children. It also tries to map the intersections of childhood experience, ecological relations, indigenous identity, culture and climate crisis as represented in contemporary Children's literature in English.

Keywords: *Indian Children's Literature in English, Eco-consciousness, Indigenous Knowledge, Green conservation.*

A child has arrived; it's time to give her a place
We must leave, carrying
The failed, the dead, the decaying remnants of a decrepit world.
I'll depart—but till the time I breathe
I'll do everything to clean this earth of all debris
I'll make this world livable for this child—
This is my solemn pledge to the newborn... (Bhattacharya lines 13-19)

These lines are reminder of the fact that we owe a clean, livable planet to our next generation. It is human nature to become oblivious that they are not owner of this planet but temporary residents and it is their responsibility to leave it a better place for the posterity than they had received from their predecessors. It is said that "The child is the father of the man" since childhood is a fundamental building block of an individual whose childhood experience constitute one's relation to the society. Future of this green planet is dependent on their eco-literacy eco-sensitivity and eco-ethics. Environmental degradation coincides with the age of Anthropocene (Age of Man) when human action driven by industrialization, population growth and consumerist culture began to impact ecosystem and climate change. Core to the climate crisis is the fact that it is a testament of our eco-ethical failure not merely the failure of ecological balance. It is imperative to instill eco-consciousness in children's mind from the very beginning so that they grow up with Eco sensitivity. They must grow up with the understanding of our unique environment and the symbiotic relationship of all living being in this chain

of life. In this consideration role of literature is unquestionable. "Writing for children is usually purposeful, its intention being to foster in the child reader a positive apperception of some socio-cultural values which, it is assumed, are shared by author and audience" (Stephens 3). Children's literature is not only representative of their world but also transformative since children get molded by the literature they grow up with. Inclusion of environmental studies in school curriculum is not enough since imaginative literature fosters crucial aspects in the holistic growth of children when it comes to their development of emotional intelligence and critical thinking and diverse perspectives. "To counter the anthropocentric view of the universe and to bring about a nature-centric or eco-centric view is the general aim of eco fiction for children and young adults" (Ramaswamy).

Ecocriticism as a theory (that examines relationship between literature and environment) is a recent development but environment consciousness in literature is as old as literature itself. In Indian context, we can reread *Panchatantra*, *Hitopadesha*, the *Jataka Tales*, stories from *Vedas* and *Upanishads*, *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata* and regionals folk stories for children that are replete with environmental issues and advocacy for symbiotic relationships between human and non-human world. But considering the present situation of climate crisis or climate emergency there is a deliberate need to generate eco-conscious literature for the next generation besides mere green re/reading of existing literature. When we look at the gamut of contemporary children's literature English which is comparatively new and meagre in comparison to the vernacular Children's literature existent in India, we witness a separate growing body of literature that are exclusively produced to capture the young minds to lead them towards green consciousness, eco-compassion, climate change and preservation of biodiversity. "Writers are building on a rich history of nature writing by the likes of Ruskin Bond, Zai Whitaker, and Ranjit Lal. But rather than just observing the environment, these stories reckon with the crisis confronting it" (Mishra). Manjula Padmanavan, Arup Kumar Dutta, Nilima Sinha, Vandana Singh, Priya Nagrajan, Suniti Namjoshi, Siddhartha Sarma, Anita Roy, Bijal Baccharajani, Zai Whitaker etcetera are famous names of green lit writers. Drawing on eco-criticism, green studies, this paper does an analytical study of contemporary children's green lit with a special focus on Bijal Vachharajani's *A Cloud Called Bhura: Climate Champions to the Rescue* (2019), Anita Roy's *Gravepyres School for the Recently Deceased* (2020) and Zai Whitaker's *Termite Fry* (2023).

A Cloud Called Bhura: Climate Champions to the Rescue is a speculative sci-fi about climate change that takes us to a possible future where a massive brown cloud called Bhura Cloudus takes over the sky of Mumbai and climate chaos is created like health hazards, economic stress, climate migration etc. Four friends Amni, Tammy, Mithil and Andrew unite the children of Mumbai to combat with this grim situation questioning accountability of governance as well as of society as a community. It humorously rather ironically portrayed the complex nexus of political, economic and cultural negligence that creates climate crisis like cloud Bhura. It's a cautionary tale of our impending future "The Earth will be fine...it's humans who are in trouble" (Vachharajani 72). This novel is like a climate change manifesto for children sketching out not only the problems and reasons of climate hazards but also detailing the goals strategies and action for climate justice sustainable development and climate recovery. The children of Mumbai files Public Interest Litigation against the State of Maharashtra for failing to control pollution and thus violating the young generation's constitutional rights to life, liberty, property as well as public trust resources. They start a protest march for climate justice. "The environmental justice movement is a collective term for the efforts of poor communities to defend themselves against the dumping of toxic waste the harmful contamination of their air, food, and water, the loss of their lands and livelihoods, and the indifference of governments and corporations" (Kerridge 531). The author has painstakingly delineated the climate vulnerable sections in this novel through the portrayal of the character Tammy or Tammana who unlike her friends come from a humble background living in a slum area with her ailing grandparents- Ben and Nanu. They are the worst sufferer of climate disaster when the flood described as toxic deluge (Vachharajani 162) comes and wrecks her home. Not only the direct impact of climate induced flood, but also the rising prices of air conditioners or other things affected the poor. Whereas Amni, Mithil deals with the heatwaves by using the air conditioners, Tammy could not do the same. Similarly the farmers are also climate vulnerable communities whose "corps are wilting and harvest are failing" (113) due to climate change. Climate chaos threatened of marine life, birds and animals,

Mixing reality with imagination it makes the events described in the novel relatable. Each chapter is strategically documenting the rising temperature and Air Quality Index. Narrative structure of the novel is interesting as it inserts newspaper clips or page drafts of the children in between the chapters detailing the different perspectives or reactions to climate change from different sections of the society with different interests. Cloud Bhura has been described as an animated object giving it spaces for telling its own points. It speaks soliloquy in a poetic language mocking at the puny human activities. The author doesn't depict it like an alien but animates it to make climate change a palpable reality. Thus, the author has not only portrayed the climate crisis in a menacingly vivid image but has also dragged our notice towards the glitches on the part of administration that instead of addressing the crisis aggravates it. The biggest hurdle in repairing ecological devastation is that neither administration nor society is ready to accept it a reality. In the novel, we see that the Head Minister Mota Bhai presumes cloud Bhura to be part of anti-national inter-border terrorism whereas Pandit Setu believes it to be the incarnation of god and environment minister says not to worry about the cloud Bhura as it is not a killer. The author has rested her faith on the children as she remarks that age has nothing to do with making changes and there are multiple instances in the pages of history where the younger generation has come together to bring revolution in society.

Anita Roy's *Gravepyres School for the Recently Deceased* falls in the category of fantasy fiction genre resembling the western fantasy fictions like *Harry Potter*, *The Hobbit*, *Chronicles of Narnia*. Uniqueness of the novel lies not only in the conception of the storyline borrowed from her Indian theological and cultural backdrop but also in weaving environmental issues in the content. Description of the land of dead is strikingly different from that of our popular conception. Yamaraj, the God of death and justice has been cast here as professor Yama, the principal of the school. Author has mixed cultures taking inspirations from different mythologies for characterizations. The character of Professor Styx has been taken from Greek Mythology which has the eponymous Titan goddess of the river Styx that lies between the world of dead and living. The novel centers around the journey of Jose (a boy from Delhi) and Mishi in their search for seeds of hope. Jose, a little boy enters the school of *Gravepyres* which is a school for someone who has just died. The world of dead is described through the eyes of children, when they die premature death and becomes a transitioner in the very school that teaches 'Mathamythics', 'Cloud forming', 'Scare Studies', Seeing and so on. The school teachers and the curriculum remind one of Hogwarts School of Harry Potter. He is helped out by a little girl named Mishi who helps him as a transitioner in the land of dead. Mishi resembles Peter pan who does not age and helps little children in their adventure in the school. Jose wants to go back to the land of living with the help of the vultures who could travel between the worlds of living and dead (72). But his proposal is rejected by the gigantic talking vultures who calls humans trash dumpers, meat- poisoners. The novel lays bare the grim situation of pollution, toxic food, use of plastic that aggravated catastrophic decline in the population of vultures. Vultures "perform a vital function in the ecosystem cleaning up and disposing of carcasses that can otherwise become a breeding ground for disease" (64). In India especially due to the use of medicines like diclofenac in cattle, vultures are on the verge of extinction leading to ecological imbalance. Recently deceased Jose could easily relate to the "noise pollution, the air pollution, climate change, ecosystems, greenhouse gases, poisoned rivers, plastic seas" causing climate calamities when the talking vultures inform that "little chicks dying before they are born. Nowhere to nest, nowhere to fly and the sickness, the terrible sickness" (73). Moreover, vultures are finding it difficult to cross the lake of Lachrymosa that lies between the world of Living and Dead. The river of time that feeds the lake is dying as something is blocking its way upstream. Jose and Mishi sets out to find the reasons and also to find the seeds of hope (*shraddha beej*) in the eternal spring. Following the trail of the river they meet Ranjubaba, a 'mad old hermit' (122) who becomes their guide to reach the eternal spring. His character is tuned with Indian belief system that is foregrounded in eco sustainable lifestyle as he has declared that it is his dharma to look after his plants, his herbs (143). They found a dam belonging to a company named Plasticorp is blocking the flow of the river. The dam stands there flashing human avarice, unthoughtful actions, eco disasters making "pots of money, no matter what it cost" (121-122). There is an allegorical reference to the dam that is restricting the river of time since the company is 'plasticating' everything by twisting an organism's genetic code and plastic polymers together for "perpetual pristine perfection" (171). It refers to the human invention of plastic

that is alarmingly irreversible damage to environmental health and blocking the natural flow of waterbodies. Besides this allegorical interpretation, an analogous situation can be evinced in the environmental disturbances and degradations that follows the construction of dams and reservoirs as described by Ranjubaba- “they are eating up everything in the forest to build the dam, and they won’t stop until they’ve killed us all” (Roy 122). With a thrilling adventure they manage to bag seeds to hope as well as to open the floodgates to make the river flow again though they could not demolish the dam. With a curious way of ‘Seeing’ by Jose on the day of his final examination, the author brings home the true meaning of synergic life. With Jose we find that we are not separate from anything, everything is woven in a chain and exists in symbiosis.

Zai Whitaker is a prolific writer writing on environmental issues for children’s literature. She comes from the famous family of naturalists, her husband being the famous Snakeman of India, Rom Whitaker and her uncle is Birdman of India, Salm Ali. Along with her husband, she is a founding figure of various organizations and projects like the Irular Women’s Society and the Madras Crocodile Bank/Centre for Herpetology. Since her husband was a famous herpetologist, she has deep knowledge of snake catching communities like Irular (a marginalized tribal community in Tamil Nadu) and has a keen interest in the conservation of snakes and forest life. *Termite Fry* takes us away from the life of a metro city kid to the life of Adivasi children, their perspectives, struggle and engagement with nature from city centered climate hazards to the problems of wild life conservation, on. This novel centers around the life of Mari and Thenee, two siblings of Irular community as they lay bare their unique relationship with nature and environmental conservation. The novel opens with their parents Karadi and Rani taking them to an anthill in a dense forest at night to catch termites. The whole practice of termites hunting exhibits their unique understanding of nature and natural beings. Weaving the story with folk belief, the author has created a green literature that is ingrained in the indigenous fabric of India. Spirit of Goddess Kanaïamma warns them against snake and frog killing and implores the Irular people to conserve frog since it cleanses earth of harmful insects and thus contributing to ecosystem. But the socio-economic standing of the community jeopardizes their relationship with nature. In one hand, they have deep reverence for forest and maintain its sacred secrecy, in another hand they ruthlessly kill the snakes and frogs to sustain themselves. They kill more since they get cheated in the hands of traders like Prabhu and Thole Raja who take advantage of their illiteracy and deceive them. The author has beautifully blended social, economic and political standing of the community with environmental challenges. Indigenous ecological knowledge is the way to sustainable development “...forest knowledge must be shared because it was world knowledge.” (Whitaker 11). “Bullfrogs are becoming rare because of the frog-leg industry” (Whitaker 12). The Irular community possess deep traditional knowledge of nature and biodiversity. They are extraordinarily skilled in snake catching. But they become the very agency of eco-exploitation by Snake skin trade, frog leg trader due to caste discrimination, poverty and illiteracy. Through a very engaging storyline, it explores the impact of Wildlife Protection Act on the life of the community and rests hope of an alternative future in the hands of a child like Thenee who becomes the first to go to school and turns the snakeskin occupation to extracting venom to produce the life-saving anti-venom. Zai Whitekar has broken the stereotype of characterization in Indian English Children’s literature that often homogenizes the diversity of Indian population by focusing on a select group of children coming from mainstream society.

Through the analysis of these three novels the immense potentiality of green lit in the field of India English Children’s literature is perceptible. These authors are reviving the Indian ethos that always stressed on conservation rather than blind consummation of nature. Besides mapping the intersections of childhood experience, ecological relations, indigenous identity, culture and climate crisis, such green lit promotes eco-consciousness and an alternative future. Nivedita Bhattacharya rightly observed that “an environmentally interpretative reading of a literature catering to the imaginations of children can mould them to develop an eco-sensitivity that they will carry into adulthood” (48). All the novels conclude with a positive note stressing on eco-education and information to get climate justice. “Despite the legacy of “softening” in Indian children’s literature, there has recently been some recognition that presenting more realistic social content in Indian children’s literature is desirable” (Superle 13). Children are vulnerable to climate change but they are the ones to would bring changes to the scenario and if they grow up building a natural connection with nature, they will have a positive impact of policy

making and decision-making regarding climate. These novels create that climate imaginaries for children to combat climate emergency.

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Impact of Social Media on Literature

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Abstract: Social media has changed how literary texts are created, shared, experienced, and recognized. This paper explores the mutual effects of social media and modern literary practices. It draws on research from media studies, digital humanities, and sociolinguistics, covering (1) authorship and gatekeeping, (2) form and genre, (3) language and style, (4) readership and communities, and (5) the economics of publishing. It argues that social media serves as both a space and a tool for literature: a space that influences attention, identity, and community, and a tool that allows for different forms, metrics, and visibility through algorithms. The paper examines platform-driven phenomena like microfiction, instapoetry, thread narratives, fanfiction ecosystems, and BookTok as new literary forms influenced by technological limitations and online dynamics. While social media increases access, diversifies voices, and speeds up the sharing process, it also heightens risk through dependence on platforms, data collection, harassment, and shifting trends. The conclusion suggests a research agenda that blends platform analysis, data-driven methods, and close observation of creator communities to place social-media-driven literature within broader histories of serialized literature, letters, and experimental writing.

Keywords: social media; literature; digital humanities; participatory culture; microfiction; instapoetry; BookTok; fanfiction; attention economy; algorithmic curation.

INTRODUCTION:

Since the mid-2000s, literature has become closely connected with networked platforms like blogs, microblogs, social networks, video-sharing sites, and community archives. These platforms do more than just share texts; they help shape them. Limitations on characters, algorithm rankings, and social metrics like likes and shares encourage writers to be brief and direct while also prompting serial releases. Meanwhile, communities of practice like TikTok book clubs, fan writers on AO3, and serialized-fiction writers on Wattpad change how authors build readership and how readers engage in understanding texts. The result is a literary landscape where publishing, marketing, reception, and even writing increasingly depend on these platforms. This paper reviews existing research and debates to address a key question: How has social media altered the production, form, and circulation of literature, and what are the cultural and economic effects of these changes?

Definitions and Scope

Social media refers to platforms that allow users to create content and interact socially (e.g., X/Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, Tumblr, Reddit, Wattpad, AO3, Facebook, Discord). Literature covers a broad range: traditionally published fiction, poetry, and nonfiction; digitally native forms (microfiction, instapoetry, thread essays, video-poetry); and community-written works (fanfiction, collaborative storytelling). The paper focuses on English-speaking contexts while recognizing global involvement and creative expressions.

Historical Background

The rise of social media builds on previous traditions: the periodical serials of the 19th century, the little magazines and zines of the 20th, and the listservs and blogs of the late 1990s and 2000s. Each

earlier medium influenced forms—like Dickens's serial novels, the minimal lyric of small presses, and the diary-style blog essay. Social media continues this trend by increasing frequency and feedback while making it easier for writers and readers to connect.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Gatekeeping and Authorship

Research on participatory culture (Jenkins) and networked publics (boyd) shows how social media redistributes cultural production. Agents, editors, and critics are no longer the sole gatekeepers; recommendations now come from influencers, reader communities, and algorithmic feeds. Writers who are native to these platforms can turn their followings into book deals, but they are also subject to platform rules and unclear recommendation systems.

Genres and Forms

Scholarship in digital humanities identifies new forms tailored to platform limitations: 280-character microfiction, threaded "novels," image-text lyric on Instagram, and TikTok video-poetry. These forms play with serial structure, cliffhangers, direct address, and comments that blend text and audience interaction. Fanfiction communities show extensive world-building, diverse perspectives, and new ways to share and archive stories.

Language and Style

Sociolinguistic research highlights how vernaculars, emojis, GIFs, and various markers merge into literary language. Writers use conversational tones, switch between languages, and embrace screenshot aesthetics; they also engage with platform humor, popular memes, and intertextual connections that assume shared online culture.

Reading Communities and Reception

Platforms allow for highly engaged readerships that include live comments, annotations, remixes, and book clubs that mobilize buying power (e.g., BookTok). Reader input can influence plots through feedback, beta reading, or polling. The social connections between users thus become part of the text's ecology.

Political Economy

Research in publishing examines how social media shifts marketing, discoverability, and risk. Viral moments can boost older titles; however, attention is fleeting and unevenly shared. Data-driven metrics pressure writers to maintain visibility through posting and engagement, in addition to their writing.

Theoretical Framework

1. Remediation (Bolter & Grusin): Social media literature reshapes earlier media (diaries, epistolary fiction, serial publications) while emphasizing immediacy and hypermediacy.
2. Participatory Culture (Jenkins): Readers become co-creators through comments, fan works, and shared authorship.
3. Networked Publics (boyd): Context collapse, persistence, and searchability create unique audience dynamics that affect tone and self-presentation.
4. Attention Economy (Davenport & Beck; Wu): Limited attention encourages strategies that catch interest, shorter works, and ongoing serialization.
5. Gatekeeping and Algorithms: Platform moderation acts as an algorithmic filter that influences canon formation, visibility, and norms.

Research Questions

1. How do platform features (character limits, video length, remix capabilities) influence narrative structure and style?
2. How do communities (hashtags, fandoms, creator groups) affect authorship, editing, and canonization?
3. What are the economic effects of platform-driven discovery for authors and publishers?
4. How do language trends (emojis, memes, vernaculars) move from social media to print and back?
5. What ethical issues (plagiarism, harassment, AI-generated content, content moderation) emerge in social media literary production?

METHODOLOGY:

A mixed-methods approach will include:

- Platform Analysis: Reviewing platform features and policies for selected sites.
- Corpus Study: Collecting a diverse set of social-media-born literary texts (e.g., 10,000 micro-poems, 500 thread stories). Using NLP for topic modeling, sentiment analysis, and stylistic features, combined with close reading.
- Ethnography/Interviews: Conducting semi-structured interviews with platform-native authors, fan writers, and book influencers; observing online book clubs and writing communities.
- Publishing Data: Case studies of works that moved from platform to print, including sales data and marketing strategies when available.
- Comparative Close Reading: Analyzing pairs of texts—social-media-born versus print-first—focusing on changes in voice, pacing, presentation, and audience engagement.

Ethical protocols will include informed consent, privacy protections for non-public posts, and clear handling of pseudonyms.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:

1) Authorship, Gatekeeping, and the “Creator-Author”

Social media reduces the gap between writers and audiences. Authors engage in identity development—through Q&As, behind-the-scenes glimpses, live readings—measured by metrics that reflect audience reception. The work to create visibility can uplift marginalized voices often ignored by traditional channels; however, it can also disadvantage those unable to continuously engage. Changes in algorithms can suddenly disconnect writers from readers, highlighting platform risks.

2) Form: Seriality, Brevity, and the Interface

Platform restrictions encourage unique narrative styles. Threaded fiction resembles serialized stories but is tailored for quick viewing on mobile devices. Instapoetry integrates layout and space within square images, while TikTok poetics combine sound, text overlay, and gestures. These forms promote cliffhangers, direct engagement, and ongoing storytelling, with comments acting as real-time annotations.

3) Language: Vernaculars, Emoji, and Memetic Intertext

Using emojis, reaction GIFs, and meme styles in literature shifts the tone toward intimacy and playfulness. Writers adopt screenshot aesthetics, lowercase formatting, and code-switching to reflect conversational authenticity. Memetic intertext—playing with trending sounds or templates—creates fast intertextual connections, requiring readers to understand the cultural context.

4) Communities: Fandom, Beta Reading, and Collective Intelligence

Fanfiction spaces show how community editing happens through beta readers, comment culture, and tags that function as metadata guiding reader navigation. Community standards—regarding content warnings and tagging—have entered mainstream publishing practices. Collaborative storytelling on platforms like Reddit and Discord emphasizes the collective as a creative force.

5) Economy: From Virality to Viability

Viral success can lead to book deals, tours, and adaptations, while reviving older works shows how social trends impact catalog value. However, virality is not a reliable business model. Diverse revenue streams (Patreon, tipping, subscriptions) reflect attempts to create stable income beyond advertising-driven platforms. Publishers are increasingly looking to these platforms and crafting marketing strategies that utilize reader creators; however, data imbalances keep creators reliant on platform systems.

6) Ethics: Moderation, Ownership, and AI

Platform moderation policies influence what can be published or highlighted, sometimes hindering sensitive topics or marginalized voices. Debates around copyright and plagiarism are heightened in screenshot culture, where sharing can obscure origin. The rise of AI writing tools brings new questions about authorship (co-writing, disclosure, originality) and risks (spam, style duplication). Clear attribution, community practices, and policy development are vital concerns in literature.

7) Global and Local: Transnational Circulation and Vernacular Literatures

Social media allows for cross-border micro-canon, where immigrant and local languages reach

audiences beyond traditional platforms. Underserved and queer voices find spaces through hashtags and community archives, but challenges like language hierarchies and moderation biases remain. Translation methods adapt to short formats, audio-visual elements, and user-annotated texts.

Case Studies (Illustrative)

1. Instapoetry and the Short Lyric: Poets who create short, image-centric pieces for social feeds illustrate how typography and minimalism fit the scrolling format. Discussions about literary worth—accessibility versus craftsmanship—reflect ongoing conflicts between experimental and popular forms.
2. Threaded Microfiction: Writers use connected posts to tell serialized stories with cliffhanger appeal. Reader comments and quoted posts serve as paratexts that influence interpretation.
3. Fanfiction to Print: Works born on platforms that transition to commercial markets reveal routes from community validation to mainstream distribution, along with debates on transformation and credit.
4. BookTok and Backlist Revivals: Reader-influencers create demand spikes that reshape marketing budgets and in-store displays. This trend highlights the importance of peer recommendations over traditional review methods.
5. Web Serials and Community Patronage: Long-form serials hosted on community platforms foster dedicated micro-economies through memberships, merchandise, and direct support.

FINDINGS (SYNTHESIS):

- Aesthetic: Platform features lead to unique literary micro-forms and mixed-media texts.
- Social: Reader engagement redefines authorship and interpretation, emphasizing collaborative efforts.
- Economic: Discoverability is democratized but unstable; platform rules and algorithms significantly influence results.
- Linguistic: Internet language styles and visual elements (emoji, spacing, overlays) increasingly appear in mainstream literature.
- Institutional: Publishers and educators adjust evaluation standards, teaching methods, and marketing to consider platform-driven texts.

Limitations

This study summarizes existing literature and presents a plan for empirical research; it does not include original quantitative data. Platform ecosystems shift quickly, and access to data can be limited by service terms and API rules. Cultural differences (language, region) call for localized studies beyond English-speaking contexts.

Implications and Future Research

- Canon and Curriculum: Include platform-native works in course materials; develop assessments focused on multimodality and participatory aspects.
- Methods: Merge computational text analysis with ethnography to account for both broad trends and specific practices.
- Policy: Advocate for creator rights, open algorithms, and fair moderation to safeguard artistic expression.
- Archives: Develop strategies to preserve transient, interactive texts (comments, edits, collaborations) as integral to the work's identity.
- AI Collaboration: Investigate co-authorship models and transparency norms as generative tools become common.

CONCLUSION:

Social media has not just moved literature online; it has transformed the conditions that shape literary creation. By influencing author-reader relationships, encouraging new forms, and changing how discovery and value are understood, platforms act as both a medium and a marketplace. Recognizing

platform-native genres as valid forms of literary practice prompts critical assessments that consider interface dynamics, community involvement, and data-related issues. Continued empirical research—using computational, ethnographic, and historical methods—will clarify how these trends evolve and how literature keeps changing.

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Emergence of Dalit Autobiography as Discourse of Resistance

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Abstract: It is an attempt to explore Dalit autobiography is one of the most powerful and emerging forms of Dalit Literature in the contemporary India. The genre remains acclaimed and famous because it specially stands for the communities who have been marginalised in the name of religion, economy, caste, morality, culture and society. So soon, it has gained a surprising momentum not only in India but across the world reader. It is also called resistance literature because of the nature of this literature is consistent in rebellion and requires a hope for transformation. The form of autobiography carries pain and oppression of Dalits in the past and present as well. It has powerful impact on Dalit autobiographies writers because they have evanescent and natural impact on writings. In a sense, they clearly tells the stark reality of their lives from generation to generation and present their lives experiences to the readers. Though it is criticised as if it has neither proper forms and content, merely exaggeration of the self history, yet it defends and breaks the silences and has found recognition in the academic, cultural and political spaces in the country as well as abroad. Its popularity is rooted in the telling true experiences, an ongoing struggle, assertion of Dalit identities and an incessant struggle to fight against Dalit lives misrepresented and misdescribed by the mainstream literature of Indian writing and mind. The paper delves into the study of Dalit autobiography to note that it is a proper form of genre of Dalit literature which tells the perspective of Dalitness and writes of Dalit lives.

Keywords: Dalit, Dalit Autobiography, Assertion of Identities, Resistance Literature and Casteist Society.

INTRODUCTION:

Origin

The subject of origin of the term, 'Dalit' is rooted in the sacred books called Hindu Scripture that relates a community not fit for social structure of the society. However, the term of befitting to the social structure of society or to construct the shape of the society is a matter of dialogue, problematics and interpretation. Unfortunately, the scholars of the sacred books have given their words just in providing nomenclature and categorisation for the pleasure of the texts and floral approach to mark binaries of the portrayal of characters in the development of social history of Indian society. Later on, it becomes a belief system of typical Indian society. But those writers were not aware that it is mechanised foolish mechanism in order to strengthen a monolithic approach of analysing the Indian society. They were also not aware that when they have portrayed stereotyped images of Dalit community, there would be a counter balance and emergence of voice from the same marginalised community. They were not aware that there would be struggle against inequality created by them in the form of pluralist voices of the multiple society and the form of the act of writing that remained a literary weapon in order to resist historical, social religious and political oppression. Now, the resistance of lived experience compiled in Dalit autobiographies are acting and fighting for justice in an unequal India society. Dalit resistance is now an ongoing struggle of the form of struggle

as counter measure against the suppressive system and a potent force in the struggle for liberation and Dalit identity assertion. As a matter of fact, the power of struggle is working in response to cunning passages adopted by the scholars in the history and the religious books.

In formal way, the term Dalit is rooted to the established history of recognition and acceptance which means the term 'Dalit' forcefully expresses the oppressed status of Dalit Community. It is postulated by the Dalit consciousness and Dalitness absorbed by Dalit scholars who have exercised their act of writing and perspectives about their own worlds of art and activism. If we talk of literary coinage of the term, it aims at the borrowing from Sanskrit literature which means 'dal', which means to crack open, split, crush, grind, and so forth. It was used for those called "Untouchables" remained outside in the Hindu Hierarchy from generation to generation; historically marginalised and socioeconomically disadvantaged communities in India. The term 'Dalit' has many synonyms in literary discourse that is required for knowledge system of the readers of the Dalit Literature. If we talk about the word 'Untouchability,' it is stated that the term came around 400 CE in Indian society. Of course, the term has been used by Jyotirao Phule, a Marathi scholar and social reformer in the history of Dalit literature. The word carries a Marathi borrowing which means word 'Dalit' for outcaste and Untouchable. But the term has been also popularised by Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar in his writings and speeches which are treated by Dalit readers as resources of Dalit Literature. It is also named in the same fashion as as the Depressed Classes/Scheduled Castes people in Indian Census of the time. Later on, Nursinh Mehta, a literary poet and religious reformer used the term Harijan or Children of God appreciated and accepted by MK Gandhi. In this way, these are the notable terms for Dalit Community and our Constitution has recognised to safeguard for Dalit interest and uplift their Lives.

DALIT LITERATURE:

Coming to the definition of Dalit Literature is a matter of many scholarly lines and expressions which accentuate the meaning and stark reality of Dalit community. The term Dalit literature came for the first time into existence in 1958 in a Dalit Literature seminar in Bombay and later on its came into prominence in 1972 by group of Marathi Literary figures and activists who formed organisations called 'Dalit Panther.' It is the same educated youths group who led a social movement in Maharashtra through their art and activism to fight caste-based oppression and discrimination. The group consist of educated Dalit youths who have militant notions, radical methods and literature to demand an egalitarian society for historically marginalised community called Untouchables. Their method of protest were quite distinct, they used to protest through boycotting elections, strengthening mass demonstration and publish the recorded history of militants arts and activism. This movement integrates poetry, stories and other forms of literary genres to articulate their voices against Dalit suppression.

Dalit literature has emerged as a discipline of a comprehensive study of history of Dalits and their lived experiences under the oppressive agency prevalent in the past and present as well. It has been a long history of multiple marginalities in terms of morality, economy, religion e.t.c.. In an extensive form, it is also study of subaltern voices which includes women, minorities, students and rickshaw pullers and so on. It can not be denied, the study takes representation of those who don't have own history or people without history. To have emphasis on the literary discourse in contemporary theory and criticism more particularly the study of Marxism, study from the margins and postcolonial study, Dalit literature is acclaimed worldwide the study of humanity, sociopolitical uplift of Dalits and their lives through art and activism mediated by the possible representations, historical and ahistorical trace of time.

Sharan Kumar Limbale quotes Arjun Dangle, the Marathi Dalit scholar's word to define Dalit Literature:

Dalit Literature is marked by revolt and negativism, since it is closely associated with the hopes for freedom by a group of people who as untouchables, are victims of social, economic and cultural inequality. (Limbale 1, 2004)

He further accepts other appropriate nature for the definition of Dalit literature by quoting Dangle's analysis on the influence of Ambedkar and his project for uplift of Untouchables and their political awareness.

His revolutionary ideas stirred into action, all the Dalits of Maharashtra and gave them a new self-respect. Dalit literature is nothing but the literary expression of this awareness." (1)

In addition to this, the most clear cut definition of Dalit Literature comes through the broader analysis of Dalit Literature through Anrjun dangle in his the most most famous book. *Poisoned Bread*.

"Dalit literature is the literature produced by the Dalit consciousness. Human freedom is the inspiration behind it. That is its implied value. The nature of this literature consists in a rebellion against the suppression and humiliation suffered by the Dalits-in the past and even at present-in the frame work of the varna system...As Dalit sensibility seeks to bring about compatible changes in the social consciousness, it is rebellious as well as fundamentally optimistic and revolutionary." (Dangle 267 1992)

Dangle is meant that the broader spectrum of Dalit writings is based on Dalit consciousness but it is also taken as a revolt against attitude of the casteist society. It is clear that Dalit problems can not be resolved until Non-Dalits change their attitudes towards Dalit Problems and challenges. To add on more, Dalits scholars need to have a rebellion approach against the suppression and humiliation suffered by them and put into the form of writing so that ongoing protest and struggle can be lesson for witnessing the horrible past.

In the above context of protest and struggle of Dalits, Sharat Chandra Muktibodh defines Dalit Literature in his essay "What is Dalit Literature?"

The nature of Dalit consciousness is obviously not subjective. It is true that pains and pleasures are lived and experienced by individuals alone but the sufferings of Dalits are common reasons. Hence their content is essentially social." (Muktibodh 1992:267)

Muktibodh has given a microscopic study of Dalit Literature in which he takes a survey of Dalit demography which is marked by lives under wretchedness and poverty in comparison with non-Dalit lives in Indian society. Further, Daya Pawar takes Dalit Literature in his literary account by stating: that Dalit consciousness is a revolutionary feeling which goes against middle class society. It is a system which makes sympathy about downtrodden people (Pawar: 29) But Dalit Literature struggled a lot for the soul of humanity. It passed almost 2000 years that they are now able to give self expression, self existence and their assertion. Dalit literature is now a political agenda to fight for the economic and social rights. Sharan Kumar Limbale says: The burning cry of untouchables against the injustices of thousand years (Limbale 2003: IV) it is clear that Dalit Literature has now a corpus of literary productions regarding the definition and Dalit literary history produced by many Dalit and non-Dalit scholars as follow Daya Pawar, Shran Kumar Limbale, Shanker Rao Kharat, Baby Kamble, Kumud Pawade, Arjun Dangle, Omprakash Valmiki, Vasant Moon, Rohinton Mistry, Arundhato Roy, Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao and their works. In defining Dalit literary history, there has been a separate yardstick of empathy and sympathy in representation.

DALIT AUTOBIOGRAPHIES

In general frame, autobiography is a genre which is written to react to one's own life; it is a body of self knowledge that comes to an individual when he/she thinks about himself and is put into an art form. The genre was developed in the history of English Literature at the end of the eighteen century. Now, it leaves a natural impact on the writers to write what their own literary history. In the context of resistant discourse, the genre is associated with the external manifestation of internal turmoil, the idea is more suitably lies for Dalit writers. To glance on Dalit writers, they are writing their own histories of oppression and humiliations suffered in the past and the present as well. This is more impactful weapon to write about self and address their issues across the world readers. In one aspect, reading Dalit

autobiography is reading social history of Indian society. Then, we witness the history of the structural violence on Dalits community due to caste-based politics and *varnashramdharma*. Ramesh Kumar gives an emphasis for the literary production of Dalit scholars as it is: “an expression of caste instead of individuals. It challenges the traditional literary aesthetics, ideologies, and mainstream literature ‘which does not capture the reality of the oppressed.’” (Ramesh 28) He is meant that Dalit writing should have their own literary yardsticks, they must have their own perspective in writing rather be directed by the mainstream of literature. As a matter of fact, the mainstream of literature does not cover up the stark reality of Dalit lives on the contrary there has been an effort to hide non -propagation and communication.

The method of Dalit autobiography lies in its own yardstick, it does not only share the lived experiences as an individual but it is collective documentation of the entire community. It is a body of work and documentation of the lived experiences of Dalits which is treated as natural and powerful genre of resistance discourse against the mainstream literature and oppressive society. The beauty of Dalit autobiography is that the ‘individual self’ gets identified with ‘collective self’ whereas the subject of identity assertion is made into community awareness. Nayar writes

The Dalits face several oppressive social forces in society. Writing of autobiography by the Dalit is a form of resistance against various forms of oppression. Dalit autobiographical narratives are corporeal- isolation –isolation a making real through the body of social suffering.”(Nayar 2)

It gives an impression that the fundamental pursuit of Dalit writing is a resistance discourse against an unequal society in India. Of course, it plays an important role in constructing and shaping Dalit identity, solidarity and attention of the world readers who actually give empathy to subaltern voices. The genre remains a concurrent flow of literary production, until the attitude of the hierarchical forces will remain changed.

In “Joothan,” Valmiki writes:

We need an ongoing struggle, and a consciousness of struggle, a consciousness that brings revolutionary change both in the outside world and in our hearts, a consciousness that leads the process of social change. (Valmiki x)

He shares an unified ideology of Dalit to continue a consciousness of struggle in order to bring a compatible change in he casteist society. The ongoing struggle project is only the process of social change. He is meant in especial reference to his text “Joothan” in which he gives emphasis on childhood and upbringing of his life in hardship and discriminatory society and system. As a result, he comes out with idea of documenting the lived experiences of his life.

Dalit autobiography puts resistant weapon in understanding their experiences, events and life that are sources for writing and talking to their lives. It plays an important role to revisit and review Dalit history and history in general about Dalits. In this way, the recognition of their own lives contest the mainstream literature and reject the established social structure. A change and revolution remains possible when Dalits writers talk about their literature in order to revolt against the story of pain, oppression and general exploitation. The culture of writing by Dalit scholars will invite and gain attention of the worldwide readers to read between the lines of Dalit writings. So, culture of writing is instrumental in order to disseminate their works to the world literature and accept the world writers for their representation. They should also not limit their works of art in vernacular language but the writer in English as well along with translation and interpretation of their vernacular language literary assets. As a matte of fact, the most of the Dalit autobiographies has been written in Marathi, Kannada, Hindi and Telugu that need be translated into internationally recognised languages in a understanding and historicising Dalit autobiographies.

Form and Structure

Dalit biography comes under a massive attach of criticism for its form and structure. Most of the svarna critics don’t accept Dalit autobiography because they have different yardsticks of analysing literature. They allege that Dalit autobiographies have poor content, broken languages and lemon

squeezing of their ideas that don't accord to the demand of the mainstream literature in India. They blame:

Dalit autobiographies are unstructured, artless outpourings of Dalit writers' unmediated experience and have become repetitive and stereotypical. (Valmiki xxviii)

To accentuate on the above allegation regarding content and poor Grammarology is just insignificant and apparently the part of the conspiracy theory. The central idea of the conspiracy is that it doesn't accept the underlying rules of the mainstream literature. It remains neither philosophical nor discursive thought of satyam, Shiva and Sundram.

Omprakash Valmiki defends the authenticity of Dalit autobiography and responses to the criticism forcibly applied on the genre:

"Dalit writers should write autobiographies so that not only our history will stay alive, but also our true portrayals of wrongdoers. Dalit autobiographies will provide inspiration to our future generation." (xxviii)

Valmiki mainly concerns herewith Dalit autobiography has its own scripts and is exposing the underlying structures of the mainstream of literature which favour the interest of the majoritarianism. It also exposes the hypocrisy of religion and historical cunning passage for ruling out Dalit significance to the social history of Indian society. This is the major cause for rejection of this genre from savanna critics

He further highlights that Dalit autobiography must be the favourite genre for Dalit scholars because they can document their lives experiences, history and perspective of Dalitness rooted in them. He writes

those experiences that did not find a place in literary representations. Experiences like Valmiki, his birth and growing up in the untouchable caste of Chuhra, the heroic struggle that he waged to survive his preordained life of perpetual physical and mental persecution and his transformation into a speaking subjects and recorder of the oppression and exploitation he endured, not only as an individual but also as a member of a stigmatised and oppressed community, had never been represented in the annals of Hindi Literature. (Valmiki xxx)

He undergoes a perpetual paradox of exploring his own identity and he comes an extreme pain whenever her members all those days of suffering and oppression perpetuated by his classroom teacher. It also puts in grief whenever he thinks, he was a silent spectator at the erasure of his own history and so does his community.

There are numerous Dalit autobiographies that tell the tale of theories and practices of this genre highlighting an individual and collective documentations of Dalit lives. The most representative text is Omprakash Valmiki's *Joothan* that presents the birth and growing up of Valmiki in the untouchable caste of Chuhra, the heroic struggle against the mental and physical persecution, enduring oppression and exploitation and the dignified existence in the stigmatised and oppressed community. It is notable to trigger Kamble's "The Prison We Broke," provides a graphic insight into the oppressive caste and patriarchal tenets of the Indian society, but nowhere does the writing descend to self-pity. At a glance, Faustina Bama's *Sangati* in which she invites the oppressed groups to form solidarity and end sexist oppression outside and inside home. We can not ignore Kumud Pawde's "The Story of My Sanskrit" (*Antasphot*) presents the social, economic and political implication of untouchability in the post independent India. It talks about a living history of the hypocrisy of the society and some renowned leaders of the post-independent India. Similarly, it is worth taking into account another autobiography-Shankarrao Kharat's "A Corpse in the Well" demands for justice for his father who was forced to carry up a corpse in the well because he was a Dalit. In addition to this, there are more that enrich Dalit autobiography genres- Sharan Kumar Limbale's *Hindu*, presents narratives of India's successes and failures as a nation in terms of the situation of Dalits in the society, Daya Pawar's *Baluta* reflects caste violence and practice of untouchability in his Pawar's life, Urmila Pawar's *The Weave of My Life* that

narrates the weave of pain, suffering and agony rerouting three generation of Dalit women to overcome the burden caste and Vasant Moon's *Growing up Untouchable in India: A Dalit Autobiography* illuminates the inescapable hierarchy imposed by caste.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The present article is based on the secondary sources which is contextualised by some social and political and literary moves in order to articulate the expression of resistance discourse of Dalit autobiographies. These are Humanism, Existentialism and Marxism which are the part of Dalit Literature overall. It is noted above that Dalit literature is a byproduct of social consciousness, it aims at the the proper study of mankind and fight for a dignified life. It also strikes Dalits to have their writings based on their own existence that is the central theme of the writing and which is frame to the social content as well and at the end marxism is applied to produce revolution in all context of Dalit lives.

NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF RESEARCH PROBLEMS

- Dalit Life is an ongoing struggle from generation to generation that demands for a just and egalitarian society.
- We need to disseminate Dalit discourse, we need to talk about representation and inclusivity of identities and cultures and so does their literature.
- Dalit Lives matter because they need to live a dignified life overcoming all inequality and misdescription and misrepresentation of Dalits.

CONCLUSION:

The emergence of Dalit literature has been a significant development in the history of Indian literature. Particularly, the emergence of Dalit autobiography adds a new genre to Dalit literature, it talks about Dalit lives and recalls oppression and humiliation suffered by Dalits in the past and at the present through writings. It presents the stark reality of the Dalit Lives and image of Dalit reality. Understanding and analysing Dalit autobiography, we find that narratives are not only tale of an individual but the collective documentations of Dalit community that unveils memories, pain, oppression and suffering. Dalit literature continues to evolve, inspiring and empowering generations of writers and readers alike. Exploring the meaning of the title of the papers, it gives impression, the particular genre is rich in content and form and can not be left out of the box of the mainstream literature.

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Mathematics in Society, Literature, and Global Media: Bridging Disciplines for Human Advancement

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Abstract: *Mathematics is far more than a scientific discipline; it is a universal language that permeates society, literature, philosophy, and global media. From the poetic symbolism of numbers in ancient texts to the algorithmic foundations of today's digital platforms, mathematics has continually bridged the gap between abstract reasoning and human experience. It provides a framework for critical thinking, ethical decision-making, and creative expression, shaping narratives in literature, patterns in art, and innovations in media technologies. Across civilizations, mathematical thought has guided social organization, informed economic and political systems, and enabled cross-cultural communication through shared logical structures. In the contemporary world, the integration of mathematics with information technology and global media has amplified its role in education, development, and collective problem-solving—whether through data-driven storytelling, artificial intelligence, or cross-disciplinary collaboration. This article explores these intersections, demonstrating that mathematics is not only the foundation of scientific progress but also a transformative force that connects cultures, advances societies, and enriches the global exchange of ideas.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

Mathematics has often been described as the "language of the universe" (Devlin, 2000). While traditionally associated with logic, precision, and scientific advancement, mathematics also extends into domains that may seem non-quantitative, such as literature, cultural narratives, and the global media landscape. Throughout history, mathematics has played a dual role: both as a tool of calculation and as a symbolic, philosophical, and artistic medium.

In today's interconnected digital world, mathematics is not confined to classrooms and laboratories—it is embedded in the algorithms that curate our media, the structures that shape economies, and the metaphors that enrich literary expression. This paper aims to investigate how mathematics bridges disciplines, influences human creativity, and advances collective progress across society and culture.

2. MATHEMATICS AND SOCIETY:

2.1 Historical Foundations

Civilizations such as Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, and Greece employed mathematics not only for trade and astronomy but also for structuring governance, law, and social systems. For instance, the Sulbasutras in ancient India encoded geometrical knowledge within ritualistic and social contexts, while Greek mathematics shaped democratic and philosophical discourse.

2.2 Social Organization and Ethics

Mathematics underpins justice systems (via probability, logic, and statistics), economic planning (through financial mathematics and optimization), and democratic structures (e.g., voting theory, game theory). It provides an objective lens for ethical decision-making in public policy, allowing societies to balance fairness, efficiency, and inclusivity.

2.3 Education and Empowerment

Education in mathematics equips individuals with analytical and critical thinking skills that empower citizens in everyday decision-making. Moreover, mathematical literacy fosters inclusivity in the digital age, bridging gaps between technological elites and marginalized groups.

3. MATHEMATICS IN LITERATURE AND CULTURE:

3.1 Symbolism of Numbers

Literature often uses numbers as symbols of power, divinity, or mystery. In Dante's Divine Comedy, the structure of the poem reflects precise mathematical patterns, while Indian epics like the Mahabharata employ numerical symbolism to convey moral lessons.

3.2 Mathematical Narratives in Modern Literature

Authors such as Lewis Carroll, himself a mathematician, embedded mathematical logic in Alice's Adventures in Wonderland. Contemporary literature continues this trend, weaving themes of infinity, chaos, and symmetry into narrative structures.

3.3 Philosophy and Human Imagination

Philosophers such as Pythagoras, Descartes, and Bertrand Russell emphasized the deep relationship between mathematics and human thought. Mathematics, therefore, is not only descriptive but also imaginative, extending beyond numbers to shape our worldview.

4. MATHEMATICS AND GLOBAL MEDIA:

4.1 The Algorithmic Age

Global media is powered by algorithms, which are essentially mathematical constructs. Recommendation systems in platforms like YouTube or Netflix use probability, linear algebra, and machine learning to personalize user experience (Manovich, 2001).

4.2 Data-Driven Storytelling

Journalism and media increasingly use statistics, infographics, and data visualization to tell stories. This integration of mathematics enhances clarity, transparency, and impact, especially in areas such as climate change, pandemics, and social justice.

4.3 Artificial Intelligence and Creativity

Artificial intelligence, rooted in mathematical models, has begun influencing literature, art, and film production. Machine learning not only processes information but also co-creates narratives, raising philosophical questions about authorship and originality.

5. INTERDISCIPLINARY BRIDGES:

5.1 Cross-Cultural Communication

Mathematics provides a neutral, universal framework that transcends linguistic and cultural boundaries. Shared mathematical knowledge enables scientific cooperation and cultural exchange on global issues such as space exploration, pandemics, and climate modeling.

5.2 Technological Innovation

From encryption in digital communications to blockchain in financial systems, mathematical advances shape the future of information security, commerce, and governance. These innovations demonstrate how mathematical research directly influences societal structures.

5.3 Towards Human Advancement

Mathematics, when integrated with media and literature, nurtures holistic development. It fosters both rational analysis and creative imagination, guiding humanity toward a balanced model of progress where science, art, and culture reinforce one another.

6. CHALLENGES AND ETHICAL DIMENSIONS:

Despite its transformative power, mathematics in media and society raises ethical concerns:

Bias in Algorithms: Mathematical models can perpetuate inequalities if datasets are biased.

Over-Reliance on Quantification: Human values cannot always be reduced to numbers.

Accessibility: Mathematical literacy remains uneven across regions, risking digital divides.

Addressing these challenges requires interdisciplinary dialogue, ethical frameworks, and inclusive education policies.

7. CONCLUSION:

Mathematics transcends its conventional boundaries to serve as a bridge between society, literature, and global media. It is not merely a technical tool but a cultural force that shapes narratives, informs ethical decisions, and drives innovation. By embracing mathematics as both a scientific and humanistic discipline, societies can foster collective advancement, nurture creativity, and strengthen global communication. The 21st century, marked by rapid technological growth and global interconnectedness, calls for a renewed understanding of mathematics—not as an isolated subject but as a living language that unites knowledge, cultures, and humanity itself.

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Colonizing the Mind and Sexualizing the Body: The Destiny of Dalit Women in The Prison We Broke

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Abstract: This paper explores how the complex process of colonization of mind and sexualisation of body in Baby Kamble's autobiographical narrative *The Prison We Broke*, foregrounds the ways in which a Dalit woman's body and mind are subjected to both external domination and internalized oppression. Mental colonization is the assimilation or acceptance of a dominant group's ideology by marginalized people to the point where they begin to view their identity, worth, and potential through the lens of those in power. "Every colonized people.... in whose soul an inferiority complex has been created by the death and burial of its local cultural originality- ..." (18) *Black Skin White Mask* (1952). To Fanon when one is colonized deeply, one begins to adopt the worldview imposed upon them by the colonizer blindly and sometimes forcefully. Sexualizing the body is the act of emphasizing the sexual nature of a person or body treating them as a sex object, or reducing their worth to their physical appearance or sexiness rather than their other qualities. A Dalit woman - the authoress herself in "*The Prison We Broke*" was in such social condition that she was expected to believe that her destiny depends on how beautifully she presents herself, both physically and mentally to the patriarchal society, which is, on the other hand, dominated and colonized by the upper class of the society.

Key terms: Colonizing the mind, Commodification of Body, Theophobia, Religious Fanaticism.

INTRODUCTION:

The concept, 'Colonizing the Mind' touches on the view that recounts the internalized attitudes of cultural or ethnic inferiority felt by the people as a result of colonialism. In the context of the psychological dimensions of colonialism a Martinique-born psychiatrist and philosopher Frantz Fanon in his *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952) highlights how the colonial system creates a profound sense of inadequacy and self-hatred in the colonized. Fanon's work focuses on the colonized mind which becomes a battleground for identity, caught between a devalued indigenous self and an unattainable colonial ideal. "What is often called the black soul is a white man's artefact" (15)--- *Black Skin White Mask*. The author unveils the mental and emotional instability that underpins colonial interactions. A South African, anti-apartheid activist Stev Biko in his essay *White Racism and Black Consciousness* (1971) states that the most potent weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed.

"Sexualizing the Body" means viewing, presenting, or treating a person's body, primarily in terms of their sexual appeal, often outside of their full human context. Sexualisation of body is not empowerment. It is conformity to an image created for someone else's pleasure, not for a person's own liberation. Women's body is often treated as commodity. The commodification of body, particularly female body, is nothing but objectifying it; which can be bought, sold and exploited whenever required. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie opines that when you reduce a woman's body to a sexual object, you erase her intellect, her voice, and her humanity.

In contemporary U.S. culture, media frequently conveys objectifying messages about girls and women, which can lead to what is termed "internalized sexualization"—the belief that being sexually attractive to men is central to a girl's value and identity. McKenney and Bigler conducted two studies with adolescent girls aged 10 to 15 (N = 330). and found that higher levels of internalized sexualization

were significantly associated with the choice to wear more sexualized clothing (Study 1), and with increased levels of body surveillance and body shame (Study 2). These findings suggest that internalized beliefs about sexual attractiveness can have tangible effects on both appearance-related behaviour and psychological well-being in young girls.

In literature, history, and contemporary society, Dalit women's bodies have been objectified, controlled, and commodified, not only because of their gender but also because of their caste identity. The sexualization of Dalit women's bodies is a complex intersection of gendered violence, caste oppression, and patriarchal dominance. The commodification of a Dalit woman's body is also well presented in the attitude of the priest Kali Nath to Sohini in M.R. Anand's *Untouchable* (1935). The upper class patriarchy often denies the equal marital status for a Dalit woman in their society; but it is often observed that they (the upper class patriarchy) do not hesitate to take advantage of a female body if they have any opportunity, which is quite bare in character of Sohini. Due to patriarchy and class system in society the Dalit women is knowingly or unknowingly being colonised psychologically. A Dalit woman cannot help but think that their Destiny depends on how they will behave and become the part of pleasure required in the patriarchal society.

The etymology of the term 'Dalit' can be traced to the root word *dal* in Sanskrit, which means to crack, split, be broken or torn asunder, trodden down, scattered, crushed, destroyed, and is understood in all the Indian languages that are derived from Sanskrit. As a noun and adjective, 'Dalit' can be used for all genders: masculine, feminine and neuter. In the words of A. P. Nirmal, who pioneered Dalit theology in India, 'the Dalit are 1) the broken, the torn, the rent, the burst, the split; 2) the opened, the expanded; 3) the bisected; 4) the driven asunder, the dispelled, the scattered; 5) the downtrodden, the crushed, the destroyed; and 6) the manifested, the displayed' (139).

In *The Prison We Broke* Baby Kamble highlights how the Brahminical patriarchy and the prevalent hegemony shapes the psyche of the Dalit community. In the case of religious ceremony Brahmins create all the norms and customs in such a way that they can easily create a sense of theophobia within the Dalit community. This sense works as tool to subdue them. "Hey you, are you women from good families or female donkeys? Go and fetch the kumkum box like a good wife. Give the mother her due! It is because of your stupid ignorance that the mother is angry (24)." Here an old man trying to create fear within their mind. Such activities often sow the seeds of religious trauma for the women. They start to believe on man-made religion. On the other hand, responsibilities and ritual activities are primarily done by the women in family. The Brahmins also generate caste based inferiority in the mind of the Dalit. Women immensely believe on such things. " Then one possessed women would sit down sobbing and another would roll her eyes and grind her teeth at him and shower curses on his head"(22). This psychological and psychiatric condition manifests a trance-like state of the possessed woman. The word "possessed" here can be interpreted literally or metaphorically. Literally, it might refer to women being believed to be "possessed" by spirits, as was often claimed when women showed signs of extreme distress or mental illness — especially in superstitious or rural communities. Metaphorically, it may refer to a woman overloaded with sorrow, rage and trauma. The image of her sitting and sobbing reflects a state of helplessness and deep sorrow.

Dalit women doubly marginalized: first by upper caste oppression and second by the male dominance within their own family. Untouchability significantly increases the sufferings of Dalit women by subjecting them to multiple layers of discrimination — based on caste, gender, and often class. This intersectionality makes their experiences more oppressive. "In the temple, the Brahmins had surrounded the idol of Vitthal to protect it from the polluting touch of the Mahar. Many wielded lathis."(126) This line is talking about a Hindu temple where the idol of the god Vitthal (a form of Krishna or Vishnu) is kept. The Brahmins (upper-caste priests) made a circle around the idol so that the Mahars (an "untouchable" caste) could not go near it because of the old, wrong belief in untouchability. The line "Many wielded lathi." signifies the outburst of protecting the irrational and traditional rule. Taking care of all the family members in every possible way is expected from a woman without looking into their own physical and mental condition. They have to listen to what the male and elders of the family asked them to do. They are, on the other hand, dominated by the upper class of the society. Sometimes, they have to go to their parental home at the time of their delivery for their better nourishment. They are to take care of them all but none for women even in times of dire necessity.

In India the Dalit were exploited in society primarily because of the strict and rigid rules of Hindu philosophy. In Hinduism a women's role has been seen as supporting force in the family. The religious fanaticism of Hinduism creates some norms which separates the elite class from the denigrated. "Hindu philosophy had discarded us as dirt thrown us into their garbage pit, on the outskirts of the village." (18). The problems of untouchability, caste based discrimination and the prevalence of static rules create an unprivileged and oppressed class i.e. Dalit. Everyone should have equal access to education, regardless of their caste or gender. But, under the shadow of castism, the Dalit (including Mahars) were traditionally denied access to education. In the colonial period, though some educational reforms began under British rule, access for Mahar women remained limited due to social stigma and lack of institutional support. The Dalit students had no right to sit together with the students of the upper class in school. "All the girls in the class had benches to sit except us Mahar girls. We had to sit on the floor in the corner of the classroom like diseased puppies." (129). The line painfully captures the humiliation, exclusion, and dehumanization faced by Dalit girls in school due to caste discrimination. It reflects how the oppressive caste system invades even the most basic spaces of childhood and education, reinforcing a lifelong sense of inferiority and social rejection. Denying them access to education is a powerful means of colonizing the way of thinking, as education fosters critical thinking and the pursuit of rational inquiry.

Traditionally, caste norms confined Dalit to low-paying, stigmatized jobs (e.g., leather work, sanitation). Social stigma prevented upward occupational mobility and discouraged participation in mainstream professions. Untouchability was so much intensified in the society that the upper class often refuse to purchase any product from the Dalit community. "The high caste in the village will not buy milk from us. (133). The Dalit were not devoid of economic exploitation due to their being lower caste and contemporary untouchability in society. Kamble also refers to the controlling force through marriage and motherhood showing how the body is sexualized as a reproductive tool: childbearing becomes a duty, not a choice. She explores the moral policing of women's bodies, even by other women in the community. They do not know the meaning of marriage." For girls marriage means nothing but calamity." (93). The marriage becomes calamity because a "seven- year- old bride " (88) cannot know the actual meaning of marriage; they have just knowledge of sound and chaos of marriage, not the knowledge of a bride. The institution of marriage can readily serve as a pathway into the commodification of women. The foundation stage is the ideal time to mould anything into its expected form. . "Young girls, hardly eight or nine or ten years old were brought home as daughter -in- law." (87). Girls, at their tender age, believe in what their elders says them to do; they are dependent on the elders to take decision in their life. In this regard Kamble highlights the influence of child marriage to subjugate the Dalit women. They accept the right and the wrong imposed on them by society. Women are often conditioned to enhance and present their bodies in ways that cater to male desire rather than for their own self-expression or personal satisfaction. . Thus, sexualization of a woman's body has been going on for a long time very easily. They are raised to embody the ideals of the patriarchy, since their survival depends on compliance given by male.

CONCLUSION:

. Through the autobiographical voice of Baby Kamble, *The Prison We Broke* illustrates how the internalization of Brahminical patriarchy traps Dalit women in a prison of mental subjugation, while their bodies are sites of both control and resistance. Yet, in narrating her story, Kamble tried to disrupt this colonization—her writing becomes a radical act of reclaiming subjectivity. The article ultimately compels readers to reconsider the framework of feminist and caste studies, asserting that true emancipation must involve listening to, and learning from the lived experiences of Dalit women. In breaking the prison of silence and shame, Kamble not only liberates herself but also provides a blueprint for collective resistance. Here it has been highlighted that how caste and gender intersect to oppress Dalit women not only socially and economically, but also psychologically and physically

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Cyber-Geographies of Everyday Life: A Comparative Study of Spatial Shifts in Work, Education, and Social Interaction in Ara, Bihar (2010–2025)

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Abstract: Over the last fifteen years, the diffusion of cyber technologies has significantly reshaped the everyday geographies of small Indian cities. This paper examines the city of **Ara, Bihar**, as a case study to trace the transition from a period of limited digital exposure (2010) to the present digitally integrated era (2025). The research focuses on three key domains—**work, education, and social interaction**—to explore how the arrival and expansion of platforms such as WhatsApp, Zoom, and Google Meet have altered spatial practices and routines. In 2010, Ara's digital life was largely confined to cyber cafés, limited internet penetration, and face-to-face modes of work, education, and social exchange. Workplaces and schools operated exclusively within physical spaces, while social interaction centered around markets, fairs, and community gatherings. In contrast, by 2025 was evolved into a **multifunctional digital hub**, serving simultaneously as an office, classroom, and space. The proliferation of mobile, connectivity while redefining the role of public and semi-public spaces such as cafés and coaching centers. The study employs online learning options, and social media platforms has enabled new forms of a mixed-method approach, combining household surveys, interviews with long-term residents and archival data on internet access. Findings highlight both the **opportunities and inequalities** of digital integration: while cyber technologies have expanded educational access, diversified work opportunities, and facilitated new modes of social interaction, persistent gaps remain along urban-rural, gender, and socio-economic lines. The paper contributes to the emerging scholarship on **cyber-geographies**, demonstrating how even smaller Indian cities are negotiating the complex interplay between physical and digital spaces in everyday life.

Keywords: Cyber-geography, Spatial shifts, Online education, Social media and community spaces, Remote work.

INTRODUCTION:

The rapid diffusion of digital technologies in the twenty-first century has profoundly reshaped the geographies of everyday life. Across the Global South, digital infrastructures—ranging from mobile internet to social media platforms—have not only reconfigured economic activities but also redefined the spatial practices of education, work, and social interaction (Graham, 2014; Zook, 2017). The notion of “cyber-geographies” captures this hybridization of the digital and the material, where physical places are increasingly mediated by virtual flows of information and connectivity (Kitchin, Dodge, & Perkins, 2011). In India, where over 800 million people now use the internet (Telecom Regulatory Authority of India [TRAI], 2024), the growth of digital platforms has contributed to new forms of spatial organization, challenging traditional boundaries between public and private spheres. While much scholarship on digital transformations has concentrated on metropolitan centers such as Delhi, Mumbai, and Bengaluru (Datta, 2019; Rathi & Tandon, 2022), smaller cities and peri-urban contexts have

received comparatively less attention. Yet, it is precisely in these spaces—often characterized by uneven infrastructures, socio-economic inequalities, and layered cultural practices—that the encounter between the physical and the digital becomes most dynamic. Ara, the district headquarters of Bhojpur in Bihar, exemplifies this trajectory. With limited exposure to cyber technologies in 2010, Ara’s digital culture was largely restricted to cyber cafés and public booths, primarily serving young men preparing for competitive examinations or seeking employment information. By 2025, however, Ara has witnessed an accelerated digital integration, driven by affordable smartphones, the spread of mobile internet, and the pandemic-induced expansion of online education and work-from-home practices. The transformation of everyday spaces in Ara reflects broader national and global processes. Homes, once primarily domestic domains, have evolved into multifunctional hubs serving as classrooms, offices, and social arenas (Shaw & Graham, 2017). Public spaces such as markets, coaching centers, and cafés have adapted to hybrid practices, balancing face-to-face interactions with online engagements (Madianou, 2016). At the same time, persistent digital divides—especially across lines of gender, caste, and economic status—have shaped who benefits from these spatial shifts and who remains marginalized (Hilbert, 2011; Mahapatra & Singh, 2021). This paper situates Ara within the growing body of cyber-geography research by offering a comparative temporal analysis of spatial shifts between 2010 and 2025. It examines three interlinked domains—work, education, and social interaction—to trace how digital technologies have reconstituted everyday geographies in small Indian cities. In doing so, it responds to recent calls in urban and digital geography to expand the empirical focus beyond metropolitan areas and to investigate how “ordinary cities” in the Global South negotiate technological change (Robinson, 2006; Graham & Dutton, 2019). The study thus contributes not only to understanding the specificities of Bhojpur but also to theorizing the uneven geographies of cyber integration in emerging urban contexts.

Aim

To examine how digital technologies have reconfigured the everyday geographies of Ara, Bhojpur (Bihar), by tracing spatial shifts in work, education, and social interaction between 2010 and 2025

Objectives

1. **Analyze spatial shifts in work practices** – from traditional offices and markets to hybrid and home-based digital workspaces.
2. **Examine transformations in education** – tracing the transition from physical classrooms and coaching centers to online and blended learning environments.
3. **Study changes in social interaction** – comparing pre-digital (2010) face-to-face gatherings with hybrid social networks facilitated by WhatsApp, Facebook, and other platforms in 2025.

METHODOLOGY:

Study Area - The research was conducted in Ara, Bhojpur district, Bihar, a small but rapidly urbanizing regional center. Ara presents an illustrative case of how digital technologies diffuse into non-metropolitan urban spaces in the Global South.

Research Design - The study employs a mixed-method research design, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches.

Sample and Sample Size - A total of 106 respondents were surveyed using a structured questionnaire distributed through Google Forms. The majority of respondents were college students and young adults (18–25 years), The sample also included a smaller proportion of older age groups (26–40 years and above), to capture generational contrasts. A purposive sampling technique was adopted to ensure representation of individuals with direct exposure to work, study, and social interaction through digital platforms.

Tools and Instruments - Data were collected online via Google Forms over a two-week period in September 2025. The questionnaire contained both close-ended and Likert-scale items, capturing demographic details, digital access, work/study patterns, and perceptions of digital technologies.

Quantitative and Comparative analysis have been conducted. Thematic qualitative analysis was used to interpret open-ended responses and interviews and Visualization tools (tables, bar charts, flow

diagrams, schematic models) are employed.

Theoretical Framework: Situating Cyber-Geographies

The transformation of everyday spaces through digital technologies cannot be understood in isolation; it is best situated within the broader theoretical debates in critical human geography on the production of space, networked society, and spatio-temporal transformations.

Lefebvre's Production of Space (1974).

Henri Lefebvre conceptualized space as a dynamic construct—produced and continually reshaped through the interplay of social practices, symbolic representations, and everyday lived realities. In the context of digital transformation, cyber-technologies become new instruments of spatial production, enabling practices such as remote work, online learning, and virtual social interaction. Homes in Ara, for example, once primarily domestic, are now **produced as hybrid spaces**—simultaneously serving as office, classroom, and site of sociality. This aligns with Lefebvre's notion that new technologies and social relations continuously reconfigure spatial meanings (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]).

Castells' Space of Flows (1996).

Castells introduced the idea of a 'space of flows' to describe how digital networks prioritize movement of information, capital, and communication, diminishing the dominance of fixed geographic locations. In the digital everyday life of small Indian cities, this becomes visible in the way **WhatsApp groups, online coaching classes, and gig platforms** connect Ara's residents to networks that stretch across national and global scales. The "place-bound" spaces of work, education, and community life are now interwoven with trans-local digital flows, producing hybrid socio-spatial configurations that blur the distinction between local and global.

Harvey's Time-Space Compression (1989).

David Harvey's concept of time-space compression underscores how new communication technologies shorten distances and intensify temporal rhythms, fundamentally reshaping how people experience space and time. In the digital era, information and interaction transcend geographical distance almost instantaneously. Students in Ara attend live lectures hosted from Delhi or Bengaluru, and migrant families maintain daily emotional ties through video calls. Everyday rhythms, once constrained by commuting or physical co-presence, are restructured by the **accelerated temporalities** of mobile internet and digital communication platforms.

Cyber-Geographies as an Extension.

Building on these frameworks, the concept of *cyber-geographies* provides an analytical lens to study the **mutual shaping of digital and physical spaces**. Cyber-geography investigates how virtual spaces—formed through networks, platforms, and data infrastructures—intersect with and reshape material geographies of everyday life (Kitchin, 1998; Dodge & Kitchin, 2001). Rather than replacing physical geographies, cyber-geographies produce **hybrid spatialities** where the digital and material are co-constitutive. In Bhojpur, this hybridity is evident in the reconfigured roles of homes, schools, offices, and markets as they increasingly operate as **digitally mediated environments**. Thus, the present study positions itself within these theoretical debates by examining how Lefebvre's socially produced spaces, Castells' flows, and Harvey's compressed temporalities manifest in the lived geographies of a small Indian city navigating the digital turn.

Spatial Shifts and the Emergence of Cyber-Geographies

Digital transformation is not merely about technological adoption; it actively reconfigures the spatiality of everyday life. By reorganizing where and how work, learning, and social interaction occur, cyber technologies have produced **new hybrid spaces** where the digital and physical intertwine. These shifts can be observed most clearly in three domains: **work, education, and social interaction**.

1. Work: From Offices to Hybrid and Home-based Workspaces

Traditionally, economic activity was anchored in **physical workplaces**—factories, shops, and offices located in central business districts or industrial zones. With digital integration, particularly after the

COVID-19 pandemic, many of these functions migrated into **cyber-spaces**, transforming homes into multifunctional hubs. The boundary between *home* and *office* has blurred. Remote work, online freelancing, and digital entrepreneurship (e.g., online retail, gig platforms) have reduced dependence on fixed office space. In Ara, small-scale businesses now use WhatsApp or Facebook Marketplace to connect with clients, reducing the necessity of physical shop visits. Similarly, government offices increasingly use e-governance platforms, reducing the need for citizens to travel for paperwork. Emergence of the “digital office” where email, Zoom, Google Meet, and collaborative platforms like Slack create a **networked workspace** spread across households, cafés with Wi-Fi, and mobile devices.

2. Education: From Classrooms to E-learning Environments

Education is one of the most dramatically transformed sectors. Schools and coaching centers have historically served as **central learning spaces** in small Indian cities. The rise of digital technologies, however, has reconfigured learning geographies. Traditional classrooms are increasingly supplemented—or sometimes replaced—by **virtual classrooms**. Platforms like Byju’s, Zoom, and Google Classroom extend the learning environment beyond physical schools. In Bhojpur, students preparing for competitive examinations now rely heavily on YouTube lectures or other edu-tech companies like Unacademy, often attending live classes on smartphones at home. The pandemic accelerated this shift, normalizing the home as both a domestic and educational space. Creation of **distributed learning networks**, where the classroom extends across homes, coaching centers, and even public spaces like cyber cafés, enabled by the ubiquity of mobile internet.

3. Social Interaction: From Public Gatherings to Digital Communities

Social life has always relied on **public and semi-public spaces**—markets, tea shops, parks, and fairs. While these remain important, digital platforms now provide alternative arenas for social exchange. Social interaction increasingly occurs in **cyber-spaces** such as WhatsApp groups, Instagram feeds, or Facebook communities. The role of cafés and community halls has partly shifted to virtual meeting rooms like Zoom or Google Meet. Younger populations use Instagram and WhatsApp to organize cultural events or coordinate local protests, replacing some functions of physical community gatherings. Families dispersed due to migration sustain ties via daily video calls and group chats rather than face-to-face visits. Development of **digital social hubs** that replicate and sometimes displace traditional gathering spaces. These hubs are trans-local, allowing people in small towns to simultaneously participate in networks extending to Delhi, Dubai, or New Jersey. These shifts illustrate how **cyber-geographies emerge**. **Homes** transform into hybrid sites of work, study, and social interaction. **Public spaces** (markets, cafés, coaching centers) take on hybrid functions, often serving as Wi-Fi-enabled nodes where digital and physical practices intersect. **Networks** increasingly substitute for fixed places, as relationships, transactions, and learning occur in *flows of data* rather than fixed physical proximities.

Domain	2010 (Pre-Digital Era)	2025 (Digital Integration Era)
Work	Fixed Private and Govt. Offices, Shops and Markets, Banks, Clinics	Remote work, Freelancing, Online Retail, E-Market, WhatsApp based / Facebook business
Education	Physical Classroom, Coaching Centres,	E-learning Apps, Online coaching, Zoom/ Google Meet Classes, Home-based classrooms
Social Interaction	Markets, Tea shops, Cafes, Fairs, Festivals, Community Halls etc	WhatsApp / Instagram / Facebook groups, Group Video calls,

Spatial Shift in Work, Education, and Social Interaction (2010 - 2025)

Thus, everyday geographies in small Indian cities like Ara are no longer bounded by traditional notions of *office, school, or market*. Instead, they exist in **digitally mediated hybrids**, producing new inequalities (digital divides) and new opportunities (expanded connectivity).

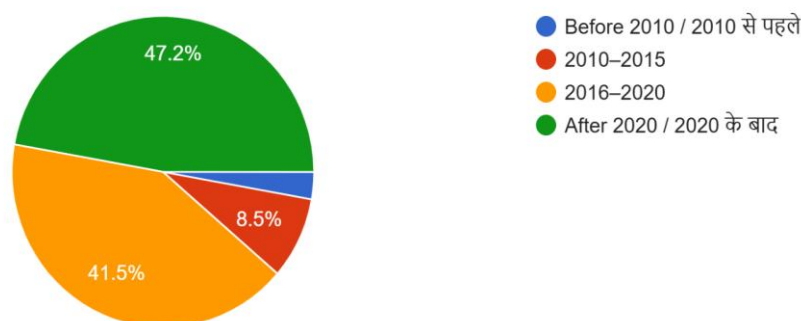
Empirical Evidence from Ara

Findings and Discussion

The study reveals that Ara's everyday geographies have undergone profound transformations between 2010 and 2025 as digital technologies became embedded across the domains of education, work, social interaction, and household services. The evidence points to a hybridization of spaces, where physical and digital practices coexist, creating new forms of *cyber-geographies*.

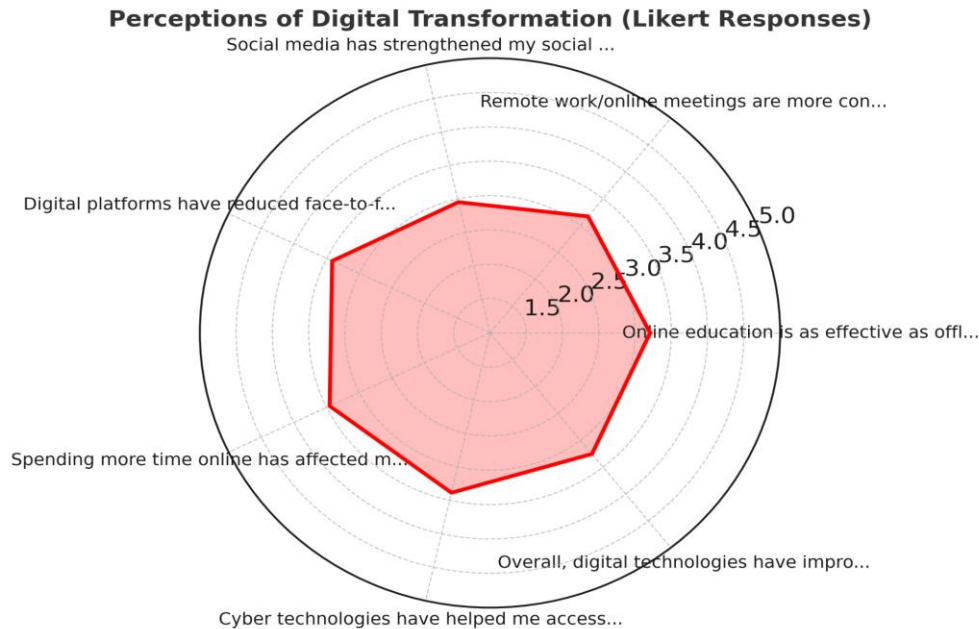
6. When did you first start using the internet? / आपने इंटरनेट का उपयोग कब शुरू किया?

106 responses



Source: Primary survey conducted in September 2025

Survey findings indicate that among the 106 respondents, **47% began using the internet only after 2020**, while an additional **41.5% reported first accessing it between 2016 and 2020**. This temporal pattern reflects the two most significant milestones in India's digital trajectory during the past decade. The first was the **public launch of Reliance Jio in September 2016**, which radically transformed the Indian telecom landscape by offering **affordable, high-speed 4G internet** and a suite of digital applications. This unprecedented reduction in data costs democratized access, extending internet connectivity beyond urban elites to semi-urban and small-town populations, including cities like Ara in Bihar. The second major turning point was the **COVID-19 pandemic (2020 onwards)**, which confined people to their homes and compelled a rapid adaptation to digital modes of work, education, and communication. As physical mobility and face-to-face interactions were severely restricted, individuals and institutions increasingly turned to online platforms. **Educational institutions shifted to virtual classrooms**, utilizing tools such as Zoom, Google Meet, and YouTube to sustain continuity in teaching and learning. Similarly, workplaces and administrative systems embraced remote operations, accelerating the normalization of digital practices in everyday life. Together, these two moments—the *Jio revolution* and the *pandemic-induced digital surge*—marked a decisive phase in the creation of cyber-geographies in small Indian cities like Ara, fundamentally reshaping their social and spatial landscapes.



The radar chart visually summarizes how the **106 respondents** rated different aspects of digital technologies on a **Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree)**.

1. **Online education effectiveness (3.2/5):**

Respondents are **neutral to moderately positive**. While online classes provided access and flexibility, many questioned their depth, discipline, and reliability compared to face-to-face teaching.

2. **Remote work/online meetings convenience (3.1/5):**

Rated only slightly above neutral. Students and young professionals recognize convenience but also face **connectivity issues, lack of interaction, and productivity challenges**, limiting full acceptance.

3. **Social media strengthening connections (2.9/5):**

Scored lowest. Respondents feel social media **expands networks but weakens intimacy**—relationships are more numerous, but less meaningful.

4. **Reduction in face-to-face interactions (3.4/5):**

Stronger agreement here. Many acknowledged that digital platforms **diminish traditional, in-person interactions**, aligning with broader concerns about urban isolation and digital dependency.

5. **Impact on physical health (3.45/5):**

A major concern. Respondents report **eye strain, sedentary lifestyles, and reduced outdoor activity** as consequences of prolonged online engagement.

6. **Opportunities expansion (3.38/5):**

Moderately high score. Digital technologies are valued for opening up **educational resources, remote jobs, and global information access**, particularly for students in smaller cities like Ara.

7. **Overall quality of life improvement (3.25/5):**

Respondents cautiously agreed. While technology enhances convenience and access, concerns about health, reduced socialization, and inequality temper the sense of overall improvement.

Education and Learning Spaces

Survey responses confirm that the education sector has been the most visibly reconfigured. Over 80% of respondents reported attending online classes during the COVID-19 lockdown, and many institutions continue to resort to digital platforms whenever classrooms are unavailable due to election duties or examinations. Google Meet, Zoom, and YouTube have become integral supplements to traditional teaching, with students forming WhatsApp groups to circulate notes, exam updates, and practice material. However, perceptions of effectiveness remain ambivalent. The radar chart indicates only moderate agreement (3.2/5) that online education is as effective as physical classes. This suggests that while online tools expand accessibility, issues of engagement, discipline, and infrastructure constrain their full acceptance.

Social Interaction and Community Life

A striking shift is observed in the nature of social interaction. Before 2010, markets, fairs, and family gatherings were the dominant spaces of sociability. By 2025, hybrid forms of interaction—combining offline meetings with WhatsApp and social media communication—predominate, as reflected in the pie chart comparison. Colleges maintain official WhatsApp groups, teachers operate informal networks, and students organize digital collectives for both academic and cultural activities. Extended families and neighborhood associations also sustain bonds through group messaging. Yet, the survey data reveal ambivalence: respondents scored low on whether social media strengthens relationships (2.9/5) but relatively high on whether digital platforms reduce face-to-face interaction (3.4/5). This suggests that while digital tools provide continuity and expansion of networks, they simultaneously erode depth and intimacy in personal relationships.

Household Services and Everyday Practices

The digitalization of services in Ara reflects locally adapted practices. While mainstream food delivery apps such as Zomato and Swiggy are absent, households routinely access essential services—grocery deliveries, electricians, plumbing, and medical consultations—through WhatsApp or small-scale mobile networks. Payments are increasingly facilitated through UPI platforms, embedding the digital into routine economic life. These services demonstrate how cyber-technologies penetrate even informal economies, reshaping household geographies. At the same time, survey responses highlight concerns about physical well-being: a mean score of 3.45/5 suggests that prolonged online activity has tangible health costs, including eye strain, sedentary behavior, and reduced outdoor interaction.

Synthesis: Cyber-Geographies in Ara

Taken together, these findings underscore that Ara's cyber-geography is characterized by dual tendencies. On one hand, digital technologies have opened opportunities, enhanced access to education and services, and provided resilience during crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. On the other, they have reconfigured the meaning of spaces—transforming homes into multifunctional hubs and substituting markets and classrooms with virtual networks—while generating anxieties over health, reduced physical interaction, and digital divides. This reflects the broader theoretical insight that digital technologies do not replace but rather re-produce space in new hybrid forms, consistent with Lefebvre's (1974) notion of the production of space and Castells' (1996) concept of the space of flows.

CONCLUSION:

This study has examined the emergence of *cyber-geographies* in Ara, Bhojpur district, by tracing the spatial shifts in work, education, and social interaction between 2010 and 2025. The findings demonstrate how digital technologies have reconfigured everyday life in a small Indian city, transforming homes into multifunctional hubs of work and study, embedding WhatsApp and other platforms into community networks, and enabling access to essential services through localized digital arrangements. Drawing on Lefebvre's (1974) notion of the social production of space, Castells' (1996) concept of the space of flows, and Harvey's (1989) theory of time-space compression, the study positions Ara as an illustrative case of how even non-metropolitan urban centers in the Global South are negotiating hybrid physical-digital spatialities.

The contributions of this paper are threefold. First, it extends the literature on cyber-geographies beyond metropolitan contexts by providing empirical evidence from a small city, thereby highlighting the uneven but significant diffusion of digital technologies. Second, it demonstrates the dual nature of digital integration: while new opportunities in education, work, and social connectivity emerge, concerns over health, reduced face-to-face interaction, and deepening socio-economic divides persist. Third, it foregrounds the lived experiences of young people and community actors, showing how digital practices are locally adapted to meet infrastructural constraints and social needs.

From a policy perspective, the case of Ara offers important lessons for similar small and medium-sized cities across India and the Global South. **First**, investments in affordable and reliable digital infrastructure should be prioritized, particularly to address connectivity gaps in peri-urban and rural fringes. **Second**, community-level digital literacy programs—especially targeting women, older populations, and economically disadvantaged groups—are essential to bridge persistent digital divides. **Third**, educational institutions should adopt blended learning frameworks that combine the accessibility of online tools with the depth of classroom engagement, supported by teacher training in digital pedagogy. **Fourth**, local governments can facilitate platforms for small-scale service providers (grocers, plumbers, electricians) to integrate into digital networks, ensuring inclusive participation in emerging economies. Finally, policy initiatives should recognize and address the health and social costs of digital immersion by promoting balanced use of technology and strengthening community spaces for in-person interaction.

In conclusion, Ara's experience underscores that the digital turn is not merely a metropolitan phenomenon but a transformative force reshaping the geographies of everyday life in smaller cities. By documenting these shifts, the present study contributes to the growing body of scholarship on cyber-geographies and offers pathways for policymakers, educators, and community leaders to foster more inclusive, resilient, and human-centered digital urban futures.

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Digital Narratives and the Reconstruction of Social Media Platforms are Redefining Literary Expression and Community Formation in the 21st Century

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Abstract : *In this essay, the role of digital media websites in the modern practice of literary and community formation has been kept in mind. With the trans-disciplinary approach to the literary theory discussion, the media studies, and the sociology, the current research investigates the way in which such sites as Twitter, Instagram, Tik Tok, and Wattpad have transformed literary narration, expanded it, and formed new forms of literary gate keeping. The study aims to explore three critical phenomena: micro-narratives and online storytelling in the context of seriality, the character of algorithmic curation of literary contest and transnational literary crowds which occupy the geographical space in this manner. The book in the instances of viral poetry, fan fiction fandoms and multimedia storytelling projects graphically demonstrates how the digital media has led to the production of new literatures as well as the inversion of the traditional notions of authorship and literary standing. Marginal voices are specifically highlighted that have been able to break free into the digital world of social media as an escape route into the routine publishing gate keeping industry and create other literary economies and open up narrative spaces. The middle part of the article highlights the conflicting commercial algorithms with art, platform monetization and art and community. Findings show that, as literary production and consumption have significantly been deregulated to new media platforms globally, there are developing forms of cultural homogenization of self-expression and identity-making. The book has contributed to the debate topics of digital humanities, media literacy and future of literature in the increasingly globalized but divided world.*

Keywords:- *Digital narrative scholarship, algorithmic recommendation, online literary society, democratized publishing, micro-narrative, micro transmedia storytelling, digital humanities, cultural globalization, platform capitalism, alternative literary economies, marginalized voices.*

INTRODUCTION:

The digital revolution has transformed nearly everything in the world of humanity and literature is no exception. The social media has given rise to a space in which the stories are written, circulated, and read in such a distinctly different manner from the bygone days of the print culture. And whereas previously it was the realm of inanimate pages of the books and the reign of editors, it is multinational and interactive on the web. Instagram poems, Twitter threads, Tik Tok stories. Wattpad fanfiction communities all. They prove that the digital media is no longer a rising platform of traditional forms of writing but a new ground with its power politics and conventions. This essay hypes about the reshaping of digital stories in the mode of writing of literature and identities framing. It addresses how literary culture has been evolving, the character of how algorithms are being deployed to construct visibility, how transnational sites of literature are being constructed and the preservation issue of content. Finally, it also situates the discussion within the grand discourses in the digital humanities, and recontextualizes the ancient works, in film adaptation, the issues of the day.

The Evolution of Literary Expression.

From Formalism to Fluidity

The traditional work of literature, whether novel or epic or fragment of poetry, has been traditionally an elite artefact, shaped in content and passed down to future generations. The role of concision, velocity and casualness has been advanced by web spaces. It has led to the development of a new genre of literature that thrives on the web space:

- **Micro fiction:** Fiction cut down to a couple of hundred words, and ideally placed on a web site like X (previously Twitter).
- **Insta poetry:** Short visual poems that can be accompanied by pictures (text based).
- **These threads** are told in serial form and this builds suspense and interactivity and more so the readers are involved in the narration process.

The works also can be termed as fluid literature because the works can be revised, remixed and co-authored by the readers time and again. Those changes can be interpreted as the reinterpretation of the single authorship as the co-narrative formation.

The Author as a Persona.

In the publishing culture, there was a split between author and reader in which the latter was on the opposite end of the side of authority. Writers are part of an online community where they take part in a two-way communication. Live, yet not passive feedback i.e. likes, comments and shares are a participatory loop. Added to this, self-branding, backstage unpackaging and constant communication with readers require writers to create an online persona. It is a spin-off that annuls the distance between characters and literary creation. Social Identity and Online Storifying.

The Curated Self

The social media is a self-narration or a self-expression. Posts, bios, and time lines made by the users regarding themselves are what people retell their lives with. New tracks of the performativity theory of Goffman also emerge, though: online identities are a kind of performance mediated by the response of the audience. The constant requirement to look right (likes and shares) compels individuals to build their desirable online front stage self and push less elegant backstage realizations to the backburner.

Community and Belonging

It becomes achievable to build non geographically situated communities through digital narrative. Feelings of belonging are created through shared narration, particularly when it involves minority groups that do not have to get it physically. The first of these is the best known one the so-called fandoms: groups of book-, movie-, and franchise-based franchises lead to fanfiction, fanart, and fan critique, providing in the process also cultural-level meaning making. The reason it is possible for the social process of collective creation and social identification to occur is because of the sharing of the stories in these environments.

Algorithms, Literary Discourse and Curation.

Algorithms have become replacement for custom editors, and control what to read. The research by Zeynep Tufekci (2018) indicates that the recommendation algorithms do not overstate the theory of filter bubbles but only scale it down. In books it is rendered as works of wildly popular emotional candour or beauty against those of delicacy or innovation. The removal of traditional policy has also been disrupted by content moderation. In a bid to fill the mouths of marginalized people, online components silence sensitive content - particularly the sexuality, politics, or violence work. The LGBTQ+ authors, for their part, are not only censored on their own accounts, but ultimately are forced to censor themselves or go elsewhere. The problem of artistic freedom is that these are not only the cock-an-eye new gatekeepers but rather more open than the old publishers. Trans-national Literary Community/Cultural Exchange. Global and Situated. Web media offers the writers of various parts of the world the platform on which to voice the world. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and Hasan Minhaj are two writers whose application of transnational fiction is clear in questioning the West. With such international availability however is the drawback that there are instances where artists are coerced into presenting local culture to the rest of the rest of the whole world and vice versa. The other danger that accompanies this danger is the danger of silencing other voices in other languages to other languages

under English-language hegemony. Translation and Cross-cultural Adjustment The local translation community work especially in the fan communities is focused on bridging the language gap; translating printed materials into another culture. A fine example is that of South Korean Webtoons: domestic success, then worldwide success and it formed the narrative of how we all are being narrated in a pictorial manner. These drawings are the legacy of the cross-cultural communication via internet.

LITERARY ADAPTATIONS IN FILM: SHAKESPEARE TO MARGARET LAURENCE

Film adaptations demonstrate how classical literature is continually reinterpreted in light of contemporary cultural concerns. In India, Vishal Bhardwaj has famously adapted Shakespeare: *Maqbool* (2003) reimagines Macbeth in Mumbai's underworld; *Omkara* (2006) translates Othello into rural Uttar Pradesh; and *Haider* (2014) situates Hamlet amid the Kashmir conflict. Other Indian films like *Angoor* (1982, from *The Comedy of Errors*), *10ml Love* (2010, from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*), *Khoun ka Khoun* (1935, from *Hamlet*), *Goliyon ki Raasleela Ram-Leela* (2013, from *Romeo and Juliet*), and *Qayamat Se Qayamat Tak* (1988) show Shakespeare's continuing influence in South Asian cinema. Apart from Shakespeare, books by Canadian author Margaret Laurence have been cinematised and that is testimony enough that literature can elicit meaning out of a film from geographies. The adaptations testify to the extent of how the tale cannot be contained in words and the extent of how it's reimagined at each specific time by means of visual and digital images.

DIGITAL HUMANITIES AND MEDIA LITERACY

Digital Humanities and Media have profoundly influenced information and communication technology (ICT), with repercussions in education and cultural practices. Digital Humanities and Media Literacy has had a significant impact on information and communication technology (ICT), and has an implication in education and culture. Digital literacy means that educators have to pivot in their ways of teaching. They should not purely excavate deeply into the texts, but also study how the platforms function, how the algorithm communities interact, and the full ecology of online culture. Digital texts are ephemeral; schools must then decide how to canonize these texts in meaningful ways - like the app shut down or the post was deleted by the algorithm. Media literacy is just as critical. Students must learn to manipulate algorithmically-driven feeds, to learn how social media monetizes itself, and then to be critical and conscientious of online communities. Digital culture leads to school providing the technological literacy, moral, and imaginative capabilities to the students.

CONCLUSION:

The digital age brings both exciting and challenging changes to literature. On the positive side, new platforms make it possible for anyone to share a story, give a voice to the voiceless, and connect disparate people. On the negative side, algorithms can silence people, standardize culture, and works can escape protection. The current literary scene is about guarding and opening, about authenticity and spectacle, and innovation and established values. Digital narratives need more exploration regarding the transformations of the values we ascribe to books as well as the stories that make it into the canon and the globalized flow of culture. It ultimately comes down to screen and self, algorithms and community, and the local and global aspects of writing on the internet. Digital media can enhance literature's power to shape feelings and perceptions. Students, teachers, and creators increasingly recognize this reality.

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Erasing Women's Aspiration: A Feminist Critique of Desire and Agency in Disney's Fairy Tale Canon

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Abstract: *Fairy tales are often dismissed as innocent children's stories, yet they wield immense cultural power in shaping societal expectations—particularly regarding gender roles. From a young age, audiences are immersed in narratives where women's ultimate fulfilment pivots on romantic union, more often than not at the expense of their original dreams. This pattern is deeply rooted in patriarchal storytelling, training everyone to view women not as autonomous individuals but as instruments of male desires. This pattern is prominently evident in Disney's classic adaptations, where heroines like Cinderella, Ariel, and Belle articulate aspirations in the beginning — only to have them eclipsed by the male protagonist's pursuit of marriage. Simone de Beauvoir's 'The Second Sex' (1946) famously posits that woman is constructed as "The Other" in a male-dominated world. They are defined in relation to men rather than as an independent subject. Similarly, Luce Irigaray, in 'This Sex Which Is Not One' (1977), critiques the erasure of female desire under patriarchy, arguing that women's wants are either silenced or rewritten as passive complements to male agency. These theoretical frameworks expose how fairy tales are far from being innocent fantasies that perpetuate a hierarchy where women's narrative exist to serve men's goals or desires.*

This paper examines three iconic Disney films: Cinderella (1950), The Little Mermaid (1989) and Beauty and The Beast (1991) — to demonstrate how their heroines' initial desires (for adventure, knowledge, freedom, or escape) are systematically overwritten by the male protagonists' quest for marriage. By analysing dialogues, plot structures, and character arcs through Beauvoir's and Irigaray's lenses, the study reveals a consistent pattern of female subjugation disguised as "happily ever after," such storytelling reinforces real-world norms that polices women's autonomy while centring male desires as the primary default.

The analysis proceeds in three parts. Firstly, it establishes the theoretical foundations of Beauvoir's and Irigaray's critiques. Next, it dissects the primary films to expose the erasure of women's agency. Finally, it confronts potential counterarguments — such as Disney's later "progress" — to argue that historic narrative continues to shape contemporary gender dynamics. By interrogating these tales, this paper challenges readers to envisage storytelling that prioritises women's wants rather than rendering them invisible.

Key Words: Feminism, Fairy Tales, Desire, Agency, Patriarchy.

1. INTRODUCTION: Theoretical Foundations- A Feminist Framework for Deconstruction

In order to comprehend how traditional fairy tales reinforce patriarchal norms, this article employs two foundational feminist theories: Simone de Beauvoir's concept of "the Other" and Luce Irigaray's critique of female desire as a "lack". These frameworks help dissect the patterns of storytelling used in these fairy tales to employ patriarchy's object of desire. These framework also highlights how traditional storytelling consistently marginalise women's autonomy while entering male desire as the default and universal narrative driver.

1.1. Simone de Beauvoir and the Concept of “The Other”

In her seminal work, *The Second Sex* (1949), Simone de Beauvoir argues that we are governed by and living in a patriarchal society, which does not construct women as an autonomous subject but as “the Other”. In this binary construct, man is positioned as the universal or primary subject— “the Subject, he is the Absolute”—whereas woman is relegated to a secondary category or “the Other”, defined only in opposition or reference to **man**. (Beauvoir 26) Historically, this philosophical distinction has profound implications for how women are represented in narratives. When viewed through this lens, the narrative arcs of heroines does not exist for their own sake, rather to compliment and serve the male protagonist’s story. The woman’s journey culminates not for the fulfilment of her own goals, rather in her transformation into becoming an object of male pursuit such as wife, prize or tool for redemption. These narratives function as ideological tools by naturalising the idea that woman’s ultimate purpose is not self-determined rather, it is always relational to a man. The very structure of the plot becomes an enactment of this philosophical polarity, subtly conditioning audiences to accept the female character’s secondary role as inevitable and natural with an iconic “happy ending” label. The pervasive nature of this pattern in storytelling makes the patriarchal message both powerful and seemingly beyond question.

1.2. Luce Irigaray and the Myth of “Lack”

Building on to Beauvoir’s work, Luce Irigaray in *This Sex Which is Not One* (1977), offers a critique’s perspective of how patriarchal culture and language reduce female desire to a void, or a “lack”. According to her, women are consistently depicted as “incomplete” in an individual capacity, and are awaiting for fulfilment by men, who are framed as “whole and authoritative”. This framework helps explain why women’s desires in fairy tales are often portrayed as temporary or fleeting whims which is later relegated and replaced by rather important objective of fulfilling male protagonist’s pursuit of his desire, such as Ariel’s curiosity about the human world(*The Little Mermaid* 1989) or Belle’s love for books(*Beauty and the Beast* 1991) were relegated, while male protagonist’s desires, like Prince Eric’s(*The Little Mermaid* 1989) search for a bride or the Beast’s quest for love and redemption (*Beauty and the Beast* 1991), are presented as the logical and narratively inevitable drivers of the plot. This conventional pattern of storytelling teaches audiences to perceive men’s ambition as rational and purposeful, while women’s desires and ambitions are seen as secondary or irrational. Irigaray’s work emphasises on how a female character’s “lack” serves as a transactional precondition for the male narrative to take over and begin. She must first be defined by what she lacks—a voice, a husband, or a home—before the male character can embark on his heroic quest to fill that void. This fundamentally explains both how and why the heroine’s personal growth is so habitually tied to a male character’s journey rather than their own.

2. PRIMARY ANALYSIS: The Narrative of Erasure:

This section applies the combined framework of de Beauvoir and Irigaray to inspect three iconic Disney films: **Cinderella (1950)**, **The Little Mermaid (1989)** and **Beauty and The Beast (1991)** revealing a deliberate pattern of subordinating and relegating female desire for male narrative arch, through a lens of feminism.

2.1. Cinderella (1950)

Disney’s *Cinderella* (1950) offers an insightful case study to comprehend how fairy tales reinforce patriarchal norms. Beneath its enchanting glare lies a cultural script that trains women to accept silence, endurance, and objectification (becoming the other) as pathways to happiness and men the glorified entitlement of being the primary. Using Simone de Beauvoir’s concept of woman as “the Other” and Luce Irigaray’s critique of female desire as a “lack,” we can trace and retrospect how the film naturalises women’s subordination through spectacle and song. The film opens with the loss of Cinderella’s father where she becomes a servant in her own home. Immediately, she casts into the role of “the Other” (de Beauvoir’s notion that woman is not seen as a subject with autonomy rather, defined in relation to others). Her autonomy/value is surrendered the moment male protection(father) disappears. The stepmother embarks patriarchal cruelty. Cinderella’s subjectivity collapses into servitude with the absence of her father. Right from the beginning, she is defined by her labour. She rises at dawn, singing

“A Dream is a Wish Your Heart Makes.” (Cinderella 1950, 4:10-5:15). The soft and comforting phonetics of the lyrics reinforces Irigaray’s argument of female desire as “lack.” Her desires are not articulated positively, rather it is framed as absence — “a wish” to be fulfilled and a dream to be granted by external influence. Instead of active pursuit, the plot instructs her (and its female audience) to wait, endure and hope. De Beauvoir’s “the Other” and Irigaray’s “lack” converges here: Cinderella’s predicament is passive, her desires deferred and her existence dependent upon recognition by prince not herself. As the story matures, her silence is exalted as virtue. Her silence and incapacity to resist against injustice or her stepmother’s abuse is glorified as virtue. This aligns with de Beauvoir’s observation that patriarchy glorifies women not for agency but for compliance—woman as mirror, reflecting man’s needs over her own. When the royal mandates the ball for every maiden so that the prince can choose a bride, her step-sisters fantasies about *being a princess*, illustrates Irigaray’s criticism: female desire is scripted as desire for the Other (the prince/crown), never as autonomous longing (Cinderella 1950, 27:40-28:05).

When her gown is destroyed, Cinderella collapses and then rescued by fairy godmother’s magic, transforming her into a spectacle for male gaze. This is not empowerment. “*Bibbidi-Bobbidi-Boo*” (Cinderella 1950, 42:10-43:00) dramatises Irigaray’s point that femininity is a mask constructed only through objects like gown or glass slippers: beauty is assembled for male gaze rather than an identity born of inner subjectivity. Cinderella’s silence proves this more prominently at the ball where she enchants everyone not with her intelligence or words as she hardly speaks but rather with her beauty that was assembled for male gaze. De Beauvoir’s “the Other” is on full display as Cinderella’s existence is only validated through male recognition. Irigaray’s “lack” is also validated as Cinderella is not valued for her own agency but for what she fulfils—an empty role of the ideal bride for the crown. The climax further personifies her objectification. The prince’s pursuit is not of Cinderella as subject rather as a perfect fit and correct possession. De Beauvoir’s observation that women are reduced to objects (glass slippers), defined in relation to men is literalised. The ending is resolved with marriage as the slipper fits, the prince chooses her like the glass slipper was her identity (Cinderella 1950, 1:10:05). As Irigaray argues, female desire is folded back into male centric narratives just like how Cinderella’s dream of “more” is collapsed into being “chosen.” As de Beauvoir would insist, she never becomes a subject in her own right. She remained “the Other,” validated only through male subject. Through de Beauvoir’s lens, Cinderella is the eternal Other, defined by and for men, never herself. Through Irigaray’s lens, she is the embodiment of “lack,” her desires are always constructed as absence, waiting to be fulfilled by marriage. The glass slipper sparkles, but it also shackles. Cinderella’s story does not liberate women rather enacts as a pedagogy of patriarchy. It teaches girls how to dream in silence, how to endure rather than resist, and how to mistake recognition by others for freedom. It is not a tale of empowerment, but a patriarchal pedagogy wrapped in a lustrous magical fantasy that is conditioning generations of women to see endurance and silence as virtue, and submission as destiny.

2.2. The Little Mermaid (1989):

Disney’s *The Little Mermaid* (1989) may appear as a fairy tale inspiring freedom, rebellion and love, but beneath its colourful animation and infamous songs, the film is yet again a repackaged patriarchal script that defines women not as a subject but as an object to be seen, desired and controlled. Using Simone de Beauvoir’s notion of woman as “the Other” and Luce Irigaray’s critique of female desire as “lack,” we can ascertain how the film chronologically reduces Ariel’s longing for freedom into silence, beauty and male validation. The story opens with King Triton’s kingdom, where her daughter Ariel is already cast as “the Other.” She is defined not as an autonomous being but, judged through the lens of patriarchal rules as a disobedient child. Her curiosity about the human world is dismissed and forbidden, while her sisters serve in compliance with male authority in the background, rather than expressing subjectivity. Ariel is never a subject in her own right but always positioned against male power, initially her father, then later her lover. This confirms her complicity with de Beauvoir’s notion of woman as “the Other.” Ariel sings the film’s most iconic song “*Part of Your World*.” (The Little Mermaid 1989, 15:22-18:04) Superficially it appears as a declaration of longing: “*I want to be where the people are, I want to see, want to see them dancing.*” (The Little Mermaid 1989, 16:11) Yet, Irigaray’s criticism of desire as “lack” reveals its deeper meaning. Her desire is not

articulated as self-determination, rather as an absence—yearning for what she does not have but humans do. Her rebellion is more about filling the void patriarchy has inscribed into her rather than building her own world. She dreams of belonging, not becoming. When Ariel first notices Eric, all her desires collapse into romance. Initially, the film perceived as hunger for freedom, is now transformed into fixation over a man. This is patriarchy's ambiguous dexterity: redirecting women's ambitions into the narrow goal of love and dependency. Her revelation to her father, "*Daddy, I love him!*" (The Little Mermaid 1989, 35:29) This declaration reduces her defiance into a plea for parental or patriarchal approval. De Beauvoir's "the Other" comes into play again as Ariel's desire cannot stand alone without the validation of male authority. This is followed by the rage of Triton as he destroys Ariel's collection of human artefacts. This violent policing and obliteration through rage and wrath echoes centuries of patriarchal control over women's knowledge and desires. Ariel's agency is annihilated, but the narrative portrays this as parental protection. Her rebellion is thereby delegitimised whereas her desires are infantilised. Ursula comes into frame and she exposes the patriarchal bargain with chilling clarity. "*Poor Unfortunate Souls,*" (41:30) she tells Ariel, "*You have got your looks, your pretty face, and don't underestimate the importance of body language!*" (The Little Mermaid 1989, 43:12-44:24) Again, Irigaray's critique is reflected as femininity is reduced to a spectacle where woman's body is defined as commodity. Ariel's choice to trade her voice (symbol of subjectivity) with legs, a physical form only to make her desirable to a man, reflects coercion by patriarchy. Irigaray would argue that Ariel's "lack" is leveraged in purest form where sacrifice of her agency (voice) is normalised, for it is being done for male gaze. On land, the lesson is clear as her silence is romanticised and glorified with the lyrics "*You don't need to say a word, not a word, go on and kiss the girl.*" (The Little Mermaid 1989, 59:44-1:02:14) De Beauvoir's "the Other" is in absolute here as Ariel's fate depends entirely on Eric's recognition. She not the subject who is choosing him, but an object which is waiting to be chosen. The climax confirms the pattern when Ursula, the only female figure with true power is demonised and destroyed—not by Ariel, but by Eric. Even at her narrative peak, Ariel cannot act as a subject as the salvation is patriarchally mandated to come from male heroism. Thus, confirming de Beauvoir's argument that women are eventually relegated to supporting roles (the Other).

Towards the end patriarchy is authenticated; it is Triton who decides Ariel's fate, transforming her into a human as an act of parental mercy. Her rebellion does not end with freedom but, with transfer of Ariel—from her father's control to husband's embrace. The film narrates a tale of silencing. Through de Beauvoir's lens, Ariel has always been the Other that is defined through and for men, never herself. Through Irigaray's lens, her longing is never constructive rather "the lack," a void that needs to be filled by patriarchal structures. The film may appear to celebrate rebellion but in reality, it teaches girls to surrender their voice as it does not equate with the value and significance of beauty and marriage.

2.3. Beauty and The Beast (1991)

The reinforcement of patriarchal norms in fairy tales is substantially corroborated in *Beauty and The Beast* (1991) with absolute comprehension. Beneath its fame and glamour lies a narrative that burdens women with the sense of responsibility of redeeming broken men, while truncating their own desires with endurance, patience and silence. The film opens with the story of a selfish prince who is cursed to become a Beast. From the beginning the story is scripted in a way that his redemption is not his own responsibility, it is to be achieved through a woman's love. De Beauvoir's "the Other" is narratively clear that woman exists to complete a man's story, not her own. Also, woman is only useful as "the other," to serve as the one who loves and endures. The curse does not ask the Beast for atonement or self-reflection but, to be loved by a woman for redemption. Belle enters the narrative as "odd," who is mocked by villagers for being bookish which is reflected in her opening song "*Little Town.*" (Beauty and The Beast 1991, 03:04-08:06) Gaston is documented mocking, "*It's not right for a woman to read. Soon she starts getting ideas...thinking!*" (Beauty and The Beast 1991, 8:45-8:50) This humorous line crystallises patriarchy's anxiety for women who claims subjectivity, threatens the order. Belle longs for "adventure in the great wide somewhere," (Beauty and The Beast 1991, 20:27-20:30) but her dream is relegated and perceived as Irigaray's critique of desire as "lack" by the narrative of the plot—an undefined yearning, waiting to be fulfilled by marriage in a narrative resolution. Gaston's advances on Belle reinforces de Beauvoir's "other." He defines her as an object for possession rather than a primary

subject: “*The most beautiful girl in town—that makes her the best.*” (Beauty and The Beast 1991, 07:38-07:40) Beauty here is the only significant currency, reducing Belle and her agency to a spectacle. Although her rejection of Gaston momentarily asserts independence, but the narrative redirects her into another patriarchal trap: the Beast’s castle. When Belle sacrifices her freedom for her father’s, her role is sealed and idealised as caregiver—typical “other” who exists in relation to male figures. In captivity, the Beast commands: “*You will join me for dinner. That’s not a request!*” (Beauty and The Beast 1991, 26:20) His dominance is portrayed as entitlement, his coercion is reframed as passionate. The enchanted objects pled Belle to forgive him as if it is her responsibility to endure male anger until it softens. Here Irigaray’s “lack” resonates again as Belle’s own desires subtly starts to vanish from the narrative. Her agency is reduced to nurturing, waiting and healing. The story pivots with the song “*Something There,*” (Beauty and The Beast 1991, 54:45-57:05) as Belle sings, “*There’s something sweet, and almost kind...*” (Beauty and The Beast 1991, 54:45) The Beast’s rage is improvised as hidden tenderness, and Belle’s fear is reinterpreted as love. This is patriarchy manoeuvre to transform violence into romance, conditioning women to interpret cruelty as evidence of passion. Here, de Beauvoir would note that Belle ceases to exist as subject at this moment. Her role is to mirror the growth of Beast, not the pursuit of her own dreams of freedom.

By the time ballroom scene is implemented, Belle’s earlier song, “*I want adventure in the great wide somewhere*” (Beauty and The Beast 1991, 20:27-20:30) is regretfully forgotten. Her autonomy of character is absorbed by the task of Beast’s redemption. Irigaray’s notion of “lack” manifests again, Belle’s desire for independence is systematically erased and replaced by the “lack” which she has been deceitfully told to fill by Beast’s need for her love. The climax, reinforces the patriarchy like a blueprint. The Beast transforms, not through his own accountability or penance, but through Belle’s endurance. Her patience grants him humanity not his self-reflection. De Beauvoir’s “other” resonates again: she is not the protagonist the title of the film had claimed, but an instrument of his salvation. The film ends with marriage as a resolution. Belle, who’s character appeared to be strong longing for escape and freedom is yet again reduced to a role of wife. Her “adventure” has be relegated to rehabilitation of a man. Her desires and independence are dissolved. Irigaray is proven right again as female desire is not permitted to stand-alone, rather framed as “lack.” Lack of fulfilment, lack of completion which needs to be resolved in a man. Beauty and the Beast turns out to be a memoir of submission of an independent woman for patriarchy. Through the lens of de Beauvoir, Belle is “the Other”, who’s significance is limited to the Beast’s redemption rather than her own liberation. And through Irigaray’s lens, her desires are erased and rewritten as “lack,” which is to be filled by the redemption of the Beast. This is a classical template of teaching women to endure, heal and sacrifice until men’s violence is reformed into love.

3. CONCLUSION: The Lasting Legacy and Call to Action:

The close reading and critical analysis of *Cinderella* (1950), *The Little Mermaid* (1989) and *Beauty and The Beast* (1991) confirms a persistent patriarchal blueprint in the storytelling of classic fairy tales and its adaptations. These narratives consistently employs a “narrative bait-and-switch,” pattern of storytelling; transforming a heroine’s initial quest for personal fulfilment into a male-centric story of romance and redemption. They frame female agency as a form of sacrifice and position marriage as the sole resolution, regardless of heroine’s original aspirations. The heroine’s aspirations are glorified and used as a bait, then their characters are portrayed as “lack” (Irigaray 1985) which makes it ideal and obvious for the male protagonists to take over. Their original character arcs are relegated, their agency obliterated and replaced by the one’s of male protagonists. Subsequently they become “the Other” (De Beauvoir, 1949) in their own story. This narrative pattern has significant and enduring cultural implications. These films have huge cultural legacy which remains deeply embedded in popular consciousness of majority of the population thus they continue to influence gender expectations. This narrative pattern normalises female self-erasure, conditioning young girls to equate love with sacrifice and subsequently teaching boys to expect women to prioritise their needs. By consistently resolving women centric stories with marriage, these tales reinforce a “marriage mandate” that mirrors patriarchal societal pressures which marginalises single women as “incomplete” (Irigaray 1985). Similarly, this type of traditional storytelling is harmful for men as well; portraying them as entitled to women’s emotional and domestic labour which essentially limits the scope of their own

psychological and emotional growth and development. The purpose is not to discard these timeless stories that is already deeply embedded in both history and subconscious of majority of the people but to interrogate them critically. A crucial step would be to promote “critical media literacy” that encourages audiences, especially children to question gender narratives and imagine different possibilities for their favourite characters. The emergence of modern adaptations of Disney films like *Frozen 2013* and *Moana (2016 and 2024)*; does priorities female relationships and self discovery indicating a positive shift in storytelling. The ultimate goal is to move towards narratives that honours female autonomy which goes beyond marriage and is actively encouraged. The “happily ever after” needs to be redefined which favours freedom and empowerment.

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Metamodernism in western literature and Indian Literature

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Abstract: Irony can highlight the problems and sincerity solves them. Metamodernism is an oscillation between modern sincerity and postmodern irony. A framework or mindset that believes in the possibility of a better world to achieve the idealistic goals of justice, equality, and truth with a realistic and practical approach. It is a cultural and literary response to recent global events like global warming, financial instability, political confusion, and digital explosion. The Modern age was associated with the age of Radio while the postmodern age was concerned with the age of Television. Metamodernism embraced the age of the internet for a more balanced world-view taking into account the optimism of the modern period and pluralism of the postmodern period.

Western literature evolved through the movement of modernism and postmodernism. The literary and philosophical development of western literature occurred within Europe and North America. David Foster Wallace in *Infinite Jest* (1996) advocated for 'New Sincerity' in a post-ironic world to break away from the concept of postmodernist irony and cynicism. Zadie Smith in his novel *NW* (2012) highlights metamodernism in its structural innovation and emotional sincerity. Jonathan Franzen addresses family dysfunction, ecological anxiety, and moral collapse in his novels *The Corrections* (2001) and *Freedom* (2010). Ocean Vuong blends poetry with prose, fiction and memoir in his deeply emotional epistolary novel *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous* (2019).

Conversely, Metamodernism in Indian Literature provides a critical framework for understanding the cultural shifts in contemporary India. It deals with the modernization, globalization, and traditional values within a same framework. The contemporary works in Indian literature navigate between tradition and innovation, irony and sincerity, and postcolonial critique and spiritual reawakening, digital chaos and emotional depth. Indian Literature blends Indian themes with global styles. Indian writing engages with ecological issues, climatic fiction(cli-fi), and digital identity. Arundhati Roy in her novel *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017) deals with gender, identity, spiritual yearning and political resistance. *Tomb of Sand* (2018) by Geetanjali Shree and translated by Daisy Rockwell deeply evokes patriarchal and nationalistic expectations with a post-colonial lens. Amitav Ghosh in his novels *The Hungry Tide* (2004) and *Gun Island* (2019) highlights ecological degradation and climate change, and environmental consequences of industrialization and relationship between human and nature. This Paper attempts to do a comparative study of metamodernism as an emerging theory in Western literature and Indian Literature applying qualitative and analytical methodology.

Key words: Metamodernism, Western Metamodernism, Indian Metamodernism.

INTRODUCTION :

Metamodernism can be described as pragmatic idealism because it reflects modern idealism and postmodern skepticism. It believes in progress in meaning, beauty, and moral values but it must be emotionally rich, intellectually rigorous and grounded in the realities of human life. It is a stance of constructive Engagement. It is an emerging theoretical approach in the development of philosophical and literary thoughts with idealistic goals and realistic and practical approach. We are now undergoing a new stage for all mankind, developing an understanding of important ideas and views from a fixed, uncritical acceptance to a more flexible understanding of tradition that have developed over the past centuries. The trajectory of development of literature from Modernism to postmodernism and then to Metamodernism can be understood as a spectrum or continuum. Modernism has travelled from the rejection of the past for a new future in the late 19th and early 20th centuries as a reaction to industrialization, urbanization, and rapid technological advancements. Postmodernism began to re-evaluate and re-contextualize the past and challenged the grand narratives and universal truths in the late 20th century rather than a complete rejection. But, the journey of Metamodernism for a new future engages with the past embracing modernism and postmodernism began to flourish in the early 21st century. The core principle of the term metamodernism is a dynamic movement between reconstruction and deconstruction, hope and melancholy, totality and fragmentation, and sincerity and Irony. Metamodernism can be exemplified by the cultural philosophy of the digital age.

Metamodernism was introduced as a term by Mas'ud Zavarzadeh in 1975 to describe emerging American Literature from the mid-1950s noting an oscillation between modernist naivety and postmodern cynicism. Later notably in 1999 when Moyo Okediji applied the term to contemporary African-American art as an extension and challenge to modernism and postmodernism. But, It gained a widespread academic attention when Timotheus Vermeulen and Robin Van Den Akker introduced the term 'metamodernism' in their 2010 essay *Notes on Metamodernism* (2010). They described it as a "structure of feeling" that oscillates between modernism and postmodernism embodying a movement between opposite poles such as hope and melancholy, sincerity and irony, and unity and plurality. They emphasize 'ironic sincerity' and 'pragmatic idealism' as central to the metamodern sensibility reflecting a shift from the relativism and cynicism of postmodernism to a more engaged and affective cultural response. Alison Gibbons co-edited with Vermeulen and Akker in *Metamodernism: Historicity, Affect, and Depth after Postmodernism* (2017). They have used the term in geographical contexts as diverse as South America, Asia, and Western Europe in multi-disciplines as experimental poetry and technology studies, physics and economics and mathematics, and eastern spirituality.

METAMODERNISM AND STRUCTURE OF FEELING

Structure of Feeling is not a zeitgeist but a dynamic way to portray the lived and affective experience of social and cultural change of a particular time and place. It is a triadic concept that involves practical activities, and imaginative and sensorial experiences. It captures how people feel, think, and relate to each other in ways that are shared, yet not fully codified or conscious. Metamodernism can be explained as structure of feeling as it highlights how people emotionally experience the contradiction of our time like the digital hyperconnection, climate anxiety, political instability, late capitalism, and the exhaustion of irony. It can be exemplified by the Contemporary TV shows or Memes that express ecological distress and digital fatigue at the present time. We feel, like the world feels today is the key sign of a structure of feeling. Similarly, Metamodernism is a contemporary cultural sensibility to feel the experience of navigating the world today. Banksy known for his satirical street art and epigrams, portrayed a girl with Balloon reaching for a heart-shaped balloon symbolizing hope and loss confirmed the metamodern sensibility to address contemporary issues. Banksy's art uses sincerity within irony to exhibit serious political and social issues more accessible and understandable to a broad audience by presenting them in a humorous and visually captivating way. This combination of Sincerity and Irony is the hallmark of Metamodernism.

Metamodernism in Western Literature

Western Literature reflects the cultural, social and historical contexts in a vast and diverse range of works. It has a rich tradition of experimentation with form, style, and narrative techniques. It has had a significant impact on global literary traditions, influencing authors and their works worldwide. It insights into the human experience and the complexities of modern life. The tradition of transition had been influenced by the writers like Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, and T.S.Eliot. They experimented with form and style to push literary boundaries. Only authors and their works can reshape the literature. Virginia Woolf advocated for Women's independence in both life and literature. She argued for breaking male-dominated literary traditions in his work *A Room of One's Own* (1929). Joyce refined and popularized the technique of stream-of-consciousness to render unfiltered and inferior thoughts of the characters. Though introduced by Lewis Carroll in his book *Through the Looking Glass* (1871), James Joyce went beyond the boundaries of Language introducing Portmanteau words and multilingual puns in *Finnegans Wake* (1939). T.S.Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922) acted as a bridge in transition to postmodernism from modernism both stylistically and philosophically through its collage of disparate voices, languages, and cultural allusions. This Poem is a masterpiece that exhibits intertextuality, fragmentation, and deconstruction of meaning. Eliot mixes Sincerity and Irony especially in *The Love Song of J.Alfred Prufrock* (1915).

David Foster Wallace, Jonathan Franzen, and Ocean Vuong were iconic transitional figures and the precursors to Metamodernism. They infuse metamodern elements in their works. David Foster Wallace in his novel *Infinite Jest* (1996) examines how human lives are entangled with the pursuit of pleasure and escapism. The novel infuses postmodern elements such as metafiction, irony and fragmentation into a narrative by exploring the theme of sincerity, empathy, and belief. It utilizes postmodern techniques to criticize a media-saturated and ironic culture for searching meaning and connection in a post- postmodernism era that can be identified as metamodernism. Jonathan Franzen infuses his novels with neorealism particularly in his later works like *The Corrections*(2001) and *Freedom*(2010). His works focus on human connections and ethics with a complex contemporary reality, sometimes presenting a de-politicized form of realism. Neorealism in Literature focuses on the realistic depiction of everyday life, social problems, and the struggles of the poor and working class. The novel deals with the post-postmodern issues of late capitalism, the breakdown of family and community, and search for personal and social redemption. Chip Lambert retreats into a simple life in Lithuania. It suggests a return to Sincerity and ultimately affirms the possibility of Love, Forgiveness, and the ethical commitment. Ocean Vuong describes his experience of working illegally on the Tobacco Farm. While describing his novel *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous* (2019), He said, "Fiction is strongest when it launches a moral questions. when it goes out and seeks to answer. The questions that we couldn't ask in life because the costs would be too much. Fiction and Narrative Art gives us a vicarious opportunity to see these questions play out, at no true cost to our own" (Vuong 32). The novel demonstrates metamodern elements through blending of poetic lyricism with raw and brutal honesty to explore complex themes of trauma, identity, and family issues. Vuong explores his family history in his epistolary novel. It is a letter from son to a mother who can not read and write. It is a story of people caught between disparate worlds and asks how we heal and rescue one another.

Metamodernism in Indian English Literature

Indian Literature in English is distinct from western Literature through the transcultural exchange in India while Western Literature concerns global cultures. Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, Henry Louis Vivian Derozio, and Michael Madhusudan Dutt laid the groundwork for Indian writing in English. Raja Rao, R.K.Narayan, and Mulk Raj Anand influenced the literature with substantial growth by their realistic novels. His novels highlights various aspects of Indian history, culture and identity including postcolonialism and modernisation. They contributed their feelings and experiences deeply Indian in spirit through their writings to the growth of Indian English Literature. They modernized Indian Literature by bridging English literature with Indian traditions and myth. The integration of Indian mythological and traditional elements enabled future generations of writers to expand the scope

of modern transitional writings. The tradition of transition continued with Rabindranath Tagore. *The Hungry Stones* (1916) reflects the rejection of grand narrative and infusion of postmodern sensibilities through the blending of reality and fiction. Raja Rao in his transitional novel *kanthapura* (1938) combines modern narrative structure with postcolonial themes of colonial oppression, Indian nationalism, and cultural hybridity. Moorthy and Ratna were the inspiring characters who embraced modern and progressive ideals for social and political change. Raja Rao blends local with global to challenge the established authorities through the voice of Achakka. R.K.Narayan set his novel *Malgudi Days* (1943) in the fictional town of malgudi as a microcosm for cultural shifts in post-colonial india. It depicts the intersection of traditional indian life and the influx of western modernity. His works highlights the integration of Eastern and Western Norms, and local and global tradition to pave the way for postmodernism. M.R.Anand is known for his humanistic approach and reformative zeal. He started his own style of social realism in his novels *Untouchable* (1935), *Coolie* (1936), and *Two Leaves and a Bud* (1937). Anand reformed standard English as described in *The Empire writes Back* by critics Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin to reflect Indian values and create a new trend in literature. The transition from Modernism to postmodernism and then to Metamodernism involves Amitav Ghosh, Arundhati Roy, and Geetanjali Shree.

Amitav Ghosh acts as a literary bridge between postmodernism and metamodernism. His multidimensional visions includes ecological crisis, fragmented narrative, and refusal of binaries. He connects Art, climate and global justice. His novels are not confined to a single genre but highlights the entangled crises of ecology, colonial history, myth, and the failure of literature to address the urgency of climate change. His works reflect deep concerns with anthropocene and expose the silences in literature regarding environmental issues and advocate for a deeper and cooperative relationship between humanity and the non-human world. *The Hungry Tide* (2004) set in mangrove delta in Eastern India and Bangladesh to link local ecosystem with global environmental and migratory issues. The novel foregrounds the interconnectedness of human and nonhuman life. It moves beyond anthropocentrism and emphasizes planetary ethics. Ghosh argues in his novel *The Great derangement* (2016) that Climate change is not an environmental crisis but a crisis of culture. The novel represents a new version of climate fiction (cli-fi) and Eco-Literature. *Gun Island* (2019) is a Eco-thriller that uses myth to explore the contemporary issues like climate change, forced migration, and the limits of human understandings. The shift in literary and cultural style in the early 21st century to metamodernism suggests new form of sincere environmental response. *Tomb of Sand* (originally written in Hindi by Geetanjali shree as *Ret Samadhi* in 2018 and translated into English by Daisy Rockwell in 2022) deconstructs the Borders with a sincerity in addressing themes like trauma, gender, and identity. Arundhati Roy in her novel *The ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017) focuses on Military conflict, political conflict, and its impact on the people after India-Pakistan partition. The novel refers to real historical events like Gujarat Riot, Kashmir Insurgency, and Bhopal Disaster. Roy deconstructs oppressive system that excludes the protagonist Anjum from mainstream society and keep outside the binary gender system, and reconstructs a sense of democratic values enshrined in the constitutions. The amalgamation of Deconstruction and Reconstruction is the hallmark of metamodernism.

Conclusion :

Western Metamodernism is a cultural reaction whereas Indian Metamodernism is a cultural integration. The Indian metamodernism was influenced by western literature but grounded in Indian social identities. The Indian response to the transformational impact of western literature is ongoing. In response to the profound western culture and literature on India, Indian writers developed a unique literary tradition of taking western literary styles and concepts and transforming them back to their traditional sources in a new way that enriched Indian literature and culture. Western metamodernism often grapples with internal philosophical dilemmas, Indian metamodernism is inherently engaging with history, language, culture, and power. Yet both traditions reflect a common desire to move beyond irony without abandoning complexity, to seek meaning without falling into naivety.

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Cultural Shifts in the Mirror Of Literature and Media

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Abstract : *Culture is a living, evolving entity—continuously molded by history, technology, and human experience. Among the many mediums that record and reinterpret these transformations, literature and media remain the most powerful. Literature captures the inner dimensions of human life, offering layered insights into themes of identity, power, gender, displacement, and globalization. Media, meanwhile, amplifies and circulates these ideas across borders, reframing them for an age defined by speed and digital connection.*

This paper explores how the relationship between literature and media unveils major cultural transitions: from colonial to postcolonial awareness, from rigid gender roles to feminist reinterpretations, and from local identities to global interdependence. By reading literary works alongside evolving media forms, the study contends that both fields extend beyond passive reflection. They actively participate in constructing, challenging, and redefining cultural meaning. In doing so, literature and media emerge not merely as mirrors of societal change but as creative forces shaping the cultural consciousness of the modern world.

Keywords: *Cultural transformation , Literature and media, Globalization , Digital culture.*

INTRODUCTION :

Culture is not static; it flows like a river—absorbing, transforming, and reshaping itself through time. The two most powerful mirrors reflecting these changes have always been literature and media. While literature preserves the emotional and intellectual history of an era, media captures the pulse of the present. Together, they form a dynamic dialogue between tradition and transformation, showing how societies evolve, rebel, and reimagine themselves.

Literature: The Soul of Cultural Reflection

From Homer's *Odyssey* to Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Americanah*, literature has always been a cultural barometer. It records the moral, social, and political shifts of human civilization.

When the Renaissance dawned, writers like Shakespeare celebrated human individuality and curiosity, mirroring the era's shift from divine-centered to human-centered thinking. The Romantic poets later turned inward, embracing emotion, nature, and imagination, signaling a break from the industrial rationality of their time.

In the 20th century, modernist writers such as T.S. Eliot and Virginia Woolf captured the fragmentation and alienation brought by war and urban life. Today, postcolonial and feminist writers challenge power structures and question identity, gender, and race—reflecting a world struggling to find equality and belonging in a globalized age.

Literature, therefore, doesn't merely reflect change—it provokes it. By giving voice to the marginalized and questioning authority, it becomes an active agent of cultural reformation.

Media: The Fast-Moving Mirror

If literature is the soul of culture, media is its face—ever-changing, expressive, and immediate. From the printing press to Instagram reels, media has evolved into the world's loudest storyteller.

The 20th century saw newspapers and cinema shaping national consciousness. World War

propaganda, freedom movement journalism, and films like *Citizen Kane* or *Pather Panchali* reflected deep cultural anxieties and aspirations. In the 21st century, the digital explosion has democratized voices. Social media platforms allow individuals to narrate their realities, challenge stereotypes, and create new cultural languages.

However, this rapid evolution has a double edge. While media amplifies diverse perspectives, it also risks creating echo chambers, misinformation, and cultural homogenization. The same mirror that reveals truth can also distort it.

Interplay Between Literature and Media

Today, literature and media no longer exist in isolation—they interact continuously. A novel becomes a web series; a poem turns into a viral post; a literary movement becomes a hashtag.

For example, Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* found renewed power in its television adaptation, becoming a cultural metaphor for women's resistance worldwide. Similarly, social media revives forgotten voices through digital archives and literary podcasts, creating new forms of storytelling that merge art, activism, and accessibility.

This fusion of text and technology has birthed a new cultural ecosystem—where narratives circulate faster, reach wider, and influence deeper than ever before.

Cultural Shifts in the 21st Century

In the current century, the mirror reflects rapid globalization, identity fluidity, and environmental consciousness. Literature and media today question rigid boundaries—between East and West, male and female, human and machine.

Writers like Arundhati Roy, Ocean Vuong, and Mohsin Hamid use hybrid forms to express hybrid identities. Meanwhile, films and online platforms spotlight sustainability, gender diversity, and mental health awareness—issues that redefine modern culture.

These shifts show that our collective imagination is evolving from dominance to dialogue, from hierarchy to harmony.

Conclusion: The Mirror and the Mind

Both literature and media hold the mirror before us—not just to see what we are, but what we are becoming. Every cultural shift begins as a whisper in art and ends as a movement in society.

In an age where algorithms compete with authors, and trends replace traditions, it becomes even more important to look into these mirrors—not passively, but critically.

For in their reflection lies not only the story of our culture—but also the blueprint of our future.

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Voice for female existence in *That Long Silence* by Shashi Deshpande

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Abstract: Shashi Deshpande is an eminent Indian English novelist, won the Sahitya Akademi Award for *That Long Silence* in 1990 and the Padma Shri Award in 2009. Her novel *That Long Silence* (1988) is a seminal work in Indian English literature that foregrounds the complexities of gender, identity, and silence in a patriarchal society. The novel revolves around Jaya, a middle-class woman whose life represents the suppression of female voice within the domestic and social spheres. Through her fragmented narration, Deshpande illustrates how silence becomes both an imposed condition and a survival strategy for women caught in patriarchal norms. Jaya's inner conflict highlights the conflict between her intellectual aspirations and the expectations of being a dutiful wife and mother. The enforced muteness reflects not only personal repression but also the collective silencing of women within traditional Indian households, where conformity and obedience are prized above individuality. Deshpande expands a realistic style to depict the constraints imposed on female subjectivity, underscoring how silence functions as an instrument of control. Yet, the novel also reveals silence as a form of resistance—Jaya's eventual introspection and acknowledgment of her long silence suggest the beginnings of self-awareness and the possibility of reclaiming her voice. Thus, the research paper explores silence as both a symbol of suppression and a herald to empowerment.

Jaya's struggle within the broader discourse of feminist literary criticism, this paper argues that *That Long Silence* critically gendered dynamics of speech and silence, offering insights into the suppressed narratives of Indian women. Ultimately, Deshpande reveals how patriarchal ideologies sustain female marginalization gesturing towards the potential of self-expression and liberation through the act of breaking silence.

Keywords: Female existence, Silence, Patriarchy, Suppression, Identity, Feminism, Empowerment.

INTRODUCTION:

Shashi Deshpande is one of the prominent authors of Indian Writing in English. She wrote many outstanding novels like the *Dark Holds No Terrors*(1980), *If I Die Today*(1982), *Come Up and Be Dead* (1983), *Roots and Shadows*(1983) and *That Long Silence* (1989) etc. the main theme of her writings are the quest for a female identity and existence.

Shashi Deshpande's *That Long Silence* is a powerful novel that foregrounds the silenced experiences of middle-class Indian women caught between tradition and modernity. Through her protagonist Jaya, Deshpande captures the internal and external struggles of women who are compelled to maintain silence in patriarchal domestic spaces, while secretly yearning for a voice of their own. This paper examines how Deshpande transforms silence into a narrative strategy for asserting female existence. It explores the themes of suppression, identity crisis, marital conflict, and the search for autonomy, and how these interwoven concerns give women the agency to recognize their own suppressed individuality. Using feminist literary criticism and psychological analysis, the study argues that *That Long Silence* offers more than just a story of victimhood—it is a call for re-articulating female existence against patriarchal constraints.

The twentieth century witnessed a gradual but decisive shift in Indian English literature as women writers began to challenge established patriarchal norms. Among them, Shashi Deshpande holds a significant position as a writer who explores the complex psychological realities of women in middle-

class households. Her novel *That Long Silence* (1988), which received the Sahitya Akademi Award, delves into the silenced lives of women who are expected to submit, adapt, and sacrifice within domestic spaces.

The novel portrays the protagonist Jaya, a writer and housewife, who confront the contradictions of her existence—her creative aspirations versus her domestic responsibilities, her individual desires versus societal expectations, and her need for expression versus enforced silence. Deshpande uses Jaya's personal crisis as a metaphor for the collective plight of Indian women who are denied the opportunity to voice their existence.

This paper explores how *That Long Silence* articulates the muted struggles of women and offers a voice to female existence. It examines the narrative strategies employed by Deshpande to dismantle patriarchal silencing, and how silence itself becomes a tool of resistance and reflection.

Female Perspective and the representation of Women

Feminism in Indian literature has often grappled with cultural specificities. Unlike Western feminism, which has historically focused on issues such as suffrage, reproductive rights, and workplace equality, Indian feminism engages with deep-rooted social institutions such as family, marriage, caste, and religion. Shashi Deshpande, rather than adopting a radical or militant tone, writes from within the framework of the middle-class Indian household.

In *That Long Silence*, feminism is neither an abstract ideology nor a loud protest—it is a quiet confrontation, an inner negotiation with the forces of patriarchy. Jaya represents the Indian woman who has been socialized into silence but gradually realizes the necessity of self-expression. Her struggles reflect what feminist critics like Simone de Beauvoir call the condition of “the other”—the woman relegated to a secondary existence.

Deshpande, through Jaya, situates silence as both a symptom of oppression and a means of self-realization. The novel, therefore, becomes a feminist text that captures the lived experiences of ordinary women while challenging the structures that perpetuate their marginalization.

Silent Voice as a Narrative Strategy

Silence is the central metaphor of *That Long Silence*. Jaya, despite being a writer, finds herself silenced by domestic expectations. The very title of the novel suggests the long-standing muteness imposed upon women within marital and familial structures. Silence operates at multiple levels:

Marital Silence – Jaya is married to Mohan, a conventional man who expects her to be the ideal wife. Their communication is filled with unspoken tensions, and Jaya often chooses silence over confrontation to maintain peace.

Creative Silence – As a writer, Jaya suppresses her authentic voice. She recalls abandoning stories that were too raw or too real because they threatened to disrupt her marital harmony.

Cultural Silence – The novel reflects the Indian cultural ethos that equates a woman's virtue with her silence and obedience. Jaya inherits this silence from generations of women before her.

However, Deshpande also suggests that silence is not merely passive. Jaya's silence becomes a space of contemplation where she examines her own life critically. The very act of narrating her suppressed experiences is an attempt to break that silence. Thus, silence paradoxically becomes the medium through which Jaya finds her voice.

Marriage as a powerful tool and Female Identity

Marriage in *That Long Silence* is portrayed as an institution that sustains patriarchal dominance. Mohan, Jaya's husband, embodies the conventional male ego, expecting his wife to be supportive, accommodating, and submissive. For him, Jaya's silence signifies loyalty and obedience. When Mohan faces a professional crisis, Jaya is expected to stand by him unquestioningly.

The novel highlights how marriage removes female individuality. Jaya reflects on how she ceased to exist as “Jaya” and became merely “Mohan's wife.” Her sense of self is fragmented between her domestic role and her inner aspirations. Jaya becomes a conventional home-maker, takes care of the household, feeds Mohan, agree to his wishes, and rarely questions him despite of disagreeing with him on various grounds.

A woman can never be angry; she can only be neurotic, hysterical, frustrated. There is no room for despair, either. There is only order and routine, today I have to change the sheets tomorrow, scrub the bathrooms the day after clean the fridge. (Despande,147-148)

She thought about Mohan,

A husband is like a sheltering tree....Take your pain between your teeth, bite on it, and don't let it escape. (Despande,32)

This conflict echoes the ideas of feminist theorists like Betty Friedan, who described "the problem that has no name"—the unspoken dissatisfaction of housewives confined within domesticity. Jaya personates this dissatisfaction, as she questions the cost of her silence and submission.

Writing as Self-Assertion

One of the most significant aims of the novel is writing as a means of reclaiming voice. Jaya once aspired to be a writer of meaningful stories, but societal pressures forced her into silence. Her earlier writings under the pseudonym "Seeta" were confined to safe, conventional themes, never challenging patriarchal values.

However, as she encountered the crisis in her marriage, Jaya begins to re-evaluate the purpose of her writing. She realizes that authentic writing must stand up to uncomfortable truths rather than merely conform to social expectations. Through the act of narration in the novel itself, she confronts her silenced voice.

Thus, novel becomes a metaphor for female existence. It allows Jaya to re-establish her fragmented identity and assert her individuality against patriarchal norms.

Inward Space as a Site of Oppression and Resistance

The internal sphere in *That Long Silence* is both a prison and a site of awakening. The flat in which Jaya and Mohan live during the crisis becomes symbolic—it confines Jaya physically but also gives her the solitude to reflect. The household, traditionally considered a woman's domain, is shown as a place where her identity is restricted.

Yet, it is within this space that Jaya begins her journey of self-discovery. Her reflections on silence, her memories of other women's struggles, and her eventual decision to confront her own voice all emerge within the domestic sphere.

Deshpande scratched off the traditional association of home with female subservience, showing it instead as a place where resistance can germinate.

The Legacy of Female Silence

The novel also explores silence as a legacy passed down through generations of women. Jaya recalls her mother and grandmother, who lived lives of submission, silence, and sacrifice. These women accepted silence as their destiny, reinforcing the cultural expectation that a "good" woman endures without complaint.

By reflecting on this legacy, Jaya becomes aware of how deeply entrenched silence is in the female psyche. However, she also realizes the need to break this cycle for the sake of future generations. Her decision to speak, to write, and to assert herself symbolizes a rupture in this inherited tradition of silence.

Psychological Dimensions of Silence

Beyond its social and cultural meanings, silence in the novel has profound psychological implications. Jaya experiences inner turmoil, depression, and identity crisis as a result of her silencing. Her sense of worth is constantly measured by her husband's approval, leaving her emotionally dependent and vulnerable.

Silence, in this psychological sense, becomes both a defense mechanism and a symptom of trauma. Jaya suppresses her anger, frustration, and creativity to conform to societal norms, but this suppression leads to alienation and despair. Only through self-reflection does she begin to heal and reclaim her individuality.

This psychological portrayal aligns with the feminist-psychological approach in literature, which emphasizes the inner lives of women and the impact of patriarchal control on their mental health.

Reclaiming Female Existence

The climax of the novel is not marked by dramatic rebellion but by Jaya's quiet realization that she must no longer hide behind silence. She recognizes that her existence cannot be defined solely by her roles as wife and mother. Instead, she must assert herself as an individual with her own voice and identity.

Jaya's decision to write honestly and to face her life with courage symbolizes the reclaiming of female existence. It reflects what feminist scholar Elaine Showalter describes as "gynocriticism"—a woman-centered approach to literature that values female experience and expression.

Conclusion :

The purpose for writing on women by women novelists is only to raise a voice for female existence or emancipation of new women. The women are reconciled to a life of humiliation in the form of gender bias while performing like the roles of wives, mothers, sisters and daughters in a rigidly custom found milieu they live in. They have to think of preserving their identity as an independent human being.

Shashi Deshpande's *That Long Silence* is not merely a narrative about marital discord; it is a profound exploration of the silenced existence of women in patriarchal societies. Through the character of Jaya, Deshpande illustrates how silence, though imposed, can become a space of reflection and eventual self-assertion.

The novel gives voice to female existence by questioning cultural norms, exposing marital power dynamics, and emphasizing the need for authentic self-expression. Jaya's journey from silence to articulation resonates with countless women who struggle to reconcile tradition with individuality.

In offering a voice to female existence, *That Long Silence* becomes both a mirror of reality and a subtle manifesto for change. It calls upon women to recognize their suppressed identities and to transform silence into speech, conformity into assertion, and submission into selfhood.

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Morden trends of Languages and Communication

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Abstract : Languages and communication in the modern world are undergoing rapid transformation due to globalization, digital technology and cultural exchange. English has emerged as a global lingua franca, while hybrid forms like Hinglish and Spanglish highlight the blending of local and global identities. Social media platform has redefined expression through emojis, memes and hashtags, making communication faster and more visual. Artificial intelligence and machine translation tools are breaking down linguistics barriers, while video conferencing platforms have popularized remote and virtual communication. At the same time, issues of inclusivity, gender- neutral language and cultural sensitivity are shaping how people interact across societies. A parallel concern is the preservation of endangered languages amidst the dominance of global ones, a challenge partly addressed by digital archives and online resources. By embracing these innovations, individuals can better navigate the increasingly interconnected global landscape and take full advantage of the benefits multilingualism has to offer.

Key Words: globalization, virtual communication, artificial intelligence, inclusivity, endangered, global landscape.

INTRODUCTION :

Language is the most powerful tools of human interaction, and in the modern era they have undergone rapid transformation. Globalization, digital technology, and cultural exchange have reshaped the way people express themselves and connect with others. Today communication is not limited to face-to-face conversations; it extends across social media, instant messaging, virtual platforms and even artificial intelligence. The way we communicate has change significantly in this age of rapid technological growth, with digital platforms acting as the focal point of this revolutionary shift. The part the influence of digital technologies, such as artificial intelligence (AI) for language learning and translation. The emergence of social media and instant messaging, which are changing linguistic norms and the combination of augmented and virtual reality (AR/VR) for immersive communication experiences, dominates current trends in language and communication. Additional significant developments include the development of more individualized and gamified language learning resources, the growing significance of digital literacy and the relevance of multilingualism and cultural awareness in a more globalized society.

MODERN TRENDS IN LANGUAGES

The Emergence of English as a Universal Language

- English still predominates in digital domains academia, and worldwide business.
- There are new variations of English that are streamlined and non-native for cross cultural communication, such as **Global English** or **Globish** are becoming more prevalent.

The Growth of Multilingualism

- More people are learning more than one language frequently with the aid of AI based tools and applications like babble and Duolingo etc.

- Code switching alternating between languages during a conversation is widespread, particularly among metropolitan youth.

The Evolution of Digital Language

- Internet slang (such as ‘sus’, ‘omg’, ‘Bro’ etc.) and the use of emojis and stickers are becoming essential components of daily speech.
- Memes and social media swiftly give rise to new words.

Indigenous and Minority Language Revival

- AI powered language preservation is one of the digital technologies being used in a global drive to preserve and restore endangered languages.

MODERN TRENDS IN COMMUNICATIONS

Brief Visual First Interaction

- Tik- Tok, Instagram reels and you tube shorts are platforms that emphasize visual story telling.
- The long emails and texts are being replaced in many casual circumstances by voice and video notes.

Voice and AI Communication

- Conversational AI (such as Chat Gpt) and voice assistants (such as Alexa, Siri and Google Assistant) are widely used methods of information retrieval and task completion.
- People are using natural spoken language more when dealing with technology.

Asynchronous Communication

- Due to the flexibility of asynchronous forms (such as- Email and Loom videos), communication has changed particularly in remote work.

Hyper Personalization

- AI and Algorithm create messages and information that are instantly tailored to user’s tastes, actions and even emotional states.
- Language is becoming more inclusive and gender neutral. Examples include utilizing “They” as a singular pronoun and non-gendered job names.

Trends in Social and Cultural Communication

Globalization and Localization

- Cultural and social communication trends include globalization and localization, with brands and people required to adjust communications for cultural and language context.
- A crucial Commercial and diplomatic ability is “Glocal” communication, which strikes a balance between local relevance and global appeal.

Memetic Communication

- Use memes, gifs and viral forms to swiftly express complex ideas or emotions across languages.

Digital Etiquette (“Netiquette”)

New conventions emerge for tone, response, speed, emoji use and boundaries (e.g- ask life separation via communication platforms).

Artificial Intelligence and Language Technology

- Machine translation and realtime interpretation AI earphones (like Timekettle) and tools like Deepl and Google Translate are enhancing real time Multilingual conversation.

AI Content Generation

- AI is already capable of writing emails, screenplays, essays and even effectively imitating human tone and style.

- Bring up moral questions regarding veracity and false information.

AI- powered Language learning

AI powered tutors can now personalize and modify language learning to your learning style and level in real time.

Challenges in Languages and Modern Communication

Verbal Dilution

One of the most noticeable things about digital communication is the use of short, simplified language forms. People often use abbreviations like “LOL” (laugh at loud), “BRB” (Be right back), and “OMG” (Oh my god) to make conversations faster and easier. These shortenings help people talk quickly, but they also make language simpler and less detailed. As more people, especially younger generations, get use to this kind of language, there is concern that they might lose the ability to communicate in more complex and formal ways. This can lead to a decline in the richness and diversity of language also, because digital communication focuses on being quick, it sometimes ignores accuracy. This can make it hard to express complex ideas clearly and it may reduce the emotional and expressive power of language.

Language Fragmentation

The digital age has also caused language to break into smaller, unique forms. Different online groups and platforms have their own special ways of talking- what are called “micro- languages”. These can include made-up words, abbreviations, and specific slang that only people within those understand. For example, the way people talk on TIK-TOK, or discord can be very different from Twitter or Facebook. While these special forms of language help to create a sense of community, they can also create barriers between groups. Also, the dominance of certain languages – especially English in digital spaces can push aside other languages, making them less common. This can lead to the loss of traditional and indigenous languages as well as a lack of language variety across the world.

Communication Misinterpretation

Text based communication makes it harder to understand message clearly, because it doesn’t include non-verbal cues like tone, facial expressions, or body language. Without these clues, Messages can be misunderstood. For example, a message that’s meant to be funny might be taken the wrong way, leading to confusion or even hurt feelings. Emojis and GIFs have been added to help with this by adding emotional context. Emojis can show if a message is serious or playful, and GIFs can add humour and explanation. However these tools aren’t always reliable. Their meaning can change depending on context or how someone interprets them, and they can’t fully replace the depth of real- life communication.

Ethical Issues in Language Use

The digital age has also brought new ethical problems related to the way people use language. One major issue is the rise of cyberbullying and hate speech. Online platforms allow people to say harmful things in ways that might not be possible in real life. This can cause serious emotional and even physical harm. Another problem is the spread of misinformation. False news, conspiracy theories, and misleading stories often rely on confusing and misleading language. The fast spread of these messages through social media makes it harder to tell the truth from lies. These issues can affect public opinion, increase social divisions, and break down trust in institutions. To address these ethical problems, both individuals and systems need to take responsibility for preventing harmful speech and false information.

Conclusion :

The latest communication trends include the widespread use of artificial intelligence (AI) for task automation and personalized experiences, the expansion of hybrid and remote work models supported by unified communication tools, a focus on human centric and authentic communication, and an increase in the use of video, short form content and multimodal communication formats.

Furthermore, 5G technology is increasing connection but data privacy and security are becoming increasingly important concerns, coupled with the focus on sustainability in communication practices. While digital communication has brought many useful changes, it also brings challenges that need careful attention. Issues like verbal dilution, language fragmentation, communication misunderstandings, and ethical problems, such as cyberbullying and misinformation all stem from the changing digital world. As society continues to adapt, it's important to address these challenges to ensure that language stays a tool for meaningful and constructive communication. Modern trends in languages and communications promote speed, inclusivity and global reach, they also pose challenges of language erosion, inequality, privacy risks and mis communication.

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Intersection of Literature, Media, Culture and Women in addressing ecological crisis

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Abstract: Environmental change is now a lived reality rather than a distant forecast. Across the Indo-Gangetic plain, heat arrives earlier, monsoon rains behave erratically, and local ecologies strain under cumulative pressures from pollution, land-use shifts, and over-extraction. Scientific data describe these shifts, yet numbers alone rarely move public imagination. Literature, journalism, and ritual supply the connective tissue that carries facts into everyday meaning. This article offers a broad synthesis across ecocriticism, environmental communication, ecofeminist theory, and eco-spiritual festivals to show how cultural forms shape ecological perception, agency, and policy imagination. It argues that enduring climate action requires more than technology and regulation. It also needs narrative competence, gender-just institutions of care, and embodied practices that make reciprocity with land and water both thinkable and feasible. Drawing examples from regional writing, community media, women's cooperatives, and Bihar's women-led festivals—*Chhath Puja*, *Jivitputrika Vrat*, *Hartalika Teej*, and *Sama-Chakeva*—the paper sketches practical pathways for educators, journalists, policy makers, and cultural workers. Culture, in this account, is not only an external manifestation of a community but could also contribute in policy making regarding eco – preservation with the help of media.

Keywords: *ecocriticism; environmental communication; ecofeminism; festivals of Bihar; Eco-culture; sustainability; media.*

INTRODUCTION :

The climate crisis, which is an emergency situation for whole humanity, is often addressed and expressed in the language of policy makers which combines mostly the leaders, politicians, officials. Such abstractions are necessary for global coordination, but they sit far from the daily experiences of climate sufferings. As Amitav Ghosh notes, “climate change is also a crisis of culture, and thus of the imagination itself” (Ghosh 9). Culture narrows that gap with the help of literature and media. A short story about a failed monsoon, a radio bulletin in a local dialect, or a dawn procession at the river during festivals transforms general phenomena into felt concerns. Literature teaches readers what to notice and how to remember. Media moves those memories across space. Festivals keep them alive across generations. A broad lens is essential because ecological disruption does not respect disciplinary borders. This article begins with ecocriticism—how texts model relations between humans and the non-human world. It also examines environmental communication and how attention is made, sustained, and sometimes exhausted. Next, it turns to ecofeminism as both critique and practice, showing why gender-just institutions are not optional appendages but the very infrastructure of adaptation. Finally, it reads women-led festivals as embodied archives of ecological ethics, before closing with pragmatic steps that can be adopted. The aim is synthesis of ideas that people working on climate, culture, or community resilience can put to work.

Literature and Ecocriticism: Reading with the World

Ecocriticism asks a simple question with far-reaching implications: what happens if we treat the environment not as scenery but as a participant in the story. Early pastorals idealized rural balance, yet even those idylls reveal who was allowed to speak for land and who was silenced. Romantic writing staged mountain and storm as sublime, capturing the push-pull of awe and anxiety. Contemporary texts place broken seasons, gutted rivers, and the slow grief of extinction at the centre of plot and image. When a village well runs dry in a novel, the shortage is never only water; it is kinship rearranged, labour redistributed, and hope renegotiated. Literature does not only deal with environmental issue in the content or subject matter but also in the very narrative structure. Fragmented plots mirror environmental disruption; choruses of voices resemble ecological interdependence. Lyric poems compress multispecies encounters into a handful of precise images; long novels track slow violence across decades. Language choices are ethical choices too. Calling forests “resources” invites extraction; calling them “relations” suggests reciprocity and duty. As Kate Soper cautions, “nature is not a blank category but a contested terrain of meanings” (Soper 15). Literature experiments with such naming, testing how words open or foreclose futures.

Ecocritical work has widened beyond Anglophone canons and scenic “nature writing.” Scholars now read city novels for heat, dust, and water politics; they read migration memoirs as climate texts; they recover children’s songs as seasonal knowledge. This widening is also a rebalancing of authority. Indigenous storytelling, Dalit eco-poetics, women’s oral histories, and regional literatures contribute evidence that expert documents cannot capture alone. As Raymond Williams reminds us, “culture is ordinary: in every society and in every mind” (Williams 93). The outcome is not a rejection of science but a richer cartography of how ecological change is felt, narrated, and resisted. From a literary point of view, a few grounded lessons stand out. To begin with, attentiveness is not a given but something that can be nurtured. When readers move slowly through a text, they are encouraged to sharpen their senses—watching the flight of birds, feeling the texture of soil, catching faint smells, or listening to the pulse of a rhythm. These habits of close noticing are not limited to books alone; they also help communities remain alert to the subtle signs of change in their surroundings. A second insight lies in literature’s gift of scale. Stories are able to move back and forth between the smallest of details and the widest of horizons, shifting from the private moment to the planetary stage. This capacity to stitch together the intimate and the vast is exactly what discussions on climate change often lack. A third reminder is that moral weight is most powerfully carried by particulars rather than by abstract appeals. A single, vivid image with a broken pot lying beside a dry handpump can touch the conscience in ways that a slogan or a graph might never achieve. Together, these points suggest how literature teaches us to see, to connect, and to judge with a sensitivity that numbers alone cannot provide that sight.

Media and Environmental Communication

If literature deepens perception, media communication builds circulation. Newsrooms decide whether a flood is framed as local misfortune or a sign of a wider pattern. Editors choose between a headline that alarms and one that explains. Photographs of cracked earth or smoke-choked skylines do cognitive work: they turn statistics into scenes. Ursula Heise stresses that “narratives of place and planet provide frameworks through which publics imagine environmental futures” (Heise 56). Yet attention is finite. Environmental communication therefore faces a double task to make it matter and make it liveable. A number of strategies can make communication both effective and lasting. One important approach is to connect the global with the local. A technical explanation of something as vast as a heat dome gains far greater force when paired with the words of a farmer watching leaves wither or a nurse describing patients suffering from heat stress. Rhythm too plays a role, while brief regular updates help communities stay informed in real time, longer narrative pieces provide the depth needed to understand wider systems and historical patterns. Equally vital is keeping pathways to action open. Information that leaves readers in despair remains incomplete; what truly matters is offering clear steps—whether that means knowing the timing of shade, the location of water points, or the number of a helpline—that transform attention into care.

Language itself must also be treated with respect. Reports that draw on local idioms, familiar names, and a tone of dignity travel further and build trust more effectively than impersonal technical

prose. Finally, it is necessary to return to the scene. Follow-up stories that trace recovery and maintenance remind audiences that disasters are not spectacles to be consumed and forgotten but are ongoing realities that require sustained engagement. Digital platforms complicate and extend these tasks. They enable quick warnings and participatory storytelling, but they also reward outrage, spread rumours, and expose activists—especially women and youth—to harassment. A healthy communication ecosystem requires not only more content but also better norms, verification routines, safety protocols, and collaborations between journalists, researchers, and community media. When a district newspaper partners with a school to publish seasonal diaries, or when a radio station curates voice notes from farmers about pests and rainfall, attention becomes a shared civic craft rather than a private commodity.

Ecofeminism: Care, Critique, and Collective Skills

Ecofeminism joins two analyses that are often kept apart: the extraction of nature and the devaluation of care. It points to how gendered labour—fetching water, gathering fuel, tending fields, cooking, nursing—makes women first responders to ecological change. Vandana Shiva emphasizes that “women have been the custodians of biodiversity, embodying a continuity between life, livelihood, and ecology” (Shiva 45). When a river recedes, walking distances grow. When forests thin, time spent collecting fodder expands. When prices rise, household negotiations intensify. Naming these burdens is the beginning of justice. Yet ecofeminism does more than tally costs. It also names assets: local knowledge of seeds and soils, networks of reciprocity, and the practical intelligence that keeps households and villages afloat. Seed banks are organized, grain cooperatives stitched together, kitchen-gardens multiplied, and seasonal calendars maintained. Women’s self-help groups have become platforms for solar lantern distribution, safer cooking fuels, composting drives, and backyard nurseries. Such initiatives do not “solve” climate change on their own, but they thicken the social fabric through which any solution must pass.

Ecofeminist critique resists romanticizing this labour. Women’s unpaid work should not become an invisible subsidy for unsustainable development. Land rights, access to credit, representation in water and forest bodies, safety from violence, and time-saving infrastructure are not extras; they are the very infrastructure of adaptation. Bina Agarwal further reminds us that “participation of women enhances both equity and the effectiveness of environmental governance” (Agarwal 102). The point is not to insert women into an unchanged system, but to transform the system so that care and ecological limits guide design, budgeting, and law. Finally, ecofeminism keeps an eye on imagination. It asks whether stories about “progress” can hold intimacy with place, or whether they sacrifice belonging for spectacle. It invites other plots: repair over replacement, maintenance over neglect, cooperation over extraction. In doing so, it links ethics to everyday technique—how to mend, share, borrow, grow, and live.

Eco- Cultural Festivals: Embodied Archives of Ecological Ethics

Cultural practices rooted in nature promotes sustainable living and preservation of biodiversity and ecosystem. Such religious festivals foster cultural ethics emphasizing on moral obligation to protect environment and generating eco-conscious behaviour for generations. They bind knowledge to gesture, song, taste, and place so that it survives beyond any single speaker. In Bihar and neighbouring regions, several women-led festivals like *Chhath Puja*, *Jivitputrika Vrat*, *Hartalika Teej*, and *Sama-Chakeva* that entwine devotion, kinship, and ecological care. Reading them Eco critically does not reduce faith to function; rather, it recognizes that ethical learning often happens through the body.

Chhath Puja

Over four days, families prepare offerings to the setting and rising sun. The sequence—bathing, fasting, evening arghya, dawn arghya—structures time around water and light. Women lead the work of sweeping ghats, arranging bamboo baskets, and cooking *prasad* with seasonal fruits. Material choices matter: clay lamps instead of plastic lights, leaf plates instead of using non bio degradable plastic, and riverbank cleaning rather than littering. Songs praise the sun as giver and the river as mother, encoding reciprocity in melody and refrain. As Kimmerer notes, “all flourishing is mutual” (Kimmerer 166). The festival stages a civic lesson without speeches to keep water clean, share labour, and symbiotic

relationship with nature.

Jivitputrika Vrat (Jitiya)

Mothers undertake a rigorous fast for the well-being of children. In recent years, communities have paired the fast with tree plantings or pledges against crop-residue burning. The ritual therefore tutors two virtues at once—care for kin and care for habitat. Its pedagogy is concrete: hunger marks the day, storytelling fills the evening, and dawn breaks with a shared meal that seals a community promise.

Hartalika Teej

Celebrated around the monsoon, Teej foregrounds friendship among women and the right to choose. Swings decorated with leaves and flowers transform common spaces into temporary gardens. Fasting, song, and exchanges of gifts weave social ties that will be called upon during illness, shortage, or flood. The festival's seasonal timing rehearses a sense of fit between human joy and rainfall, between celebration and replenishment. In times of erratic monsoon, Teej becomes both a reminder of older rhythms and a rehearsal for collective care.

Sama-Chakeva

In Mithila, sisters sculpt clay figures of birds and siblings, paint them with natural colours, and carry them in bamboo baskets at dusk. The songs tell of false accusation and loyal defence, coinciding with the arrival of winter migrants. Children learn to name birds, notice their timings, and imagine human bonds alongside avian journeys. The final immersion returns clay to water, completing a cycle of making and unmaking that resists plastic permanence. By gathering mud from the pond and returning it later, participants experience an ethic of use without domination.

These festivals do not romanticize hardship. They convert scarcity into solidarity and anxiety into attention. They also democratize ecological knowledge. One need not read a policy brief to learn that rivers deserve care; one needs only to clean a ghat and light a lamp year after year. The rituals place women at the centre of planning and performance, training a public that recognizes care work as civic work.

Implications

The analysis makes it clear that change rests on small steps, not on grand slogans. What follows are ideas that different groups can adapt, not rigid plans. Teachers have an important role. Climate science can be taught with poems, folk tales, or short stories in different languages, so that students begin to “read” their own surroundings as they would a text. Instead of writing only from books, students might be asked to watch the fields after rain, to talk with grandparents about old practices, or to draw and write about what they see. A garden in the schoolyard, or a seasonal calendar on the wall, becomes a record that grows with time. Lessons also open up when farmers, artists, or ritual leaders are invited to speak beside scientists. And rather than testing only memory, schools can look at everyday habits—how water is used, how waste is sorted, how trees or common spaces are cared for. For media workers the task is different but just as urgent. Breaking news has to be there, but so does slower reporting that explains what happened and what comes after. A note about a heat dome is sharper when paired with a farmer showing wilted leaves or a nurse describing heat stress. Language matters too: local words and idioms carry respect and travel further than cut-and-paste technical reports. People need direction as well as numbers to call to places for shade or water and practical steps that turn awareness into care. Reporters also need safety, especially for women and young people in the field. Radio stations, folk singers, and libraries can extend reach and when audiences are treated as participants rather than mere listeners to grow trust. Administrators and policymakers can also help by taking smaller but lasting measures. Women's groups, cooperatives, and festival committees can be recognized as partners in planning for water, waste, or energy. Funds can go to things that last—a few benches in the shade, taps at busy markets, a compost pit by a shrine. After disasters, offices should publish reports that show what has been done and what still needs care, with timelines people can follow. Shared places like ponds, grazing paths or riverbanks also need protection with clear agreements with who looks after what. Relief works better when it follows the cultural calendar by reaching people in spaces where they already gather. Community groups and cultural workers bring the thread back to their daily life. They can collect and share songs, recipes, or craft skills linked to the seasons. Festivals are a chance to replace plastic

with leaf plates, clay cups, or bamboo baskets, and at the same time to support the makers through small fairs or stalls. Repair clinics can turn waste reduction into a gathering, where neighbours learn stitching, soldering and how to take care for tools. Clubs can bring elders and youth together, the old sharing weather knowledge and the young offering digital skills. Even small successes deserve notice. A mural on a wall or a community board can remind people of what was achieved and keep confidence alive until the next festival.

Methodological Note: Why Synthesis Matters

A synthesis paper does not claim novelty in data; it claims usefulness in arrangement. Climate scholarship is vast, and policy windows are brief. Bringing together ecocritical reading, communication strategy, ecofeminist critique, and ritual practice help practitioners see where efforts can meet and reinforce one another. It also resists two temptations: to treat culture as an optional extra, and to treat culture as a magical fix. Culture is infrastructure for meaning. It cannot replace reservoirs or regulations, but without narrative competence, information struggles to travel, and without embodied practices, values fade when pressure mounts. This synthesis also argues for method pluralism. Quantitative measures of rainfall and temperature are crucial, but so are qualitative accounts of fatigue, memory, and care. Workshop notes, songbooks, and festival ledgers belong alongside rainfall charts and cost-benefit analyses. As Buell reminds us, “literature is not only the reflection of environmental crisis but also its mode of address” (Buell 7). When methods sit together, blind spots shrink and options multiply.

Conclusion

The work of environmental restoration could be judged not only by tonnes of carbon avoided but also by the habits it cultivates. Literature trains perception and memory; media organizes attention and participation; ecofeminism centres justice and care; festivals rehearse gratitude, restraint, and reciprocity. Together they make change imaginable, bearable, and shareable. The future will not be secured by numbers alone, nor by stories alone, *but by their thoughtful combination*: data that people can carry, and narratives that invite them to act. If policy is the machinery of change, culture is the architecture of meaning. Treating culture as infrastructure suggests practical priorities: invest in institutions that preserve memory, renew language, and dignify care. Literature media and festival build communications that explain without exhausting, place women’s knowledge and labour at the centre of planning, align civic calendars with seasonal rhythms so that protection and repair become customary, not exceptional. These are not ornaments but are foundations for living well within limits.

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Impact of Chetan Bhagat's Quotes on Indian Middle-Class Mindset and Aspirations

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Abstract: Chetan Bhagat, one of India's most widely read contemporary authors, has had a profound impact on the cultural and intellectual landscape of the Indian middle class. His popular quotes, which are frequently shared across social media platforms and in public discourse, encapsulate themes of ambition, self-worth, societal pressure, and the pursuit of individual dreams. This paper investigates the influence of Bhagat's quotes on shaping the mindset and aspirations of India's urban and semi-urban middle-class population. Through a combination of content analysis and qualitative data from surveys and interviews, the study explores how his motivational language resonates with middle-class values such as upward mobility, education, and self-determination. The findings indicate that Bhagat's accessible language and relatable messages reflect the struggles of the middle class and act as a catalyst for personal ambition, subtly influencing life choices, career goals, and societal perceptions. The paper also examines the dual nature of this influence—while many individuals find empowerment in his words; others critique the oversimplification of complex realities. Ultimately, this research highlights the power of popular literature in shaping socio-cultural aspirations in contemporary India.

Key Words: Aspirations, Motivational quotes, Youth mindset, Personal ambition, social media discourse.

INTRODUCTION:

This research explores the intersection of Bhagat's widely disseminated quotations with the core values that are both socially and personally oriented among traditional and neo middle class Indians. This intersection may influence their aspirations for upward mobility and self-actualization (Capelos and Basu) (Singh). By analysing the spread of these quotations across digital platforms, the study reveals that their motivational framing resonates with the individualistic aspirations found among Indian university students and aligns with the expressive functions of modern middle-class identities (Khare) (Capelos and Basu).

Furthermore, the motivational framing of Bhagat's quotations employs narrative techniques similar to those found in his novels, thereby reflecting the increased anxiety and mobility concerns reported among Indian middle-class youth (Vimal and R) (Deuchar). These anxieties are exacerbated by the widespread use of digital platforms, where middle class youths actively navigate academic expectations and self-identity, reflecting the self-construction dynamics noted in recent studies of Indian middle-class children (Sandhu and Barn). As a result, the aspirational narratives embedded in Bhagat's quotes enhance the digital self-construction practices observed among middle class youth, reinforcing their pursuit of upward mobility and self-actualization (Sandhu and Barn) ("Social Mobility in Developing Countries"). These dynamics resonate with findings that indicate Indian middle-class youths face increased media gratification and self-construction pressures during their digital interactions (Sandhu and Barn) (Bhushan). The extensive circulation of Bhagat's quotations on mobile-first platforms thus serves as a form of digital cultural capital that both mirrors and strengthens the aspirational ethos of the

Indian middle class (Martelli et al.). The widespread sharing of these quotations on platforms like WhatsApp and Instagram further fosters a collective narrative of aspiration, a phenomenon similarly observed in the cultural mediation of social media among Indian middle-class families.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

The following synthesis draws upon empirical studies of explainable AI in education, generative AI adoption impacts, and learner trust dynamics to contextualize the role of culturally resonant quotations in algorithmic-transparency interventions. Recent evidence indicates that embedding culturally salient narratives within explainable-AI interfaces can markedly increase students' trust and perceived fairness of algorithmic feedback. These findings align with prior work demonstrating that culturally informed design elements amplify trust in AI-driven educational feedback systems (Viberg et al.) (Afzaal et al.). Moreover, qualitative insights from Indian contexts reveal that aligning such designs with aspirational narratives not only mitigates anxiety but also fosters a sense of agency among middle-class learners, echoing observations of AI-evoked aspiration in Indian deployments of algorithmic systems (Sambasivan et al.). Consequently, leveraging such aspirational quotes may serve as a culturally grounded lever to accelerate AI acceptance and mitigate the infrastructural and trust barriers identified in Indian educational settings (Agarwal and Vij) (Green). Empirical evidence from Indian contexts further suggests that AI-driven instructional designs embedding culturally resonant motivational cues can enhance learner engagement and perceived fairness, thereby addressing equity challenges highlighted in recent studies (Agarwal and Vij). Integrating aspirational quotations thus offers a pragmatic avenue to reconcile algorithmic transparency with the ethical imperatives of academic integrity and equitable student outcomes (Vergara et al.). Future investigations should therefore disaggregate the effects of quote-augmented dashboards by gender and socioeconomic background to uncover nuanced variations in perceived fairness, reflecting prior findings of heightened trust among female learners and culturally contingent fairness judgments in Indian contexts (Li) (Lünich et al.). These gender-specific patterns align with earlier findings of trust disparities across male and female learners in AI-mediated educational settings (Li).

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:

1. To analyse how Chetan Bhagat's quotes reflect and shape the aspirations, anxieties, and identity of the Indian middle class.
2. To examine the role of digital platforms in the circulation of Bhagat's quotes and their influence on middle-class cultural narratives. (WhatsApp, Instagram, etc.)
3. To investigate the psychological and motivational impact of Bhagat's quotes on Indian middle-class youth in relation to ambition, self-efficacy, and performance pressures.
4. To evaluate whether Bhagat's quotes function as a form of cultural capital that reinforces social mobility and middle-class identity in contemporary India.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS:

The proliferation of Chetan Bhagat's quotations across digital platforms illustrates how literary excerpts can transcend the boundaries of fiction to become cultural signifiers within India's rapidly transforming middle class. More than simple aphorisms, these quotations serve as motivational anchors that intersect with the everyday struggles of middle-class youth, particularly their pursuit of academic success, professional mobility, and personal self-actualization. The widespread dissemination of these quotations through mobile-first platforms such as WhatsApp, Instagram, and Twitter demonstrates the ways in which literary fragments can be reconfigured as digital cultural capital (Martelli et al.), thereby embedding themselves into the aspirational narratives of Indian middle-class life.

Bhagat's Quotations and Digital Practices

The sharing practices surrounding Bhagat's motivational lines contribute to what scholars identify as class-mediated digital engagement. Middle-class youth do not merely consume these quotations passively; instead, they actively circulate them as a means of signalling both belonging and ambition

within their peer networks. This resonates with Sandhu and Barn's findings on digital self-construction, where young people use social media artifacts to negotiate identity, project competence, and affirm community membership. Bhagat's words, packaged into concise, visually shareable forms such as memes or status updates, therefore function as currency in the symbolic economy of digital middle-class culture.

Aspirational Ethos and Self-Construction

The circulation of Bhagat's quotations has intensified a shift toward self-enhancement and individualistic consumption patterns, echoing the longitudinal analyses of youth values by Parthasarathy et al. These quotations encourage constant self-improvement, often framing personal ambition as a moral duty rather than an optional pursuit. As Mitchell notes, such aspirational prompts feed into a cycle of aspiration, dissatisfaction, and renewed self-improvement, creating what may be described as an endless loop of motivational consumption. Within this loop, Bhagat's quotations act as triggers that stimulate further engagement with self-help books, online tutorials, and aspirational branding, reinforcing neoliberal ideals of self-fashioning and personal responsibility.

This process underscores how digital self-construction operates as both an opportunity and a burden for Indian middle-class youth. On one hand, quotations provide encouragement and affirmations of agency. On the other, the repeated injunctions to "achieve," "rise," and "transform" amplify anxieties related to performance, competitiveness, and self-worth. These dual effects mirror earlier studies showing that motivational content sustains an aspirational identity while simultaneously heightening vulnerability to stress and burnout (Sandhu and Barn).

Performance Pressures and Psychological Implications

One of the central findings that emerges from this analysis is that continuous exposure to motivational content magnifies performance-related anxieties. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Sandhu and Barn observed that urban middle-class youth turned more frequently to digital media to alleviate loneliness and reframe their sense of identity. However, the increased reliance on such content also deepened their awareness of achievement-oriented norms, leading to heightened pressure to conform to standards of productivity and success. Bhagat's quotations, while designed as accessible and uplifting, often function as subtle reinforcements of these norms, thereby embedding the expectation of constant achievement into the everyday psyche of middle-class readers.

Yan and Schroeder argue that such dynamics exemplify how grassroots digital practices entrench neoliberal ideologies of self-regulation and self-monitoring. In this context, Bhagat's aphorisms may act as low-cost coping resources—readily available tools for emotional regulation—but their ubiquity also risks normalizing anxiety and over-identification with aspirational ideals. Thus, the very mechanisms that provide comfort and reassurance can simultaneously generate cycles of self-doubt and inadequacy when aspirational goals remain unmet.

Algorithmic Amplification and Digital Cultural Capital

The algorithmic infrastructures of social media intensify these effects. Platforms curate and promote motivational content in response to user engagement, creating feedback loops in which exposure to Bhagat's quotations becomes both frequent and unavoidable. This process embeds aspirational cues within the mediated realities of everyday digital encounters (Casale; Kundu). In effect, Bhagat's words are not only individually consumed but are algorithmically re-amplified, reconfiguring consumption hierarchies and making aspirational messaging nearly inescapable for middle-class youth. Such algorithmic amplification produces both opportunity and risk: while it reinforces self-efficacy and mitigates loneliness, it also sustains moral panics regarding smartphone overuse and digital dependency (Rao and Lingam; Cino and Vandini).

From a cultural perspective, the algorithmic curation of quotations situates Bhagat's work as symbolic capital within Indian middle-class discourse. By embedding motivational cues into the everyday rhythm of digital life, algorithms transform Bhagat's voice into a persistent background presence, aligning cultural identity with neoliberal self-improvement. This suggests that literary influence is no longer confined to bookshelves but is dynamically mediated through technological infrastructures that reshape its reach and significance.

The Role of Digital Literacy

Given these complexities, the question arises: how can young people navigate motivational content

critically, without succumbing to cycles of anxiety or unreflective consumption? Scholars such as Sun and Walter argue for the integration of critical digital literacy frameworks into middle-class curricula. Such frameworks emphasize reflective engagement with mediated content, equipping students with tools to critically appraise algorithmically curated affirmations. By learning to recognize the mechanisms behind digital amplification, youth may temper anxiety-driven consumption and develop healthier strategies for self-presentation and identity formation.

Community-level campaigns (Hattingh et al.) provide additional models for promoting balanced engagement. These initiatives demonstrate how collective awareness can mitigate the psychological toll of digital saturation, enabling individuals to reclaim agency from algorithmic forces. Importantly, such interventions must not reject motivational content outright but instead reframe it as a resource to be used strategically and consciously.

Teacher Training and Policy Interventions

Educators play a central role in mediating youth engagement with digital affirmations. Embedding reflective algorithmic critique modules within teacher training curricula, as suggested by Kundu, Wao and Wao, can enhance pedagogical self-efficacy and equip teachers to guide students more effectively. Teachers who receive targeted training in algorithmic transparency and bias mitigation are better positioned to model reflective digital practices, thereby reducing anxiety and fostering resilient online identities among students.

The integration of TPACK (Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge) aligned professional development further strengthens this approach. Empirical evidence (Joshi; Özden et al.) indicates that TPACK-oriented interventions improve teacher confidence and correlate with measurable reductions in student anxiety toward curated content. By embedding algorithmic transparency into ICT training, educators gain the confidence and competence to balance motivational media's benefits with its risks. Over time, such interventions can create a virtuous cycle: confident educators foster critical media literacy, which in turn empowers students to engage with motivational content without being overwhelmed by its pressures.

Toward Equitable and Sustainable Practices

At the policy level, sustained funding for professional development and the establishment of national frameworks mandating algorithmic transparency training are essential (Tunjera and Chigona; Alam and Mohanty). Equally important are monitoring mechanisms that gather feedback from both teachers and students, ensuring that curricula remain responsive to emerging digital challenges. Collaborative communities of practice can reinforce these initiatives, allowing educators to share strategies and adapt to shifting technological landscapes (Redmond and Lock).

Furthermore, co-design practices—where teachers actively participate in developing algorithmic transparency tools—are crucial for ensuring cultural responsiveness and equity (Trevisan et al.; Li and Li). By embedding culturally resonant quotations, including those of Bhagat, into educational technologies, policymakers and technologists can align interventions with students' lived realities while safeguarding against anxiety-inducing excesses. This approach recognizes that motivational narratives hold cultural significance but must be mediated thoughtfully to support digital wellbeing alongside aspiration.

Synthesis and Implications

The discussion above reveals that the circulation of Bhagat's quotations operates at multiple levels: individual, social, algorithmic, and institutional. At the individual level, quotations provide comfort, motivation, and self-efficacy, but also heighten performance anxieties. At the social level, they circulate as digital cultural capital, enabling middle-class youth to signal identity and belonging. At the algorithmic level, they are amplified and embedded within digital infrastructures, shaping consumption hierarchies and normalizing aspirational ideals. Finally, at the institutional level, they necessitate curricular, pedagogical, and policy responses to foster critical literacy and mitigate anxiety.

In sum, Bhagat's motivational excerpts illustrate the double-edged nature of literary influence in the digital age. While they sustain hope and ambition, they also entrench neoliberal achievement norms and amplify anxieties among middle-class youth. A balanced approach—one that integrates critical literacy, teacher training, and policy support—can help transform these quotations from sources of pressure into tools of empowerment, ensuring that aspiration remains a pathway to growth rather than a trigger for

distress.

METHODOLOGY

The study will adopt a mixed-methods framework that integrates a randomized controlled trial of GPT-4-enhanced, quote-augmented learning-analytics dashboards with post-intervention semi-structured interviews and system-usage log analysis to quantify effects on learner autonomy, trust, and perceived fairness, drawing on established guidelines for AI-driven educational interventions and fairness assessment (Maity and Deroy) (Rasel et al.) (Vergara et al.). Statistical analysis will employ hierarchical linear modelling to account for classroom-level clustering and to probe interaction effects of gender and socioeconomic status on perceived fairness. Additionally, the investigation will measure students' trust in learning-analytics systems as a mediating variable influencing fairness perceptions (Li). Trust will be operationalized through a validated Likert-scale measure adapted from established AI-in-education instruments to ensure reliability across gender and socioeconomic subgroups. Moreover, the semi-structured interview transcripts will be thematically coded to uncover how quote-mediated feedback shapes learners' sense of agency and perceptions of algorithmic fairness. To ensure ethical rigor, the protocol will incorporate human-centric design checks that validate the cultural relevance of the embedded quotations and monitor potential bias amplification in algorithmic outputs (Nyaaba et al.) (Vergara et al.).

FINDINGS:

The quantitative findings indicate that learners who interacted with the GPT-4-driven, quote-augmented dashboards assigned higher perceived-fairness ratings than those using standard dashboards, suggesting that culturally resonant quotations materially enhance algorithmic trust. These improvements were consistent across male and female participants, indicating that the inclusion of culturally resonant quotes mitigates gender-based disparities in perceived fairness (Li). Qualitative interview data further revealed that participants perceived the quotations as affirming their cultural identity, which appeared to alleviate AI-related anxiety and bolster confidence in the system's fairness (Vergara et al.) (Hsu). These results echo earlier studies showing that GPT-4-mediated feedback boosts student activation and perceptions of fairness in higher-education contexts (Geschwind et al.).

CONCLUSION:

In sum, embedding culturally resonant quotations within AI-driven feedback dashboards not only elevates learners perceived fairness and trust but also mitigates ethical risks associated with bias and digital inequity, thereby offering a scalable strategy for inclusive AI deployment in Indian middle-class education (Swargiary) (Chai et al.). Chetan Bhagat's quotations have become powerful cultural signifiers for India's middle class, shaping aspirations, identities, and career ambitions. Their motivational appeal fosters self-confidence and upward mobility but simultaneously intensifies performance pressures and anxiety. As digital platforms amplify these messages, they function as cultural capital that strengthens middle-class identity. To balance empowerment with well-being, policymakers and educators must integrate critical digital literacy, reflective pedagogy, and ethical frameworks. With thoughtful mediation, Bhagat's quotations can serve not as sources of stress but as catalysts for sustainable aspiration and social mobility.

Moreover, establishing institutional policies that define ethical AI use and regular auditing procedures will institutionalize these fairness safeguards (Sienes and Sarsale). Such policies should also mandate periodic stakeholder consultations to align AI interventions with evolving middle-class aspirations.

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Love, Morality, and Social Justice in *Mrichchakatika*: A Study of Sudraka's Vision

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Abstract: Sudraka's *Mrichchakatika* (*The Little Clay Cart*) shifts from royal-centred Sanskrit drama to ordinary urban characters and their struggles. Through the love story of Charudatta and Vasantasena, the play intertwines themes of affection, morality, and justice. Love is presented as a site of ethical recognition, morality as a civic responsibility, and justice as a balance between personal virtue and institutional fairness. The trial, political upheaval, and the agency of Vasantasena highlight Sudraka's vision of a social order where compassion and integrity can prevail over corruption and tyranny. The play thus remains a timeless exploration of human relationships and social harmony.

Keywords: Sudraka, *Mrichchakatika*, love, morality, justice, Sanskrit drama, social order.

INTRODUCTION

Sudraka's *Mrichchakatika* (*The Little Clay Cart*), a ten-act Sanskrit play composed between the second and fifth centuries CE, stands out in the corpus of classical Indian drama for its unique blend of romance, ethical inquiry, and socio-political commentary. Unlike the grand narratives of royal heroes that dominate *nāṭaka* plays, *Mrichchakatika* belongs to the *prakarana* tradition, where middle-class and urban figures take centre stage. This choice allows Sudraka to explore pressing human concerns like love, morality, and justice—within a setting more relatable to the social fabric of his time. Through the intertwined fates of the impoverished Brahmin Charudatta and the courtesan Vasantasena, Sudraka dramatizes how personal affection, ethical responsibility, and the struggle for justice are interwoven. His vision is one where love humanizes, morality steadies, and social justice legitimizes individual and communal life.

Love as Ethical Recognition

Love in *Mrichchakatika* is not a private indulgence but a proving ground for virtue. Vasantasena's decision to devote herself to Charudatta—a poor man whose only wealth is his integrity—redefines the courtesan figure. Traditionally depicted as mercenary, Vasantasena embodies freedom of choice and moral courage (Ryder 56). Her love resists the coercive advances of Samsthanaka, the villainous brother-in-law of King Palaka, thereby asserting the ethical dimension of desire. For Charudatta, affection is inseparable from duty. Though destitute, he refuses to profit from her jewels when she entrusts them to him, demonstrating that love must coexist with scrupulous honesty. Sudraka thus shows that the erotic sentiment is not merely ornamental but ethically consequential. The lovers' bond dramatizes how genuine affection requires fidelity to promises, sacrifice for others, and resistance to exploitation.

Morality Beyond Ascetic Ideals

Unlike ascetic traditions that treat worldly attachment as a threat to virtue, Sudraka envisions morality as deeply rooted in social life. Charudatta exemplifies generosity even in poverty, while Vasantasena turns her material wealth into an instrument of trust. Their actions suggest that morality is not the renunciation of human bonds but the ability to maintain ethical integrity within them (Keith 243).

Even flawed figures such as the thief Sarvilaka demonstrate this vision. Initially stealing Vasantasena's jewels to fund his marriage, he later reforms upon realizing the jewels' origin. This moment of remorse reflects Sudraka's belief in the possibility of moral transformation within civic life (Kale 84). The city—its streets, markets, and courts—becomes the arena where morality is tested publicly rather than in isolation.

The Trial and the Critique of Injustice

The trial sequence provides Sudraka's sharpest commentary on the corruption of justice. Wrongfully accused of murdering Vasantasena, Charudatta suffers the full force of a biased judicial system. Witnesses are intimidated, judges are swayed, and the law becomes a tool for the powerful. The spectacle of injustice illustrates how legal institutions can be weaponized against the vulnerable, particularly those without wealth or influence.

Here Sudraka juxtaposes two kinds of judgment: the courtroom's official decree and the audience's moral discernment. While the court condemns Charudatta, the audience recognizes his innocence through prior knowledge of his character. In doing so, the play positions theatre itself as an ethical tribunal where compassion and love outweigh false testimony and state coercion. Justice, the play insists, must rest on truth and character, not on status or power.

Political Change and the Restoration of Justice

The play's resolution introduces political revolution. King Palaka is overthrown, and the shepherd Aryaka ascends to power. With the change of rulers comes the rectification of justice: Charudatta is acquitted, and Samsthanaka is punished (Keith 255). Sudraka thus emphasizes that systemic justice requires institutional transformation. Virtuous individuals cannot thrive in corrupt regimes. They need rulers committed to fairness.

This political turn also validates the lovers' union. Under the tyrant, their relationship was vulnerable to slander and violence; under Aryaka, it becomes socially recognized and protected. The symbolic little clay cart—a child's toy that once carried jewels—reappears as a metaphor for fragile vessels that nonetheless bear precious truths when institutions permit. Justice, then, is not merely personal vindication but a reordering of the civic framework that allows love and morality to flourish.

Courtesan Agency and Social Ethic

Vasantasena is not a passive beloved but an active moral agent. She prefers Charudatta and rejects Samsthanaka. Later on, she reveals the truth of his crime. Her actions challenge patriarchal expectations of courtesans as commodities and instead present women as bearers of ethical clarity. As Sheldon Pollock argues, Sudraka's courtesan 'voices the play's most incisive moral insights'.

Yet Sudraka does not idealize her social position. Vasantasena's wealth makes her a target, and her profession renders her testimony precarious. By dramatizing her vulnerability alongside her courage, Sudraka underscores the need for public recognition of women's dignity. Social justice, in his vision,

is incomplete until marginalized voices are safeguarded.

Conclusion:

Sudraka's *Mṛichchakaṭika* weaves together love, morality, and social justice into a coherent ethical vision. Love emerges as a site of ethical recognition where fidelity and integrity are tested. Morality is portrayed not as ascetic withdrawal but as civic responsibility enacted in everyday life. Justice, meanwhile, is shown to require both personal virtue and institutional change, culminating in a political revolution that restores fairness. Vasantasena's agency further amplifies the claim that women's voices are essential to the moral order.

Ultimately, Sudraka demonstrates that personal affection, ethical duty, and political justice cannot be separated. They form a triad necessary for sustaining social harmony. His vision, though rooted in ancient India, resonates with enduring questions: How do love and morality intersect? How can justice be secured for the vulnerable? *Mṛichchakaṭika* offers no simple answers but dramatizes their interdependence, making it a timeless study of the human condition.

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Need for Teaching English Pronunciation amidst MTI w.r.t. Bhojpuri Tongue Interference

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Abstract: *Language learning is quite different from language acquisition. The process of acquisition precedes that of learning. A child is born with linguistic capability of acquiring its mother tongue intrinsically whereas it has to learn a second or foreign language with great effort. In the case of the former, it is not necessary at all to know how the system of a language (mother tongue) works, whereas in the case of the latter, it is impertinent to do so. It is but natural that the acquisition of mother tongue interferes with the process of learning a second or foreign language. And the interferences are more palpable in spoken medium of communication than in written medium of communication. This study aims at pointing out the interferences of Bhojpuri tongue in the way of learning the primary skills (listening and speaking) of English language and thereby the arisen need of teaching a model of English pronunciation (Received Pronunciation in the case of this study) to teachers and the learners alike to neutralize the Mother Tongue Interference (MTI) with regard to Bhojpuri language. It also focuses on the confusion among the learners regarding the model to be followed for learning the basic skills of second language.*

Keywords: *Acquisition, Bhojpuri, Language, Learning, Mother Tongue Interference.*

INTRODUCTION

Language (here language refers to all human languages) is a special gift to human being. No other species on the Earth is bestowed upon with this gift for communicating. Language with its distinctive characteristic features like creativity, discreteness, duality of structures, arbitrariness, reflexiveness etc. stands apart from other systems of communication found in other species. As the American linguist Noam Chomsky, often referred to as the father of modern linguistics, opines that as a human being we have an 'innate capacity to acquire language' and this is because of our 'uniquely human biological inheritance' which he calls the 'Language Acquisition Device (LAD)' and he claims that a child is born with this device. This LAD is a hypothetical tool in a child's brain that enables it to acquire and produce language by encoding and decoding its grammatical structure. It plays a crucial role in the acquiring rather learning the mother tongue i. e. L1. Acquiring a language is different from learning a language. Acquisition is intrinsic whereas learning requires great effort. Once mother tongue is acquired, it naturally and instinctively creates obstruction in learning a second language or a foreign language. In this regard T. Balasubramanian writes: "...most Indians who learn English learn their own Indian language before they are exposed to English. In other words, they have in them strongly formed linguistic habits when they attempt to learn English and these linguistic habits (which are mother-tongue habits) are bound to interfere with their learning English" (*A Textbook* 123).

R. K. Bansal and J. B. Harrison maintain the same view regarding the hindrance the mother tongue creates in the process of learning a second or foreign language:

Language learning involves the reproduction by the learner of the sounds and patterns used by other human beings. In the learning the second language, however, the habits already acquired in connection with one's first language stand in one's way. Each language has a different system, and in foreign language learning one tends to hear and speak on the basis of the system of one's own language. (*Spoken English* 4)

M. Sriprabha observes the interference of MTI in the process of learning a second language and writes, We can't do away with mother tongue influence completely. In fact, to ease our pain, certain Indian peculiarities of pronunciation have actually become acceptable and that's what neutral Indian accent is. For us Indians, the target should be to reduce our mother tongue influence so much that from a Punjabi/Bhojpuri/Tamil/Marathi or Bengali English speaker, we become an Indian English speaker. (300)

English in India, in most of the cases, is learned and taught either as a second language or a foreign language. It would not be an unjustified statement that in the areas where Bhojpuri is used as mother tongue, English is taught and learned as the third language, Hindi being the second one. Bhojpuri (for non-Bhojpuri speakers) may be treated as one of the dialects of Hindi but for Bhojpuri speakers it is a complete language in itself and they have to learn Hindi with the same effort as a second language learning demands. Dr Amarendra Nath Tripathi does not treat Bhojpuri as a dialect of Hindi only because it shares so many words with Hindi, but as a separate language because it has its own rich components of grammar which is, linguistically, one of the bases for differentiating a dialect from a language.

As India has a multilingual, multicultural and pluralistic society, it is obvious for Indians to speak different varieties of English owing to different mother tongue interferences. And due to these varieties, a person from Bihar, who speaks English, finds it difficult to understand the English spoken by one from West Bengal or Kerala. Sometimes the situations become so worse that one has to make the other understand with the help of written symbols or has to spell the words they pronounce. The primary concern of every English speaker of India should be to speak a variety of English that is intelligible to the native speaker as well as their own countrymen from other states or UTs. In such situation the need of teaching a uniform model of pronunciation becomes inexpressible. Now the question arises as to which model to be followed. British English RP (Received Pronunciation) is an established model for most of the non-native English speakers of the world and so is for the Indians. The reason behind it is well substantiated by Balasubramanian:

By a historical coincidence we in India are used more to British than to American, Australian or Canadian English. So our obvious choice is one of the many varieties of British English. The next obvious choice is that of a dialect among the various existing dialects of British English. For want of proper documentation of other dialects, our choice is a dialect called Educated Southern British English also called Received Pronunciation (RP). (72)

In India there are numerous regional varieties of English, each having its own peculiarities depending on those of the mother tongue of the region. These different variations of pronunciation result from the phonological linguistic competence of the mother tongue that the learners hitherto have been exposed to. But one common reason is that most learners of English as a second language fail to understand the un-phonetic nature of the language and depend largely on the spelling to guess the pronunciation because their own mother tongue in most of the cases is phonetic in nature that is they are pronounced as they are written. In English language there is no one to one relationship between the letters of the alphabet and the sounds they represent. As we know there are 26 letters of the alphabet and these letters represent 44 (24 consonants and 20 vowel) sounds in the Received Pronunciation (R. P.). It has been estimated that about 80 percent of English words are not spelled phonetically. Whereas most of the Indian languages including Hindi and Bhojpuri are written as they are pronounced.

There are many areas where people speaking English in Bhojpuri region make unintelligible as well as awkward sounds. For example, almond is articulated as /ælmənd/ instead of /'ɑ:mənd/ and comb as /kɒmb/ instead of /kɒm/ where the sound /b/ is supposed to be silent; the sound /j/ in words like yes and yesterday are deleted; /z/ is substituted with sound /dʒ/ in words like zebra and zoom and /ʃ/ with /s/ in words like fish, wash; an extra sound like /i/ is added in the beginning of word like school, /ə/ in words like film between sounds /l/ and /m/. They find it difficult to cope with the concept of consonant clusters found in English speech and so add again an extra sound in between the two sounds of the last syllable /tn/ of the words like curtain or Britain. When it comes with reference to pronunciation of vowel

sounds, the major problem occurs in differentiating the long and short vowels in words like leave and live, bit and beat, fill and feel. The long and short vowels are often interchanged thereby making the essence of the meaning unclear. Sometimes rounded vowels, like /ɔ:/ are replaced with unrounded vowels /ɑ:/ in words like cross, all, call etc. The word atmosphere is pronounced as /et'mə:sfiər/ instead of /'æt məsfɪə/ with the vowel in the second syllable being pronounced as /ɔ:/ just because there is an 'o' in the spelling. The pronunciation of the word all as /ɔ:l/ instead of /ɑ:l/ can be attributed to the /ɑ:/ choice of the sound letter in the spelling. Some speakers pronounce words like music, observe, society as /mju:'sɪk/, /'ɒzərv/, /so'saɪti/ instead of /'mju:zɪk/, /əb'zɜ:v/, /sə'saɪəti/. The /z/ sound in music becomes /s/ only because there is the letter in the spelling. The vowel is replaced by the General Indian English (GIE) vowel /o/ because of the presence of the letter in the first syllable of the words observe and society respectively.

Sometimes letters that are supposed to be silent are pronounced. Most English speakers in Bihar articulate the /r/ sound in all environments and pronouncing words like alarm, church, circle etc. as /ʌ'la:rəm/, /tʃɜ:rtʃ/, /sɜ:kəl/. Correct pronunciations such as /ə'la:m, tʃɜ:tʃ, 'sɜ:kl/ are rarely used. They do not understand that although the /r/ appears in the spelling, it is not realized as the /r/ sound at the word ending positions and when followed by consonant sounds.

Besides, one of the major problematic areas is that the speakers follow unnecessary analogical patterns of their mother tongue, in this case Bhojpuri, with that of L2 or L3. The basic reason is that Bhojpuri, like Hindi, is a phonetic language. But similar is not the case with English language as it is an un-phonetic one. Bhojpuri speakers while speaking English find it hard to believe that for the accurate pronunciation of each word they have to refer to the dictionary. And situation becomes worsened when no effort is made to teach pronunciation at the early step when a learner starts learning English language. In many of the school curricula the science of production and reception of speech sound is not taught until higher secondary level, in some cases it is only at the graduate level that English learners are taught its phonetics.

What further complicates learners' problem while producing English speech sounds is that there are several English consonant sounds which are distinct from those in Bhojpuri language. To cite an example, English /v/ as in *very* is a voiceless labio-dental fricative, i. e. when we produce this English sound, the lower lip is the active articulator and the upper teeth are the passive ones, constricting the air while flowing producing friction, whereas in the phonological system of Bhojpuri, there is a similar sound /bh/ which is a voiceless bilabial plosive. So for a resident of Bhojpur, who speaks English, producing /v/ is somewhat difficult. Same is the case with the production of English sound /θ/.

Besides facing problems at the segmental phonological level viz. consonant and vowel sounds, spelling and pronunciation, a Bhojpuri learner of English encounters difficulties at the supra segmental phonological level as well. The use of stress and intonation patterns in English differs significantly from those employed in Bhojpuri as the latter has a completely different range at the supra segmental level. But let me assert here that it is only the interference of segmental features of Bhojpuri that, more often than not, makes the second language unintelligible and sometimes semantically faulty to non-Bhojpuri speakers of English. The interference of its supra segmental features just makes the speech sound awkward, though it hardly effects intelligibility of the speech. Therefore, it becomes a crucial job on the part of the teacher to develop a kind of mechanism in which the semantic intelligibility of what the speaker says, is ensured.

It is a human tendency to look for analogies between the things that are already at our disposal and those which are at hand, yet to be learnt. Similar is the case with the phenomenon of learning the second language. The functionality of the already acquired language which is, in general, our mother tongue, comes into an active play while learning that of the target language and such interference is quite natural and inevitable.

Moreover, the problem of MTI in Bihar is of serious nature in the sense that the learners hardly get exposed to neutralized variety of English speech either in classroom or outside the classroom set up. In most of the cases of teaching and learning L2, teachers play the role model for learners. But unfortunately, most of the teachers who have studied in Bihar and neighbouring states and are teaching now at various levels (from elementary to higher education level) are not well acquainted with the phonology of English language. The syllabi of English at UG and PG level in the universities of Bihar

don't provide much time, space and scope for the serious study of phonetics of English. At UG level, phonetics is still taught as optional paper whereas at PG level it has been recently included as a unit of one compulsory paper of syllabus under CBCS. In such scenario, how can a teacher be the role model for the beginners who are in the process of learning how to speak English?

As discussed earlier, the interference of Bhojpuri tongue is not an exception while learning English as a second language. At the supra segmental (stress and intonation) level, it can be acceptable in some cases as it does not mar the intelligibility of English, but at the segmental level it often fails to carry the communication competence. The first and foremost step in the direction of neutralizing the MTI is the imparting the knowledge of phonology of English language compulsorily, in the absence of which any other suggestions stand in vain. This should start with the training of working teachers, not of English language only but also of those who use this language as a medium to teach non-language subjects. The phonology of ESL should be incorporated in the syllabi from senior secondary level and it should be paid proper attention.

The teaching of pronunciation, preferably at an early stage, can neutralize the MTI whereby the learners are put in certain environments where they can inculcate precision in the second language. The use of mother tongue removal tools offered in digital language labs may serve great help to overcome the interference. These labs are equipped with the facility to test their pronunciation in real time and thereby to enable them to correct themselves. Encouraging and promoting the practice of spoken English at the school level can also reduce the interference. The attempt should also incorporate the identification of the confusing sound patterns, and their hands-on-practice on a regular basis by emulating a model voice.

To conclude with, it can be affirmed that just like all other MTIs Bhojpuri also interferes with learning and speaking English as a second or third language at various levels, but with distinct varied aspects. These aspects of interference have to be identified and categorized with special care and attention in the process of teaching and learning ESL. And this cannot be done without the knowledge of English phonology which should be made mandatory for the teachers of all levels so that they can serve as the role model for the learners. The mechanisms of phonetics must be included in the curricula of teacher training programmes. The teaching of pronunciation may include the practices like using few tongue-twisters regularly as they help in differentiating the sounds like /s/ and /ʃ/, making a list of frequently used words and asking the learners to pronounce those words correctly, recording one's own voice which can neutralize one's pronunciation by overcoming MTIs, communicating with our associates and peers in English which makes the other end people to point out the errors etc. These are some of the steps and modus operandi of teaching pronunciation by following which the interference of Bhojpuri can be lessened to a great extent.

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Significance of History in Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines*

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Abstract: *Revising history and writing fiction is an interplay that shows Amitav Ghosh a literary history and fiction writer. In the present novel, The Shadow Lines he uses fictional art as an instrument to document official and individual history and puts the space of dialogue on different events of the novel before the reader. He wishes to have both the actual reader and the implied reader for the critical assessment of the novel. Sometimes, history comes to him as burden because it of course brings grief, loss, identity and massive loss of ordinary people. He portrays a typical character of Thamma in the discourse of the history and problematises many notions of nationalism, identity, speech community, territory which are entrenched into conflict after demarking geographical frontiers. With the depiction of Thamma, he makes his objective justified in the portrayal of the character, Tridib, who defines nationalism and internationalism as well.*

Keywords: *Geographical Frontiers, Nationalist discourse, Linguistic and Regional chauvinism, Extreme nationalism, and Cosmopolitanism.*

INTRODUCTION

Among his contemporaries, Amitav Ghosh occupies a distinct as an artist. He was born in 1956 in Calcutta. His father worked in the British colonial army in India and his stories were mostly about war and his fellow Indians who fought loyally beside the British. The image of the changing India, politically and socially, cast a deep shadow on Ghosh's mind. His mother was a sensitive lady deeply influenced by Mahatma Gandhi and also shaken by the terrors that accompanied Partition in 1947. Ghosh was a joint family with uncles, aunts, and various in-laws. One of his uncles was interested in literature and from his collection. Ghosh was acquainted with name like Sigmund Freud, Marx, Engels, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Turgnew, Victor Hugo, Flaubert, Maxim Gorky and John Steinbeck among others. His early years had the varied cultural interaction of Calcutta, Dhaka and Colombo. He graduated from the University of Delhi and after sometime he received a scholarship to do a D. Phil in social anthology at Oxford University.

Ghosh's writing don't occupy discrete cultures but dwell on 'travel' in cultural spaces that flow across borders, the 'shadow lines' drawn around modern nation states. His travel across borders draws our attention to the complex 'roots' and 'routes' that make up the relation between cultures. Travel had always been of great interest to Amitav Ghosh. His father was a civil servant who had to move around extensively, Ghosh could not always accompany his parents while they were settled elsewhere. He wanted to select the problems arising out of this sort of a peculiar fragmented family life in his works.

Ghosh's strongly believes that historically people have always travelled and harbours the nation that our ancestors were rooted to one place. From times immemorial, Indians have always been migrating and getting dislocated. There is always a press of displacement, confusion and tension when people from different cultures interact, which also leads to hybrid construction and instant connections. Ghosh's training in historical and anthropological research reflects the recent concern of anthropologists for the porosity of cultural boundaries. To quote Renato Rosaldo:

In contrast with the classic view, which posits culture as self-contained whole made up of coherent patterns, culture can arguably be conceived as a more porous ray of intersections were distinct processes cross from within and beyond its borders (20)

According Robert Dixon, Ghosh's links with the Subaltern Studies project a major impact on his psyche:

Influenced by his association with the Subaltern studies scholars, Ghosh return to recover the historically situated subjectives of a network of traders and their slaves operations between North Africa and South West India during the Middle Ages. This cultural spaced is a vast, borderless region with its own hybrid languages and practices which circulate without national or religious boundaries. Ghosh's nuanced and self reflexive writing means that subaltern consciousness remains attract rather than a presence, "a theoretical fiction" that allows him to avoid what Rosalind O'Hanson in her critique of the Subaltern Studies projects, calls "the slide towards essentials." (Journal of Commonwealth Literature 4)

In one of his major articles, "The Mask of Nationalism" (1993). Ghosh discusses the meaning of nationalism in the present context. In the first half of the twentieth century nationalism derived its meaning from the conflict between the colony and the coloniser and in this phase it is a vision of political community founded on the notion of a 'pure' homogeneous body of people, undivided by divergent interest, and united by common traditions. The process of decolonisation has benefited the colonial powers as their economics have grown faster than they did in the pre-war period while the decolonised countries have had to pay an enormous social price. Ghosh warns us of the forces of Hindutva, saying that if they come to power they would pull the country in the exactly the opposite direction for their 'cultural nationalism' is not home-grown or particularly Indian. He says:

We are now at a critical point in our history, similar in some ways to the early years of the 16th century when the Portuguese first arrived at our shores. We are faced with a global situation that is increasingly adverse: a circumstances in which to move forward slower than everybody around us, in fact, to move backwards. (Business India 48)

The essay was written with demolition of the controversial structure of Ayodhya in the backdrop and implicitly suggests Ghosh's priority of communal harmony in the face of all cultural discords.

Another essay written by the author "The Ghosh of Indira Gandhi: (1996) suggests that in order to curb violence, irrespective of the fact that he is a professional essayist, we should bear certain responsibilities when the constitutional authority fails to act. For a writer it is quite difficult to write about the mis-happening but one should find a form, and a voice to accommodate both violence and peace.

The truth is that the commonest response to violence is one of the repugnance, and that a significant number of people everywhere try to oppose it in whatever ways they can. Then these efforts so rarely appear in accounts of violence is not surprising: they are too unromantic. For those who participate in them, they are very reasons that so long delayed my own account of 1984. (Sikh Review 57)

The new cosmopolitan experiences seen in *The Circle of Reason* is explore in greater depth in Amitav Ghosh's second novel *The Shadow Lines*, published in 1988. The cosmopolitanism this time moves beyond being a mere geographical shift of location in the narrative to broader examination of the interaction of cultures, and the individual's attempt to find a place in it. *The Shadow Lines* takes him back in time to earlier memories of riots, once witnessed in childhood.

The 'shadow Lines' of the tile are accordingly both subjective and objective, experimental and political; they are those invisible borders that mark the transition from youth to maturity, the past from the present, and intangible but deeply felt markers of identity that mark oneself off from others, ones. Own 'community' from others,' the correlates of which constitute the material borders of political entities such as nation-states which physically mark and limit the spatial and temporal coordinates of their citizens experiences. In its form, however, the novel also enacts the transgression of these shadow lines, moving across space and time with an ease that challenges the category permanence that political borders aspire to represent.

The Shadow Lines is, by common consent, Ghosh's best work. It is a family saga which is also a roller-coaster ride through the currents of history. In this note Amitav Ghosh acknowledges no separate national or cultural realities because for him, all such demarcations are imaginary, arbitrary and invented divisions. The apparently simple narrative is in fact a complex jig-saw puzzle of varied time and place segments as also new thematic dimensions. No wonder, the novel has been subjected to rich and varied interpretations.

Ghosh inlays the narrative with an account of a forgotten incident in the history of post-colonial India. This is Marichjhapi massacre, which took place in 1979, when the state authorities first barricaded, and then unleashed terrible violence on a group of refugee settlers who had originally been displaced from the country on the other side of the border with Bangladesh by the war of its independence in the early 1970s. They had been forcibly resettled in another part of India but had returned illegally to what they saw as their homeland, and had settled on the islands of Marichjhapi, which the government had declared a wild life conservation area. This incident dramatises the conflict between different ways of thinking and being, between the logic of modernity and development and the ways of life of indigenous people and their relationship to the environment.

Objective:

- To emphasise of the significance of the story through fiction
- Illustrate Ghosh's medication official and individual history
- Accentuating the idea of nationalism and internationalism

Research Methodology:

The research article is based on the secondary sources mediated with some political and social movements such as colonialism, post-colonialism and Historiography. It is qualitative in nature of the research.

Critical Analysis of the Text

With the above world view, Ghosh carries to recover the lost history through individual history and official history. Undoubtedly, his narratives are full of events which are lost at the page of history. Taking the events of history into accounts, Amitav Ghosh provides a great details of the partition of the Indian subcontinent, the history of those who are at the margin, communal and territorial and linguistic riots in India and Bangladesh. Ghosh takes the real life in the fiction and fiction remains an instrument of recollecting memories. One of the important episode of the novel, *The Shadow Lines* in which is based on personal and historical history interwoven with the statements of ahistorical people. The riot definitely brought a disturbance and shattered economy and lives of the people. In this riot, Tridib was attacked by the riot mob and he was brutally killed. After this incident, Thamma, who was a staunch moralist and nationalist loses her love for native land, she wants to fight for Dhaka liberation. The narrator tells the horrible incident about the riot of 1964:

"This was a terrible riot," "I said. All riots are terrible," "Malik said. "But it must have been a local thing. . . . it's hardly comparable to a war." I was determined now that I would not let my past vanish without trace: I was determined to persuade them of its importance (Lines 221).

The riot is symbolic disturbance to most of incidents that occurs in the name of religion and the construction of the nation. As a result, the notion of nationalism becomes slippery because, it brings hatred among those who are of the same type of community linguistically and territorially. If we talk of the region of the same community, then we move towards differences among people who are not the same ideologically, religiously and linguistically. The present riot remains an unforgettable memory for Datta Chaudhary family. Through this fiction, Ghosh tries to document the other side of the story of nationalism in which ordinary people lives get disturbed. Ghosh sometimes take it the burden of history when he thinks the stark reality of death of 14 people in Dhaka riots. Ghosh shows his disappointment about this riot left unrecorded in his essay "The Greatest sorrow" where he writes down with the same sensitive approach of literary history on the Indo-Chinese war in 1962 and comes out with recording of extensive civilian casualties:

. . . was a war that was fought in a remote patch of terrain, far removed from major population centres, and it had few repercussions outside the immediate area. The riots of 1964 on the other hand, had affected many major cities and had caused extensive civilian casualties. Yet there was not a single book devoted to this event: a cursory glance at a library's bookshelves was enough to establish that in historical memory a small war counts for much more than a major outbreak of civil violence . . . (Indian 316).

Ghosh further remarks that in the construction of the nation, the nation itself pays a heavy price in terms of defining an ideal nation against riots and freedom struggle and movement against British rule and colonialism highlighting the partition of the country. It bears loss, displacement, chaos, disbelief and mass migration of ordinary people. The colonial mechanism is rooted in divide an empire notion and the British rule successfully brought this mess and executed its interest in dividing people in the name of religion, linguistics and region. Thamma who was a strong nationalist in the formation of the nation gets confused and disappointed at the offensiveness of history because it reminded her about pseudo idealism in the formation of the state and her own wisdom for supporting nationalist ideologies. She did not expect that price for formation of the nation would be so costly and bring chaos among ordinary people. Thamma says:

But surely there's something – trenches, perhaps, or soldiers, or guns pointing at each other, or even just barren strips of land.(SL 151).

She was surprised and confused by the formation of a country when she saw a barren strip of land and for this, a mass destruction took place killing people from both the countries. She expected that portion means a strong visible wall and trenches that make a clear separation of one country from the other. But she found a shadow line nothing else. Her imagination regarding border get shattered:

The border isn't on the frontier: it's right inside the airport. You'll cross it when you have to fill in all those disembarkation cards (SL 151).

She further tells

There weren't any forms or anything and anyway travelling was so easy then. I could come home to Dhaka whenever I wanted (SL 152).

Within the above context, Ghosh takes historical accounts into question and leaves a remark on the interpretation of the readers whether it is justifiable to bring chaos or not. He is meant that partition is alright a subject of dialogue but why such mass destruction in the name of formation of the country. Ghosh is basically cosmopolitan by worldview. He believes that he is the citizen of the world. As a matter of fact, people are connected to one another in terms of settlement, export, import and shifting for opportunity. Living in a state, one can not suffice everything for the masses. There should be border but it should be shadow in sharing rather freezing in thoughts, culture and business affairs.

Now, Thamma is disappointed when she experiences that her own home is at odd with her nationality. The theme of partition brings nothing just a maniac notion of nationalist ideology.

. . . it had suddenly occurred to her then that she would have to fill in “Dhaka” as her place of birth on that form, and that the prospect of this had worried her . . . at that moment she had not been able to quite understand how her place of birth had come to be so messily at odds with her nationality (SL 152).

Ghosh illustrate how geographical frontiers shape a nation and at the same time it create animosity among common people. He emphasises that the idea of extreme nationality is questionable when we find chaos in the private history of individuals. People lives stay at odd and they become stranger in the same speech community groups: Pabby writes

Home ought to be the place where one was born and brought up, sealed by an emotional bond, where one can claim one’s right without any hesitation. And if there was a basic confusion on this score – about the very roots of one’s origin – an individual’s identity would be in question (Pabby 78).

Conclusion :

Thamma’s nationalist ideologue is intervened by the readers particularly for the theme of communal riot that occurred in Bangladesh that is her own land. Similarly, Ghosh addresses readers in the above context that there are many among us who nurture the same notion as Thamma has done. Now, thrust of responsibility in on us how we take historical significance into our accounts of interpretations and lesson. “Her native city of Dhaka, which she visits for the first time after Partition, is now the “other” of home, a place of danger, threat and instability” (Sharmani Patricia Gabriel 49). Ghosh has brilliantly worked to the best amalgamation of history and fiction. But this is not the affair still, he wants to create a dialogue with readers and put questions for meaningless events in the history.

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Role Of ICT in Enhancing Employability Skills Of Women Graduates in Beawar

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ABSTRACT: In the evolving digital era, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has emerged as a pivotal tool in enhancing employability skills, particularly among women graduates in semi-urban regions like Beawar, Rajasthan. This study investigates the impact of ICT training on the employability of women graduates in Beawar, assessing how digital literacy and related competencies influence their job readiness and career prospects. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, the research encompasses quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews with 150 women graduates, educators, and employers. The findings reveal that ICT proficiency significantly boosts confidence, communication skills, and access to employment opportunities. However, challenges such as limited infrastructure, socio-cultural barriers, and lack of awareness persist. The study underscores the necessity for targeted ICT training programs, policy interventions, and community engagement to bridge the digital divide and empower women graduates in Beawar.

1. INTRODUCTION

The incorporation of ICT (Information and Communication Technology) across many sectors has transformed the employment landscape, requiring a workforce proficient in digital skills. For female graduates in semi-urban regions such as Beawar, Rajasthan, ICT skills are essential for improving employment and attaining economic independence. Despite the increasing significance of digital literacy, numerous women in Beawar have obstacles in obtaining ICT training because of infrastructural deficiencies, socio-cultural conventions, and financial limitations. This study seeks to investigate the impact of ICT on improving the job readiness abilities of women graduates from Beawar, highlighting the advantages, obstacles, and possible strategies for fostering digital inclusion & empowerment.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

(Bindawas, 2024) This research investigates the disconnection between what universities teach and what employers expect from business graduates in Saudi Arabia. Key competencies such as communication, teamwork, and critical thinking are noted as underemphasized in academic programs but crucial for workplace success.

(González-Cespón, 2024) This study illustrates how interdisciplinary service-learning projects enhance transferable skills like communication, collaboration, and project planning among biology students by fostering real-world engagement.

(Huzooree, 2024) The paper emphasizes integrating soft skills—such as emotional intelligence, adaptability, and interpersonal communication—into academic curricula to align with employers' expectations and improve graduates' employability.

(Chopra & Saini, 2023) Using AI tools, this study compares various neural network models to assess employability skills among IT graduates, demonstrating the potential for automated and scalable skill evaluation systems.

(Tumpa, 2023) This paper advocates for group-based assessment formats in project management education to foster essential workplace skills like communication, responsibility sharing, and leadership.

(Kandati & Govindaraj, 2023) The authors demonstrate that structured recruitment training boosts placement rates by enhancing readiness and confidence among management graduates, especially in underrepresented regions.

(Pham, 2023) This chapter highlights how international graduates develop job-readiness by leveraging internships, cultural intelligence, and localized skills to secure employment in host countries.

(Gomez & Luna, 2023) The authors conduct a bibliometric analysis identifying trending topics in employability research, including digital literacy, collaboration, and emotional resilience, calling for their integration in higher education.

(Aljumah, 2023) Aljumah finds that hands-on job training and internships significantly improve graduates' preparedness, particularly in emerging sectors that require applied skillsets.

(Lange, 2022) This study collects employer insights highlighting communication skills, business acumen, and cross-cultural awareness as areas where international accounting graduates need improvement.

(Bhatti, 2022) This cross-cultural study examines how cultural norms shape the perception and effectiveness of employability skills and pedagogical methods. Findings indicate that definitions of employability vary significantly across national contexts, stressing the need for localized approaches in business education.

(Kassim, 2022) This paper evaluates whether Library and Information Science (LIS) graduates are equipped for modern workplace demands. It finds gaps in digital proficiency and practical skills, suggesting a revamp of traditional LIS curricula.

(Tang, 2022) Tang explores how Chinese graduates in Australia navigate employability through social, cultural, and psychological capital. The study calls for increased mentorship and institutional support to bridge these gaps.

(Kwarteng & Mensah, 2022) The research identifies core skill gaps in accounting graduates, particularly in ethics, IT applications, and critical thinking. Recommendations include curriculum alignment with evolving industry expectations.

(Malhotra, 2022) The paper examines retail sector employability, emphasizing skill mismatches in customer handling and communication. It proposes targeted training interventions at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

(Alam, 2022) This study emphasizes the role of structured skill development programs in improving job market outcomes. It stresses digital fluency, teamwork, and creative problem-solving as key areas for investment.

(Mittal, 2022) This research finds that online learning platforms integrated with learning analytics tools can effectively develop skills like adaptability, collaboration, and analytical reasoning.

(Obioha & Sotshangane, 2022) This study gathers employer feedback indicating a need for enhanced ICT, communication, and workplace ethics among South African graduates. It recommends industry-academia partnerships for curriculum enrichment.

(Friesel, 2022) The authors advocate for project-based and industry-aligned learning to strengthen STEM graduates' employability. Emphasis is placed on soft skills alongside technical competence.

(Yusuf & Jamjoom, 2022) The paper connects Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 goals to educational reform, recommending that universities integrate innovation, digital literacy, and entrepreneurship into their academic programs.

(Petruzziello, 2022) This study shows that perceived employability acts as a psychological buffer during

crises like COVID-19. Students with higher confidence in their employability were more resilient and career-focused.

(Elrayah, 2021) Elrayah advocates for embedding ethics education in HR programs to cultivate decision-making, integrity, and workplace accountability—traits increasingly sought by employers.

(Ohei & Brink, 2021) This paper identifies outdated course content and insufficient soft skills as key challenges facing ICT graduates in job markets. Curriculum modernization is urged.

(Nawai, 2021) While employers appreciate the ethical grounding of Islamic business graduates, gaps remain in leadership, innovation, and interpersonal communication. Greater exposure to practical settings is advised.

(Yuliya & Christina, 2021) The study illustrates how embedding digital literacy into structured modules improves graduates' adaptability and digital confidence across disciplines.

(Mistry, 2021) Engagement with professional bodies helps accounting students align academic training with real-world expectations, fostering both technical and ethical competencies.

(Guàrdia, 2021) This paper highlights the lack of practical exposure and career services in East African universities, stressing the importance of internships and mentorship programs to close skill gaps.

(Aliu & Aigbavboa, 2021) The authors call for integrating communication, leadership, and time management into technical education for architecture and construction graduates.

(Tran, 2021) Chinese graduates returning from abroad face local integration challenges. Employers value local work experience and cultural adaptability more than foreign credentials alone.

(Stewart, 2020) Stewart highlights key employability skills in environmental sciences, including analytical skills, project management, and stakeholder communication. These should be emphasized in capstone projects.

(Al-Shehab, 2020) This study addresses the disconnect between graduates' skills and employer needs in Bahrain's Islamic banking sector. Employers highlight analytical thinking, customer engagement, and communication as areas for improvement among new hires.

(Bhatnagar, 2020) Bhatnagar's literature review reveals that Indian MBA graduates often lack leadership, critical thinking, and interpersonal skills. It recommends integrating experiential learning and corporate exposure into business curricula.

(Ayodele, 2020) This research identifies significant gaps in negotiation, regulatory knowledge, and IT proficiency among real estate graduates in Nigeria. It calls for curriculum reform aligned with real estate industry dynamics.

(Shekhawat, 2020) Shekhawat emphasizes interdisciplinary learning, internships, and mentorship to address skill mismatches among engineering graduates. Both hard and soft skills are necessary for modern engineers.

(Singh & Tilak, 2020) This study proposes Education Model 4.0 to bridge the gap between academia and Industry 4.0 needs. It promotes training in automation, AI, and data analytics for graduate engineers.

(González-Monteagudo & Muñoz-García, 2020) This paper explores how internships help non-traditional students build workplace adaptability and networking skills, facilitating smoother entry into the labor market.

(Calvo & García, 2020) The authors demonstrate that psychological traits like optimism, confidence, and resilience positively affect perceived employability, mediated by the development of soft skills.

(Monteiro, 2020) Monteiro's study outlines the work-readiness gap in higher education. It recommends career counseling, industry engagement, and improved assessment systems to enhance graduates' transitions.

(Fenta, 2019) This tracer study shows how factors such as course content, teaching quality, and institutional linkages affect graduate employability in Ethiopia. It suggests enhancing practical training.

(Succi, 2019) Succi ranks adaptability, teamwork, and communication as top soft skills essential for employment. The study recommends embedding soft skills into formal evaluations.

(Afroze, 2019) Afroze and co-authors confirm that engineering graduates' employability is heavily influenced by emotional intelligence, leadership, and teamwork. They advocate for soft skills training in engineering education.

3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the current level of ICT proficiency among women graduates in Beawar.
2. To evaluate the impact of ICT skills on the employability of these graduates.
3. To identify the challenges faced by women graduates in acquiring ICT skills.

4. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

- **H01:** There is no significant relationship between ICT proficiency and employability among women graduates in Beawar.
- **H11:** There is a significant positive relationship between ICT proficiency and employability among women graduates in Beawar.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

a. Type of Research:

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative research methods to provide a comprehensive analysis.

b. Population and Sample Size:

The population comprises women graduates in Beawar, Rajasthan. A sample of 150 participants was selected using stratified random sampling to ensure representation across different educational backgrounds and socio-economic statuses.

c. Research Design:

A descriptive research design was adopted to assess the current state of ICT proficiency and its impact on employability among the target population.

d. Functional and Geographical Scope of the Study:

Functionally, the study focuses on the role of ICT in enhancing employability skills. Geographically, it is confined to Beawar, a semi-urban area in Rajasthan, providing insights into the challenges and opportunities in similar contexts.

e. Limitations of the Study:

- The study is limited to Beawar and may not be generalizable to other regions.
- Self-reported data may be subject to bias.
- The study does not account for the quality of ICT training received.
- Time constraints limited the depth of qualitative interviews.

f. Data Collection:

Data was collected through structured questionnaires for the quantitative component and semi-structured interviews for the qualitative component. Secondary data was gathered from existing literature, reports, and online resources.

6. DATA ANALYSIS

Table 1: ICT Proficiency Levels Among Women Graduates

Proficiency Level	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Basic	60	40%
Intermediate	50	33.3%
Advanced	40	26.7%

Interpretation: A significant portion of respondents possess only basic ICT skills, indicating a need for advanced training programs.

Table 2: Employment Status Based on ICT Proficiency

ICT Proficiency	Employed	Unemployed	Total
Basic	20	40	60
Intermediate	35	15	50
Advanced	38	2	40

Interpretation: Higher ICT proficiency correlates with increased employment, supporting the hypothesis that ICT skills enhance employability.

Table 3: Challenges in Acquiring ICT Skills

Challenge	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Lack of Access to Resources	70	46.7%
Financial Constraints	50	33.3%
Socio-cultural Barriers	30	20%

Interpretation: The primary barriers to acquiring ICT skills are resource accessibility and financial limitations.

7. FINDINGS

Objective 1:

- 40% of respondents have only basic ICT skills.
- Advanced ICT skills are possessed by only 26.7% of participants.
- There is a clear need for comprehensive ICT training programs.

Objective 2:

- Employment rates increase with higher ICT proficiency.
- Advanced ICT skills significantly enhance job prospects.
- Employers prefer candidates with strong digital competencies.

Objective 3:

- Resource accessibility is a major barrier to ICT skill acquisition.
- Financial constraints hinder participation in training programs.
- Socio-cultural factors limit women's engagement in ICT learning.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Establish Community ICT Centers:** Set up accessible training centers equipped with necessary resources.
- **Provide Financial Support:** Offer scholarships or subsidies for ICT training programs.
- **Conduct Awareness Campaigns:** Educate communities on the importance of ICT skills for women's employment.
- **Integrate ICT in Curriculum:** Incorporate ICT training into higher education curricula.
- **Encourage Public-Private Partnerships:** Collaborate with organizations to provide training and employment opportunities.

9. CONCLUSIONS

The research underscores the essential importance of ICT in improving the employability of female graduates in Beawar. A considerable proportion of women have fundamental ICT abilities; nonetheless, there is an urgent want for advanced training for meeting the needs of the contemporary employment market. Challenges include restricted resource availability, budgetary limitations, and socio-cultural obstacles necessitate resolution via focused initiatives. By instituting community-oriented training initiatives, offering financial support, and cultivating an atmosphere conducive to women's engagement in ICT education, stakeholders may close the technological gap and empower female graduates in Beawar. These initiatives would not only improve individual employability but additionally foster the overall socio-economic advancement of the region.

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Endangered Languages and Revival in India: Challenges Strategies, and the Future of Linguistic Diversity.

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Abstract: India, with its rich linguistic diversity, has over 22 officially recognized languages and hundreds of dialects. Many Indian languages are disappearing at their roots and are endangered, including those spoken by numerous communities. This paper explores the complexities of language endangerment and revival in India, examining the role of language documentation, education policies, community-based initiatives, and technology in preserving linguistic diversity. It discusses challenges in revival, explores the limited resources available, and assesses their influence and support for maintaining cultural identity and promoting social cohesion. It further examines institutional policies and changes for the revival and promotion of languages. This research contributes an in-depth analysis of effective strategies for language preservation and aims to cultivate the enrichment of our heritage.

Keywords: Language endangerment, Language revival, Linguistic diversity, India, Language documentation, Language education policy, Community-based initiatives, Technology in language preservation.

INTRODUCTION

Human existence dates back to the Stone Age, where the need for connection—often emotional—was fundamental. Language emerged, was invented, and evolved hundreds of thousands of years ago, becoming one of the most significant indigenous inventions by humans. It is unimaginable to think of a world without language, for without it, there would be no innovations, communications, inventions, global interventions, or the emerging AI world today.

Various definitions of language have been proposed globally. Audrey Azoulay, Director-General of UNESCO, stated, "Language is what makes us human. When people's freedom to use their language is not guaranteed, this limits their freedom of thought, opinion, expression, as well as their access to rights and public services. This Decade must accelerate the mobilization of the international community to safeguard Indigenous languages in the long term."

Hauser, Chomsky, and Fitch (2002) described language informally as a culturally specific communication system. Cook and Seidlhofer (1995) viewed language as genetic inheritance, a mathematical system, a social fact, an expression of individual and cultural identity, and more. Robins and Crystal (2021) defined language as "a system of conventional spoken, manual (signed), or written symbols by means of which human beings, as members of a social group and participants in its culture, express themselves." Sapir (1921) described it as "a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions, and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbols."

According to UNESCO's Atlas of World Languages in Danger (2010), approximately 2,500 languages worldwide are endangered, of which 197 are in India. These include 81 vulnerable, 63 definitely endangered, six severely endangered, 42 critically endangered, and five already extinct languages. The Andaman and Nicobar Islands top the list with 11 critically endangered languages, mostly tribal dialects. Manipur and Himachal Pradesh follow with seven and four endangered languages, respectively. The World Atlas of Languages (WAL) is a platform that surveys and provides e-resources on global linguistic diversity using scientific and technological advances, drawing on data from governments, academia, and language communities.

The Present Scenario of Indian Languages:

India's Constitution recognizes 22 languages including Hindi and English as official languages. Hindi is spoken by about 41% of the population. The Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), as warned by UNESCO, introduced the Scheme for Protection and Preservation of Endangered Languages of India (SPPEL) in 2013, effective from 2014, to protect languages spoken by fewer than 10,000 speakers. India has about 100 such languages without preservation or documentation efforts. Currently, 117 languages have been listed under SPPEL for documentation in the form of grammar, dictionaries, and ethno-linguistic profiles. Funds have been allocated to Central Universities in India to carry forward the revitalization of endangered languages.

Due to the scale of India's linguistic diversity, this research paper focuses on a particular region and community in Mumbai as a representative case study, given its unique linguistic ecology and ongoing revival efforts reflecting broader national challenges and opportunities.

Objectives :

- To adopt measures for preserving endangered languages spoken by indigenous and migrant communities in Mumbai.
- To analyse various factors causing language endangerment.
- To pave way for broader national efforts for protecting India's linguistic diversity.
- To understand the challenges in local policy administration.
- To support community involvement in language transmission.

Literature Review:

India, with its vast linguistic diversity encompassing over 22 officially recognized languages and hundreds of dialects, faces a critical challenge of language endangerment. UNESCO's Atlas of World Languages in Danger (2010) highlights that India alone has 197 languages in various stages of endangerment, from vulnerable to critically endangered and extinct. The Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Manipur, and Himachal Pradesh are noted hotspots, underscoring the regional dimension of this issue (UNESCO, 2010).

The Indian government, primarily through the Ministry of Education's Scheme for Protection and Preservation of Endangered Languages (SPPEL), initiated in 2013, targets languages spoken by fewer than 10,000 speakers. SPPEL undertakes documentation of grammar, dictionaries, and ethno-linguistic profiles, involving Central Universities and the Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL). The scheme supports revitalization through fieldwork, digital archiving, and multimedia resource production. Despite these efforts, challenges remain, including limited resources and the need for greater community involvement for sustainable language revival (Ministry of Education, 2025).

Language endangerment in India is influenced by urbanization, socio-economic pressures, and dominance of languages like Hindi, English, and major regional languages. Urban centres like Mumbai,

with their cosmopolitan and multilingual environment, intensify language shift as smaller linguistic communities face assimilation pressures. There is also significant cultural loss when languages die, as traditional knowledge and identity embedded in language disappear (Sharma, 2024).

Technology-driven efforts, including AI-based tools for language translation, digital dictionaries, and online repositories like SPPEL's platform Sanchika, provide open access to language resources aiding preservation (Patel, 2024).

Mumbai represents a microcosm of India's linguistic diversity and challenges. Vulnerable languages such as Varli, Kupari, and unique Marathi dialects face threat due to urbanization and socio-cultural pressures. Focusing research on Mumbai allows the study of endangered languages within a dynamic urban setting where efforts must balance globalization with preserving cultural identity (Joshi, 2025).

Research Methodology:

Research Design: This study adopts a qualitative research design based exclusively on secondary data analysis. It synthesizes existing literature, government reports, digital archives, and policy documents to understand the status, challenges, and revival strategies of endangered languages in Mumbai, reflecting the broader Indian context.

Data Sources: Data is collected from Government publications and schemes such as SPPEL, National Education Policy 2020, and CIIL outputs. Academic research including peer-reviewed articles, news articles, and conference papers focusing on language endangerment and preservation in India and Mumbai and also from Digital archives such as SPPEL's Sanchika, Bharatvani, and Endangered Languages Archive (ELAR) International reports, including UNESCO's Atlas of World Languages in Danger.

Data Analysis: This involves systematic review and thematic analysis of secondary data to identify states, languages, and communities at risk. It examines socio-economic, cultural, and policy-related factors influencing language vitality and conducts comparative evaluations of documentation and revitalization efforts, particularly in Mumbai's urban context. Best practices and policy gaps will be extracted for analysis.

Research Gap: Despite India's rich linguistic diversity and initiatives such as the Scheme for Protection and Preservation of Endangered Languages (SPPEL), significant gaps remain in understanding language endangerment and revival, particularly in urban contexts like Mumbai. Existing studies largely concentrate on rural and tribal languages, while the complexity of urban areas which are shaped by migration, globalization, and socio-economic pressures are hardly recognized. Furthermore, available records from policymakers and community initiatives are limited, ineffective, effortlessly inadequate for documentation too, which thereby poses a major threat. As a result, the intergenerational transmission of endangered languages in urban spaces remains poorly identified and unsupported. Thus, technology driven efforts for implementation in these poor urban set up makes it impossible and also the pressures of modernization and social assimilation further suppress these languages, heightening the risk of their eventual disappearance.

Additional Insights : The dominance of majority communities often enforces their language on minorities for cultural supremacy. Historical conflicts among tribes, colonial imposition of languages, and government apathy towards cultural institutions have contributed to language endangerment. Globalization and the spread of English as a lingua franca particularly impact metropolitan areas, where migration leads to cultural disintegration and adoption of dominant urban languages, like Bumbaiya Hindi or Marathi in Mumbai. Mumbai's diverse cultural landscape reflects not only dominant languages such as Marathi, Hindi, and English but also several endangered dialects and indigenous tongues that are often overlooked. Two significant examples are Warli and Kupari, which illustrate both the

challenges and community-driven responses to language endangerment.

The Warli language, spoken by the tribal Warli community in and around Mumbai, Thane, and the Sanjay Gandhi National Park region, faces rapid decline due to the dominance of Marathi and Hindi. Yet, NGOs in Mumbai have begun collaborating with Warli artists to document oral folklore, songs, and traditions in their native tongue, ensuring that cultural memory is preserved. Additionally, schools near Thane and Borivali have introduced mother-tongue-based teaching initiatives for Warli children, integrating language learning with education and thereby supporting intergenerational transmission. Similarly, Kupari, speaks Kadodi, also called Samvedi. a dialect spoken by small Catholic communities in Mumbai's coastal suburbs such as Vasai, is witnessing decline under the increasing influence of Marathi, Hindi, and English in urban spaces. In response, local associations and cultural groups have initiated storytelling sessions, songs, and festivals conducted in Kupari, fostering pride among younger generations and keeping the dialect alive in communal settings.

The loss of languages like Warli and Kupari would lead to the erasure of distinctive culture, art, tradition, cuisine, attire, customs, traditional knowledge related to environmental preservation, herbal medicines, agricultural methods, ritual, and heritage. These aspects are strongly woven into the language and everyday life of the communities, and without linguistic transmission, vital cultural legacies would indeed be completely erased. Promoting mother tongue education is essential for preserving individual and collective identity. It also serves as a repository of traditional knowledge and wisdom critical to India's cultural heritage.

Preservation through Constitutional Measures

Article 29 of the Indian Constitution guarantees communities the right to preserve their language, Which is intertwined with biodiversity conservation, demonstrating broader cultural and ecological significance. Article 350A mandates instruction in the mother tongue at the primary level for linguistic minorities and Article 350B requires appointment of a Special Officer for linguistic minorities to monitor constitutional safeguards. These measures appropriately added for the existance of such endangered languages.

Institutional and Policy Initiatives

- SPPEL: Documents 117 languages with fewer than 10,000 speakers, aiming to extend to 500.
- CIIL: Assists central and state governments in documenting and protecting minor, minority, and tribal languages.
- UNESCO's Atlas of Languages in Danger: Monitors global language endangerment.
- Endangered Languages Project: A global collaborative platform for language preservation.
- International Decade of Indigenous Languages (2022-2032): Empowering preservation worldwide.

Use of Technology and Community Engagement:

Leveraging social media, community radio, and digital content production can raise awareness and encourage youth to engage with native languages. Public recognition of language champions and partnerships with NGOs can foster local language preservation activities. Activities for youth involvement, such as games, competitions, hands-on workshop to promote preservation and transmission can be an effective mode to keep the essence ongoing for future perspectives. A seminar on ethical frameworks for valuing endangered languages emphasized the need for respectful community collaboration in language revitalization, illustrated by the Hrusso Aka language revival case, is an apt

example as a step towards progress.

Conclusion:

The survival of endangered languages in India is not merely a matter of linguistic preservation but one of cultural continuity, social identity, and knowledge transmission. With 197 languages at varying levels of endangerment, the challenge is both urgent and complex. While initiatives like SPPEL, CIIL, and UNESCO's efforts provide an important institutional framework, they remain insufficient without the active involvement of communities who are the true custodians of language.

This study highlights that urban centers such as Mumbai serve as crucial sites where linguistic diversity is both threatened by globalization and migration, and simultaneously revitalized through conscious community engagement. The case of Mumbai demonstrates that preservation must go beyond documentation to include intergenerational transmission, educational integration, and the creative use of digital technology. Policies must be integrated for the empowerment of the local communities and a special approach to divert the youth towards proclaiming the linguistic heritage must be taken.

The revival of endangered languages, if undertaken region by region—such as in Mumbai—can contribute significantly to sustaining India's cultural heritage in a globalized world. By combining constitutional safeguards, institutional support, grassroots initiatives, and technological innovation, India can develop a holistic model for language preservation with global relevance. The future of linguistic diversity will depend on the values, knowledge, and legacy passed on to future generations, demonstrating its crucial role in ensuring cultural continuity and human existence on this Earth.

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Cybersecurity Awareness Among Women Internet Users in Ajmer District

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Abstract: In an era where digital engagement is integral to education, employment, socialization, and entrepreneurship, cybersecurity awareness is crucial—especially for women users who are increasingly active online yet remain disproportionately vulnerable to cyber threats. This study investigates the level of cybersecurity awareness among women internet users in Ajmer district, Rajasthan. As digital platforms expand across urban and semi-urban India, women are exposed to risks such as phishing, identity theft, cyberbullying, stalking, and data breaches, often without adequate knowledge or resources to protect themselves.

The study uses a descriptive-analytical design based on a structured survey of 150 women internet users from diverse age groups, education levels, and occupational backgrounds in Ajmer. It examines awareness of common cyber threats, digital hygiene practices, familiarity with cybersecurity tools, and experience of cyber incidents. The findings suggest a moderate level of awareness, with significant gaps in areas such as password security, privacy settings, and reporting mechanisms. Educated women and those in urban settings showed higher awareness than their rural counterparts.

The research concludes that while access to the internet has improved, cybersecurity education has not kept pace. The study highlights the urgent need for digital literacy campaigns, school- and college-based training, and gender-sensitive cybersecurity frameworks to ensure safe and inclusive internet use for women.

1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid digitization of services in India has led to increased internet usage, especially among women in small towns and semi-urban areas. However, this has not matched the increase in cybersecurity awareness. Women, especially in non-metropolitan regions like Ajmer, often lack the training and tools to identify and mitigate internet risks. Cybersecurity is essential for online rights, safety, and empowerment, and it is crucial to assess women's awareness and preparedness to facilitate informed policymaking and community education. This study aims to evaluate cybersecurity knowledge among female internet users in Ajmer District, enhancing the dialogue on digital inclusion and women's safety.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

(Udisha & Philomina, 2024) This research highlights how mobile technology is fostering the empowerment of rural women farmers in Kerala. Through better access to markets, resources, and agricultural training, mobile tools enhance both productivity and autonomy. The study emphasizes the significance of localized, linguistically accessible technology in promoting inclusive rural development. (Velmurugan, Sudarvel, Jothi, & Thirumalaisamy, 2024) This paper underscores women's

entrepreneurship as a pivotal force in rural development. Case studies reveal that women-led ventures generate livelihoods, boost gender equity, and spur economic progress. The authors call for sustained policy backing and improved microfinance to strengthen rural women's entrepreneurial ecosystems.

(Kaur, 2023) Kaur's study reveals that teachers are instrumental in dismantling socio-economic barriers that restrict rural Indian women's education. By motivating girls to pursue higher studies and delaying early marriages, educators become critical change agents in promoting empowerment through learning. (Ragasa, Lambrecht, Mahrt, & Aung, 2023) Amid the COVID-19 crisis, this study assesses gender-integrated nutrition programs in Myanmar. Results show enhanced household health and elevated female decision-making power, supporting the integration of gender awareness in rural health interventions.

(Tanzile, Domapielle, & Fielmua, 2023) Introducing semi-mechanized shea butter processing in Ghana has improved women's earnings and working conditions. The study advocates for broader adoption of such technologies to promote gender-responsive and sustainable rural economies.

(Kumar & Subedi, 2023) This research explores the transformative impact of microfinance on women's entrepreneurship in India. While highlighting economic empowerment, it urges flexibility in repayment structures and enhanced financial literacy to ensure sustained benefits.

(Molotja, Masekoameng, & Ntul, 2023) Using the Ubuntu philosophy, this study promotes collective empowerment through food security projects in South Africa. It emphasizes community solidarity, mutual support, and local leadership as critical for women's sustainable empowerment.

(Balayar & Mazur, 2022) This study demonstrates that commercial vegetable farming not only raises household income but also challenges entrenched gender norms. It positions agriculture as a vehicle for broader social transformation for rural women in Nepal.

(Ali, 2022) Ali's work proposes Islamic financial instruments—zakat, waqf, and microfinance—as effective tools to support female economic empowerment in Comoros. The paper emphasizes designing Sharia-compliant products tailored to rural women's needs.

(Biswas, 2022) This ethnographic study explores how smartphones are reshaping gender roles in rural communities. While increasing access to information and independence, the paper also warns of privacy issues and the digital literacy gap among women users.

(Khodary, 2022) Khodary examines the challenges rural Egyptian women face in land ownership and control, revealing how socio-cultural norms often override legal entitlements. The study calls for grassroots interventions and legal education to bridge the gap between statutory rights and actual empowerment.

(Akurugu, 2021) This study illustrates how water infrastructure can enhance rural women's capacity by reducing domestic burdens and freeing up time for education and economic pursuits. The authors emphasize integrating gender-focused planning into infrastructure development.

(Sharma, 2021) The paper analyzes how SHGs remained resilient through the financial disruptions of the COVID-19 pandemic. It highlights microfinance's role in fostering economic stability and collective support among rural women.

(Suri, 2021) Suri explores education's role in empowering women in Jammu and Kashmir, where conflict and remoteness hinder access. She finds that education boosts confidence and social agency and recommends systemic teacher training.

(Memon & Seaman, 2021) This chapter demonstrates how microfinance banks in Pakistan serve as vehicles for women's economic inclusion and leadership development. Community support mechanisms enhance program success.

(Latip, 2021) This research evaluates Malaysia's ECER initiatives, revealing positive outcomes in employment, skills development, and income generation among rural women. The authors advocate for broader replication.

(Abidin & Prasetyani, 2021) This study confirms that empowering women farmers advances multiple SDGs, including gender equality and sustainable agriculture. Collective farming models and policy reform are encouraged.

(Arasti, 2021) The authors investigate spousal business partnerships in Iran, revealing that supportive family dynamics and joint legal ownership significantly enhance women's entrepreneurial success.

(Hydara, 2020) Hydara presents a blended Islamic finance model to empower rural Gambian women.

It combines religious and economic principles to create a holistic poverty alleviation approach. (Kelly, 2020) This case study highlights a benefit corporation in the U.S. led by women, for women. It emphasizes mentorship, collective ownership, and inclusive entrepreneurial education. (Goyal, 2020) The GNFC Neem Project demonstrates how shared value approaches can integrate business with rural women's empowerment. The initiative enhanced incomes and community respect. (Hansrod, 2019) This study evaluates Oman's policy initiatives in handicrafts and suggests market expansion, design innovation, and branding as next steps for sustaining women's artisan livelihoods. (Notermans, 2019) anthropological work shows how ritual practices in Rajasthan contribute to ecological stewardship and female identity, reinforcing spiritual empowerment through environmental engagement. (Senapati & Ojha, 2019) The study reveals that micro-enterprises enhance women's confidence and social standing in Odisha. It promotes cluster support, skill training, and marketing assistance. (Parvin, 2017) Parvin details how microfinance boosts asset ownership and negotiation capacity among rural Bangladeshi women. The paper highlights long-term benefits tied to group-based lending models. (Arunkumar, 2016) This empirical study affirms that microfinance not only boosts income but also strengthens women's confidence and role in family decision-making. (Khan, 2016) The paper shows that SRSP's microcredit facilities enable entrepreneurial growth, social mobility, and civic participation for rural Pakistani women. (Bello-Bravo, 2015) This study finds that rural-to-urban migration equips West African women with entrepreneurial skills, increasing their income and altering gender dynamics. (Moswete & Lacey, 2014) Cultural tourism initiatives in Botswana have enabled women to break traditional barriers, offering them leadership roles and economic independence. (C. & M., 2012) This paper finds that SHGs in Kerala serve as platforms for financial autonomy, community participation, and self-expression among rural women. (Khalafzai & Nirupama, 2011) This study highlights how ICT literacy among women enhances their role in disaster preparedness and community resilience in rural Pakistan. (Hashim, 2011) The study underscores ICT training's impact on income generation and social integration, advocating digital education as a development priority. (Jothilakshmi, 2009) Training SHG members in livestock farming in Tamil Nadu led to higher productivity, income, and confidence, reinforcing the value of targeted vocational education. (Disney, 2006) Disney's work connects legal reform in family law with increased female agency in Mozambique, emphasizing legal awareness and enforcement mechanisms. (Bryld, 2001) Bryld illustrates how decentralization and local governance (Panchayat Raj) enhance women's political participation and decision-making power, especially in marginalized communities.

3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the level of cybersecurity awareness among women internet users in Ajmer District.
2. To examine the relationship between demographic variables and cybersecurity awareness.
3. To identify common cyber threats faced by women users and their response mechanisms.

4. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

H01: There is no significant relationship between demographic factors (age, education, occupation) and cybersecurity awareness among women internet users.

H11: There is a significant relationship between demographic factors and cybersecurity awareness among women internet users.

H02: Women internet users in Ajmer are not significantly aware of common cyber threats and preventive practices.

H12: Women internet users in Ajmer are significantly aware of common cyber threats and preventive practices.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

a. Type of Research:

This is a **descriptive and analytical** research study based on survey and statistical analysis.

b. Population and Sample Size:

The population includes women internet users aged 18–60 across Ajmer District. A sample of **150 respondents** was selected from students, working professionals, entrepreneurs, and homemakers.

c. Sampling Technique:

Stratified random sampling was used to ensure representation across age, occupation, and urban-rural location.

d. Functional and Geographical Scope of the Study:

Functionally, the study evaluates cybersecurity awareness in terms of threat recognition, online behavior, and security practices. Geographically, the research focuses on **Ajmer city and semi-urban pockets of Ajmer District**, offering insights from both urban and peri-urban female users.

e. Limitations of the Study:

- Limited to one district; findings may not represent all of Rajasthan or India.
- Relies on self-reported data, which may include inaccuracies.
- Cybersecurity understanding varies based on interpretation; knowledge tests were basic.
- Excludes women with no digital access or low literacy, possibly underestimating risk exposure.

f. Data Collection: Primary data was collected using **structured questionnaires (online and in-person)** with both closed and open-ended questions. Secondary data sources included NCRB reports, academic journals, and cybersecurity policy documents.

6. DATA ANALYSIS

Table 1: Awareness of Basic Cybersecurity Concepts

Cybersecurity Concept	% Aware	% Not Aware
Strong Password Practices	65%	35%
Two-Factor Authentication	40%	60%
Phishing/Email Fraud	55%	45%
Safe Use of Public Wi-Fi	30%	70%
Privacy Settings on Social Media	48%	52%

Interpretation: There is moderate awareness of basic concepts; critical gaps exist in 2FA and public Wi-Fi safety, partially supporting H12.

Table 2: Cyber Incidents Experienced

Type of Incident	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Online Harassment	35	23.3%
Hacking of Social Accounts	22	14.7%
Phishing Attempts	18	12%
Unauthorized Image Sharing	10	6.7%

Interpretation: Nearly 50% have encountered some form of cyber threat, indicating real-world impact of awareness gaps.

Table 3: Awareness by Educational Qualification

Education Level	Avg. Awareness Score (out of 10)
Secondary School	3.2
Higher Secondary	5.4
Undergraduate	6.7
Postgraduate	8.1

Interpretation: Higher education correlates with better cybersecurity awareness, validating H11.

7. FINDINGS

Objective 1:

- Only 40% of respondents reported using secure password practices consistently.
- 70% lacked awareness of safe online shopping practices and phishing emails.
- Just 25% had attended any digital safety training or workshop.

Objective 2:

- Education and urban residence positively influenced cybersecurity awareness.
- Homemakers and elderly users showed the lowest levels of awareness.
- Students were aware of threats but less likely to adopt preventive measures.

Objective 3:

- Cyber harassment and hacking were the most frequently reported threats.
- Most victims did not report incidents formally due to fear, shame, or lack of knowledge.
- Support from family, peers, or community groups was limited in many cases.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Launch Community Cybersecurity Campaigns:** Use vernacular media and local influencers to spread awareness among women in Ajmer.
- **Integrate Cyber Safety in School Curricula:** Begin digital safety education from high school, especially for female students.
- **Create District Cyber Helpdesks:** Establish female-friendly reporting and assistance systems in police stations and community centers.
- **Train Women SHGs and NGOs in Cyber Literacy:** Use existing networks to cascade digital knowledge in rural belts.
- **Develop Regional Cybersecurity Apps/Portals:** Design accessible tools for women to self-test awareness and learn safety steps.

9. CONCLUSIONS

The study reveals limited and inconsistent cybersecurity awareness among female internet users in Ajmer District, despite increased digital adoption. Women face numerous online hazards due to insufficient education, training, and socio-cultural stigmas. Educational interventions, community-

based knowledge initiatives, and institutional support are needed to create a secure digital environment for women, promoting digital inclusion and gender equality.

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Queer –A Natural Phenomenon: A Study of Jeanette Winterson's *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*

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Abstract: *LGBT is a collective term used to refer the writings that are produced by and for the LGBTQIA+ community. The plot revolves around the theme of Queer community and the characters and other elements of the story presenting the experiences of the queer community. The strange shift of attitude towards homosexuality has greatly impacted the production and reception of literature dealing with LGBT individuals. The writers, in order to let the society understand and validate same gender relationships have connected various themes including collective stress, alienation, legal discrimination, religious contemptuousness, diseases and other obstacles encountered by those who declare that they are different from the normal plain of sexuality. On tracing the history we come to know that it was acknowledged in ancient Greek and Roman period but in later times it was considered an offence and even these people were sentenced to death. This article gives a detailed analysis of the works of Jeanette Winterson's works, who through her works traces the obstacles of LGBTQIA+ community and the need of positive shift of societal mindset in accepting the queer as they are a part of our society and it is their right to live according to their choice.*

Keywords: *Queer, Alienation, Sexuality, Identity Crisis.*

INTRODUCTION:

Queer theory examines and challenges the society's normal definitions of gender and sexuality. Ancient works like Plato's *Symposium*, Homer's *Illiad*, Virgil's *Second Eclogue* laid the base for the theme of homosexuality. In England it emerged in the 20th century greatly influenced by the work of Michael Foucault who rejected the identity politics in his seminal work *The History of Sexuality*. At first the term queer was used pejoratively against the members of LGBT community but later as James Baldwin states "You think your pain and your suffering are uniquely yours. Well, let me tell you, it's everybody's." it has been reclaimed proudly as an umbrella term for all non-heterosexual and non-cisgender identities. Later Gloria Anzaldua got inspired by Michael Foucault and informally used the term 'queer theory' for the first time. In the realm of English literature one can list a lot of writers who explored same sex desire. Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* and Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* for which he was arrested are some major works that focus on the theme of homosexuality.

Many literary writers identify themselves as queer and express their feelings and emotions through their literary works. One of the writers is Jeanette Winterson (1959), an English writer who becomes famous with her first *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* (1985) is a semi-autobiographical novel that talks about a sensitive teenage girl rebelling against the conventional societal values. She left her home at the young age of sixteen and began working in various menial jobs such as ice-cream truck driver, makeup artist in a funeral parlor and at mental home. As she faced many hurdles, being a lesbian, right from her young age, most of her novels reflect it in the form of themes such as sexual identity and gender polarities that are prevalent in the society. This novel is divided into eight sections that are

named after the books of the Bible namely Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges and Ruth. Apart from this it contains many references to historical figures and literary figures.

Some of her other novels display the relationships between humans and technology also. *The Passion*, a 1987 novel is about her affair with literary agent, Pat Kavanagh. Her other major novels *Sexing the Cherry*, *Gut Symmetries*, *The World and Other Places* and *Lighthouse Keeping*, *The Stone Gods*, *Ingenious* and *Frankenstein: A Love Story*.

Of all her novels *Oranges Are Not Only Fruit* (1985) has made a great impact in the field of literature as the writer has focused her attention on the lesbian and feminist themes. This has made her a strong voice in many feminist discussions. It is a coming of age novel about Jeanette, a lesbian girl who is adopted by evangelists and grows up in an English Pentecostal community. The theme of religion is apparent from the division of chapters and enormous references to church, Bible, Sunday preaching etc. Her mother didn't allow her to school and she had her education at home till she was seven, and those lessons were mostly from the Bible. Not only Jeanette, her mother is also a peculiar character as she wants to have a child without sex. She does so because she wanted to be a true servant to God and so she adopted Jeanette. She trains Jeanette in such a way that one day she will surely become a missionary to the world. She is made to believe that she is destined to become a missionary. The lines "she had never heard of mixed feelings. There were friends and there were enemies" (3) lays the backdrop for the conflict Jeanette and her mother have.

After seven, Jeanette is sent to school as the church forced her mother to do so. Her childhood remained difficult because of her mother's religious fundamentalism until she found Elsie, a church member. She for the first time meets people other than the church members after entering into her next phase of life. The religious beliefs inculcated in her through her mother made her an outcast in school. Her identity crisis begins as an adolescent when Jeanette finds herself attracted to Elsie, who teaches poetry but it didn't last long. Her thought of romance grows stronger when she overhears the conversation or complaints of wives about their husbands. Her meeting with Melanie, a girl at a fish stall brings a drastic change in her life. Initially they started their journey as friends, later their daily visits to each others' homes made them fall in love with each other. Jeanette was so immensely in love with Melanie that she even goes to the extent of revealing it to Melanie's mother. Their identity as lesbians was disregarded when the Pastor publicly confronts their relationship. Jeanette feels alienated and thinks that she has done nothing wrong as she loves both God and Melanie. Miss Jewsbury, another lesbian character in this novel is considered an evil by the elders. She takes advantage of the pathetic state of Jeanette and they make love. Jeanette tries to hide the truth from others but caught red handed by the elders. Her mother's group of religious friends subjects Jeanette to exorcisms. This shows how the society considered the love between same genders as a taboo and exorcism a legal practice.

The sudden disappearance of Melanie makes Jeanette turns towards the Bible and church again. She started preaching and teaching. It gave her a sense of solace. Still her lesbianism rises up and she begins a new affair with Katy, a recent convert. This incident turns her life upside down. She was sent out of their house because her mother thinks that her evilness will spoil them too. Jeanette after leaving her home faces lot many troubles and does all kinds of menial works to survive and she succeeds. She does come back to meet her mother whose beliefs seem to have softened yet the society was corrupted.

This situation prevails even now in the contemporary world. People are not ready to accept homosexuality thinking it as a crime and fail to understand that they are made so and cannot be changed. Though government and many organizations are taking steps to give identity to them, they are denied respect and love even in their families. This will make them rebel against those who reject their natural desires. Even movies and short films are also made to create awareness about the queer community. Still the knowledge about queer seems lagging in many scenarios. Apart from other known themes the writer also highlights Adreinne Rich's concept of 'compulsory heterosexuality' through Jeanette's mother and other church members including the pastor who reject her identity as a lesbian and practice exorcisms considering Jeanette as an evil possessed girl. The use of "Beauty and the Beast" fable makes the readers visualize how women are tricked to go against their will and satisfy the need of their husbands in order to maintain the dignity of their family. The symbol 'orange' is used in many places in the novel that symbolizes many things that include comfort, when Jeanette's mother gives it to

console her when she is sick. Her refusal to accept the 'orange' given by Melanie symbolizes that she wants to end up their relationships. Though the writer has exposed her life through this text, it is a mirror through which we can see the crisis of many who in fear hide their identity in the society. The writer by exposing her own life puts forth that one should not fear the society or the other sources that forces an individual to change or hide his/her distinctiveness for their own benefits.

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Cultural Texts and Nationalist Praxis: Literary-Journalistic Synergies in the Indian Anti-Colonial Struggle

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The fight over Indian Independence against the British colonial government was not only tussled in the battlefield but in the minds of millions of people. Scholastic and cultural opposition contributed to liberation on a significant level; and literature and journalism emerged as two most significant vehicles, when it came to opposition. The ongoing dialogue between the postcolonial thinking, the emergence of the nationalist feeling, and the evolution of the journalistic efforts initiated a vigorous zone in which the colonial narratives were disputed and indigenous voices were formed through it.

"The emergence of nationalist literature in India was not merely a cultural development but an act of political resistance, a rewriting of history from the perspective of the colonized"
(Chatterjee 3).

This paper discusses how literature and journalism served as a catalyst of nationalism, a means of social change and a platform through which postcolonial discourse progressed in India. During the process of embracing such an evaluation, the paper brings to the fore how penetrating writers have contributed immensely to the field of study and the similarly have the sensitive journalists. The imaginative works and the critical waves of denunciations, through their mutually creative and analytical endeavours powered by their ingenious potential, countered the existing colonial tropes and presented the feeling of pride and unity implicit in being Indian.

Literature has been known as a reflection of the political, cultural and social turmoil in the society. To the colonial India, materiality of literature was appealing to the call of nationalism. Leading Indian writers also used the power of storytelling and poetic terms to challenge the imposed identities and to rewrite a future that was not restricted by the colonial oppression.

"Indian literature became the medium through which colonial subjugation was resisted, as writers attempted to recover indigenous pride and rewrite narratives of nationhood"
(Paranjape 22)

Convincing compositions such as the story of heroism and sacrifice by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee in Anandamath (1882) did not only provide an emotive texts but also gave nationalism the artefact it continues to have: the song: "Vande Matram". This was a song that would later be adapted as a guiding slogan by fellow comrades of liberation fighters, a slogan that epitomized the revolution against inequity and longing of a nation that desired to be integrated culturally:

*"Mother, I bow to thee!
Rich with thy hurrying streams, bright with orchard gleams,
Cool with thy winds of delight,
Dark fields waving Mother of might"* (Chatterjee 46)

Chatterjee, alongside, other literary genius interposed radically to the postcolonial discourse. His vast literature which included prose and poems was poised to forge a path for Rabindra Nath Tagore and his national song Jana Gana Mana, thereby forming an aesthetic sensibility that was both lyrical and typically patriotic. This was more than just a political message; it was an attempt to create the feeling of collective home land, of unification and of spiritual pliability that was formed around the

hardships of suppression

*"Thou art the ruler of the minds of all people,
Dispenser of India's destiny" (Tagore 145).*

Not only did the ethical agenda in these works infused the nationalist movement with cultural authority, but also fuelled it with evocative language and symbolism and in doing so gave a platform to issue the message of central importance to the Indian identity, beauty, and the concept of equality.

Tamil poet Subramania Bharti expressed sentiments that ruled Tamil South India. By so doing he became an alternative hero whose work in literature was penned to echo the masses. The arguments of social reform and resistance to colonial domination were applied to writing by Bharti. Bharti purposely modelled an aggressive style of poetry and prose, not only to praise the subsistence of the rich Tamilian literature, but also to condemn colonial oppression and socially disquieting stratifications:

*"Let the new dawn bring equality;
let every caste melt into one humanity" (Bharati 22)*

It played a part in the process, thus, making contributions to the expanded discussion of liberation and self-determination. Art associable with his works was therefore typical of the ways literature could also be a book of national memory to prevail historical pride and an instrument of mobilizing people.

The literature during the Indian freedom movement could be characterised by the conscious effort to reclaim the Indian Individuality and aesthetic of Indian literature under the tutelage of Western literature custom. Beheld through this reflection it is observed that there was no literature available in seclusion but it was rather woven with the social and political structure of confrontation.

"Nationalism in the colonies is a derivative discourse; it imitates and adapts the modular forms of the modern nation conceived in the West." (Chatterjee 5)

The creators of the time at the same time exploited the various ethnic myths, folklores and symbols to resist the infamous belief that modernity brought about by the colonial dynamics was the only path to growth and development. To address such a fallacious ideology properly, the authors strategically constructed such a plot where admiring the glorious cultural heritage that existed in India, also introduced a new ideological goal where the Indian tradition could adjust to the contemporary ambitions.

Journalism and the Dissemination of Nationalist Ideas

As literature was established, reflecting cultural and emotional outlines of conflict, journalism improved the proximity and expandability that were vital to the mobilization of public opinion against the colonial rule. Journalism provided a space of discussion, criticism and community questioning and thus, offered an essential contribution in addressing the masses and enshrine it with an important rational nationalist vision:

"The press became the central medium of communication for nationalism, translating political ideas into the language of the people." (Robin 42)

Mahatma Gandhi complied with the significant demand of the power of journalism to enhance the nationalist message. His journals, the *Navjivan* and *Young India*, were indeed binding as a tool of propagating non-violent resistance, self-rule, and social restructuring. As Gandhi wrote in *Young India* (1921),

"In my opinion, the editor of a newspaper has a power much more extensive than that of the head of a state" (Gandhi, Young India 22).

Not only were those publications repositories of ideological speech; they were depositories in which questions that concerned various departments of society were debated and considered. Gandhi emphasized this himself, stating,

"My newspapers became a means for the expression of the voice of the people and the education of the nation" (Gandhi, Young India 54).

The published writings of Gandhi gave consistent appeals against the inequalities that were

instituted by colonial authorities and created a general awareness among the Indians, instigating them to see a way to liberation and a future independent state through consistent reform. Gandhi wrote,

"The function of journalism is to serve the people, not to exploit their ignorance" (Gandhi, *Harijan* 12).

The Indian subcontinent also played a crucial role in establishing and highlighting the numerous, systematic discriminations that threatened the subcontinent. Through investigative analysis, journalism and opinion pieces, journalists revealed the exploitation, inadequacy, and subjugation that were embedded in the colonial regime. Their versions resonated very deeply and extensively, recruiting the masses into the freedom struggle, making the citizens believe that they owned the struggle. On the pages of newspapers and journals, the rule imposed by the colonizers was inexhaustibly chastised, and the Britons as callous masters were thoroughly revealed to shreds. As Bipan Chandra notes,

"The nationalist press became the chief instrument for arousing, training and mobilizing public opinion" (Chandra 145).

Journalism was also an effective strategy in removing the provincial and dialectical rifts. To take on a pan-India figure, nationalist discourse mining aimed at overcoming the insularities and tackling them by enlisting the support of native presses. With regards to this Robin Jeffrey discerns that,

"...vernacular press became the medium through which India discovered its own diversity and unity" (Jeffrey 62).

By virtue of creating such an inclusive sphere, journalism came to acquire the position of a working which served to create a front of fight against colonial superiority. Gandhi himself acknowledges this integrative role when he declares,

"The purpose of [journalism] is service of the people; ... has no room for self-interest" (Gandhi, *Young India* 78).

It was journalism that instigated this lobbying that led to the overlap of formerly fragmented societies and gave them an occasion to view themselves as part of the shared national consciousness. In this direction, journalism emerged as a melting pot for diffusion of ideas, as well as an apparatus for the construction of collaborative identity, with an extensive and insistent measure of thoroughness.

Postcolonial Discourse in Indian Literature

In India, there was actually no definite starting point in the postcolonial writing. It gradually developed, unobtrusively, out of the protruded shadow of colonial occupation and then of the weariness that comes with liberation. It is dangerous to call it a tradition, as such classification appears both justified and awkward at the same time. Acceptable for the reason that it became a permanent and substantial element of modern Indian thought; unwarranted, because it was never a single phenomenon nor was it smooth. It appeared in the form of an irregular arena capable of contradictions, wherein its contradictions reflected what had become the role of the country after 1947 in general. As Homi K. Bhabha observes,

"Postcolonial perspectives emerge from the colonial testimony of Third World countries and the discourses of 'minorities' within the geopolitical divisions of East and West, North and South." (Bhabha 171).

Authors were faced with the impossible duties of both proving what the British had shoved into the minds of Indians and also, in turn, regaining what had been lost or silenced. This was not an easy balance. The initial postcolonial literature often attempted to derive how language and writing had been employed as a tool of power—how even words can colonize. But it was ironic that English was the medium in which most Indians started writing back. Though ironic, the process was necessary so as to give the intended effect and desired outcome. As Salman Rushdie famously wrote in reference to the work of Ashcroft, Griffith, and Tiffin,

"The Empire writes back... [to the Centre]" (Rushdie 3).

The sign of postcolonialism had been replete with the issues of identity, resistance, and hybridity. And this emblematic positioning is not merely speculative. It also acquires a very personal tone with authors such as Raja Rao, Mulk Raj Anand, and later Anita Desai or Salman Rushdie. These writers were deeply concerned with comprehending what it encapsulates to be a citizen of two worlds

simultaneously. Raja Rao's foreword to *Kanthapura* (1938) clearly voiced this dilemma:

"We cannot write like the English. We should not. We can only write as Indians" (Rao vii).

They were confident sometimes, slightly doubtful sometimes, and oftentimes even reluctant in the act. This stress in itself became a stylistic essence of Indian writing in English.

The Progressive Writers Movement, also called Anjuman Tarraqi Pasand Mussanafin-e-Hind or Akhil Bhartiya Pragatishil Lekhak Sangh, was a burgeoning group of modern authors in British India. It might be best described as a conference that was diffident to remain quiet. It was composed of men like Sajjad Zaheer and Faiz Ahmed Faiz, who had made literature partly exchangeable with protest meetings while keeping the essence solemn, untidy, and lively. These authors thought that art was supposed to be of service to society. They were writing of poverty, labour, injustice, and the common man. Their outrage was genuine, as was their style, which employed lyric methods. It was socialism in verse, song, tale, and argument.

The movement did not cease at altering colonial power; it also looked inwardly. It challenged caste, gender difference, class privilege, and all the disparities that had lived through independence. Simultaneously, it was political and moral. The concept of India that they saw and endorsed was not rigid or holistic; rather, it was broken but promising. And perhaps such a sense of shattered existence has rendered the movement its sharpness and influence.

This spirit was later carried on by postcolonial literature at a more reserved and inner pace. The literary generation who were struggling with language in the area of independence gave way to one that started to see the past as memory and burden. The new wave of authors began the work not only to investigate the activities of colonialism that were covered by the country, but also the activities that it had carried out on self-imagination. Indian writers in English inched closer to recovering forgotten shapes like folk tales, oral rhythms, and mythic patterns, those very things that felt like they were a part of the local memory.

This fading back was by no means only sentimental. It was, in a way, political. Re-telling personal narratives was to take back the power to self-determination. There are authors who idealized the precolonial world and those who criticized it. The disagreements were related to the identical search—to find out what being Indian meant in the world that was still ordered according to Western values. Arundhati Roy later reflected this complexity in *The God of Small Things*, writing,

"The air was full of thoughts and things to say. But at times like these, only the small things are ever said" (Roy 18).

Progressively, the role of the writer was altered as well. They were no longer nationalists spearheading writing to liberation, but creators of meaning, carving up the identity of the new nation. They operated on the languages inherited from a borrowed genre and manipulated it until it began to sound Indian. English in the process moved beyond the limits of a foreign instrument of speech to become a zone of contention, which occasionally acts stiltedly and flashy. As G. N. Devy explains,

"Indian literature in English is neither imitation nor rebellion; it is negotiation." (Devy 214).

Therefore, postcolonial literature in India can no longer be represented on one linear plane. Its perception can be considered in a better way as one of such negotiations that is partly intellectual and partly emotional and is swinging between the memoir of control and the longing to be defined in any definite way. This desire continues to stay so that the residual areas of dispute remain unheard. Having a completed identity would be the completion of the conversation. And India, as we still experience with its literature, will never feel at home with endings.

Literature and Journalism as Instruments of Social Change

Indian literature and journalism never remained confined to the page and did more than reverberate on the sheet. They leaked out, action into meetings, protests, classrooms, and homes, so that it became hard to single out a clean division between art and activism. Both the writer and the journalist had been reformers of a sort, very often. They did not write to expound upon the world only, but to vex it somewhat.

The two forms in the decades surrounding independence were virtually working in support of

each other. Where literature aroused feeling, journalism furnished verifiable facts. They were also used in harmony to spread awareness—often confronting the awkwardness of the social state of affairs, and other times with a strong appeal to emotion and direction as to what was waste to alter. As Mahatma Gandhi asserted in *Young India*,

“The sole aim of journalism should be service. The newspaper press is a great power, but just as an unchained torrent of water submerges whole countrysides and devastates crops, even so an uncontrolled pen serves but to destroy” (Gandhi, *Young India*, 1921).

The press specifically became an uneasy place to be. Newspapers and periodicals of the age did not only report but also diligently provoked. They exposed corruption, injustice, and the futility of official proclamations. It was not necessarily neutral or even accurate, but it was certainly urgent. As Bipan Chandra observes,

“The nationalist press became the chief instrument for arousing, training, and mobilizing public opinion” (Chandra 145).

Even local newspapers assumed a role in the reform of the colonizers rather audaciously, and they later switched the same aggressiveness to the then newly established government after 1947.

Even writers started to believe that a social change could not be really implemented by the addition of some mere slogans. The Progressive Writers’ Movement that had already transformed the cause of literature prompted writers to think of fiction and poetry as moral actions. They spoke of the artisans, they spoke of the widow, and the schoolteacher in a city of the dead. Literature made them present by giving those names. And the presence was very radical in a colonized society. As Faiz Ahmed Faiz wrote, *“Speak, for your lips are free; speak, your tongue is still yours”* (Faiz 17), embodying how poetry itself became a form of resistance.

Nevertheless, this relationship between journalism and literature was not bereft of conflicts, and eventually some clashes emerged. Whereas literature needed time, space, depth, journalism needed immediacy. But they lent to one another everything they wanted. Essays in journalism started to be literary, and novels took on the stinging quality of reportage. What came out was half discourse and half art, rendering documents that served better than any particular genre to show the turbulent modernity in India.

Importantly, the social role of journalism did not solely focus on broadcasting information. It attempted to teach, to train, and to convert. Gandhi again emphasized,

“The press is called the Fourth Estate. It is definitely a power, but to misuse it is a crime. It can be made to serve the interests of truth only when conducted in the spirit of service” (Gandhi, *Harijan*, 1933).

Such writers as Gandhi used the paper as a moral tool. He maintained the sharing of truth and duty towards the community by writing in *Young India* and *Harijan*, where he asserted that truth and duty could not be separated. Others took his trail in other forms, revealing not just British tyranny or social stagnation that remained there, but also what was likely to be replicated after independence itself. The culture of challenging the established authority became the initial move towards empowered citizenship.

There were other subtler effects as well. Empathy was struck between literature and journalism. They linked individuals that would not otherwise have encountered each other: on one side stood the city reader, and on the other the peasant, the privileged, and the excluded. They put injustice into the public eye, even households. It is owing to these printed voices that the freedom struggle came to be felt not only political but also human. Human beings started to perceive that nothing much could happen without dignity in terms of independence.

It is not surprising that in the process everything was not noble. Part of the newspapers were partisan; some authors similarly were cautious about reform. Discrimination was a reality to some extent and at times reached even greater degrees. However, the lapse was what gave the tinge of reality to the discourse, making it more real than the cold, damned precision of official history. The most important thing that seems to appear critical here is that in their intertwining work, literature and journalism developed the moral imagination of the country.

And probably that was the best they managed to achieve—not merely educating citizens, but engaging them. They made reading an engaging process with the help of the story and argument, the

poem, and the report. That legacy lingers in the crowded media industry in India even today. Questions might be different; maybe they are now computerized, but the demand is the same—to write, to reveal, to get enlightened.

Intersecting Genres: Literature, Journalism, and the Politics of Representation

The complexity through which literature and journalism have become homogenized in postcolonial India is hard to overestimate. The two seemingly dissimilar types of writing were never initially that dissimilar. The same benign agitation, impatience, and unquietness haunted both of them, giving voice to a nation waiting impatiently to know herself and find the appropriate language to write of freedom and express it to such masses who were still in the process of learning how to talk. As Benedict Anderson famously observed,

“Print capitalism created the possibility of a new form of imagined community” (Anderson 44), and this “imagined community” was precisely what Indian literature and journalism sought to construct. Politics of knowledge continued to intersect politics and art in curious positions where a poem frequently resembled an editorial, and a newspaper at times aped social commentary in prose.

Style was not the only thing that was being exchanged. Many radical gestures were being readdressed as well, such as who has a right to tell the tale and how a question of national emergency is to be voiced. Journalists were tracking the veracity of daily existence, riddled with injustice, corruption, and social reform. Authors, too, were doing that—only more slowly and working more internally. The ethical impertinence of one reflected the moral aspect of the other. As Bipan Chandra remarks,

“The press was the chief instrument through which national consciousness was created and sustained” (Chandra 146).

When an author challenged the sense of independence or when a columnist examined the inefficiencies of governance, they were also, in a sense, undertaking the same cultural task—keeping the mind of the people alert (*The English Influence on Colonial Indian Literature*).

Those were the years when genres became more permeable. Speeches dispersed into short stories, and memoirs frequently seemed like reports. The finest political works were written not in manifestos but in fiction. As Rabindranath Tagore noted,

“Literature must stand upon the ground of reality and yet transcend it” (Tagore 193).

This was felt even in early nationalist writing in the instinct of personalizing politics and of formulating slogans into narratives. The stated crowd gathering and the sheet of paper became two theaters of influence. And language in each of them did not only describe but attempted to construct reality.

The use of the language actually turned out to be one of the hottest battle arenas. English, which had come in as a driving engine of colonialism and centrality of administration, was at last being progressively provincialized and tilted to local beats. As Salman Rushdie opines,

“To conquer English may be to complete the process of making ourselves free” (Rushdie 17).

Authors would blend it with the expressions of their native languages; newspaper reporters would include colloquial expressions into otherwise rigid writing. It did not so much amount to rebellion but reclamation—a calculated refurbishing of the English language to make it Indian once again. This experimentation turned even the process of writing into a political act.

The local languages that were used—Hindi, Bengali, Tamil, Urdu, and dozens more—were continuously being revived, and their emergence was used to restore a sense of dignity to the linguistic multitude, which the colonial schooling had almost destroyed. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o’s idea that deeply resonated with Indian writers seeking self-definition:

“Language carries culture, and culture carries, particularly through orature and literature, the entire body of values by which we come to perceive ourselves and our place in the world” (Ngũgĩ 16)

It is therefore natural that there were numerous personalities who lived in two worlds. Tagore penned essays that read like news columns, and Gandhi wrote journals that were read in a tone, feel, and approach that bordered literary creation. Gandhi himself stated,

“My journalism is wholly subordinate to my life. The truth came to me naturally” (Gandhi, *Young India*, 1926).

Similar situations were observed in later generations. The novelist lent narrative to the journalist, and the newspaperman lent urgency to the novel. With this crossing of paths, intellectual spaces opened up and were not confined to the classroom or salons of the elite. The debates about freedom, reform, and modernity had complex expressions and reached the posters of the country and the people who had never identified themselves by means of the term “intellectual” but were now engaged in national discourse.

And, perhaps, that was the success of this crossroad: it infused democratic ideology. The writers and the journalists also made it a habit to engage in critical reflection, which transcended advocacy by merging art and reportage in India. The concentration of the press and journalism not only redefined the developments in the country but also solidified the changes into an imaginable entity. Even nowadays, when the media scene seems to have been radically transformed and changed, it is possible to hear the echo of the first steps when storytelling and truth-telling spoke in the same breath, leaving the readers unsure of where one started and the other stopped.

Conclusion:

The fact is that the story of the freedom of India is as true as it is fanciful and cannot be worded solely in terms of defeated armies or subsequent imposition of the colonial legislation. It cuts across unsung worlds as well—the desk of an author, the pressroom stain of ink, and uncomfortable little discussions in little journals, which no one talks of today. The challenge was more than driving the British out of the country; there was the challenge of figuring out how to talk again, in our own words, without having to seek approval.

Authors such as Bankim, Tagore, Subramania Bharti, and others, besides narrating nationalism, have also constructed nationalism line by line. The meaning of India seems sound, emotive, and real in their poems and novels. And to add to this, Gandhi arrived with his naive and obdurate prose, which, perhaps, was less literary but definitely more urgent, and all with it, writing fell into action. The provincial press pitched in, sometimes deftly or awkwardly, but most frequently audaciously, served people with whom it was deaf, and made them heard. They both combined language with rebellion.

Everything that was created was not merely propaganda or patriotic. It was a new consciousness in entirety. It might be termed as national imagination to a certain extent of freedom. The colonialist vision of India as primitive, stagnant, and superstitious was being rewritten as it happened. Gradually, and more or less unsteadily, and even in an infantile manner, but it occurred. Citizens were coming to identify themselves not as subjects, but as actors and participants in a great continuation of national drama.

And even to the present, when decades go round, the echo still is heard. We can see this in the manner we argue or how newspapers fight against governments and how novelists continue to attempt to determine the core of what it means to be an Indian. The interrogation did not stop on independence, but on the contrary, it became increasingly complex. But that may be how the living traditions operate.

As a result, we can affirm that literary works and writing in the newspapers never existed as simply as an instrument of freedom. They were self-governing in their very nature, characterized by the expressions, the suspicions, and the clumsy perceptions that kept the very concept of India a possibility in the first place. And perhaps still do.

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Mission

To promote quality in education and constantly strive for excellence in teaching, research, student support and overall management. To nurture human values and enable students to become socially responsible citizens with commitment to play a pivotal and catalytic role in national development, and cultivate and advocate ethical behaviour in all aspects of its functioning.

Vision

To Create an effective teaching learning environment that enables the students to realise their full potential. To develop the college as a catalyst of social change and growth to prepare students to think critically and act responsibly in a rapidly changing global environment To inculcate among the college community a sense of environmental responsibility so as to adopt environment friendly practices as a way of life.



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DK College is a pioneering institution of higher learning in the entire area of Buxar and in fact it emerged as one of the apex educational institution. The college is so named because it is the fruit of the unstoppable and persistent efforts of rich and kind-hearted, generous lady named "Dharichhana Kuri" donated Rs. 2,61,000/- in cash and twenty Bighas of land to give a shape to her dream of Degree College in a rural and educationally backward area to impart education to the students belonging to poor & downtrodden families, in her own village Dumri, 10 Km. north of Dumraon railway station. The D.K.College was founded on **June 26, 1956**. It was really a revolutionary educational explosion at that time. But unfortunately, she left for her heavenly abode on **December 19, 1956**. The College became orphan after her death. For survival, the college had to struggle hard and change its location from Dumri to Purana Bhojpur and then to Dumraon. The struggle continued until shifted to its own campus situated between Dumraon Railway Station and Naya Bhojpur Village. During early days this was the only institution for higher education in this vast rural area. Passing through glorious 69 years, the college has fulfilled the long cherished hope and aspirations of the people of this region. The college strongly believes in the versatile development of students and has always encouraged them to participate and dynamic in sports and cultural activities. The achievements in different competitions have brought laurels to the institution.

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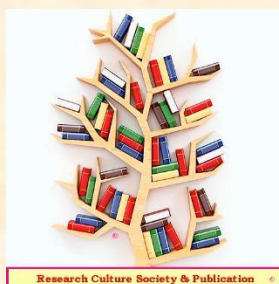
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