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A FIXED SERVICE HOLDING TIME OF AT LEAST 'A' UNITS FOR A SECONDARY QUEUE

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Abstract

When a service at a particular queueing system can be submitted back after utilization or because it can no longer be used at times, such a service is said to be surrendered. When such a facility is available, it may be claimed by consumers initially deprived of it due to its unavailability. This may give rise to Secondary Queues which comprise of all such service takers. The main characteristics of models with secondary queues are its Service Holding Time and Service Wastage that allows to predict the service surrender rate. This paper deals with the study of such a Service Surrender Facility in which a service cannot be surrendered for A units of time once it is availed. The probability of Service Holding Time, Expected Service Holding Time and Service Wastage are derived in this article.

Keywords: *queue, service surrender facility, secondary queues, service holding time, expected service holding time, service wastage, statistics, operations research*

Introduction

Service Surrender Facility

The conventional queueing theory (Champernowne 1956) is based on commonly observed queues where various queueing models are generated depending on the distributions of arrivals and departures.

But in many practical instances, the customers may also have to wait in the secondary queue in addition to a primary queue. The approach to analyse a secondary queue differs from that of the primary queue.

A secondary queue comes into play only when the system has a possibility of a 'SERVICE SURRENDER FACILITY'

Consider a situation where one or more customers can submit back the service availed by the customers due to dissatisfaction (e.g., misfit of the size), lack of requirement (e.g., railway or bus tickets) or at times may be because the availed service does not get exhausted even after utilization (e.g., library books). Such a SERVICE is said to be

SURRENDERED. Other customers will highly demand these services due to their limited availability.

Secondary Queues

The primary focus of this paper is the study of some aspects of secondary queues, which was first introduced by Kane Neela (2001) and is described as follows:

Consider a service counter with a finite (say N) number of services available. The system works as per finite system capacity queues. After serving N customers of this queue, service is not available to any of the next arriving customers. But when the (N+1)th customer arrives, the customer can now register his name in a 'waiting list'. Such customers are served as and when any of the previously served customers surrender their service. This waiting list now serves like another queue.

The customers who have received the service can utilize it for some period and have an option of

surrendering the service as and when they wish which is a random variable.

The customers on 'waitlist' do not know how long they will have to wait or even whether they will get the service at all.

Therefore, when a customer joins the primary queue, he/she can either get a service or have a chance of being registered on 'waitlist' if the customer wishes so; otherwise, they can quit the system.

A customer cannot surrender the service in every queueing system.

Service-surrender facility cannot be availed in the following situations

1. Doctor's Treatment
2. Haircut

Service-surrender facility can be availed in the following situations

1. Railway reservation ticket
2. A bank locker
3. Books borrowed from the library
4. Escalators, elevators, or any public transport facility

A QUEUE is the waiting line of the units at a service facility. It can be named as a PRIMARY QUEUE before the customers are registered on the 'waiting list'

A SECONDARY QUEUE is the set of waiting customers registered on the 'waiting list' wishing to avail the surrendered service.

A secondary queue will consist of only those customers who have come through a primary queue. It is optional for the customers of a primary queue to join the secondary queue.

The analysis of the models of secondary queues emphasises on the analysis of 'waiting time' of the customers and not the average queue length.

Basic Model

The customers of the secondary queue may already have undergone some waiting time in the primary queue and may get the service as and available making the waiting time of second phase unpredictable.

Service Holding Time (SHT)

A Service Holding Time is the average duration of time for which a customer holds the service, before it is surrendered. It is a continuous random variable and its probability distribution can be obtained.

For the sake of analytical convenience SHT can be considered as a discrete random variable as described by *Kane Neela (2004)* in the following manner.

Let p be the probability that a customer enjoys the service for a unit time.

The probability that he surrenders the service sometime during the unit time is $(1-p)$.

Therefore, probability that, a customer completes 't' units of time, before he surrenders the service i.e., $P(T = t)$ is as follows:

$$P(T = t) = p^{t-1}(1-p); t = 1, 2, \dots$$

T is a Geometric Variable and 'p' will follow a Beta distribution in the interval $[0, 1]$.

$$f(p) = \frac{1}{\beta(a,b)} p^{a-1}(1-p)^{b-1}; a, b > 0; 0 < p < 1 \\ = 0; \text{ otherwise}$$

Thus, according to *Bartholomew D. (1963)*, the SHT(T) follows a Compound Geometric Beta Distribution given by

$$\frac{\beta(a+t-1, b+1)}{\beta(a,b)} \text{ for } t = 1, 2, \dots \text{ and } a, b > 0$$

Expected Service Holding Time

One of the characteristics, the expected duration of time for which the customer has utilized the service before surrendering it will be given by:

$$E(t) = \sum_{t=1}^{\infty} t f_t = \frac{a+b-1}{b-1}; b \neq 1, b > a$$

Model where the customer cannot surrender his service at least for some fixed time after it is received

Consider a ride at any amusement park. Here the secondary queue will be the customers waiting for the ride of the previous batch to end. Once the ride of the first batch (primary customers) starts, the they cannot surrender the service till the ride ends. Thus, the Service Holding Time is fixed, say A units of time, till the ride ends.

With reference to the model stated in section 2, Service Holding Time (SHT) is the average time for which the service is utilized, before surrendering.

The SHT is a continuous random variable but for the sake of analytical convenience SHT it is considered as a discrete random variable as follows.

Let $p = P(\text{a customer enjoys the service for a unit time})$

$P(\text{a customer surrenders the service sometime during a unit time}) = (1-p)$

Therefore, probability that, a customer completes 't' units of time, before he surrenders the service i.e. $P(T = t)$ is as follows:

$P(T = t) = p^{t-1} (1-p)$; $t = 1, 2, \dots$ which is a Geometric Variable.

Now since 'p' differs from person to person randomly, and can assume any value in the range [0, 1], it is appropriate to consider it as a random variable.

The appropriate distribution of p is generally considered as Beta distribution with parameters 'a' and 'b' which is given by

$$f(p) = \frac{1}{\beta(a,b)} p^{a-1} (1-p)^{b-1} ; a, b > 0; 0 < p < 1$$

$$= 0 ; \text{ otherwise where } \beta(a,b) = \frac{(a-1)!(b-1)!}{(a+b-1)!}$$

According to Bartholomew D. (1963), the SHT(T) follows a compound Geometric Beta Distribution as follows:

$$P(T=t) = \int_0^1 f(p)p^{t-1}(1-p)dp = \frac{\beta(a+t-1,b+1)}{\beta(a,b)} ; t = 1, 2, \dots \text{ and } a, b > 0$$

$P(\text{The customer cannot surrender his service at least for some fixed time})$

$$= P(\text{SHT is at least A units})$$

$$f_t = K \frac{\beta(a+t-1, b+1)}{\beta(a,b)} ; t = A, A+1, A+2, A+3, \dots$$

$$= 0 ; t < A \text{ and } K = \frac{\beta(a,b)}{\beta(a+A-1,b)}$$

Distribution Service Holding Time (SHT)

$$\therefore P(T=t) = f_t = \frac{\beta(a+t-1,b+1)}{\beta(a+A-1,b)} ; t = A, A + 1, A + 2, \dots \text{ and } a, b > 0$$

$$= 0 ; \text{ otherwise}$$

Expectation of t

$$E(t) = \sum_{t=A}^{\infty} t f_t = \frac{Ab+a-1}{(b-1)} ; b \neq 1$$

Distribution Function of t

$$F_T = \sum_{t=A}^T f_t = 1 - \frac{(a+T+b)}{b} f_{(T+1)}$$

Survival Function

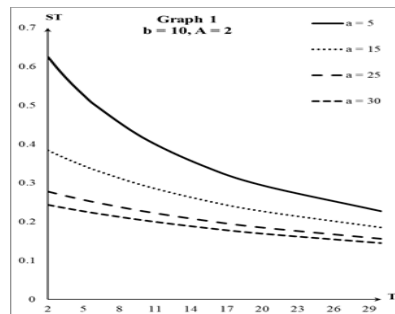
Let $T > 0$, have a density f_t and distribution function F_T .

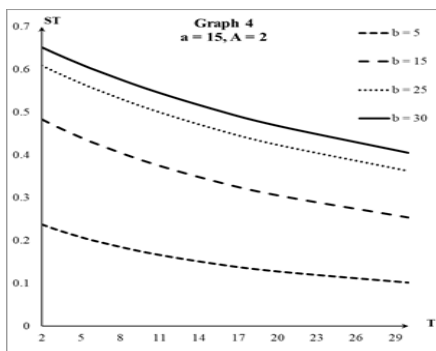
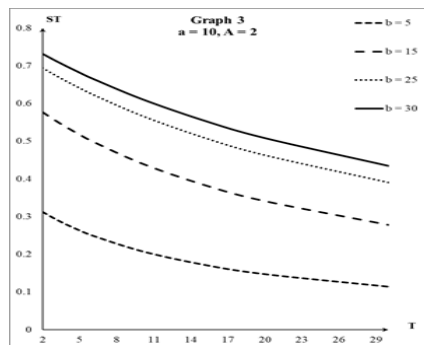
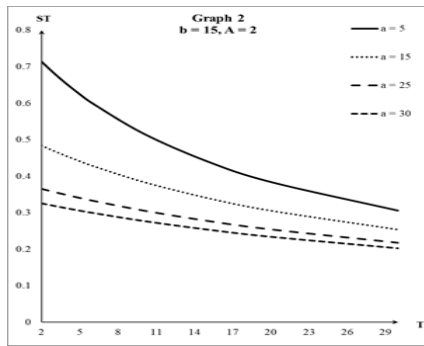
$$G_T = \frac{(a+T-1+b)}{b} \times f_{(T)}$$

Hazard Rate/ Service Wastage

The Hazard Rate/ Service Wastage S_T is given by

$$S_T = \frac{f_T}{G_T} = \frac{b}{(a+T-1+b)}$$





Conclusion

The comparison of graphs 1 to 4 show that the service surrender rate is similar for different combinations of parameters and the fixed service holding time. Higher the value of Service Wastage S_T , higher is the Service Surrender Rate.

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CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: RECOMMENDATIONS OF NEP 2020

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Abstract

The teaching profession is the cornerstone of educational progress and societal development. Continuous Professional Development (CPD) plays a crucial role in enhancing teachers' skills, knowledge, and effectiveness throughout their careers. This paper explores the concept, need, and significance of CPD, emphasizing its importance in the context of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. CPD encourages reflective practice, innovation, and adaptability among teachers, enabling them to meet the evolving challenges of the digital and globalized world. The study highlights the NEP 2020 recommendations, which mandate at least 50 hours of annual CPD for teachers and school leaders through diverse modes such as workshops, online platforms, and collaborative learning. These initiatives aim to foster competency-based education, experiential learning, and pedagogical innovation. The paper concludes that CPD is essential for building a dynamic teaching community that continually updates itself to provide quality education aligned with national goals and global standards.

Keywords: *continuous professional development (CPD), teacher education, NEP 2020, professional growth, reflective practice, pedagogical innovation, competency-based learning, lifelong learning, teacher training, educational reform*

Introduction

Being a teacher is one of the best services one can provide to society and education; it is also the foundation for human expansion. The input of a teacher is crucial and indispensable as far as the education sector is concerned. The change for flourishing and growth has to be initiated by the teachers, who are also to be alert and open to changes with full acceptance. Then, the profession functions very efficiently and meets the present and future challenges. The best way for this to happen is Continuing Professional Development. Teacher development is a self-driven and never-ending process, which starts with initial or pre-service teacher training and continues as long as a teacher remains in the profession. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is the different action; being taken by teachers to create, manage, update and develop the skills and knowledge required for the teaching profession. As the name suggests, CPD is

an ongoing and never-ending process, where learning happens as long as teachers remain in the profession. Continuous Professional Development (CPD) is broader in its scope, and it is considered as an essential factor for teachers of English to survive and excel in this digital era, the concept of CPD reflects in both the training cycle and the learning cycle.

The term Continuing Professional Development (CPD) implies, "all the activities in which teachers engage in during a career which is designed to enhance their work" (Day & Sachs, 2004:3). Professional Development includes planning, executing, recording, re-evaluating and reflecting; Professional Development helps the teachers to update their knowledge from time to time to have good awareness on the changes coming up in teaching profession.

Meaning of CPD

Continuous Professional Development (CPD) is a broader concept or a natural process by which teachers continuously administer record and reflect their professional development. CPD is intended to facilitate the teachers of English to learn and document it, and it's a reflection on what and how they learn in the teaching learning process. It is not a tick-box document record to show the number of training sessions teachers attended in their profession.

To elaborate the term, a CPD is:

- A documented record
- Self-directed: driven by individual teachers
- Concentrates on learning from experience, reflecting on learning and
- Re-evaluates its development encourages to set realistic aims and objectives
- Includes both formal and informal learning

Professional Development take place largely outdated mode like seminars, conferences and workshops. They are inadequate for the production and growth of efficient teachers at the present. Research throughout the world backs up the importance for CPD, there is a slowdown in the teaching profession at various levels which is robbing teachers in their Continuing Professional Development, and they often grow weak in the contemporary creative and digital age. The Professional Development progressively facilitates teachers to build confidence, creativity and critical thinking which is necessary at all levels in our modern education. CPD also prepares teachers to face the challenges of the 21st century and develops excellence in education. Research on Professional Development by (Burmack, 2002; Carroll, 2007; Elkins, 2007; Frey & Fisher, 2008; Riddle, 2009; Trilling & Fidel, 2009) recommended that CPD is essential for every teacher irrespective of primary school, secondary school and higher education level, to increase the knowledge, skills, teaching and

learning. Each teacher should strive to improve the effectiveness of teaching, to make sure professional development. Continuous Professional Development is also necessary to improve skill, techniques and knowledge, through various activities and programmes in the teaching profession.

Need and Significance of CPD

Continuous Professional Development (CPD) plays a significant role in the teaching profession to advance in the required knowledge and skills and to become a better teacher in the field of Teaching. When teachers join in the profession, they do not have complete training in all the areas, and as the things change teachers also need to change their approaches and methods, therefore CPD programmes can equip them to modify their teaching according to the changes. Pre-service training is inadequate to provide teachers with all the required skills and information So; they have to be adjusted regularly according to the professional needs, choosing CPD which is highly effective and efficient in the school scenario is essential. It is through action research, the outcome of the study, experienced teachers assistance and more training that enables newly joined teachers to learn and improve to become an effective teacher. Furthermore, there has been a remarkable investment of effort the world over in CPD to help advance teacher quality and also help them to meet the changing needs of students.

Research over CPD, Mohanraj, S. Padwad, A, Whitcomb, J. and H. Bokro (2009) identified that there is a gap in teaching and learning process, many of the teachers in the field of ELT are not meeting the expectations of the students in their teaching due to old learning methods and techniques which made a gap between the teachers and students and it need to be bridged at the earliest. Hence, CPD can bridge the gap with innovative courses or programmes. The Curriculum Framework for Quality Teacher Education mentioned that teachers are considered as the torch-

bearers in creating social cohesion, national integration and a learning society. They not only disseminate knowledge but also create and generate new knowledge. They are responsible for acculturating role of education. No nation can even marginally slacken its efforts in giving necessary professional inputs to its teachers and along with that due status to their stature and profession." So, changes are happening in the aspects of curriculum, methods, approaches, school environment, educational policies, and language policies in an unexpected way. Therefore teachers of English need to adapt suitable programmes of CPD to overcome the problem in Teaching; Continuing Professional Development is useful to deal with the gaps in training and for providing suitable solutions, due to time and changes. The long-established teaching approaches and methods in teaching.

Advantages of CPD

CPD benefits are sorted out in two fold as an individual and an organization, to achieve career aspirations, following are some of the benefits of Continuous Professional Development;

- a. Enables to identify gaps in Teaching and bridge those gaps effectively
- b. Encourages to plan and accomplish realistic goals
- c. Works as an indicator of objectives fulfillment
- d. Makes to be an innovative and different in teaching and learning
- e. Enables to up to date all skills needed to excel
- f. Gives a broad understanding about the role and responsibilities of a teacher
- g. Develops research attitude in teaching as well as in learning
- h. Impacts life to impact the learners
- i. Improves job satisfaction
- j. Enables to evaluate teaching learning process
- k. Prepares for greater responsibilities
- l. Builds confidence and strengthen professional credibility
- m. Helps to become a reflective teacher
- n. Makes teachers as facilitators
- o. Helps to have commitment to development in teaching
- 8 p. Contributes highly to reach personal career aspirations
- q. Accelerates career development

fruitfully and gradually

- r. Brings awareness on the emerging trends
- s. Ensures teacher capabilities keep pace with the current standards
- t. Opens up to new opportunities to reach academic goals
- u. Helps to record, review and reflect in teaching

Recommendations of NEP 2020

Teachers will be given continuous opportunities for self-improvement and to learn the latest innovations and advances in their professions. These will be offered in multiple modes, including in the form of local, regional, state, national, and international workshops as well as online teacher development modules. Platforms (especially online platforms) will be developed so that teachers may share ideas and best practices. Each teacher will be expected to participate in at least 50 hours of CPD opportunities every year for their own professional development, driven by their own interests. CPD opportunities will, in particular, systematically cover the latest pedagogies regarding foundational literacy and numeracy, formative and adaptive assessment of learning outcomes, competency-based learning, and related pedagogies, such as experiential learning, arts-integrated, sports-integrated, and storytelling-based approaches, etc. School Principals and school complex leaders will have similar modular leadership/management workshops and online development opportunities and platforms to continuously improve their own leadership and management skills, and so that they too may share best practices with each other. Such leaders will also be expected to participate in 50 hours or more of CPD modules per year, covering leadership and management, as well as content and pedagogy with a focus on preparing and implementing pedagogical plans based on competency-based education.

Conclusion

A good teacher always try to find out new things in his teaching learning process, The National Curriculum Framework (NCF), acknowledges that

teachers are remained isolated in the training sessions like multi-modal trainings for teachers, the purpose of the multi model training is filed to meet the aims and objectives learning and most of the teachers at secondary school level are away from the higher level of learning, NCF stated that, "Most of the times, these training sessions do not accommodate emerging ideas or pedagogy and neither do they try to relate them with the society". Therefore it is the high time that teachers need to involve energetically for seeking CPD opportunities which are provided them via various ways to manage their competencies and keep updating their professional skills, in spite of amidst hectic school schedule and heavy workload, It is a technology driven world, so it is the high time to adopt technology in teaching learning process, technology can provide various ways to improve and grow professionally. Establishing teacher resource centres in collaboration with different universities to cater the academic needs of the teachers like psychological and professional counselling. Providing financial support, exclusively for the professional development activities; therefore teachers can undertake some action research and different projects to meet the needs of the professional growth. Monitoring regularly the Professional Development activities done by the teachers as well as schools with systematic observation and supervision. The Recommendations of NEP 2020 discussed in detail to explain and emphasize the status of CPD, which is the need of the hour; and the research also mentions that it is through the Continuous Professional Development teachers can acquire all the required competencies to grow professionally.

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MYSTICISM AND THE FUTURE: THE RELEVANCE OF SRI AUROBINDO'S VISION IN A GLOBAL YOGIC AGE

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Abstract

In a world increasingly fragmented by materialism, technology, and alienation, Sri Aurobindo's vision of mysticism offers a luminous synthesis between spirituality and human progress. His writings—poetic, philosophical, and visionary—anticipate the modern consciousness movement that now finds expression in the global practice of yoga, mindfulness, and integrative psychology. This paper re-examines Aurobindo's literary corpus as a creative enactment of his Integral philosophy, exploring how Savitri, The Life Divine, and The Future Poetry become vehicles of mystic revelation and evolutionary aspiration. Aurobindo's mysticism transcends the ascetic withdrawal of traditional yoga and envisions a spiritual humanism rooted in transformation rather than renunciation. By positioning his work within the discourse of contemporary consciousness studies, ecology, and posthumanism, this paper argues that Aurobindo's integral mysticism holds renewed relevance for the twenty-first century. His poetry and prose are not mere relics of Indian spiritual romanticism; they form the groundwork of a global paradigm that bridges East and West, science and spirit, intellect and intuition. In our age of artificial intelligence and ecological anxiety, his call for the divinization of life emerges as both a moral and evolutionary necessity. Sri Aurobindo's mysticism is thus not the past's echo but the prophecy of the future—a supramental vision that continues to inspire the world's ongoing quest for unity, consciousness, and divine love.

Keywords: *mysticism, Aurobindo, Savitri, The Life Divine, The Future Poetry, supramental vision*

Introduction: Aurobindo in the Age of Global Yoga

When one speaks today of yoga, it is rarely confined to the ascetic caves of the Himalayas or the cloisters of monastic India. Yoga studios flourish in New York, Berlin, and Seoul; meditation apps reach millions of users daily; the language of “conscious evolution” circulates in corporate and scientific spaces alike. Yet the philosophical and poetic architect of this global consciousness movement—Sri Aurobindo—remains strangely underacknowledged. While Patanjali codified yoga's disciplines and Swami Vivekananda globalized its spiritual message, it was Aurobindo who redefined yoga as a collective and evolutionary transformation of the world itself.

Aurobindo's mysticism was not escapist. “The ascent to the Divine,” he wrote, “must be followed by

a descent of the Divine into the human” (*The Life Divine* 93). His Integral Yoga envisioned human life as a laboratory for divine manifestation, not a site of renunciation. This transformative idea finds profound literary embodiment in *Savitri*, his magnum opus—a 24,000-line epic that dramatizes the supramental journey of the soul from ignorance to illumination. Similarly, in *The Future Poetry*, Aurobindo articulates a vision of poetic creation as spiritual revelation: “Poetry is the Mantra of the Real,” he declares (Aurobindo, *The Future Poetry* 12). For him, literature itself is yoga—the word transformed into mantra, language ascending toward consciousness.

In our own time—when spirituality is often diluted into self-help or fragmented into wellness fads—Aurobindo's literary mysticism reminds us of a more radical goal: the divinization of life through art,

consciousness, and love. His work offers a holistic framework for integrating the spiritual with the scientific, the aesthetic with the ethical, and the personal with the planetary. As climate crises, AI revolutions, and cultural polarization reshape humanity's sense of self, Aurobindo's vision returns as a timeless yet urgent insight: that the next stage of human evolution is not technological, but spiritual.

Literature as Mystical Praxis

For Sri Aurobindo, literature was not an ornament of thought but an instrument of transformation. He approached writing as a *sadhana*, a spiritual practice through which consciousness could ascend to higher planes of realization. In his vision, the creative act was inseparable from mystical experience; poetry was not the imitation of reality but the *invocation* of the Real. "All poetry worthy of the name," he wrote in *The Future Poetry*, "proceeds from an inner vision and is an expression of the soul's sight of truth" (Aurobindo 67).

This conviction placed Aurobindo in a lineage of visionary poets—Blake, Shelley, Whitman, and Yeats—whose art sought to reveal rather than merely describe. But unlike the Western Romantics, Aurobindo did not confine the imagination to a psychological faculty; he saw it as a bridge between the human mind and supramental consciousness. The poet's task was to make the invisible vibrate through sound and symbol, transforming both language and reader.

In *Letters on Yoga*, Aurobindo defines inspiration as "a descent of the higher consciousness into the mind," an influx of the supramental light through words. Hence, the act of writing became a microcosm of the cosmic process itself—a descent of spirit into matter. This is why, even in his prose, there is a rhythm that borders on the incantatory. The opening lines of *The Life Divine* resonate like a Vedic chant:

"The earliest preoccupation of man in his awakened thoughts and, as it seems, his inevitable

and ultimate preoccupation, is also the highest which his thought can envisage. It manifests itself in the divination of Godhead, the impulse towards perfection, the search after pure Truth and unmixed Bliss" (*The Life Divine* 3).

Here, Aurobindo fuses metaphysical inquiry with poetic cadence. The sentence moves like a mantra, rhythmically evoking ascent, aspiration, and illumination. The effect is less argumentative than transformative. Reading Aurobindo is, in itself, a form of meditation—each word radiating the energy of consciousness that produced it.

In this sense, Aurobindo redefines the role of the writer. The true poet is not an entertainer or moralist but a *seer*, a mediator between planes of being. The creative word becomes an act of yoga, a means of fusing thought, feeling, and spirit. Literature, then, is not about representation but transmutation—it does not mirror life but raises it toward the divine.

Savitri: The Evolutionary Epic of Consciousness

Aurobindo's *Savitri*, a Legend and a Symbol remains the supreme expression of his mystic vision. Written over four decades and revised until his last days, it is not merely an epic poem but a scripture of consciousness. Drawing from the *Mahabharata* legend of Savitri and Satyavan, Aurobindo transforms a tale of conjugal devotion into an allegory of cosmic evolution.

The poem begins with the descent of the Divine Feminine into the darkness of creation—Savitri's soul embodying the "flame-white virgin of eternity." Through her ordeal of love and death, she awakens the dormant divinity in man. When Death challenges her with nihilistic logic, Savitri responds not with renunciation but with compassion, declaring:

"Love must not cease to live upon the earth;
For Love is the bright link twixt earth and
heaven,

Love is the far Transcendent's angel here"

(*Savitri* 633).

This moment crystallizes Aurobindo's unique contribution to mysticism: the refusal to abandon the world. His is a mysticism of affirmation, where divine realization must embrace, not escape, the human condition. The poem's cosmic architecture—its descent through “the worlds of falsehood” and ascent to “the planes of truth”—maps the stages of Integral Yoga itself.

Each canto enacts an inner journey: from ignorance to illumination, from the fragmentation of mind to the supramental wholeness of being. Savitri's victory over Death symbolizes the soul's triumph over mortality, not by denial but by transmutation. The poem culminates in a revelation of divine embodiment:

“A power leaned down, a happiness found its home.

*Over wide earth brooded the infinite bliss.
The spirit and the bridegroom are made one”*

(Savitri 712).

Through this consummation, Aurobindo envisions the divine marriage of spirit and matter—the evolutionary destiny of humankind. His poetic language, radiant with symbol and rhythm, performs the very transformation it describes. *Savitri* thus functions as both text and initiation: to read it is to participate in the supramental experiment itself.

Today, when readers seek spirituality in fragments—soundbites of mindfulness or diluted affirmations—*Savitri* challenges us to encounter consciousness as a vast, integrative adventure. Its vision anticipates the holistic paradigms of modern thought: transpersonal psychology, integral education, quantum spirituality, and eco-conscious philosophy. The poem's insistence that “earth shall be the home of the Wonderful and Divine” (Aurobindo, *Savitri* 707) resonates as prophecy in an era when humanity grapples with its planetary destiny.

The Life Divine: Philosophy as Revelation

If *Savitri* is Aurobindo's epic of experience, *The Life Divine* is its philosophical counterpart—a prose scripture that unites the logic of the West with the intuition of the East. Here, Aurobindo argues that evolution is not a biological accident but a spiritual necessity: the universe itself is the manifestation of the Divine seeking self-realization through matter.

His idea of “Involution and Evolution” radically reinterprets both Darwin and Vedanta. For Aurobindo, consciousness did not emerge from inert matter; rather, matter is the self-concealment of consciousness. Evolution is the unfolding of that hidden divinity—the return of the involved Spirit to its own plenitude. In his words, “Man is a transitional being; he is not final” (*The Life Divine* 894). The next step in evolution, he predicts, is the emergence of the *supramental being*—a humanity illuminated by divine consciousness.

Philosophically, *The Life Divine* dissolves the old dualities of spirit and matter, God and world, reason and intuition. It proposes a non-dual integralism, where all levels of existence—physical, vital, mental, and spiritual—form a continuum of divine manifestation. Stylistically, its long periodic sentences and rhythmic cadences elevate argument into revelation. As the philosopher R. Puligandla notes, “Aurobindo's prose is not written to persuade but to awaken” (Puligandla 213).

In the context of today's scientific and technological consciousness, *The Life Divine* offers an alternative to mechanistic reductionism. It prefigures holistic systems theory, evolutionary psychology, and even aspects of consciousness research that now dominate cognitive science. Aurobindo's “Integral Advaita” thus anticipates what modern thinkers like Ken Wilber, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, and Jean Gebser later articulate as the evolution of consciousness.

To revisit *The Life Divine* in the twenty-first century is to confront a startling possibility: that the

next evolutionary leap will not be artificial intelligence, but *divine intelligence* awakening in humanity.

The Aesthetic and the Divine: The Future Poetry

In *The Future Poetry*, Aurobindo turns his attention to the art of language itself. Here, he envisions poetry as the future medium of spiritual revelation—a language adequate to the supramental consciousness. “The highest poetic speech,” he writes, “is the rhythmic revelation of the spirit in words” (*The Future Poetry* 9).

This conception of art as revelation distinguishes Aurobindo from aesthetic modernism, which often celebrates fragmentation, irony, or the alienation of the self. For Aurobindo, poetry’s destiny is the opposite: not to reflect chaos but to transmute it. He foresaw that a “mantric” poetry—poetry charged with spiritual vibration—would emerge to bridge humanity and divinity.

His own verses exemplify this ideal. In “Thought the Paraclete,” he writes:

*“A lightning from the heights that think the Truth,
A cry amid the silence of the gods.”*

The image fuses intellect and illumination, thought and divine fire. Here the “Paraclete”—the Holy Spirit—becomes a metaphor for supramental descent, suggesting that revelation can occur through language itself. In “Transformation,” he celebrates the transfiguration of human consciousness:

*“My breath runs in a subtle rhythmic stream;
It fills my members with a might divine.”*

This poetic embodiment of mystic experience transforms the act of creation into a yoga of sound.

In *The Future Poetry*, Aurobindo also critiques Western literary decadence, arguing that poetry has lost its sacred function by divorcing beauty from truth. The future poet, he insists, must recover the ancient Vedic power of mantra—where word and vibration unite to reveal reality. His influence here is immense: T.S. Eliot’s notion of the “objective correlative,” Yeats’s mystical symbolism, and later Tagore’s lyrical

universalism all resonate with Aurobindo’s synthesis of vision and voice.

In our time, when literature faces the twin crises of commodification and postmodern nihilism, Aurobindo’s aesthetic stands as a reminder that art’s ultimate purpose is illumination. The poet, for him, is the future’s prophet, and poetry the prototype of a supramental language—a language that heals the rupture between mind and matter, word and world, man and God.

Aurobindo and the Contemporary World: Consciousness, Ecology, and the Supramental Future

In the twenty-first century, mysticism is no longer an esoteric domain but an evolving language through which humanity negotiates its survival. The spread of yoga, meditation, and mindfulness across the globe—often stripped of their philosophical depth—testifies to an intuitive longing for integration. Yet beneath this popular resurgence lies an unacknowledged philosophical foundation, Sri Aurobindo’s Integral vision, which transformed yoga from individual asceticism into a planetary evolution of consciousness.

When Aurobindo declared that “all life is yoga” (*Essays on the Gita* 5), he prefigured the contemporary movement that perceives spirituality not as withdrawal but as engagement. This insight has become particularly urgent in an age marked by technological acceleration and ecological crisis. Aurobindo foresaw that humanity’s next evolutionary step would not merely be intellectual or mechanical but spiritual and collective—a “supramental transformation” of life itself.

Today, this vision finds echoes across fields that could not have existed in his time. Neuroscience explores the plasticity of consciousness; artificial intelligence raises questions about the nature of awareness; environmental philosophy reimagines the Earth as a living organism. Aurobindo’s notion of the

supramental consciousness—a consciousness that reconciles the material and the spiritual—offers a framework to engage these frontiers without succumbing to nihilism or technocratic hubris.

In ecological thought, his concept of “Earth as the Mother” anticipates the planetary consciousness emerging in eco-spiritual movements. In *Savitri*, he writes:

*“A divinised species shall inhabit the earth;
Nature shall live to manifest secret God”*

(*Savitri* 707).

Here, evolution is not anthropocentric but cosmic. Humanity’s role is not to dominate nature but to awaken its latent divinity. This resonates deeply with contemporary ecological philosophy—from Arne Naess’s Deep Ecology to Thomas Berry’s Earth spirituality—where the human and non-human are seen as expressions of one evolving consciousness. Aurobindo’s mysticism thus expands ecology into *theology*: the Earth as a manifestation of the Divine Feminine.

Similarly, his thought offers an ethical compass for the age of artificial intelligence. While transhumanist discourse dreams of technological immortality, Aurobindo reminds us that true evolution lies not in extending the machine but in expanding consciousness. In *The Life Divine*, he warns, “Knowledge is power, but power without love is the curse of the fallen soul” (Aurobindo 847). His call for the union of knowledge and love anticipates the moral dilemmas now confronting AI ethics: can intelligence exist without empathy, or progress without compassion? Aurobindo’s answer remains timeless—without the descent of the divine heart, intellect leads only to fragmentation.

In psychological and therapeutic spheres, Aurobindo’s Integral Yoga also finds surprising relevance. His model of the psyche—with its layers of physical, vital, mental, psychic, and spiritual being—prefigures transpersonal psychology and integrative mental health. Carl Jung’s collective unconscious and

Abraham Maslow’s “peak experiences” echo Aurobindo’s insistence that human consciousness contains within it the potential for divine realization. Modern mindfulness and embodiment practices unknowingly trace the pathways he mapped in *Letters on Yoga*.

Most strikingly, his idea of spiritual evolution through collective harmony anticipates what Pierre Teilhard de Chardin called “the noosphere”—a global field of consciousness linking humanity in unity. In an age of social fragmentation and digital disconnection, Aurobindo’s vision of “spiritual democracy” offers a prophetic alternative. He writes:

“The whole world’s thoughts shall be a single thought,

And every heart a chamber of the One”

(*Savitri* 692).

This supramental unity is not uniformity but the flowering of individuality within the divine whole. The relevance of such a vision cannot be overstated in times of ideological polarization and global unrest.

Love as the Law of Future Humanity

At the heart of Aurobindo’s mysticism lies a truth that transcends philosophy and poetry alike—the supremacy of love as the unifying force of evolution. Love, for him, is not an emotion but a divine vibration, the dynamic energy through which the One becomes the many and returns to itself. In *Savitri*, love is the power that redeems death and transforms existence:

*“A lonely soul passions for the Alone,
The bride of God yearning for her Lord”*

(*Savitri* 430).

This mystic eros, echoing the *bhakti* of the Gita and the divine union of Dante’s *Paradiso*, underlies Aurobindo’s vision of human destiny. The evolution toward supramental consciousness is, ultimately, the evolution of love—from possessive desire to divine compassion. In a fragmented modern world obsessed with power and performance, this message feels revolutionary.

Aurobindo's insistence on love as the foundation of transformation also anticipates contemporary discussions of emotional intelligence, compassion-based ethics, and restorative justice. In psychological terms, his yoga of love—*prema yoga*—offers a pathway for healing trauma and integrating the shadow self. In social terms, it provides the spiritual ground for what Joanna Macy calls “the Great Turning”—the transition from an industrial-growth society to a life-sustaining civilization.

The ultimate promise of Aurobindo's vision is not the perfection of the individual but the divinization of the collective: the emergence of a humanity governed not by fear or greed but by love. As he writes, “Man is God hiding from himself; Love is his rediscovery” (*Essays on the Gita* 118).

Conclusion: The Supramental Imagination and the Future of Humanity

To read Sri Aurobindo today is to encounter a consciousness that speaks not from the past but from the future. His synthesis of mysticism, poetry, and evolutionary philosophy offers a bridge between the ancient and the posthuman, between Vedanta and virtual reality. At a time when humanity oscillates between ecological collapse and technological utopia, his vision points toward a third possibility: the spiritualization of existence. In the global yogic culture of the present, we witness a partial fulfilment of his prophecy. Millions engage daily in practices of awareness and embodiment, seeking balance in an age of excess. Yet, as Aurobindo might remind us, yoga's true purpose is not relaxation but transformation—the awakening of the divine consciousness within the material world. This awakening, he believed, would give birth to a “gnostic being,” one who lives not by instinct or reason but by direct luminous intuition of the Divine. In this sense, Sri Aurobindo remains one of the rare figures whose mysticism anticipates the epistemic shifts of the future. His integral vision transcends the boundaries

of religion, art, and science, offering a template for a planetary consciousness that honors both matter and spirit. The *Life Divine*, *Savitri*, and *The Future Poetry* are not relics of colonial India but the scripture of a coming age—an age when poetry becomes revelation, philosophy becomes yoga, and life itself becomes divine. To rediscover Aurobindo is to rediscover ourselves—not as isolated beings in a mechanistic universe but as evolving sparks of an infinite Consciousness. As he wrote in one of his most luminous passages:

*“The Spirit shall look out through Matter's gaze
And Matter shall reveal the Spirit's face.”*

(Savitri 708)

That line, more than any treatise on modernity or mysticism, encapsulates the destiny he foresaw—the supramental dawn in which the human becomes the divine instrument, and the earth, once again, a home for the Wonderful and the Eternal.

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DIFFERENT SHADES OF 'BLUE' [REFLECTIONS ON NEURO - PANOPTIC MINDSET]

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***"We are nothing more or less than the cumulative biological and environmental luck,
Over which we had no control, that has brought us to any moment."***

.....Robert Sapolsky

Abstract

*Foundational question in neurodecision making lacks a single foundational entity comparable to particles in physics or cells in biology. Instead, it operates with multiple core concepts that interrelate. Is there a single, most essential or foundational concept or type of entity, and if that is not the case, how do various concepts or types of entities in neurodecision making universe connect with one another (disappearance of distinction across Social Science disciplines)? Is it possible for different natural sciences are integrated as well? Can fields like cognito - neurodecision making, or models of evolution and development in biology, be integrated? How do neurodecision making sciences connect with natural sciences? Are theories or models appropriate units of connection? What other related or connecting units exist? Is integration of these scientific areas limited to factual matters, or do value considerations play a role? How do methodological, material, institutional, ethical, and other dimensions of academic collaboration factor in? Furthermore, what types of combinatorial, beyond mere units, exist within neurodecision making? Is relationship of unification characterized by reduction, translation, explanation, logical inference, collaboration, or another approach? What significance does unification hold in neurodecision making practices, their advancement, implementation, and assessment? Are these elements reflections of broader cognitive activities? How should all these inquiries be examined? Is unification a goal of research or foundational concept that supports other objectives? Is this a question for philosophical exploration? If this is the case, how might analyzing scientific practices are beneficial? Alternatively, could philosophy serve as tool for comprehending neurodecision making? Connecting Neurodecision making with Natural Sciences involves integration happens at multiple levels. **Questions**, in this paper, touch on fundamental issues about architecture of Neurodecision making knowledge and its relationship to other Sciences; with reference to robust traditional foundation that neurodecision making shapes behavior. **Methodological** connections exhibit that Cognito - neurodecision making increasingly adopts tools from physics, biology and cognito - science. Neurodecision making exhibits principles to explain biological phenomena (optimal foraging) or vice versa (evolutionary explanations of preferences). Neurodecision making brings convergence of protocols between behavioral neurodecision making and psychology. Promising **approach** may be pragmatic pluralism - maintaining neurodecision making' distinctive insights while selectively integrating tools and concepts from other sciences based on their problem - solving utility rather than pursuing wholesale unification. This reflects broader trends in contemporary science toward 'trading zones' where different fields exchange ideas without losing their identity, rather than seeking single, unified 'theory of everything' spanning natural and social phenomena.*

Keywords: neurodecision making, cognito – inclusive, frame of mind and behavioralism

Introduction

Is there a single, most essential or foundational concept or type of entity, and if that is not the case, how do the various concepts or types of entities in management universe connect with one another (disappearance of the distinction across the Social Science disciplines)? Is it possible for the different natural sciences are integrated as well? Can fields like Neuro - management, or models of evolution and development in biology, be integrated? How do the so - called management sciences connect with the natural sciences? Are theories or models the appropriate units of connection? What other related or connecting units exist? Is the integration of these scientific areas limited to factual matters, or do value considerations also play a role? How do methodological, material, institutional, ethical, and other dimensions of academic collaboration factor in? Furthermore, what types of unity, beyond mere units, exist within management? Is the relationship of unification characterized by reduction, translation, explanation, logical inference, collaboration, or another approach? What significance does unification hold in management practices, their advancement, implementation, and assessment? Are these elements reflections of broader cognitive activities? How should all these inquiries be examined? Is unification a goal of research or a foundational concept that supports other objectives? Is this a question for philosophical exploration? If this is the case, how might analyzing scientific practices are beneficial? Alternatively, could philosophy serve as a tool for comprehending management?

The Shades

Some of contemporary shades integrating Industrial Psychology and Neuro Management are: Neuro - Based Employee On boarding (Designing on boarding programs that align with cognitive neuroscience principles to enhance learning and retention), Neuro - feedback for Leadership Development (Using neuro - feedback tools to train leaders in emotional regulation and decision -

making), Cognitive Load Management in the Workplace (Applying neuro management techniques to optimize cognitive load and prevent burnout), Neuro - Centric Organizational Change Management (Using neuroscience to design and implement effective change management strategies), Employee Motivation Through Neuro Management (Understanding the neural basis of motivation to develop more effective incentive programs), Neuroscience of Job Satisfaction (Studying how brain mechanisms influence job satisfaction and using these insights to improve workplace conditions), Neuro - Informed Stress Management (Creating stress management programs Based on neuroscience to enhance employee well - being), Neuro - Optimized Performance Feedback (Providing performance feedback that aligns with neural processes to enhance receptivity and improvement), Workplace Safety and Neuroscience (Applying neuro management principles to design safer and more ergonomic workplaces), Neuro - Enhanced Team Building (Designing team - building activities that improve collaboration and communication Based on neuroscience), Neuro - plasticity and Career Development (Using the principles of neuro - plasticity to create effective career development programs), Neuroscience of Employee Engagement (Investigating the brain mechanisms behind engagement to develop more engaging work environments), Cognitive Neuroscience in Talent Management (Applying cognitive neuroscience to optimize talent management strategies), Neuro - Informed Leadership Training (Developing leadership training programs Based on neuroscience to enhance leadership skills), Neuro - Enhanced Learning and Development (Designing training programs that leverage neuroscience to maximize learning outcomes), Neuroscience of Organizational Culture (Studying how brain mechanisms influence organizational culture and using this knowledge to shape culture), Neuro - Based Conflict Resolution

(Using neuroscience to develop more effective conflict resolution strategies in the workplace), Neuro - ergonomics for Productivity Enhancement (Applying neuro - ergonomics to design workplaces that enhance cognitive functioning and productivity), Neuroscience of Employee Retention (Studying brain mechanisms to understand and improve employee retention strategies), Neuro - Driven Innovation Management (Using neuroscience to foster innovation and creativity in the organization), Neuroscience of Diversity and Inclusion (Investigating the neural basis of bias and using this knowledge to promote diversity and inclusion), Neuro - Informed Emotional Intelligence Training (Developing training programs to enhance emotional intelligence based on neuroscience), Neuro - Based Career Pathway (Creating career paths that align with cognitive strengths and neural development), Neuro - feedback for Enhancing Creativity (Using neuro - feedback tools to boost creativity and innovation in the workplace), Neuro - Optimized Work Schedules (Designing work schedules that align with employees' cognitive rhythms for better performance), Neuro - Based Employee Wellness Programs (Developing wellness programs that leverage neuroscience to promote mental health), Neuroscience of Work - Life Balance (Studying the brain mechanisms behind work - life balance and using these insights to improve employee well - being), Neuro - Enhanced Performance Management (Applying neuroscience to create more effective performance management systems), Neuro - Informed Job Design (Designing job roles that enhance cognitive engagement and satisfaction Based on neuroscience), Neuro - Based Mentorship Programs (Developing mentorship programs that leverage neuroscience to enhance mentor - mentee relationships), Neuro - Driven Employee Recognition Programs (Creating recognition programs that align with neural motivations to boost employee morale), Neuroscience of Organizational Behavior (Studying

brain mechanisms to understand and improve organizational behavior), Neuro - Informed Employee Engagement Surveys (Designing engagement surveys that measure neural correlates of engagement), Neuro - Enhanced Coaching (Developing coaching programs that use neuroscience to improve coaching effectiveness), Neuro - Based Decision - Making Training (Training employees in decision - making skills using neuroscience principles), Neuro - Optimized Meeting Structures (Designing meeting structures that enhance cognitive functioning and productivity), Neuroscience of Communication in the Workplace (Studying how brain mechanisms influence communication and using this knowledge to improve communication strategies), Neuro - Informed Succession Planning (Using neuroscience to identify and develop future leaders), Neuro - Based Time Management Training (Developing time management training programs Based on neuroscience to improve productivity), Neuro - Informed Employee Surveys (Designing employee surveys that measure cognitive and emotional factors), Neuro - Driven Organizational Development (Applying neuroscience to drive organizational growth and development), Neuro - Based Stress Resilience Training (Developing training programs to build resilience against stress using neuroscience principles), Neuro - Informed Feedback Mechanisms (Creating feedback mechanisms that align with neural processes to enhance effectiveness), Neuro - Enhanced Talent Acquisition (Using neuroscience to optimize talent acquisition strategies), Neuro - Based Employee Development Programs (Developing employee development programs that leverage neuroscience to enhance cognitive skills), Neuro - Informed Organizational Network Analysis (Applying neuroscience to analyze and optimize organizational networks), Neuro - Driven Change Readiness Assessments (Using neuroscience to assess and enhance change readiness in organizations), Neuro -

Optimized Collaboration Tools (Designing collaboration tools that enhance cognitive functioning and teamwork), Neuro - Based Employee Satisfaction Programs (Creating satisfaction programs that align with neural motivations to improve employee satisfaction), Neuroscience of Employee Loyalty (Studying brain mechanisms to understand and improve employee loyalty strategies),

Some contemporary shades integrating Human Resource Management (HRM), and Neuroscience Management are; Neuro - Based Recruitment Strategies, Neuro - feedback for Employee Well - being (Implementing neuro - feedback programs to monitor and improve employee mental health), Neuroscience - Informed Employee On boarding (Designing on boarding processes that enhance cognitive assimilation and retention), Neuro - Optimized Leadership Development (Applying neuroscience principles to develop effective leadership training programs), Neuroscience of Employee Engagement (Understanding the brain mechanisms behind engagement to improve HRM strategies), Neuro - Enhanced Performance Appraisals (Using neuroscience to create more effective and fair performance appraisal systems), Neuroscience - Informed Diversity and Inclusion (Promoting diversity and inclusion through an understanding of neural biases), Neuro - feedback for Stress Management (Utilizing neuro - feedback tools to help employees manage and reduce stress), Neuro - Driven Talent Management (Applying neuroscience to optimize talent acquisition, development, and retention), Neuroscience of Motivation (Understanding neural mechanisms of motivation to create more effective HR policies), Neuro - Informed Employee Training Programs (Designing training programs that enhance learning and retention Based on neuroscience), Neuro - Optimized Work Environments (Creating workspaces that enhance cognitive functioning and productivity), Neuroscience of Organizational Culture (Using

neuroscience to assess and shape organizational culture), Neuro - Based Conflict Resolution (Developing conflict resolution strategies Based on neuroscience insights), Neuroscience - Informed Career Development (Creating career development plans that align with cognitive strengths), Neuro - feedback for Creativity Enhancement (Using neuro - feedback to boost creativity and innovation among employees), Neuro - Driven Employee Engagement Programs (Designing engagement programs that align with neural processes), Neuroscience of Work - Life Balance (Understanding the brain's role in balancing work and personal life for better HRM practices), Neuro - Informed Succession Planning (Using neuroscience to identify and develop future organizational leaders), Neuro - Based Emotional Intelligence Training (Enhancing emotional intelligence in employees through neuroscience), Neuroscience - Informed Job Design (Designing job roles that optimize cognitive engagement and satisfaction), Neuro - feedback for Performance Improvement (Implementing neuro - feedback tools to enhance employee performance), Neuro - Driven Employee Retention Strategies (Using neuroscience to develop effective employee retention programs), Neuro - Informed Employee Surveys (Designing surveys that measure cognitive and emotional factors influencing employee satisfaction), Neuroscience of Organizational Behavior (Applying neuroscience to understand and improve organizational behavior), Neuro - Based Time Management Training (Developing time management training programs that enhance cognitive efficiency), Neuroscience - Informed Team Building (Creating team - building activities that enhance cognitive and emotional cohesion), Neuro - Optimized Feedback Mechanisms (Providing feedback that aligns with neural processes to improve receptivity and action), Neuro - Driven Learning and Development (Using neuroscience to create personalized learning and development plans), Neuroscience of Employee Loyalty

(Understanding the brain mechanisms behind loyalty to improve HRM strategies), Neuro - Based Mentorship Programs (Developing mentorship programs that leverage neuroscience to enhance relationships), Neuroscience - Informed Compensation Strategies (Designing compensation plans that align with neural motivators), Neuro - feedback for Enhancing Focus (Implementing neuro - feedback tools to help employees improve concentration), Neuro - Driven Organizational Change Management (Applying neuroscience to manage organizational change more effectively), Neuro - Based Employee Recognition Programs (Creating recognition programs that align with neural rewards systems), Neuroscience of Workplace Relationships (Understanding the neural basis of workplace relationships to improve collaboration), Neuro - Informed Safety Training (Using neuroscience to enhance safety training and awareness in the workplace), Neuro - feedback for Emotional Regulation (Implementing neuro - feedback programs to help employees manage emotions), Neuroscience of Job Satisfaction (Studying neural mechanisms of job satisfaction to improve HRM practices), Neuro - Driven Workforce Planning (Using neuroscience to plan and optimize workforce strategies), Neuro - Informed Employee Engagement Surveys (Designing engagement surveys that measure neural correlates of engagement), Neuroscience - Informed Talent Acquisition (Enhancing talent acquisition strategies Based on neural insights), Neuro - Based Employee Wellness Programs (Developing wellness programs that leverage neuroscience to promote mental health), Neuro - Driven Organizational Development (Applying neuroscience to drive organizational growth and development), Neuro - Informed Coaching Programs (Designing coaching programs that enhance cognitive and emotional development), Neuroscience of Employee Productivity

(Understanding brain mechanisms of productivity to improve HRM strategies), Neuro - Based Conflict Management (Using neuroscience to develop effective conflict management practices), Neuro - feedback for Building Resilience (Implementing neuro - feedback tools to enhance resilience in employees), Neuroscience - Informed Employee Satisfaction Programs (Creating satisfaction programs that align with neural motivations), and Neuro - Driven Innovation Management (Applying neuroscience to foster innovation and creativity in the organization).

Some Contemporary Shades Integrating Integrate Neuro Management and Neuro – Diversity are:

- Neuroscience of Neuro - diversity Styles (How different neuro - diversity styles (e.g., transformational, transactional) impact neural processes related to decision - making, stress, and motivation).
- Emotional Intelligence and Brain Functioning (Examining how emotional intelligence relates to brain activity in leaders and how it influences neuro - diversity effectiveness).
- Neural Correlates of Ethical Decision - Making in Leaders (Investigating brain regions involved in moral and ethical decision - making among leaders).
- Neuro - plasticity and Neuro - diversity Development (How neuro - diversity training can influence brain plasticity and cognitive flexibility in leaders).
- Neuro - feedback for Neuro - diversity Enhancement (Exploring how neuro - feedback can enhance neuro - diversity skills like focus, emotional regulation, and decision - making).
- Stress Management in Neuro - diversity through Neuroscience (The impact of stress on neuro - diversity performance and how neuroscience can help leaders manage stress more effectively).
- Brain - Based Decision - Making in Neuro - diversity (Understanding how leaders make high

- stakes decisions by analyzing brain activity patterns related to risk and reward).
- Neural Basis of Empathy in Neuro - diversity (Investigating how brain circuits involved in empathy affect neuro - diversity behavior, especially in people - centric roles).
- Impact of Neuro - chemicals on Neuro - diversity Behavior (Studying the influence of neuro - chemicals like oxytocin, dopamine, and cortisol on neuro - diversity actions and decision - making).
- Cognitive Bias and Decision - Making in Leaders (How cognitive biases, mediated by brain structures, affect decision - making processes in neuro - diversity roles).
- Neuroscience of Neuro - diversity Communication (Examining brain activity patterns that occur during effective communication and public speaking in leaders).
- Brain Networks and Neuro - diversity Problem - Solving (Identifying neural networks that contribute to problem - solving and critical thinking abilities in leaders).
- Neural Mechanisms of Visionary Neuro - diversity (Exploring how leaders who exhibit visionary traits activate certain brain areas linked to creativity and future planning).
- Impact of Sleep on Executive Neuro - diversity (How sleep quality influences cognitive performance and decision - making in neuro - diversity roles).
- Neuroscience of Multitasking in Neuro - diversity (Studying how leaders manage multiple tasks and how brain function influences their ability to switch between different challenges).
- Trust and Neuro - diversity: A Neuro - scientific Perspective (Investigating how trust between leaders and teams is developed and sustained through brain mechanisms).
- Cognitive Load and Decision - Making in Neuro - diversity (How cognitive load impacts neuro - diversity decision - making and the associated brain regions involved).
- Neuroeconomics of Neuro - diversity Choices (Understanding the economic decisions made by leaders using neuroeconomic models and brain imaging).
- Mindfulness and Neuro - diversity Performance (Exploring how mindfulness practices affect brain function in leaders and their impact on neuro - diversity performance).
- Neuro - diversity in Crisis Management (Studying brain activity in leaders during crisis situations to understand how they remain calm and make rapid decisions).
- Brain - Based Coaching for Neuro - diversity Development (Using neuro - coaching techniques to enhance neuro - diversity skills, focusing on neural pathways of learning and behavior change).
- Social Brain Theory and Neuro - diversity (Investigating how brain networks involved in social interactions shape neuro - diversity capabilities).
- Neuroscience of Charisma in Neuro - diversity (Exploring the neural basis of charismatic neuro - diversity and its impact on followers' brain activity).
- Impact of Digital Technology on Neural Neuro - diversity (Understanding how digital tools and virtual environments affect the brain function and neuro - diversity behaviors of remote leaders).
- Cultural Neuroscience and Global Neuro - diversity (Exploring how cultural differences influence neural processes related to neuro - diversity, decision - making, and social behavior).

Research Areas Integrating Neuro Management and AI - Driven Neuro - Diversity:

- AI and Neuroscience for Decision - Making in Neuro - diversity [Exploring how AI systems can complement neural decision - making processes in leaders by optimizing information processing and risk assessment].

- Neuro - AI Interfaces for Neuro - diversity Enhancement [Developing AI - driven brain - computer interfaces to enhance cognitive abilities like focus, creativity, and decision - making in neuro - diversity roles].
- AI - Augmented Neuro - feedback for Neuro - diversity Development [Using AI to analyze neuro - feedback data and provide personalized training to improve leaders' emotional regulation and decision - making skills].
- Cognitive Load Management in AI - Assisted Neuro - diversity [Investigating how AI tools help leaders manage cognitive load and improve multitasking, with a focus on neural efficiency].
- AI - Driven Insights into Emotional Intelligence and Neuro - diversity [Using AI algorithms to interpret neural data related to emotional intelligence, helping leaders improve their empathy and interpersonal skills].
- Predictive AI Models of Neuro - diversity Performance Based on Neural Data Developing AI models that predict neuro - diversity success and effectiveness based on brain activity patterns during key tasks.
- AI - Enhanced Neuro - diversity Decision - Support Systems Using Neural Inputs [Building AI - driven decision - support systems that integrate real - time neural data to assist leaders in making more informed decisions].
- Neuro - AI Collaboration for Ethical Neuro - diversity [Exploring how AI and neuroscience can work together to help leaders navigate complex ethical decisions, analyzing both cognitive and computational data].
- AI for Identifying Neural Signatures of High - Performing Leaders [Using AI to detect neural patterns associated with effective neuro - diversity behaviors and decision - making processes].
- Personalized AI Neuro - diversity Coaching Through Neural Insights [Creating AI - driven neuro - diversity coaching programs that use neural data to provide tailored advice on improving neuro - diversity skills].
- AI - Assisted Brain Function Analysis in Neuro - diversity Crisis Management Studying how AI can help leaders maintain optimal brain function and make quickly decisions in high - pressure or crisis situations.
- AI - Driven Neuro - diversity Training Based on Neuroplasticity Leveraging AI to design training programs that stimulate brain plasticity in leaders, fostering continuous learning and adaptability].
- AI and Neuroscience for Enhancing Team Neuro - diversity Dynamics [Investigating how AI can help leaders understand neural dynamics within teams and optimize communication, collaboration, and performance].
- Neuro - AI Models for Predicting Neuro - diversity Burnout [Using AI to analyze brain data to predict burnout in leaders, offering preventive strategies based on neural and behavioral indicators].
- AI - Driven Adaptive Neuro - diversity Systems Based on Neural States [Developing adaptive neuro - diversity systems that adjust recommendations and strategies based on a leader's neural state and cognitive capacity].
- AI for Decoding Neuro - diversity Intuition Through Neural Patterns [Exploring how AI can decode neural markers of intuition in neuro - diversity, enhancing leaders' decision - making capabilities in uncertain situations].
- Neural and AI Integration for Enhancing Neuro - diversity Creativity [Studying how AI can boost creativity in neuro - diversity by analyzing neural mechanisms associated with innovative thinking].
- AI - Powered Analysis of Neural Responses to Neuro - diversity Stressors Investigating how AI

can monitor and interpret neural responses to stressors in neuro - diversity, helping leaders build resilience.

- Combining AI and Neuroscience for Neuro - diversity and Inclusion [Using AI to analyze neural data related to bias and inclusion, helping leaders foster more diverse and equitable teams].
- AI - Enhanced Neuromarketing for Neuro - diversity Influence [Exploring how AI can analyze neural responses to marketing strategies used by leaders to influence and inspire their teams].
- AI - Driven Cognitive Performance Optimization in Leaders [Using AI to continuously monitor and optimize leaders' cognitive performance by analyzing neural data in real - time].
- AI - Based Virtual Neuro - diversity Assistants Using Neural Feedback [Developing AI virtual assistants for leaders that adapt based on real - time neural feedback to support decision - making, planning, and stress management].
- AI - Enhanced Neuro - diversity Communication Through Neural Analysis Investigating how AI can analyze neural data to improve leaders' communication strategies, ensuring more effective message delivery.
- Neuroscience and AI for Neuro - diversity Talent Identification [Using AI algorithms to analyze neural and behavioral data to identify future leaders with high potential].
- Neuro - AI Systems for Enhancing Emotional Resilience in Leaders [Developing AI systems that use neural data to help leaders build emotional resilience, reducing stress and improving well - being].

Some questions touch on fundamental issues about the architecture of management knowledge and its relationship to other sciences, with reference to robust coming up of Morality and Justice as fundamental incorporation in Social Science are;

Foundational Question in Management lacks a single foundational entity comparable to particles in physics or cells in biology. Instead, it operates with multiple core concepts that interrelate:

- Choice and scarcity form the traditional foundation - the idea that management studies how agents allocate limited resources among competing ends
- Exchange and value provide another entry point, focusing on how goods and services are traded and priced
- Information and incentives offer a more modern foundation, examining how knowledge is distributed and how it shapes behavior

These aren't competing foundations but different lenses for viewing management phenomena. A transaction involves choice, exchange, and information processing simultaneously. Connecting Management with Natural Sciences involves integration happens at multiple levels:

Methodological Connections: Management increasingly adopts tools from physics (statistical mechanics for market dynamics), biology (evolutionary game theory), and neuroscience (brain imaging for decision - making studies).

Substantive Connections

- Neuro - management directly studies the biological basis of management behavior
- Ecological management treats the economy as embedded within natural systems
- Complexity management borrows from physics to model emergent market phenomena

Theoretical bridges: Models serve as primary connective tissue, but other units include:

- Shared mathematical frameworks (optimization, dynamics)
- Common empirical methods (experiments, statistical analysis)

- Overlapping phenomena (competition, cooperation, resource allocation)

As regards types of **Unity and Integration**, rather than seeking complete unification, management exhibits various forms of partial integration:

1. **Explanatory unity:** Using management principles to explain biological phenomena (optimal foraging theory) or vice versa (evolutionary explanations of preferences)
2. **Methodological convergence:** Shared experimental protocols between behavioral management and psychology
3. **Ontological overlap:** Recognition that management agents are biological beings operating in physical environments
4. **Collaborative synthesis:** Interdisciplinary fields like environmental management that don't reduce one field to another but create hybrid approaches

As regards, **Values and Integration**, Value considerations permeate scientific integration in several ways:

- Research priorities: Which connections get studied reflects judgments about importance
- Welfare implications: Integration often aims to improve policy recommendations
- Ethical constraints: Neuro - management faces ethical limits on human experimentation
- Normative frameworks: Environmental management explicitly incorporates sustainability values

As regards, **Institutional and Material Dimensions** include;

- Resource allocation: Funding shapes which integrative projects proceed
- Disciplinary boundaries: Department structures can inhibit or facilitate cross - field work
- Publication venues: Journals increasingly welcome interdisciplinary research

- Training programs: New PhD programs in behavioral management, Neuro - management signal institutional recognition

Philosophy both studies these practices from outside and participates in them through fields like philosophy of management and social ontology. As regards, Role of Philosophy, Philosophy serves multiple functions in this landscape:

1. Conceptual clarification: Analyzing what 'rationality' means across management and psychology
2. Methodological reflection: Examining the validity of transferring methods between fields
3. Normative evaluation: Assessing the ethical implications of different integrative approaches
4. Meta - scientific perspective: Understanding how disciplinary boundaries form and dissolve

As regards, **Unification as Means or End?** Unification functions more as a tool than an ultimate goal in management. The aim isn't to reduce all management phenomena to physics but to:

- Improve predictive power
- Enhance policy effectiveness
- Deepen understanding of human behavior
- Address complex real - world problems requiring multiple perspectives

As regards, **Moving Forward**, questions demand interdisciplinary investigation combining:

- Empirical studies of actual scientific practices
- Philosophical analysis of conceptual foundations
- Historical examination of how fields have evolved
- Sociological investigation of institutional structures

The most promising approach may be pragmatic pluralism - maintaining management' distinctive insights while selectively integrating tools and concepts from other sciences based on their problem - solving utility rather than pursuing wholesale unification. This reflects broader trends in

contemporary science toward 'trading zones' where different fields exchange ideas without losing their identity, rather than seeking a single, unified 'theory of everything' spanning natural and social phenomena.

An inquiry addresses one of the most significant and essential challenges of our era: the pursuit of unity, not just in knowledge, but in purpose and meaning both within and among various fields. If we start with management, we must understand that it does not rest on one main concept, but instead arises from a complicated interaction of various elements: value, utility, scarcity, exchange, institutions, and behavior. None of these aspects are solely 'management' by themselves; they are profoundly interconnected with human experiences, mental processes, biological factors, and ecological considerations. Therefore, the basic principles of management are multiple and interconnected. Collaboration with the natural sciences is not only achievable; it is, in my opinion, crucial. Disciplines such as Neuro - management illustrate this concept: they combine knowledge from neuroscience, psychology, and decision theory to explore not only what choices we make but also how and why we make them. In the same way, evolutionary biology offers examples of adaptation, competition, and collaboration that reflect the behaviors of market dynamics and changes in institutions. The convergence is not just a figure of speech, it is a fundamental aspect. Models and theories certainly serve as important connecting elements; however, we should also take into account common metaphors, cognitive frameworks, mathematical structures, and more frequently, data frameworks as means of unification. At a more basic level, integration relies on a willingness to use different methods and a sense of modesty in knowledge. Scientific barriers can only be overcome by individuals who are open to understanding different forms of communication, mathematical, neurological,

and ethical. Now, regarding your more profound inquiry: is unification a goal or a basic principle? I would assert that it is both. As an objective, it promotes research across various fields, aiming to uncover patterns that exist among different areas. As a basic principle, it serves as a reminder that knowledge is inherently whole; it is only divided by academic customs and institutional limits. Furthermore, value judgments are always present. Integration involves not only facts but also the underlying goals. Why combine? And, for what purpose?

A diversity mindset is the need of the hour. Breaking through the taboos and adaptation to newness in the environment is the only mantra of success in this competitive world. Mind plays the most important role to regulate human behavior and it is affected by its surroundings. And if we fail to accept and adapt to the changes, it will have adverse effects on both our physical and mental well being thereby guiding our behavior. Our behavior further guides our actions and that influences the society in which we live. The society is nothing but a just a group of like minded people coming together with a common purpose to achieve something based on common beliefs and values. Therefore, it is very crucial to have an diversity and flexible mindset ready to accept the change, learn, unlearn, relearn every time to remain updated with the newness in the surrounding environment not only to survive but also for sustainable development. In this context, ethics, organizational motivations, and clear philosophical understanding are essential. The financial aspects of climate change cannot be completely understood without the insights of environmental science and ethical philosophy. Ultimately, philosophy serves two purposes: it examines and facilitates. It has the ability to clarify assumptions, reveal contradictions, and suggest frameworks in situations where none are present. In this manner, it not only aids in our comprehension of management but also allows us to

rethink it. It is possible that what we truly require is not a single comprehensive theory, but rather a cohesive approach—a mindset that is diversity and flexible, as well as thorough and receptive. I strive to develop this concept in my work related to neuroscience and systems integration, focusing on the intersection of the mind, brain, and society. Let us maintain this conversation. These inquiries are not merely academic; they pertain to the very foundations of our evolution.

- **Lack of a Single Foundational Entity in Neuromanagement** Your opening claim is correct: neuromanagement lacks a singular ontological "unit" like atoms in physics or cells in biology. This is not a weakness—it reflects its interdisciplinary, integrative nature. In physics, entities are fundamental because the field is reductive by design. In biology, while cells are foundational, we recognize multiple levels of organization (molecular, organismal, ecological). Neuromanagement, however, operates at multiple ontological and epistemic levels: neural mechanisms, cognitive states, organizational structures, behavioral economics, decision - making, and social contexts. Hence, rather than looking for a single foundational entity, we should perhaps be seeking a meta - framework—a structure that maps interrelations rather than defining one base unit.
- **Are Theories or Models the Units of Connection?** Yes, in neuromanagement, theories, models, and mechanisms are often the most appropriate units of integration—rather than entities. Cognitive models (e.g., dual - process theory) link neural substrates to decision behaviors. Organizational models (e.g., predictive coding in decision - making) bridge individual and group cognition. Neuroeconomic models integrate brain imaging data with behavioral utility models. These models act as translation layers across disciplines, enabling partial unification without reducing one field to another.
- **Integration Across Disciplines: Is It Possible? Absolutely—but integration occurs in different modes:**
 - a. **Cognito - neuromanagement** Combines cognitive neuroscience and management theory. Focuses on how neural processes influence executive decisions, leadership styles, or ethical judgment.
 - b. **Biological evolution and development** Offers developmental models that explain how decision - making and managerial behavior evolve across the lifespan or organizational growth phases. The idea of adaptive rationality (Gigerenzer) is already a biological - cognitive bridge.
 - c. **Natural sciences integration** Challenging, but not impossible. Requires conceptual bridges (e.g., systems theory, complexity theory, Bayesian inference) rather than direct unification.
- **Is Unification Possible or Even Desirable?** Not all integration requires unification in the strict philosophical sense (i.e., reduction or logical inference). Instead, we often see: Translation (metaphors, analogies, and computational models), Collaboration (multidisciplinary teams), Explanation (mechanistic or functional accounts), Co - evolution of concepts (e.g., how "decision" is understood across neuroscience and management). Unification in neuromanagement is not reductive—it is synthetic and combinatorial.
- **Do Value Considerations Play a Role?** Yes, unambiguously. Values influence research agendas, funding, ethics of applying neuroscience in management (e.g., neuromarketing, workplace surveillance). They shape institutional and methodological boundaries, such as ethical limits in neuro-enhancement or leadership selection. This makes neuromanagement partly a normative science, not just descriptive.

- Methodological, Material, Institutional, and Ethical Dimensions These are not peripheral—they are core integrative dimensions: Methodologically, integration requires shared tools (e.g., fMRI, decision tasks, computational modeling). Materially, shared data repositories and interoperable technologies foster integration. Institutionally, trans-disciplinary centers (e.g., neuroeconomics labs) function as hubs. Ethically, frameworks (like neuro-ethics) must evolve with application contexts.
- Combinatorial Forms beyond Units Neuromanagement relies heavily on systems thinking, network science, and dynamic models—these go beyond unit - based frameworks. Combinatory here refers to multi - level modeling, hybrid ontologism, and emergent's approaches. Agent - based models, predictive coding, and control theory represent combinatorial thinking in action.
- Is Unification a Goal or Foundational Concept? It is not the ultimate goal, but rather a means of coherence: It allows us to coordinate explanations, compare models, and translate insights. It helps align cognitive activities like abstraction, categorization, and decision - making in the scientific process.
- Is This a Philosophical Question? Yes—philosophy of science, especially philosophy of interdisciplinary, is essential here. It helps clarify what kind of integration is possible (e.g., mechanistic vs. emergent). It also aids in evaluating epistemic values (explanatory power, simplicity, and applicability). Philosophy serves as a reflective tool for: Examining scientific practices, developing heuristics for integration, Clarifying normative implications.
- Conclusion: What Is Neuromanagement's Epistemological Status? Neuromanagement is not a field seeking to reduce others but to synthesize them. Its coherence comes not from

a single foundational entity, but from: Inter - theoretical frameworks, Cross - disciplinary practices, Shared problems and heuristics, And evolving normative considerations. It is an emergent, hybrid epistemology, and its continued development depends on: Philosophical clarity, Methodological rigor, Ethical sensitivity, and institutional adaptability.

Conclusion

Connecting Neurodecision making with Natural Sciences involves integration happens at multiple levels. Questions, in this paper, touch on fundamental issues about architecture of Neurodecision making knowledge and its relationship to other Sciences; with reference to robust traditional foundation that neurodecision making shapes behavior. Methodological connections exhibit that Cognito - neurodecision making increasingly adopts tools from physics, biology and cognito - science. Neurodecision making exhibits principles to explain biological phenomena (optimal foraging) or vice versa (evolutionary explanations of preferences). Neurodecision making brings convergence of protocols between behavioral neurodecision making and psychology. Promising approach may be pragmatic pluralism - maintaining neurodecision making' distinctive insights while selectively integrating tools and concepts from other sciences based on their problem - solving utility rather than pursuing wholesale unification. This reflects broader trends in contemporary science toward 'trading zones' where different fields exchange ideas without losing their identity, rather than seeking single, unified 'theory of everything' spanning natural and social phenomena.

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STUDY OF SPATIAL MARGINALITY OF STREET VENDORS IN A METROPOLIS: A CASE OF STREET VENDORS IN MUMBAI

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Abstract

The present study is part of the researcher's project on the plight of street vendors in Mumbai and presents a critical investigation into the nature of spatial marginality. The study emphasizes on the contestation of urban space. Framed within the theoretical contexts of urbanization, globalization, and the shrinking availability of public space, the research explores the "coalescing overlap" of consequences faced by disadvantaged groups. Specifically, it examines how environmental, ethnic, cultural, and economic factors contribute to different typologies of marginality—including contingent, systemic, and derivative forms—within the dynamics of a free market economy. The focal point of this research is the street vendor community, identified as an integral component of the urban economy that offers wide access to goods and services, from fresh food to consumer electronics. Despite their economic utility, street vendors operate in a state of constant uncertainty. The study highlights the paradox where vendors are essential to the city's function yet are treated as encroachers, subjected to frequent eviction drives, confiscation of goods, and harassment by municipal authorities. The survey conducted in Mumbai reveals that the Street Vendors Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending Act 2014 has failed to significantly reduce the marginality due to implementation failures and unrealistic regulatory caps. The study presents critical data highlighting the gap between policy and reality.

Keywords: *spatial marginality, street vendors, Mumbai, Street Vendor Protection Act 2014, urban space, gender disparity, licensing policy, public space, socio-economic profile, unionization*

Introduction

The current study deals with a critical investigation into the nature of spatial marginality in the Mumbai, with a special emphasis on urban space. This research highlights the essential aspects of the various manifestations of marginality and seeks to identify the different types of marginalities present in a metropolitan city like Mumbai. The study is framed within a theoretical context that encompasses urbanization, globalization, public space, and marginality. A key strength of this research is its focus on the coalescing overlap of consequences of urbanization, the diminishing public space available to disadvantaged groups, and the nature of marginality itself. This coalescing overlap is employed to delineate the challenges faced by street vendors in Mumbai, particularly in light of the

ambiguities surrounding the implementation of the Street Vendor Protection Act of 2014. The study significantly reveals the entrenched overlap between spatial marginality, gender disparity, and societal marginality.

This study has helped in the enrichment of the data on street vendors in Mumbai and understanding various problems and recurring hindrances in their attempt to get stabilized working conditions. It is unfortunate that presently, there is hardly any comprehensive structured data on the socio-economic profile of street vendors and the street vending economy in India. Even in government surveys like the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) and the Economic Survey, the exact data of street vendors is not available.

The component of marginality depends upon various factors like unequal or inequitable environmental, ethnic, cultural, social, political and economic factors and these factors have been explored in this study. Considering the existing typology of marginality like contingent, systemic, derivative or leveraged the theme of marginality have been studied with reference to the dynamics of the free market, whose uncertain outcomes may adversely affect the working sections of the society.

Street Vendors

Vending on the streets form an integral part of the urban economies around the world and has been identified as the easiest means of offering wide access to spectacular range of goods and services in public spaces. The street vendors sell everything from fresh vegetables to finished good, fresh foods, from building materials to garments and crafts, from consumer electronics to auto repairs to haircuts. For most street vendors, trading from the pavements is full of uncertainties. They are constantly harassed by the authorities. The local bodies conduct eviction drives to clear the pavements of these encroachers and in most cases confiscate their goods. The plight of women vendors is more deplorable as there is hardly any mechanism or any schematic yardstick to access their marginality, victimization and harassment of all sorts.

After passage of several rounds of pleas and multiple rounds of solicitation Street Vendors Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending Act 2014 was passed by the government of India. In the light of this development it is interesting to delve into whether the act really has proved to be a formidable protective gear for the street vendors and whether it has reduced the marginality of the deprived sections of urban spaces. As per this act "*street vendor*" means a person engaged in vending of articles, goods, wares, food items or merchandise of everyday use or offering services to the general

public, in a street, lane, sidewalk, footpath, pavement, public park or any other public place or private area, from a temporary built up structure or by moving from place to place and includes hawker, peddler, squatter and all other synonymous terms which may be local or region specific.

This article is based on a research conducted on the street vendors within the limited the geographical range of Mumbai region. After 2014 there haven't been any surveys of street vendors in Mumbai. Government or Civic body doesn't have exact figure of the number of street vendors in Mumbai. According to the Government of India, there are around 250,000 vendors in Mumbai. But practically speaking the actual number must be multiple times more than this. The survey, completed in 2015, found more than 99,000 hawkers eligible for license and rehabilitation. 99,435 hawkers were surveyed in 2014, around 17,000 were recently declared eligible¹.

The crucial issue associated with the problem of street vending in Mumbai is the issuance of licenses and vending certificates. The criteria of issuance of license is that the vendor should have domicile certificate and the licenses would be non-transferable. The entire process of survey and distribution of certificates is riddled with multiple problems. Previous studies reveal that License caps are unrealistic in most cities — Mumbai for example, has a ceiling of around 15,000 licenses as against an estimated 2.5 lakh vendors. This means most vendors hawk their goods illegally, which makes them vulnerable to exploitation and extortion by local police and municipal authorities. Women are the most victimized person during this process but their victimization and abuse is not recorded anywhere. This is the sorriest state of the entire episode. Unionization is the only remedy by which they can be protected from police and Municipal authorities' harassment. The article is based on the research which highlight and put forth the importance of forming a viable union or an umbrella organization.

Spatial Marginality

The theoretical term spatial marginality is explored here to scout out the process of deformation and discontinuity of the absolute space of street vendors in general and female vendors in particular. The pertinent question to interrogate is why 'spatial' is an important theoretical tool to study the least advanced and neglected sections of the society. It is significant because 'spatial' or space as an academic framework for analysis provides an objective configuration of social relations and the economic disparity of marginalized sections. Number of researchers tend to use the term space or spatiality to probe various social problems and seek to find out links between various socially and politically relevant theories. The usage of this term helps to understand the reason for the usurpation and appropriation of public and urban space by handful of people, and get an insight into why the least advanced remained deprived of it.

The paper looks into the problem of harassment of the vendors and the nature of their occupancy over the urban space. The research paper basically focus on identifying how the vendors struggle to acquire the place of vending or is there any invisible mechanism involved in providing the place for the vendors to sell their products. Since space is an important tool used by many academicians to propound new emerging theories, the study of spatiality is the core theoretical research problem on the basis of which other variables has been investigated.

Research Design of the Survey

A survey was conducted in Mumbai in few select areas and based on that statistical data has been generated. survey was conducted in two prominent areas (and also surrounding small areas-total five areas) of Mumbai considering the substantive distribution of street vendors in Mumbai.

Sampling Method

- Probability method of sampling has been used because this type ensures a higher degree of representativeness and the target group has equal probability of getting selected in the sample unit. The sampling unit has been selected by a means of random sample.
- Keeping in view the importance of consistency, diversity and the transparency, proportionate stratified sampling method has been used to select the respondents. The total of research items or units have been drawn from five areas of Mumbai.

Sample Size

Probability stratified sampling method was used to select the respondents. In 2014 the Mumbai civic body, as part of its survey conducted under the Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vendors) Act, 2014, identified 2.5 lakh hawkers in Mumbai. But the number has increased after the passage of seven years.

Five important areas were selected to draw the sample. In Dadar area there are roughly around 500 to 600 (it is rounded up to 500 for purpose of convenience) both organized and unorganized street vendors working on Ranade road and D'silva road and in Malad there are sizable number of street vendors. There are also areas like Mahim, Chembur, and fort-Crawford market areas where significant number of street vendors sell their products. Main focus has been Dadar (W), Mulund (W) and Malad areas

For convenience 100 respondents were selected from Dadar area and 62 respondents were selected from Malad area.

Rationale

The exact number of street vendors in Mumbai has not been recorded anywhere, nor there any list available from any government or non-government

organization. Therefore the selection of sufficient numbers of the subjects from each stratum by means of systematic interval sampling method was used. Every fifth respondent were selected .The sufficient number has been identified as 162.

- A Questionnaire was prepared to study the above mentioned factors. The aspects like spatial marginality and exploitation, problem of unionization, strength of unions, economic distress, rivalry amongst the fellow vendor, awareness,
- In the questionnaire as per the relevance of the study, five point Likert scale has also been used to ask the respondents how strongly they agree or disagree with research statement. Questions in this rating scale was asked to collect the opinion of the respondents regarding the gender discrimination, satisfaction and motivation, harassment, self-esteem, awareness, stress level etc.

Base on the survey following observations were drawn.

Socio-economic Profile

The language spoken by the street vendors in Mumbai: The survey concentrated within Dadar, Malad, Santracruz, Boriwali, Lower Parel and Byculla area in Mumbai. The survey indicates that in this area 25.9 % of vendors are Marathi speaking and rest are non-Marathi speaking. Amongst the non-Marathi speaking vendors, the Hindi speakers are the most. Over 50% of vendors in the above mentioned areas are Hindi speakers and 5.6 % of vendors speak Urdu language. Telugu and Gujarati speakers are the same numbers that is 1.9 % while Kannada speaking vendors are 7.4 %. The Tamil speakers also have their existence in the city with around 3.7 % of them sell their items in Mumbai.

(Table 1)

Language	Percentage
Marathi	25.9
Hindi	50.0
Urdu	5.6
Gujarati	1.9
Telugu	1.9
Kannada	7.4
Tamil	3.7
other	1.9

Caste Groups

The survey has attempted to gather information about the caste groups of the street vendors. Maximum vendors are from open category. Their percentage is 45% followed by OBC's constituting 30.2% of population selling on the Mumbai streets. There are 13.2 % and 9.4 % of vendors comes from SC and ST category (**Table 2**). The researcher has also attempted to enquire the monthly earning of the street vendors. As per the response received from the vendors, 30.2 % vendors have a monthly income of Rs.11000-3000 and the same percent of vendors earn Rs. 20,000 to 30,000. (**Table 4**).

The most important question which haunts most of the vendors is the storage facility. They have a common storage facility which they take it on rent. Collectively they gather a corpus as a deposit amount and monthly pay the rent. A general consensus is observed among them with regard to the storage. Only 30.5 % of vendors afford having a common storage of their items while 64.2 % vendors do not have storage facility. Therefore they tend to take all their belongings daily to their home and get it back on the street the next day.

Unionization is a very important process wherein the vendors voluntarily join a union of their choice. Maximum vendor in the areas of research are part of some or the other union. 94% vendors are associated with the unions and only 5% are not part of any

union. Other were least bothered about to join or reframe from the union.

(Table 2)

Caste group	Percentage
SC	13.2
ST	9.4
OBC	30.2
OPEN	45.3
OTHER	1.9

(Table 4)

	Income group	Total percentage
1.	1000-5000	9.4
2.	6000-10000	15.1
3.	11000-20000	30.2
4.	15000-20000	13.2
5.	20000-30000	30.2
6.	30000-50000	1.9

How the Public Space on Street is acquired by the Vendors

In this paper the term public space is used as a theoretical tool in the context of the accessibility and utilization of the common public area by the people especially the labour class. The paper has attempted to examine how the democratic participation and expression of the economic claim takes place on Mumbai Street, and does it liberally happens or the economic claim and accommodation in open space is denied to them. It is argued that the street or open space which is public in nature represents the most important aspect of citizen's expression in multiple forms like cultural, political, economic etc. The study reveals that the right to express the economic claims in a public space is absolutely denied to the vendors who sell various items on the streets for more than 12 hours a day.

Asked about their satisfaction on the current state of affairs, and the nature of their business, around 48% said that they are happy because there is not alternative than this and also there is not

alternative left with us. 18% said that they are absolutely not happy with the current situation and anytime they may quit from this business.

The vendors acquire the space on streets from their relatives. 57.6 % of vendors get it directly from their relatives and merely 17% of vendors have got the space by accident. They even acquire the space on rent. We found that 4.7 % of vendors claimed that the space was given to them by the Bombay Municipal Corporation.

(Table 5)

Question: - How do you acquire this space on the streets?	
By what means	Percentage
By mere accident	17.0
Rented	13.2
Suggested by relative	57.6
Given by BMC	4.7
Other sources	7.5

Evictions and Harassment

Three trends that are associated with spatial marginality i.e. low level harassment, confiscations of personal belongings and evictions, which are seen as the aftermath of uneven development of urbanization and capitalist accumulation has been studied thoroughly in this paper. Low level harassment includes bullying, physical hurt, disallowing to enter a space, etc. In this case bribes had to be paid to the government authorities to secure their spaces. similarly the study shows that how an overlay of licensing requirements that are impossible to meet and temporal restrictions on vending activity generated by higher-level city officials can generate a form of double illegality that requires the payment of "double hafta" (bribe) on the part of vendors to lower-level officials (Anjaria 2006). Many a times the local corporation officials seize valuables and selling products of street vendors invoking the sections of BMC Act, 1888 as reason for seizing all the goods of vendors. In this way they are deprived and alienated

from their own public space. If the goods of vendors are seized then they have no support mechanism or recourse to reclaim their goods.

This paper has studied the theme of eviction in detail. It may occur when the civic authority removes a vendor from their place of routine business. Small-scale, targeted evictions of vendors from particular streets are very common in the city like Mumbai. The most agonizing part of this practice is the “selective logic of regulation” that generates uneven rules and uneven levels of strangle hold across the urban spaces. Currently both the state government and the center governments are planning to come out with formidable protective measure for the economic welfare of the street vendors.

During the course of our survey the vendors were asked about the eviction they face during the BMC drive. 43% opined that they feel absolutely disgruntled after every eviction drive. They express that the eviction process haunts them so much that they perceive of getting deprived of citizenship. 26% says that they feel deeply humiliated and exploited and 17% said that they are been completely deprived of all benefits. 11% feels they are insulted and 1.9% were not able to define their condition. It was informed to use that during the eviction drive the street vendors are informed by their credible sources about the evictions. We tried to interrogate this aspect also. 67% of them said yes they are informed by their well-wishers and 27% responded that they are not been informed by anyone. While answering this question these non-informed vendors logically explained that even the informers has to be paid heavily and therefore they are not informed since they unable to pay the amount the informant wants.

Many of them have also said that there is no future for their kids. A level of frequency about their concerned about their kids was studied. (Table – 7). 32% always feel that there is no future for their kids and 26% often says that there is no future for my kids.

During the eviction drive all the belongings of the vendors are taken away by the Municipal Corporation. A question was asked about how often their belongings are confiscated, 56.6% said that there is daily drive and this crates complete disjuncture to their economic stability. (See table 8). Moreover it is important to note that only 44% of the street vendors in Mumbai are aware of the Pantapradhan Swanidhi Yojana and out of that only 22% actually availed the benefit of the loan.

(Table 6)

Question: How do you feel when you are evicted from the vending spot?	
feelings	Percentage
insulted	11.3
deprived	17.0
deprived of citizenship	43.4
exploited	26.4
can't say	1.9

(Table 7)

Question: is there any future for my children.	
feelings	Percentage
Always	11.3
often	17.0
sometime	43.4
rarely	26.4
NA	1.9

(Table 8)

Question: How often your belongings are confiscated	
daily	56.6
once in a week	28.3
once in a month	9.4
unpredictable	5.7

(Table 9)

Question: Do you know about PM Svanidhi Yojana	
yes	44
no	56

Conclusion

After taking into consideration the statistics drawn from the survey it can be said that the street vendors are excluded from the public space which is indeed their fundamental right as enshrined in art 21 our Indian constitution. They are been deprived of resources, services, opportunities, public services, etc which makes their life miserable in the last few decades the nature of political economy of Mumbai has undergone tremendous change in terms of its structure and opportunities. The increase in the number of informal sector has brought to the surface the question of informal economy. The precarious condition of workers and labour class and its increasing number has raised the issue of their accommodation in the city. The heavy migration which is witnessed in Mumbai has resulted in street vending and many of them are unlicensed. The major revamp in the city's infrastructure and restructuring the public areas has resulted in several eviction drives and the ultimate victim is the vendor who sells everything on the streets. But the government as well as the citizens shown an attitude of aversion towards them and consider them as illegal traders. This has given rise to the elite based urban economy a legitimacy to look down the vendors on the streets as not worth to live in the urban areas. This development has very aptly described by Parth Chatterjee as gentrification in the Indian cities. Thus we can say that the nature of development of Urbanisation has culminated a feeling of aversion towards the working class especially the street vendors and the State continues to treat them in a discriminatory way.

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FEMINIST CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE WORKS OF SHASHI DESHPANDE AND ANITA DESAI

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Abstract

*Abstract Feminist consciousness has been a major theme in modern Indian English fiction especially in the works of Shashi Deshpande and Anita Desai. Both writers explore the inner lives of women, their struggle against patriarchal structures and their journey towards self-realization. Through psychologically complex characters and realistic narratives they portray the conflict between traditional expectations and individual aspirations. This paper examines how Deshpande and Desai articulate feminist awareness by looking at select novels like *That Long Silence*, *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, *Cry*, *the Peacock* and *Fire on the Mountain*. The study shows how their narratives give voice to women's suppressed emotions and challenge gender hierarchies and how selfhood is a vital step towards liberation. Keywords: Feminism, Gender, Patriarchy, Identity, Selfhood, Shashi Deshpande, Anita Desai, Indian Writing in English. --- Introduction Paragraph 1: Feminist writing in India has become a powerful tool to challenge traditional gender roles and expose the silent suffering of women. Indian women writing in English have beautifully portrayed the emotional, psychological and social condition of women living in a patriarchal set up. Feminist consciousness is not just an ideological stance but a lived experience through literature.*

Keywords: *feminism, gender, patriarchy, identity, selfhood, Shashi Deshpande, Anita Desai, Indian writing in English*

Introduction

Feminist writing in India has become a powerful tool to challenge traditional gender roles and expose the silent suffering of women. Indian women writing in English have beautifully portrayed the emotional, psychological and social condition of women living in a patriarchal set up. Feminist consciousness is not just an ideological stance but a lived experience through literature.

Shashi Deshpande and Anita Desai are the pioneers in this space. Their stories are rooted in the Indian socio-cultural context but resonate with women's struggle for identity and freedom worldwide. Both writers use fiction to explore the tension between societal expectations and individuality. Their protagonists are not rebels in the classical sense but

women who question norms and seek meaning within and outside the domestic space.

This paper aims to study the emergence and expression of feminist consciousness in Deshpande and Desai. It will examine how both authors use psychological realism, symbolism and narrative techniques to portray women's self-discovery and emotional freedom. The focus will be on how their female characters move from silence to assertion, from dependence to self-awareness.

Literature Review

Feminist criticism in Indian writing has gained momentum with scholars like Simone de Beauvoir and Elaine Showalter influencing Indian literary thought. Critics like Meenakshi Mukherjee and Jasbir

Jain have studied how women writers challenge patriarchal ideologies through personal narratives. Shashi Deshpande's novels have been studied for their deep psychological insights and portrayal of middle-class Indian women's problems. Anita Desai's works have been appreciated for their lyrical prose and introspective female characters. Previous research has shown that both writers present women not as victims but as agents of self-definition. But this paper will take it further by comparing their feminist consciousness as a process of awakening—where silence becomes speech and self-realization is an act of empowerment.

Discussion

Feminist Consciousness

Feminist consciousness is an understanding of gendered oppression and the identification of one's own position within the framework of patriarchy. In literature, feminism is the affirmation of one's self and the journey out of self-doubt. This transformation is what emotional and social turmoil is described as by both Deshpande and Desai through the characters in their works.

Shashi Deshpande's Vision of Feminism

In her work, Deshpande constructs narratives around women living and struggling within the limits of traditional roles, as seen in *That Long Silence* and *The Dark Holds No Terrors*. Deshpande's protagonists, Jaya and Sarita, embody the modern Indian women caught in the web of social expectations and personal aspirations. The writer's feminism is gentle and humanistic—introspection and emotional equilibrium are prioritized over overt defiance and rage.

Anita Desai's Psychological Exploration

Anita Desai examines women's inner self more than her other contemporaries. In *Cry, the Peacock* and *Fire on the Mountain*, desolation, loneliness, and

struggles with self-identity are prominent. Desai examines sentiments of confinement and an unfulfilled yearning, through the use of symbolic and stream-of-consciousness techniques. The woman's insanity is a powerful metaphor in the texts of Desai, serving as a form of reclamation, an outcry against silencing and oppression of the patriarchy.

Silence as a Symbol of Oppression

In both authors' works, silence takes on a symbolic meaning. In *That Long Silence*, Jaya's silence suggests subjugation has been internalized, and in *Cry, the Peacock*, Maya emotionally deteriorates because she cannot voice her fears. Thus, the breaking of silence becomes a means of restoration of voice and identity.

Marriage and the Domestic Space

In both authors' narratives marriage becomes a site of confinement and conflict. Deshpande's women are caught in emotionally dry, one-sided relationships, while characters in Desai's works suffer psychological claustrophobia and dominating control in their partnerships. Both authors problematize the institution of marriage and its accumulative consequences on women.

The Journey toward Selfhood

The journey toward selfhood is the primary concern of feminist problems. Deshpande's protagonists self-define and derive their power from self-analysis and acceptance, while the women in Desai's works are more likely to be ascribed the madness of the culture, because they are seen escaping in solitude. Both cases are a denial of autonomy, the madness attempts a control, and there is a need to self-assert.

Narrative Techniques and Feminist Expression

Both authors demonstrate innovation in their technique, Deshpande has been observed to use realism and the interior monologue while Desai works

with poetic constructs and psychological symbolism. These rhetorical patterns are more than style. They serve to deepen the understanding of women's psyche.

Comparative Perspective

While Deshpande focuses on the practical realities of middle-class women in urban India, Desai emphasizes the psychological dimensions of feminine experience. Yet, both converge in presenting women as conscious beings capable of self-realization. Their works collectively reflect the evolution of Indian feminist thought in English literature.

Conclusion

Shashi Deshpande and Anita Desai, as authors, mark the growing shift in the portrayal of women in Indian English fiction. Where the female character was once a passive sufferer, writers like these, put in the work to make the female character aware of their agency, wants, and desires. Where the feminist consciousness in their work rests on the drive to protest, it tends more towards self-reclamation and awareness. Given the psychological and emotional dimensions of women's suffering as protagonists, both authors have enforced the feminist literary tradition in India. Their works ask audiences to critique traditionally ascribed gender roles, and as a consequence, reinforce the recognition of the silence of self, the resolve of suffering, and the declarative power of self-expression, Deshpande and Desai's stories, therefore, function as a dominant testimony to the literary canon of the awakened voice of women.

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PSYCHOLOGICAL THEMES AND SELF-DISCOVERY IN THE FICTIONS OF PAUL AUSTER: A LITERARY ANALYSIS

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Abstract

Paul Benjamin Auster (1947-1924), a notable figure in contemporary American literature. Through detailed textual examination of ten significant novels across the three decades *The New York Trilogy* (1987), *Moon Palace* (1989), *The Book of Illusions* (2002), *Oracle Night* (2003), *The Brooklyn Follies* (2005), *Travels in the Scriptorium* (2006), *Man in the Dark* (2008), *Invisible* (2009), *Sunset Park* (2010), and *4 3 2 1* (2017) this paper investigates his exceptional depiction of intricate characters facing existential dilemmas. The construction of identity undertakes psychological odysseys that blur the lines between reality and illusion. This study illustrates how Auster's widen modern concerns regarding authenticity, intent, and interpersonal relationships in postmodern culture.

Keywords: Paul Auster, psychological exploration, identity, self-discovery

Introduction

Paul Auster (1947-2024) was a unique presence in American literature, recognized for his philosophical inquiries and metafictional style. His creations explore themes of awareness, recollection, and selfhood, depicting individuals who go through deep confusion and indistinct realities through "ontological vertigo".

Paul Auster, published a work of fiction titled *The New York Trilogy*. Since its initial publication in 1987, the trilogy consisting of *City of Glass*, *Ghosts*, and *The Locked Room* has grown to become a seminal piece of postmodern literature. Though the stories and characters in each novella are distinct, they are all centered on existential issues, identity. This novella, *City of Glass*, follows mystery writer Daniel Quinn, who lives alone, as he becomes embroiled in a puzzling case of misidentification. One day, he answers the phone expecting to speak with Paul Auster, the fictionalized version of the author. Overcome by curiosity, Quinn adopts the persona of

the investigator and gets involved in the intricate case of finding Peter Stillman, a missing person. Quinn explores the mysterious and unsettling realms of Stillman's childhood as the narrative progresses, challenging his own identity and reality in the process.

The story of *Ghosts*, the second novella, switches to Blue, a private investigator hired by a White person to spy on a Black man. Blue is tasked with watching Black go about his everyday business, but soon he becomes lost in a strange maze of mystery and can no longer tell the difference between reality and his own imagination. *The Locked Room*, the protagonist of the last novella is Fanshawe, a brilliant but eccentric writer who vanishes without a trace while ignoring his literary heritage and turbulent background. The primary character in this tale is only identified as Fanshawe's childhood buddy. After Fanshawe vanishes, the narrator is given the duty of looking after Fanshawe's unpublished manuscripts. The narrator muses on the nature of his creativity, the

veracity of the events he has experienced, and his own identity as he immerses himself in Fanshawe's writings and the lines between his fiction and reality start to blur (Bloom, 2004). The trilogy's use of mirrors and double identity as symbols reflects the complexity of human identity and the broken sense of self. Through the characters' psychological conflicts and projection of aspirations onto others, unconscious motivations are examined. (Auster, *The New York Trilogy*, 1987)

Paul Auster wrote the book *Moon Palace*, which was released in 1989. The story of the book is on Marco Stanley Fogg, a young guy who goes through a number of life-changing incidents that affect his identity and outlook on the world. Marco Fogg is a lonely and abandoned young man living in New York City at the start of the book. With few belongings following his father's passing, he makes the decision to set out on a quest for self-discovery. After moving into a dilapidated apartment, he begins working as Effing's career and learning about his life story from the elderly guy. Effing shares his own tales, which transport the reader to the early 1900s and include his involvement with the magician Canning as well as his involvement in a polar trip. As the story goes on, Marco's life takes some surprising turns. He makes the acquaintance of Kitty Wu, with whom he eventually falls in love. Their relationship, however, deteriorates after Kitty finds out she is pregnant and chooses to get an abortion. After experiencing emotional upheaval, Marco takes some time to reflect on who he is and where his life is heading.

After Effing passes away, Marco gains Effing's riches and the story changes once more. Marco's life is changed by this fortune, which enables him to seek a more comfortable lifestyle. He journeys to the western part of the country and arrives at a secluded cabin in the barren landscape. Marco struggles with feelings of purposelessness and loneliness in this remote environment. The moon is a recurrent symbol that stands for the potential for transformation and

rebirth as well as the ethereal and enigmatic facets of life. Marco eventually has a greater awareness of both the interconnection of human experiences and himself as a result of his voyage. The book ends with a feeling of acceptance and understanding of life's cycles of change. *Moon Palace* is renowned for its intricate tale structure, which combines several characters, timelines, and points of view to produce a vivid narrative fabric. (Auster, *Moon Palace*, 1989)

The Book of Illusions chronicles the life of David Zimmer, a man who suffered severe emotional trauma after losing his wife and two kids in an untimely plane accident. David withdraws from life and descends into despair due to his overwhelming grief. When he immerses himself in the life and career of silent cinema actor Hector Mann, he finds comfort in the unlikeliest of places. In the 1920s, Hector Mann vanished from view and left behind a corpus of work that was all but forgotten. David Zimmer's passion for Mann drives him to find and preserve Mann's motion pictures. During the procedure, he loses himself in the realm of silent film and is mesmerized by the performances of the actors (Auster, *Conversations with Paul Auster*, 2013).

David learns more about Mann's life and career and finds that the actor had a complicated and mysterious personal background in addition to a legacy of films. David uses this investigation into Mann's life, work, and abrupt absence as a means of escaping his own sorrow and trying to put his broken life back together. Auster blur the boundaries between illusion and reality throughout the whole book. *The Book of Illusions* is a poignant and introspective exploration of grief, the transformative power of art, and the healing potential of obsession and discovery. (Auster, *The Book of Illusions*, 2002)

Paul Auster's novel *Oracle Night* deftly navigates themes of identity, fate, and the relationship between fiction and realism. The protagonist of the book is Sidney Orr, a struggling author who is on the mend after a near-fatal illness. Sidney finds a weird blue

notepad in a Brooklyn stationery store while looking for inspiration. After buying the notebook, he decides to use its pages to draught a brand-new book. His manuscript's characters and events seem to reflect things that happened in his own life, making it difficult to distinguish between fiction and reality. Sidney is creating a novel that follows the tale of an author who gets entangled in a convoluted and perilous plot, leading him to wonder how much his work affects his own life. The idea of "oracle night", a recurrent nightmare that Sidney experienced while ill, is explored by Auster throughout the book, along with how it affected his creativity and how he perceived the world.

Sidney struggles with the thought that his writing has the ability to affect not only his own destiny but also the fortunes of people around him as the story progresses and his life gets more and more entwined with the book. Through Sidney Orr's persona, the story explores the psychological components of the creative process. Sidney, a failing author, decides to utilize the enigmatic blue notebook as the starting point for a new book, which turns into a healing and life-changing event. Writing is presented as a means of self-actualization, self-discovery, and healing for him. The novel illustrates how storytelling can help people process their own ideas and feelings, which is a deep psychological investigation in and of it.

As Sidney's novel within the notebook appears to come to life, the characters in the story experience their own psychological upheavals when confronted with the idea that they may merely be characters in a book. The blurring of these boundaries prompts the characters to question their own existence and agency, leading to a fascinating psychological exploration of their reality. Auster's narrative underscores the profound psychological bang of storytelling. Both Sidney Orr's writing and the narrative of the novel itself is presented as transformative forces. The act of storytelling serves as a way to make sense of one's experiences,

confront fears, and potentially shape one's own destiny. (Auster, *Oracle Night*, 2003)

The narrative of Paul Auster's book *Travels in the Scriptorium* is mysterious and contemplative. It looks at issues including identity, memory, imprisonment, and the blending of fact and fiction. Mr. Blank, an elderly man, awakens in a closed, bare room at the start of the book. He doesn't remember how he got there, who he is, or why he's in this strange place. A typewriter, numerous documents, and an envelope with a young woman's portrait inside are all strewn about the room. A number of people who have ties to Mr. Blank's history visit his room and engage with him as he tries to piece together who he is and what's going on around him. Look after him, Fanshawe, a guest, and Martin, a man who acts as a confidant.

Mr. Blank's examination of the items in the room, the records, and the talks he had with the guests uncover a convoluted network of related histories and experiences. His memory loss makes it difficult for him to comprehend the characters and stories he has created, but as he reads the documents, he starts to suspect that he is a writer. The work blurs the boundaries between fact and fiction, making it difficult for the reader to determine which aspects of Mr. Blank's life are true memories and which are the creations of his imagination. The novel poses concern on the nature of identity, the creative process, and the degree to which people write their own stories.(Auster, *Travels in the Scriptorium*, 2006).

Paul Auster's *The Brooklyn Follies* Nathan Glass, a retired life insurance salesman who relocates to Brooklyn in an effort to heal from a failed marriage and a lung cancer struggle, is the main character of the novel. The setting of the book is New York City following 9/11. After learning that he had lung cancer, Nathan Glass relocates to Brooklyn in order to spend the remainder of his life in quiet. He makes the decision to write a book on his life, but

before long, he starts to become involved in other people's lives. As Nathan makes friends with Tom Wood, his estranged nephew who dropped out of college and is having personal issues, the story takes shape. When they discover a rare book together, it opens their lives to unexpected individuals and adventures.

The book skillfully juggles a number of characters and subplots, such as Nathan's relationships with Lucy, his young neighbour who is also coping with family troubles. Nathan learns that relationships may be made in the most unlikely places and that life is unpredictable as he gets increasingly involved with others around him. *The Brooklyn Follies* delves with themes of human interconnectedness, repentance, and second chances. It blends comedy, sorrow, and human drama to create a compelling story against Brooklyn's distinctive background. *The Brooklyn Follies*, which emphasises the erratic aspect of life and the unexpected turns that can happen in one's journey, conveys a feeling of absurdity and unpredictability. (Auster, *The Brooklyn Follies*, 2005) Paul Auster's book *Man in the Dark* examines the concepts of reality, imagination, and the persuasiveness of narrative. The protagonist of the book is an elderly man named August Brill who is recuperating after an automobile accident. Brill's physical wounds make it hard for him to sleep, so in order to escape the harsh reality of his life, he spends his nights imagining different stories. Brill imagines a parallel America in which there is a civil war going on in one of these made-up stories. The story centres on Owen Brick, a man paid to kill the enigmatic and influential. But as Brick's quest goes on, he finds unexpected relationships and intricacies that cast doubt on his perception of reality.

Auster blurs the boundaries between fantasy and reality as the two storylines the imaginary world of Owen Brick and the real world of Brill's personal struggles develop. The book explores the essence of

storytelling itself examining how stories influence how we perceive the world and assist us in navigating its intricacies. *Man in the Dark* delves deeply into the creative process, the hazy line separating fact from fiction, and the ways in which narratives may both reveal and obfuscate the truth. (Auster, *Man in the Dark*, 2008)

Paul Auster's book *Invisible* develops into a nuanced, multi-layered story. The narrative is recounted from different points of view and takes place over several decades. Three main characters Adam Walker, Rudolf Born, and Jim Freeman are the focus of the book. The narrative starts in 1967 when Adam Walker, a Columbia University student and aspirant writer meets the intriguing and charming Rudolf Born by coincidence. Born offers to support Walker's literary journal, but when Walker becomes caught up in a chain of events that ends in tragedy and violence, their relationship takes a terrible turn. There are four sections to the story, each told by a distinct character. (Auster, *Invisible*, 2009)

Paul Auster's book *Sunset Park* revolves on the lives of a number of people who reside in Brooklyn, New York's Sunset Park neighborhood. In order to escape his difficult background, Miles Heller, a young guy who has been living as a squatter in abandoned houses in Florida, left New York City and is introduced to the reader in this story. Miles manages to sustain himself by working as a house cleaner for foreclosures, which helps him stay away from commitment and emotional ties. We also get to know the people from Miles's past in New York City, such as his estranged father Morris, a book publisher with a struggling business, and his father's girlfriend Alice, a psychiatrist. Miles's family is still struggling to deal with the sorrow of their past and their shattered relationships as a result of his actions. When Miles gets called back to New York after learning that his younger brother is hospitalized after a catastrophic accident, the story takes a dramatic turn. Miles had been trying to run away from his grief, his family, and

his past, but this incident makes him face them all. He returns to Sunset Park, where his father once lived, and he starts to rebuild his bonds with the people he left behind. Each character carries their emotional baggage and secrets, which are gradually revealed as the story unfolds. The characters grapple with their past decisions and the need for forgiveness and redemption, which are central psychological themes in the novel. (Auster, *Sunset Park*, 2010)

In the novel *4 3 2 1* provides a deep psychological investigation of the minutiae of human identity, fate, and the consequences of life's decisions. The book starts with Archie's 1947 birth and continues through his life, offering four distinct accounts of his early years and personal growth. Four different life trajectories are produced by these tales' convergences and divergences at significant junctures in Archie's life. Every Archie incarnation encounters a different combination of difficulties and possibilities, mirroring the erratic and unpredictable nature of life. Readers will see how historical and cultural occurrences, including the Vietnam War, affected Archie's life throughout the book. The intricate investigation of fate and the notion that insignificant choices and random occurrences can profoundly impact a person's life path found in *4321* It's a character-driven story that offers a profound and thought-provoking reading experience by exploring the inner lives of its numerous Archie characters.

The book explores the psychological effects of relationships and family dynamics. Archie's connections with his parents, friends, and romantic partners change over each story, which has an impact on his emotional growth and decisions made in life. The way that families and relationships are shown emphasizes how important interpersonal ties

are in forming a person's psychological composition. (Auster, 4321, 2017)

Conclusion

Paul Auster presents people in his novels that are deeply layered and frequently undergo life-changing situations, creating a rich tapestry of psychological inquiry. In his writing he frequently exhibits theme of identity, chance, coincidence, and the secrets of the human psyche. Reading one of Auster's books encourages one to consider the various ways people deal with life's challenges and the mysterious routes leading to self-discovery.

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சங்க இலக்கியங்களில் ஒப்பனைக் கலைத்திறன்

முனைவர் அ. நஸ்ரின்

உதவிப்பேராசிரியர் தமிழ்த்துறை

சோனா கலை மற்றும் அறிவியல் கல்லூரி, சேலம், தமிழ்நாடு

ஆய்வு நோக்கம்

மனிதன் தான் செய்யும் ஒவ்வொரு செயலிலும் அழகியலை எதிர்பார்க்கிறான். எனவே தான் ஒவ்வொரு செயலையும் அழகாகவே செய்கின்றான். மனிதனின் இத்தகைய அழகியல் உணர்வு இன்று நேற்றல்ல. சங்ககாலம் முதலே அவனிடம் இருந்துள்ளது என்பதைச் சங்க இலக்கியங்கள் மூலம் ஆராய்ந்து உணர்த்துவதே இந்த ஆய்வுக் கட்டுரையின் நோக்கமாகும்.

ஆய்வு அனுசூழல் சங்க இலக்கியங்களில் குறிப்பிடப்பட்டுள்ள பல்வேறு வகையான ஒப்பனைக் கலைகளையும் எடுத்து அதனை விளக்கிக் கூறியிருப்பதால் இந்தக் கட்டுரை எடுத்துக்கூறும் முறை ஆய்வு மற்றும் விளக்கமுறை ஆய்வு ஆகிய இரண்டு வகையான ஆய்வு அனுசூழல்களில் அடங்கப்பட்டுள்ளது.

குறிப்புச் சொற்கள்: பட்டாடை, கழுத்தணி, தோளணி, நறும்புகை, சண்ணம்.

ஆய்வுச்சுருக்கம்

காதலும் வீரமும் மட்டுமே முக்கியமாகப் பார்க்கப்பட்ட சங்க இலக்கியங்களில் ஒப்பனைகள் குறித்த செய்திகளும் ஆங்காங்கே இடம்பெற்றுள்ளன. காதல் மற்றும் வீரம் இரண்டிலுமே அழகு என்பது முக்கிய இடம் பெற்றுள்ளதை இவ்விலக்கியங்களைப் படிக்கும்போது உணர்ந்துகொள்ள முடிகின்றது. தினம்தோறும் அணிந்துகொள்ளக்கூடிய ஆடை முதல் அணிகலன்கள், கூந்தல், முகம் என்று சங்ககால மக்கள் தங்களை அழகாகவே வெளிப்படுத்திவந்துள்ளனர். இவ்வழகு சார்ந்த குறிப்புகளைச் சங்க இலக்கியங்கள் கொண்டு ஆராய்வதாக இந்த ஆய்வு அமைகின்றது.

முன்னுரை

மனிதனுடைய மனத்தில் உணர்ச்சியை எழுப்பி அழகையும் இன்பத்தையும் அளிப்பதே கலையாகும். கலைகள் மூலம் நாகரிகம், பண்பாடு, வாழ்க்கைமுறை, சமூகஅமைப்பு, பழக்கவழக்கங்கள் ஆகியன வெளிப்படுகின்றன. அறுபத்து நான்கு கலைகளுள் ஒன்று ஒப்பனைக்கலை. அழகு இல்லாத பொருளையும் அழகாக மாற்றுதலே இதன் சிறப்பு. சங்ககால மக்கள் ஒப்பனையில் காட்டிய ஆர்வம் குறித்தும் தம்மையும் தம்மைச் சுற்றியுள்ள பொருள்களையும் ஒப்பனை செய்ததையும் விளக்குவதாக இக்கட்டுரை அமைகின்றது.

கலை – விளக்கம்

கலை என்பது மக்களது வாழ்வியலை, பண்பாட்டை நாகரிகத்தை எடுத்துக்காட்டும் கண்ணாடி ஆகும். மனிதனுக்கு புதிய எண்ணங்களும் புத்துணர்வும் தோன்றி மனிதனுடைய வாழ்க்கையை மேம்படுத்தும்

இந்தக் கலையைப் பற்றி மா.

இராசமாணிக்கனார் அவர்கள்,

“கலை என்பது அளவும் பொருத்தமும் தன்னுள் அடக்கி நிற்பது. அதே சமயத்தில் உள்ளத்திற்கு உவகை ஊட்டுவது. உள்ளத்தைத் தன்பால் ஈர்ப்பது.”

(தமிழர் பண்பாடு ப – 54)

என்று தமிழர் பண்பாடு என்ற நூலில் கூறியுள்ளார். இதன்மூலம் கலை என்பது மனித வாழ்வின் சிறப்பான வளர்ச்சிக்கு உயிரூட்டம் அளிக்கிறது என்பது தெளிவாகிறது.

ஒப்பனைக்கலை

ஆய கலைகள் அறுபத்து நான்கு கலைகளில் ஒன்று ஒப்பனைக்கலை. ஒப்பனைக்கு அலங்கரித்தல், வேய்தல், வனைதல், பூசல், அணிதல், வருணனை என்ற பல பெயர்கள் உண்டு. அழகில் குறைந்தவர்கள் தம்மை அழகுடையவர்களாகக் காட்டிக் கொள்ள ஒப்பனைக்கலை பயன்படுகிறது. இத்தகைய

சிறப்பு வாய்ந்த ஒப்பனைக்கலையைப் பற்றி வெ.
வரதராசன் அவர்கள்,

**“அழகில் சற்றுக் குறைந்தவர்கள்
அழகுடையவர்களாகக் காட்சியளிக்கவும்
இயல்பாகவே அழகுடையவர்கள் மேலும்
அழகுடையவர்களாகக் காட்சியளிக்கவும்
உறுதுணையாவது ஒப்பனைக் கலை”**

**(தமிழரின் ஒப்பனைக்
கலைத்திறன் - ப- 16)**

என்று ‘தமிழரின் ஒப்பனைக் கலைத்திறன்’
என்ற நூலில் குறிப்பிட்டுள்ளார்.

பண்டைய காலத்தில் ஆண்கள், பெண்கள்,
சிறுவர் என அனைவரும் ஒப்பனை செய்வதில்
ஆர்வம் காட்டியதைச் சங்க இலக்கியங்கள் மிக
அழகாக எடுத்துரைக்கின்றன. மனிதர்கள்
மட்டுமின்றி தன்னோடு வாழ்ந்த அ.றிணை
உயிரினங்களுக்கும் அழகுபடுத்தி மகிழ்ந்து
வாழ்ந்துள்ளனர் என்பது சங்க இலக்கியங்கள்
வழி உணரமுடிகின்றது.

ஒப்பனையின் வகைகள்

ஒப்பனை என்பது காலநிலை காரணமாகவும்
பணிநிலை காரணமாகவும் வயதுநிலை
காரணமாகவும் வேறுபட்டு அமையும்.
பண்டைத்தமிழர் தம்மை அலங்காரம்
செய்ததோடு தாம் பயன்படுத்திய
பொருள்களையும் விலங்குகளையும் அழகுபடுத்தி
மகிழ்ந்துள்ளனர். அவர்களின் ஒப்பனையை
ஆடை ஒப்பனை, அணிகலன் ஒப்பனை, மலர்
ஒப்பனை, நறுமணப் பொருள் ஒப்பனை, கூந்தல்
ஒப்பனை, முக ஒப்பனை, என்று
வகைப்படுத்தலாம்.

ஆடை குறித்த ஒப்பனைகள்

பண்டைக்காலத்தில் நாடோடியாக வாழ்ந்த
மனிதன் தழைகளையும் மரப்பட்டைகளையும்
விலங்குகளின் தோல்களையும் ஆடையாக
அணியத்தொடங்கினான். நெசவுத் தொழிலைக்
கண்டறிந்த பின்பு பருத்தி ஆடைகளையும்
பட்டாடைகளையும் நெய்து அணிந்தான்.
காலப்போகையில் அவனுடைய அறிவு வளர
வளர, வசதிகள் பெருகப் பெருக ஆடை
அணிவதிலும் அவனுக்கு மாற்றம் ஏற்பட்டதை
சங்கப் பாடல்கள் சுட்டுகின்றன.

சங்க இலக்கியத்தைப் பொறுத்தவரை
தமிழரின் தொன்மையான ஆடை தழையாடை.
தழை என்றால் ஆடை என்னும் அளவிற்கு
செல்வாக்குப் பெற்றிருந்தது. நிலத்திற்கேற்ப
தழையாடைகள் மாறுபட்டிருந்தன.
தழையாடைகள் பெரும்பாலும் நெய்தல், ஞாழல்,
ஆம்பல், குவளை, செயலை, நொச்சி
போன்றவற்றால் தொடுக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன.
தழைகளை எவற்றுடன் இணைத்தால் அழகு
மிளிரும் என்ற அழகியல் சிந்தனை சங்ககால
மக்களிடம் இருந்துள்ளது. இத்தழையாடைகளை
இளைய மகளிரே அதிக அளவில்
உடுத்தியுள்ளனர்.

தலைவிக்குக் கையுறையாக அன்பின்
அடையாளமாக தலைவன் தழையாடையை
கொடுத்தான் என்பதை,

“தழலும் தட்டையும் முறியும் தந்து”

(குறுந்தொகை - பா- 223)

என்று குறுந்தொகை வரியில் புலவர்
சுட்டுகிறார். ஆதியில் தழையாடை
பரிசுப்பொருட்களில் ஒன்றாக இருந்திருக்கிறது.
இன்றும் கூடத் திராவிடப் பகுதியல் பழமைச்
சமூகங்களில் பரிசம் போடும் போது புடவைக்
கொடுப்பது மரபாக இருக்கிறது.

அன்றைய தழையாடை இன்று
நூலாடையாக உருமாறியுள்ளது. நற்றிணையில்
தலைவன் தலைவிக்கு கையுறையாக
தழையாடையைக் கொடுத்தமையை,

“உடுக்கும் தழை தந்தனனே யாம் அ.து

உடுப்பின் யாய் அஞ்சுதுமே கொடுப்பின்

கேளுடைக் கேடு அஞ்சுதுமே”

(நற்றிணை - பா- 359)

என்னும் பாடல் வரிகள் எடுத்துரைத்துள்ளது.
சங்க காலத்தில் தழையாடையானது
பழந்தமிழரின் எளிய இயற்கை சார்ந்த
ஆடையாக விளங்கியது மட்டுமின்றி தொல்
குடிகளின் பல்வேறு பண்பாட்டுக் களங்களில்
இடம்பெறக்கூடிய ஒரு குறியீடாகவும் விரிவு
பெற்றிருந்தது.

பருத்தி ஆடை

பருத்தியிலிருந்து பஞ்சம் பஞ்சிலிருந்து
ஆடையும் உருவாக்கப்படுகிறது. பழந்தமிழர்

பருத்திச் செடியின் அருமையை உணர்ந்து ஆடை நெய்து பயன்படுத்தியுள்ளனர். பஞ்சு, இழை என்று பருத்தி ஆடையை சுட்டும் மரபு தமிழரிடம் காணப்பட்டது.

நுண்மையின் நூலால் ஆன ஆடையை தலைவி அணிந்து தம்மை அழகுப்படுத்தியமையை,

“நுண்நூல் அகம் பொருந்தினள்”

(புறநானூறு – பா- 373)

எனும் பாடல் வரியில் பரணர் கூறியுள்ளார். இன்றும் ஆண்கள் பெண்கள் என மென்மையான பருத்தி ஆடை அணிந்து தங்களை அழகுபடுத்திக் கொள்வதைக் காணமுடிகிறது.

பட்டாடை

பட்டுப் புழுவிலிருந்து நூலெடுத்துப் பட்டாடையாக்குவர். பட்டு நூலைக் கொண்டு நெய்யப்பட்ட பட்டாடைகளை விரும்பாதவர் எவரும் இல்லை. ஓர் உயிரினத்தைக் கொண்டு உருவாக்கப்படும் இவ்வாடையை சிலர் அணிவதில்லை. பருத்தி நூலிலிருந்து ஆடையை உருவாக்கிய தமிழ் மக்கள் பட்டை மிகக் குறைந்த அளவிலே பயன்படுத்தியுள்ளனர். மிக அரியதாக அணியக்கூடிய பட்டாடையை மன்னர்களும் வசதி படைத்தோர்களும் மட்டும் அணிந்தனர். அழகிற்கும் ஆடம்பரத்திற்கும் பட்டாடைகளை அணிவதுண்டு.

பரத்தை இரவில் பட்டாடை அணிந்து தம்மை அழகுபடுத்தியமையை,

“..... அல்குல்

அணிகிளர் சாந்தின் அம்பட்டு இமைப்ப”

(புறநானூறு – பா- 373)

எனும் பரணரின் பாடல் வரிகள் எடுத்துரைக்கின்றன.

மங்கல நிகழ்ச்சிகளில் இன்றும் பட்டாடை அணிந்து பெண்கள் செல்வது பெருவழக்காகக் காணப்படுகிறது எனலாம்.

அணிகலன்கள் குறித்த ஒப்பனைகள்

ஆரம்ப காலத்தில் அணிகளை அணியாதிருந்த மக்கள் காலப்போக்கில் பலநிறத் தளிர்களையும் விதைகளையும் கொட்டைகளையும் காதுகளில் கட்டித் தொங்கவிட்டு தம்மை அழகுபடுத்திக்

கொண்டனர். பலவகை மலர்களை மாலையாகத் தொடுத்து மார்பிலும் இடையிலும் அணிந்து கொண்டார்கள். அவர்களே காலம் செல்லச் செல்ல பல அணிகளை உருவாக்கி அணிந்து கொண்டனர். அவர்கள் தங்கள் ஒவ்வொரு உறுப்பிற்கும் ஒவ்வொரு அணிகலன்களை அணிந்து அழகுபடுத்தியமையை சங்கப்பாடல்கள் மிக அழகாக எடுத்துரைத்துள்ளன.

தலையணிகள்

சங்ககாலத்தில் தமிழ்ப் பெண்கள் கூந்தலை வாரி முடிந்துக் கொண்டு அதில் பல வகையான அணிகலன்களை அணிந்து தம்மை அழகுபடுத்திக் கொண்டனர். அவ்வணிகளே தலைக்கோலம் எனப்பட்டது. சங்ககால மகளிர் பொன்னாலான தலையணி அணிந்து அழகுபடுத்திக் கொண்டமையை,

“பொன்செய் புணையிழை கட்டிய மகளிர்”

(குறுந்தொகை – பா – 76)

என்ற ஓதலாந்தையாரின் குறுந்தொகைப் பாடல் வரி சுட்டுகிறது.

மேலும் மகரவாய், தொய்யகம், சுரிதகம், உத்தி, முஞ்சம், பிறை, நெற்றிப்பட்டம், திலகம், நுதல் அணி போன்றவற்றை தலையணிகளாக அணிந்து தம்மை அழகுபடுத்திக் கொண்டுள்ளனர்.

கழுத்தணிகள்

பழங்காலத்தில் பூ, காய், இலை, கொட்டை போன்றவற்றைப் பறித்து தொடுத்து மாலையாக அணிந்தனர். இன்றும் திருமணம் நடைபெறும் போதிலும் மற்ற சடங்குகளிலும் ஒருவரை வரவேற்கும் சூழலிலும் மலர்களால் தொடுக்கப்பட்ட மாலையை அணிவித்து மரியாதை செய்கின்றோம். பண்டைத் தமிழ் மக்கள் கழுத்தில் பலவித அணிகளை அணிந்துள்ளனர். அவை நுட்பமான வேலைத்திறனுடையவை. சில பொன்னில் செய்யப்பட்டு வைரங்கள் இழைக்கப் பெற்றிருந்தன.

இத்தகைய சிறப்புவாய்ந்த கழுத்தணிகள் குறித்து மா.இராசமாணிக்கனார்,

“கழுத்தில் தொங்கவிடப்பட்டு மாம்பை அணி செய்யும் அணிகளைக் கழுத்தணிகள்”

(சங்க இலக்கிய வரலாறு – ப-113)

என்று ‘சங்க இலக்கிய வரலாறு’ என்று நூலில் கூறியுள்ளார்.

தம்மை நாடி வருபவர்களுக்கும் மன்னர்கள் பலவித விலை உயர்ந்த மாலைகளை பரிசளித்தனர். அவற்றை அவர்கள் அணிந்து தம்மை அழகுபடுத்திக் கொண்டனர். முத்துமாலை, மணிவடம், காசுமாலை போன்றவற்றை கழுத்தில் அணிந்துள்ளதை இலக்கியங்கள் சான்று பகர்கின்றன.

அழகிய ஆராய்ந்தெடுத்த அணிகலன்களை தலைவன் அணிந்திருந்ததைத் தாயங்கண்ணனார்,

“ஒல்குஇயற் கொடிச்சியை நல்கினை ஆயின்

சென்மோ நுண்புண் மாம்ப”

(அகநானூறு –பா- 379)

என்னும் அகநானூற்றுப் பாடல் வரிகளில் எடுத்துரைக்கிறார்.

தோளணி

தோளில் அணியும் அணி தோளணி. முழங்கைக்கு மேல் தோளில் அணிந்து கொள்ளும் அணிகளில் தொடி, தோள், வளை என்பன முக்கியமானவை. ஆண்கள், பெண்கள், மறவர்கள் எனப் பலரும் தொடியணிந்து தம்மை அலங்கரித்துக் கொண்டனர். முள்ளூர் என்னும் மன்னன் வீரவளைத் ‘தொடி’ என்னும் அணிகலனை அணிந்திருந்தான் என்பதை,

“முள்ளூர் மன்னன் கழல்தொடிக் காரி”

(குறுந்தொகை – பா- 16)

என்ற கல்லாடனாரின் குறுந்தொகை பாடல் தெரிவிக்கிறது.

இவ்வணியானது இன்றைய காலத்தில் கைவங்கியேயாகும். திருமணம் மற்றும் விழாக்காலங்களில் இவ்வணிகள் அணிவது வழக்கமான ஒன்றாகத் திகழ்கிறது.

கையணிகள்

மனித உறுப்புகளில் கைகள் மிக முக்கியமானவை. அனைவரது பார்வைகளும் கைகளில் அணியும் அணிகள் மீது தென்படும்.

மிகப்பழங்காலத்தில் குறிஞ்சிநில மக்கள் தம் கைகளில் கொடிகளையும் பூக்களையும் முன் கையிலும் மணிக்கட்டின் மீதும் அணிந்து வந்தனர். முதியவர்கள் தங்கள் குழந்தைகளுக்குப் பேய், பிசாசு முதலிய விலங்குகளிடமிருந்து காக்க காப்பு கட்டினர். சங்ககாலத்தில் வெண்மையான சங்குகளை அறுத்து வளையாக அணிந்து கொண்டனர்.

ஐங்குறுநூற்றில் ‘வளைப்பத்து’ என்னும் பத்துப் பாடல்கள் ஏழை முதல் அரசகுலப் பெண்கள் வரை சங்கு வளையல்கள் அணிந்திருந்தனர் என்பதை விளக்குகின்றது. இவ்வளைகளை முன் கையில் அணிவர். இதனை,

“வாளரம் பொருக கோணெர் எல்வளை”

(குறுந்தொகை – பா- 15)

என்ற குறுந்தொகை பாடல் அடியானது என்ற வரியில் விளக்குகிறது. வாளர் அரத்தால் தொழில் செய்யும் வல்லவன் வளைந்த வளையலை செய்து கொடுத்ததை தலைவி அணிந்திருந்தான் என்று காட்டுகிறது. மேலும், தலைவி முன்னங்கையில் வளையல் அணிந்திருந்ததை,

“விளங்குதொடி முன்கை வளைந்து புறம்சுற்ற”

(அகநானூறு – பா – 58)

என்ற கபிலரின் அகநானூற்றுப் பாடல் வரி புலப்படுத்துகிறது.

இன்றும் கன்னியாகுமரி, வேளாங்கண்ணி போன்ற கடற்கரையோரம் சங்கு வளையல் விற்பனை செய்வதையும் பெண்கள் விருப்பத்துடன் வாங்கி அணிவதையும் காணலாம். கண்ணாடி, தங்கம், பித்தளை, வைரம், பிளாஸ்டிக், வெள்ளி போன்ற பலவற்றால் ஆன நுண்ணிய வேலைப்பாடுகளாலான வளையல்களை அணிகின்றனர்.

“விளங்குதொடி முன்கை வளைந்து புறம்சுற்ற”

(அகநானூறு – பா – 58)

என்ற கபிலரின் அகநானூற்றுப் பாடல் வரி புலப்படுத்துகிறது.

இன்றும் கன்னியாகுமரி, வேளாங்கண்ணி போன்ற கடற்கரையோரம் சங்கு வளையல் விற்பனை செய்வதையும் பெண்கள் விருப்பத்துடன் வாங்கி அணிவதையும் காணலாம். கண்ணாடி, தங்கம், பித்தளை, வைரம், பிளாஸ்டிக், வெள்ளி போன்ற பலவற்றால் ஆன நுண்ணிய வேலைப்பாடுகளாலான வளையல்களை அணிகின்றனர்.

சூந்தல் குறித்த ஒப்பனைகள்

சங்ககால மகளிர் தம் சூந்தலைக் கண்ணும் கருத்துமாய்ப் போற்றி பாதுகாத்ததோடு அதனைப் பலவகையாகப் பிரித்து ஒப்பனை செய்துள்ளனர். அடர்ந்து காணப்படும் சூந்தலிற்கு

அருளையும் மேகத்தையும் புலவர்கள் உவமையாக்கியுள்ளனர்.

“இருண்ட அழகிய கூந்தல்”

(குறுந்தொகை – பா- 55)

என்னும் வரியும்

“மேகம் போல் தழைத்த கூந்தல்”

(குறுந்தொகை – பா- 74)

என்ற பாடல் வரியும் வேலைப்பாடு அமைந்த வீரக்கழலினை ஆண்கள் அணிந்திருந்ததை எடுத்துரைத்துள்ளன. இதன் மூலம் ஆண்களும் தம்மை அணியால் அழகுபடுத்தியமை புலனாகிறது.

மலர்களால் ஒப்பனை

மல்லிகை, முல்லை, வேங்கை, குவளை, ஆவிரம், காந்தள் முதலிய பலவகை மலர்கள் நறுமணம் உள்ளவை. பண்டைத்தமிழர் காட்டில் உள்ள பலவகையான மலர்களைப் பறித்து தொடுத்து மாலையாகவும், கூந்தலிலும் அணிந்தனர். ஷ அன்னையர் தம் குழந்தைகளுக்கு மலர்களைத் தொடுத்து கழுத்திலும் முடியிலும் அணிவித்ததை அகநானூறு,

“தூநீர் பயந்த துணைஅமை பிணையல்”

(அகநானூறு – பா- 05)

என்னும் வரியில் சுட்டுகிறது.

துளசி, காட்டு மல்லிகை, கூதாளி, குவளை, கேற்றா ஆகிய மலர்களால் ஆன மாலையை அணிந்து தலைவன் தலைவியை சந்திக்க வருவான் என்பதை,

“குல்லை குளவி கூதளம் குவளை

இல்லமொடு மிடைந்த ஈந்தண் கண்ணியன்”

(நற்றிணை – பா – 376)

என்ற நற்றிணைப் பாடல் வரிகள் வழி அறிந்து கொள்ளமுடிகிறது.

சங்ககால மக்கள் பலவகையான மலர்களைப் பறித்து கூந்தலிலும், மார்பிலும் சூடி தம்மை அழகுபடுத்தியிருந்தனர். இன்று குறிப்பிட்ட சிலமலர்களே காணப்படுகின்றன. அதுவும் விழாக்காலங்களில் கிடைப்பது மிகவும் அரிதானது.

மணப்பொருள்களால் ஒப்பனை

சங்ககால மக்கள் நறுமணச் சண்ணங்களையும் நறுமணப் பொருள்களையும் ஒப்பனைக்கு பயன்படுத்தியுள்ளனர்.

சந்தனம்

மரங்களில் சந்தன மரம் சிறப்பானது. சந்தனமரத்தை நெருப்பிலிட்டு புகைத்தும் அரைத்தும் சங்க மகளிர் பயன்படுத்தினர். சந்தனத்தை அரைத்து குழம்பாகச் செய்து ஆடவர், மகளிர், சிறுவர் என மார்பில் பூசிக் கொண்டதை,

“எ.கு விளங்கு தடக்கை மலைணன் கானத் தார நறு மார்பினை”

(குறுந்தொகை – பா- 103)

என்னும் குறுந்தொகைப் பாடல் வரிகள் தெரிவிக்கின்றன.

ஆண்களே அதிக அளவில் சந்தனம் பூசி மார்பை அழகுபடுத்திக் கொண்டதை இதன் வழி புலனாகிறது.

நறும்புகை

சிலவகை நறுமணம் பொருள்களை நெருப்பிலிட்டு நறும்புகையாக்கினர். அப்புகையில் கறும்பு கையாக்கினர். அப்புகையில் கூந்தலையும், ஆடைகளையும் புகையூட்டி நறுமணப்படுத்தினர். சந்தனம், அகில் ஆகியன புகைத்தற்குரியன.

“நறையகில் வயங்கிய நளிபுன நறும்புகை”

(குறுந்தொகை – பா – 339)

என்னும் பாடல் வரி புகையூட்டி மலையையே வாசனைப்படுத்தியதை கூறுகிறது.

சண்ணம்

சண்ணம் என்பது முகத்திற்கும் உடலிற்கும் பூசுவதற்குரிய பொடி இக்காலத்தில் பயன்படுத்தப்படும் பவுடர் போன்றது. கருப்பூரம், புழுகு, பனிநீர், சந்தனம் முதலியவற்றை இடித்துச் சண்ணம் தயார் செய்தனர் சண்ணம் இடிப்பதற்கு எனப் பணிப்பெண்கள் அக்காலத்தில் இருந்தனர்.

சுண்ணம் மட்டுமின்றி மலர்களின் தாதுப் பொடிகளையும் மார்பிலும் உடம்பிலும் பூசிக் கொண்டனர் என்பதை,

“பல்திழை எதிர்மலர் கிள்ளி வேறுபட

நல்திழை வனமுலை அல்லியொடு அப்பியும்”

(அகநானூறு – பா- 337)

என்னும் அகநானூற்றுப் பாடல் அடிகளில் கூறப்பட்டுள்ளது.

கூந்தலை ஒப்பனை செய்தல்

சங்ககால மகளிர் தம் கூந்தலை கண்ணும் கருத்துமாய்ப் போற்றி பாதுகாத்ததோடு அதனைப் பலவகையாகப் பிரித்து ஒப்பனை செய்துள்ளனர். அடர்ந்து காணப்படும் கூந்தலிற்கு இருளையும் மேகத்தையும் புலவர்கள் உவமையாக்கியுள்ளனர். இதனை,

“இருண்ட அழகிய கூந்தல்”

(அகநானூறு – பா- 87)

என்னும் அகநானூற்று பாடல் வரிகள் எடுத்துரைக்கின்றன.

கூந்தலைப் பாதுகாக்கும் முறை

சங்ககாலப் பெண்கள் தம் நீண்ட கூந்தலை தூய்மையாகக் கழுவி சீவி சிக்கெடுத்துப் பாதுகாத்தனர். கூந்தலைப் பாதுகாக்கும் முறை பற்றி அக்கால மகளிர் நுட்பமாக அறிந்திருந்தனர் என்பதை,

“மண்ணாக் கூந்தல் மாசறக் கழீஇ

சில்போது கொண்டு பலசூரல் அழுத்திய”

(நற்றிணை – பா- 112)

என்னும் நற்றிணைப் பாடல் மூலமாக தலைவி தமது கூந்தலை அழுக்கு நீங்க நன்றாகக் கழுவிச் சில மலர்களைச் சூடிக் கூந்தலை முடித்திருந்தாள் என்பது தெளிவாகிறது. எருமண்ணிட்டு கூந்தலைப் பிசைந்து தூய்மை செய்யும் வழக்கம் அக்காலத்தில் இருந்துள்ளதை,

“கூழைக் கெருமண் கொணர்கஞ் சேறும்

ஆண்டும் வருகுவர் பெரும்பே தையே”

(குறுந்தொகை – 113)

என்ற குறுந்தொகைப் பாடல் வழியாக அறியமுடிகிறது. எருமண் என்பது களிமண். கூந்தலிலுள்ள எண்ணெய்ப் பசை போக சிக்கு

முதலியன போகும் பொருட்டுக் களிமண்ணைத் தேய்த்துக் கொண்டு மகளிர் நீராடுதல் வழக்கம் இதனைச் சிற்றூர்களில் இன்றும் காணலாம்.

மயிர்ச்சாந்து பூசல்

ஆண்களும் பெண்களும் தம் தலைமுடிக்கு மயிர்ச்சாந்தைப் பூசிக் கொண்டனர் தகரம் பூசுதல் என்றும் கூறுவர். கூந்தலில் சூடிய பலவகை மலர்களை நீக்கிவிட்டு மயிர்ச்சாந்து பூசி எண்ணெய் தடவினாள் தலைவி என்பதை,

“கூந்தல் வேய்ந்த விரவுமல ருதிர்த்துச்

சாந்துளர் நறுங்கதுப் பெண்ணெய் நீவி”

(குறுந்தொகை – 312)

என்னும் பாடல் வரிகள் தெரிவிக்கின்றன. மேலும்

“புல்லினத் தாயமகன் சூடி வந்ததோர்

முல்லையொரு காழுங் கண்ணியும்

மெல்லியால்

கூந்தலுட்

பெய்து

முடித்தேன்மன்

தோழியாய்”

(கலித்தொகை – பா - 180)

என்னும் கலித்தொகை வழி பாடல் தலைவன் கொடுத்த மலரை சூடிய தலைவி தாயிடம் கூந்தலுக்கு எண்ணெய் பூச உட்காரும் பொழுது கூந்தலைப் பிரிக்க அது தெறித்து கீழே விழுந்தது. அது பற்றி அன்னை கேட்காமல் கூந்தலை பிரித்து மயிர்ச்சந்தனம் பூசி உலர்த்தி, முடியை முடிந்துவிட்டாள் என்று தலைவி கூறுவதன் மூலம் பெண்கள் அக்காலத்தில் திருமணத்திற்கு முன் பூசுகும் வழக்கம் இல்லை என்பது புலனாகிறது.

நெய்ப்பூசுதல்

பெண்கள் தம் கூந்தலுக்கு நெய்ப்பூசி அழகுபடுத்தியதை,

“நெய்யிடை நீவி மணியொளி விட்டன்ன

ஐவகை பாராட்டி னாய்மற்றெங் கூந்தல்”

(கலித்தொகை – பா- 22)

என்னும் கலித்தொகைப் பாடல் வரிகள் சுட்டுகிறது.

ஐவகையாகப் பகுத்தல்

கூந்தலை ஐந்து வகையாகப் பகுத்தும் சங்ககால மகளிர் ஒப்பனை செய்வர். ஐந்து வகையாக முடிக்கப்படுவதால் ஐம்பால் என்று பெயர் பெற்றது. ஐவகை என்பன முடி, கொண்டை, சுருள், குழல், பனிச்சையாகும்.

முடி - உச்சியில் முடிதல்

கொண்டை - பக்கத்தில் முடிதல்

சுருள் - பின்னிச் செருகல்

குழல் - சுருட்டி முடிதல்

பனிச்சை - சடையாகப் பின்னல்

கூந்தல் ஐம்பாலாகப் பகுக்கப்பெற்றதை பின்வரும் பாடலடிகள் சான்று பகர்கின்றன.

“அரியினம் கடுக்கும் சரிவணர் ஐம்பால்”

(அகநானூறு –பா- 138)

என்னும் அகநானூற்றுப் பாடல் அடிகளும்

“ஐதாக நெறித்தன்ன அறலவர் நீளம்பால்”

(கலித்தொகை –பா- 269)

என்ற கலித்தொகைப் பாடல் வரியும் விளக்குகின்றன. அன்றைய மக்கள் இயற்கையாக கிடைக்கும் பொருள்களைக் கொண்டு கூந்தலைப் பாதுகாத்து வந்தனர். இன்று கூந்தலை பல வகையாகப் பகுப்பதற்கும் நீட்டியும் சுருக்கியும் அழங்காரம் செய்ய அழகு நிலையங்களுக்குச் சென்று செலவு செய்து வருவதைக் காண முடிகிறது.

முகம் குறித்த ஒப்பனைகள்

மனித உறுப்புகளில் மிக முக்கியமான ஒன்று. முகம் பெண்கள் முகத்தில் கண், காது, மூக்கு, புருவம், நெற்றி, உதடு முதலிய உறுப்புகளை ஒப்பனை செய்துள்ளனர். கண் ஒப்பனை

பெண்கள் கண்களுக்கு மைதீட்டுதல் என்பது மிக இன்றியமையாத ஒன்றாகயிருந்தது. மையை அஞ்சனம் என்றும் கூறுவர். மீன் போன்ற மைதீட்டிய கண்களை உடையவள் தலைவி என்பதனை அகநானூற்றில்,

“கயல்என அமர்த்த உண்கண்”

(அகநானூறு – பா- 126)

என்னும் உவமையோடு புலவர் கூறியுள்ளார்.

நெற்றி

நெற்றியில் திலகம் (பொட்டு) தீட்டிக் கொள்ளும் வழக்கம் சங்ககாலத்தில் இருந்திருக்கிறது. திலகம் குறித்து கலித்தொகை,

“ஒண்ணுதல் யாத்த திலகம்”

(குறுந்தொகை – பா- 107)

என்ற வரியில் கூறுகிறது. மங்கலத்தின் ஒரு கூறாக திலகம் இடம்பெற்றுள்ளது. குழந்தைகளைக் குளிப்பாட்டி திலகம் இட்டு அழகுபடுத்துதல் அன்று முதல் இன்று வரை சமுதாயத்தில் இடம்பெற்றுள்ளது. ஆனால் இன்று பல வண்ண ஸ்டிக்கர்களை விதவிதமான வடிவத்துடன் நெற்றியில் வைத்துக்கொள்வது குறிப்பிடத்தக்கது.

முடிவுரை

அழகு என்பதை இயற்கையாகவே இறைவன் அனைவருக்கும் கொடுத்திருந்தாலும், ஒப்பனை செய்துகொண்டு அதன்மூலம் இன்னும் அழகாக்கிக் கொள்வதை சங்ககாலம் முதல் இன்றுவரையில் அனைவராலும் விரும்பப் பட்டுள்ளது. தாங்கள் அணிந்து தெகாளும் ஆடைகள் முதல் அணிகலன்கள், கூந்தல், தங்களுடைய முகம் என்று அனைத்துவகையான வெளிப்பாடுகளிலும் சங்ககால மக்கள் தங்களை மிகவும் அழகாக வெளிப்படுத்தியே வாழ்ந்து வந்துள்ளனர் என்பதை இந்த ஆய்வின் மூலம் உணர்ந்து கொள்ள முடிகின்றது.

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சங்க இலக்கியங்களில் பண்பாட்டு விழுமியங்கள்

முனைவர் ப. கற்பகராமன்

உதவிப்பேராசிரியர் தமிழ்த்துறை

சோனா கலை மற்றும் அறிவியல் கல்லூரி, சேலம், தமிழ்நாடு

ஆய்வு நோக்கம்

பண்பாடு என்பது பண்பட்ட வாழ்வியலைக் குறிக்கும். இயற்கையோடு இணைந்த வாழ்வியலை வாழ்ந்த சங்ககால மக்கள் தங்கள் வாழ்க்கைமுறையில் மிகச்சிறந்த பண்பாட்டுக் கூறுகளைக் கடைபிடித்தனர். அவர்கள் கடைபிடித்த அத்தகைய வாழ்வியல் பண்பாட்டு விழுமியங்கள் காலங்கள் கடந்தும் இன்றும் தொடர்கின்றன. வாழ்க்கையை செம்மையாக்கும் இத்தகைய பண்பாட்டு விழுமியங்களைச் சங்க இலக்கியங்கள் எவ்வாறு வெளிப்படுத்தின என்பதை ஆராய்ந்து வெளிக்கொணர்வதே இந்த ஆய்வின் நோக்கமாகும்.

ஆய்வு அனுகுமுறை: சங்க இலக்கியங்களில் உள்ள பண்பாட்டு விழுமியங்களை அவ்விதக்கியங்கள் வழி எடுத்துக் காட்டி, அதனை விளக்கியும் கூறுவதால் இந்த ஆய்வானது எடுத்துக் கூறும் முறை ஆய்வு மற்றும் விளக்கமுறை ஆய்வு என்ற இரண்டு தன்மைகளில் மேற்கொள்ளப்பட்டுள்ளது.

குறிப்புச் சொற்கள்: கனவு, பேய், பிசாசு, குடும, நடுகல்

ஆய்வுச் சுருக்கம்

விலங்குகளில் இருந்து வந்த நாம், இறைநிலையை நோக்கிப் பயணிக்க வேண்டும். அவ்வாறு பயணிப்பதற்கு நம்முடைய பண்பாட்டுக் கூறுகளே வழிவகுக்கும். இப்பண்பாட்டுக் கூறுகள் சங்க இலக்கியங்களில் பல இடங்களில் பதிவுசெய்யப்பட்டுள்ளன. நாம் அன்றாடம் வணங்கும் தெய்வங்கள், நாம் காணக்கூடிய கனவுகள், பேய், பிசாசு போன்ற நம்பிக்கைகள் குறித்த பண்பாட்டு விழுமியங்கள், தந்தையின் பெயரினைப் பிள்ளைக்கு வைத்தல், நடுகல் வழிபாடு போன்ற பழக்க வழக்கங்கள் சார்ந்த பண்பாட்டு விழுமியங்கள், திருமண முறை, விருந்தோம்பல், சடங்குகள் என்று பல்வேறு பண்பாட்டு விழுமியங்களை ஆய்வு செய்து விளக்குவதாக இந்த ஆய்வுக்கட்டுரை அமைந்துள்ளது.

முன்னுரை

பண்பாடு என்பது ஒரு சமுதாயத்தின் இன்றியமையாத கூறுகளுள் ஒன்றாகும். உலகில் மக்கள் இனம் தோற்றம் பெற்று இன்றுவரை வளர்ந்து வந்துள்ள வளர்ச்சி நிலைக்கு அடிப்படையாக அமைவது பண்பாடாகும். மனிதனை விலங்கிலிருந்து வேறுபடுத்திக் காட்டுவதும் அவனைத் தெய்வ நிலைக்கு உயர்த்துவதும் பண்பாடேயாகும். இப்பண்பாடு நிலத்தின் தன்மைக்கும் காலத்திற்கும் ஏற்றவாறு மாறுபடுகிறது. இத்தகைய பண்பாட்டுக் கூறுகளைச் சங்க இலக்கியங்கள் வழி ஆராய்வதாக இக்கட்டுரை அமைந்துள்ளது.

பண்பாடு - விளக்கம்

பண்பாடு என்பதற்கு பண்புதல், சீர்புதல், திருந்துதல் என்று பல பொருள் உண்டு. ஓர் இனத்தின் வாழ்வோடும் வளர்ச்சியோடும்

இணைந்து பண்பாடு மனிதர்களை நல்லவர்களாகவும் சமூகப் பொறுப்பானவர்களாகவும் அடையாளப்படுத்தும் பெருமை உடையது பண்பாடு. பண்பாடு என்பதற்கு, “அமைதல், உதவுதல், ஏவல் செய்தல், சீர்திருத்தல், சொற்படி செய்தல்” என்று நா.கதிரைவேற்பிள்ளை தமிழ் அகராதியில் பொருள் தருகின்றார். “பண்பென்படுவது பாடறிந்து ஒழுக்கல்”என்னும் கலித்தொகை வரியில் பண்பாடு என்பது உலக நடைமுறையொட்டி வாழ்வது என்பதை உணர்த்துகிறது.

சங்ககால மக்களின் பண்பாட்டு விழுமியங்கள்

ஒருவன் நற்பண்புகளோடு இருப்பதற்குப் பண்பாடு காரணமாகின்றன. சங்ககால மக்களின் வாழ்க்கை முறையை அறிவதற்கு அவர்கள் மேற்கொண்ட பண்பாடு சான்றாக அமைகின்றது.

பண்டையத் தமிழர்கள் பண்பாட்டைப் போற்றி வாழ்ந்தவர். இன்றும் அப்பாண்பாட்டின் மரபுநிலை தொடர்கிறது. சங்ககால மக்கள் போற்றிய பண்பாட்டு விழுமியங்களை நம்பிக்கைகள், பழக்க வழக்கங்கள், திருமண முறை, வழிபாட்டு முறை, சடங்கு முறை, திருவிழாக்கள், பொழுது போக்கு, விருந்தோம்பல் என்றவற்று வகைப்படுத்தலாம்.

சங்ககால மக்களின் நம்பிக்கைகள்

மனிதனின் வாழ்க்கையில் நம்பிக்கை முதன்மை பெறுகின்றது. 'நம்பு' என்னும் சொல்லிலிருந்து 'நம்பிக்கை' என்னும் சொல் தோன்றியது. மனிதன் வாழ்வில் நம்பிக்கை எப்பொழுது தோன்றின என்று அறுதியிட்டுக் கூறமுடியாது, ஆனால் அவர்களுடைய வாழ்வில் நம்பிக்கை தொடர்ந்து வந்தது. பழந்தமிழர்கள் மேற்கொண்ட நம்பிக்கைகளை, தெய்வ நம்பிக்கை, கனவு தொடர்பான நம்பிக்கைகள், சூளுரைத்தல், பேய், பிசாசு, கண் துடித்தல், நிமித்தம் தொடர்பான நம்பிக்கைகள் என்றவற்று வகைப்படுத்தலாம்.

தெய்வ நம்பிக்கைகள்

பழங்காலத்தில் மக்கள் இயற்கையைக் கண்டு அஞ்சியதன் காரணமாக தெய்வத்தை வழிபடத் தொடங்கினர். மேலும் தாங்கள் எடுத்துக்கொண்ட காரியம் நல்லபடி முடியவேண்டும் என்ற எண்ணமும் பக்திக்குக் காரணங்களாயின. இத்தகைய தெய்வ நம்பிக்கைகள் குறித்து சங்கப் பாடல்கள் எடுத்தியம்புகின்றன.

ஒரு செயலைச் செய்வதற்கு முன்பு முதலில் தெய்வத்தை வணங்குவது மனிதர்களின் இயல்பு. ஆயர் இளைஞர்கள் ஏற்றினை தழுவதற்காக தொழுவினுள் புகுவதற்கு முன்பு தெய்வத்தை வணங்கினர் என்பதை,

“துறையும் ஆலமும் தொல்வலி மராஅமும் முறையுளி பராஅய் பாய்ந்தான் தொழுஉ”

(கலித்தொகை – பா – 131)

என்ற கலித்தொகைப் பாடல் வரிகளில் அறியமுடிகிறது. நீர்த்துறையிலும் ஆலமரத்தின் கீழும் பழைய வலிய மாமரத்தின் கீழ் வாழும் தெய்வங்களுக்கும் செய்யும் முறைகளைச்

செய்த பின் ஆயர் இளைஞர்கள் தொழுவினுள் பாய்ந்ததை எடுத்துரைக்கப்பட்டுள்ளது.

கனவு பற்றிய நம்பிக்கைகள்

உறங்கும் பொழுது ஏற்படுவது கனவு. கனவுகள் நம்பிக்கைகளாகவும் எதிர்வரும் செயலை முன்னரே உணர்த்துவனவாகவும் திகழ்கின்றன. கனவு நனவாகும் என்பதை,

“நனவில் தான் செய்தது மனத்தது ஆகலின் கனவில் கண்டு கதுமென வெரீஇ”

(கலித்தொகை – பா – 49)

என்னும் கலித்தொகை வரிகளில் தன்னைக் காக்க வந்த புலியை வென்ற யானை துயில் கொள்ளும் போது நனவிலே தான் செய்ததை நினைத்ததால் அந்நிகழ்வு கனவிலும் வந்தது என்பதை அறியமுடிகின்றது.

பொருள்வயிற் காரணமாகப் பிரிந்த தலைவனை நினைத்து தலைவி வருத்தம் கொண்டு உறங்குகிறாள். அப்பொழுது தலைவன் வருவது போல கனவு கண்டு விழித்தெழுந்து தடவுகிறாள். இதனை,

“பொய்வ லாளன் மெய்யுறல் மரீஇய வாய்த்தகைப் பொய்க்கனா மருட்ட”

(குறுந்தொகை – பா-30)

என்ற குறுந்தொகைப் பாடலில் கச்சிப்பேட்டு நன்னாகையார் பதிவு செய்துள்ளார். உண்மைத் தன்மையாக கனவு திகழ்ந்திருந்தது தெளிவாகிறது. இன்றும் கனவு பற்றிய நம்பிக்கை மக்களிடம் இருந்து வருகிறது. விடியற்காலையில் கண்ட கனவு பலிக்கும் நனவில் வருவது பலிக்காது என்ற நம்பிக்கை மக்களிடம் காணப்படுகிறது.

பேய் பிசாசு பற்றிய நம்பிக்கைகள்

மக்களிடையே பன்னெடுங்காலமாகவே பேய், பிசாசு பற்றிய எண்ணம் இருந்து வருகிறது. இறக்கும் முன்பு தன்னுடைய ஆசைகள் நிறைவேறாமல் போனால் இறந்த பின் ஆவியாக வருவர் என்பதை நம்புகின்றனர்.

“கைப்படுக்கப் பட்டாய், சிறுமீ! நீ மற்றுயான் ஏனைப் பிசாசு அருள் என்னை நலிதரின் இவ்ஊர்ப்பலி நீ பெறாஅமல் கொள்வேன்”

(கலித்தொகை – பா – 173)

என்னும் கலித்தொகை வரிகளின் வாயிலாக சிறுமியே நீ என் கையில் அகப்பட்டுக் கொண்டாய். பெண் பிசாசாகிய நின்னை ஒழிந்த ஆண்பாற் பிசாசு என்னை ஏற்று அருள்க என்று கூறுவதன் வழி ஆண், பெண் பாசுபாடு பிசாசுகளில் உண்டு என்பது மேற்கண்ட பாடலில் பதிவுசெய்யப்பட்டுள்ளது. பேய் பிடித்தவர்களை இன்றும் மசூதிக்குச் சென்றும், மந்திரம் செய்தும் பேயை ஓட்டுவதைக் காணமுடிகிறது.

சங்ககால மக்களின் பழக்க வழக்கங்கள்

மக்களின் தேவைகளின் அடிப்படையில் பழக்கங்கள் தோன்றுகின்றன. அவை சமுதாயத்தால் ஏற்றுக்கொள்ளப்படுகின்ற நிலையில் வழக்கங்களாக உருப்பெறுகின்றன. சங்ககால மக்கள் கடைபிடித்த பழக்கவழக்கங்களாக, தந்தை பெயரை பிள்ளைகளுக்கு வைத்தல், கடன் கொடுத்தல் வாங்கல், மாலைப்பொழுதில் விளக்கேற்றல், மடலேறல், கள்ளுண்ணல், பார்ப்பனர் குடுமி வைத்திருத்தல், பறையறைதல், தை நோன்பு, நடுகல் வழிபாடு போன்றவற்றைக் கூறலாம். இப்பழக்க வழக்கங்கள் பற்றி அகப்பாடல்கள் சான்று பகர்கின்றன.

தந்தை பெயரைப் பிள்ளைக்கு வைத்தல்

பழங்கால மக்களிடம் தந்தை பெயரை மகனுக்கு வைக்கும் மரபு காணப்பட்டது. மலைவாழ் மக்களிடம் இன்றும் தந்தையின் பெயரை மகனுக்கு வைக்கும் முறை பின்பற்றப்படுகிறது. தலைவன் பரத்தையர் வீட்டில் தங்கியதால் தலைவி வருத்தத்துடன் இருக்கிறாள். தந்தையின் பெருமை மிக்க பெயரை முறையாகச் சூட்டியுள்ள தன் மகனை அணைத்துக் கொண்டு பொய்யாக துயில் கொள்வதை,

“முதல்வன் பெரும்பெயர் முறையுளிப் பெற்ற
புதல்வற் புல்லிப் பொய்த் துயில் துஞ்சும்”

(கலித்தொகை- பா-81)

என்னும் கலித்தொகைப் பாடல் வரிகள் உணர்த்துகின்றன. சங்ககால நடைமுறை காலப்போக்கில் மாறி தங்களுக்கு விருப்பமான

பெயரை நாகரிகம் என்ற பெயரில் வைத்து வருகின்றனர்.

பார்ப்பனர் குடுமி வைத்திருத்தல்

பண்டைய காலத்தில் பார்ப்பனர்கள் குடுமி வைத்திருப்பார்கள். தங்கள் வீட்டுச் சிறுவர்கள் குடுமி வைத்திருந்தனர் என்பதை,

“அன்னாய் வாழி வேண் டன்னை நம்மூர்ப்
பார்ப்பனக் குறுமகப்போலத் தாமும்
குடுமித் தலைய மன்ற
நெடுமலை நாடன் ஊர்ந்த மாவே”
(ஐங்குறுநூறு –பா-203)

என்னும் ஐங்குறுநூற்றுப் பாடல் வரிகள் எடுத்துரைக்கின்றன. இன்றும் பார்ப்பனர்கள் குடுமி வைத்திருப்பதைப் பார்க்கின்றோம்.

நடுகல் வழிபாடு

இறந்தவர்களின் நினைவாக எடுக்கப்படும் நினைவுக் கல் நடுகல் ஆகும். போரில் விழுப்புண்டு இறக்கும் வீரனுக்காக அவனைப் போற்றும் வகையிலும் தியாகத்தை வெளிப்படுத்தும் வகையிலும் கல் ஒன்றினை நட்டு அதனை வழிபடும் வழக்கம் சங்க காலத்தில் இருந்தன. இதைப் பற்றி அகநானூற்றில் நோய்ப்பாடியார் வெட்சி வீரர்கள் கொண்டு சென்ற ஆநிரைகளை மீட்க நடத்திய போரில் கரந்தை வீரர்கள் இறந்தனர். அவர்களுக்கு நடுகல் நட்டதை,

“பெயரும் பீடும் எழுதி அதர்தொறும்
பீலிகூட்டிய பிறங்குநிலை நடுகல்
வேல்ஊன்று பலகை வேற்றுமுனை
கடுக்கும்”

(அகநானூறு – பா-131)

என்னும் அகநானூற்றுப்பாடல் வழி அறியமுடிகிறது. இன்றும் இரானுவத்தில் பணியாற்றும் வீரர்கள் போரில் வீரமரணம் அடைந்தால் அவர்களுக்கு அரசு மரியாதை செய்து துப்பாக்கிக் குண்டுகள் முழங்க அவர்களின் இறுதிச்சடங்கு நடைபெறுகிறது.

சங்ககால மக்களின் திருமணமுறைகள்

ஓர் ஆணும் பெண்ணும் இணைந்து இல்லறம் மேற்கொள்ள நடத்தப்பெறும் வாழ்க்கை ஒப்பந்தம் மணம் எனப்படும். இல்லற வாழ்க்கைக்கு அடிப்படையாய் அமைவது திருமணம் என்று கூறமுடிகிறது. சங்ககாலத் தமிழரின் வாழ்க்கை நெறியை களவு, கற்பு என்று இரு வகையாகக் கூறலாம். ஊரறியாத வகையில் வயது வந்த ஆணும் பெண்ணும் சேர்ந்து வாழ்வது களவு என்றும் ஊரறியாத திருமணம் செய்து கொண்டு வாழ்வது கற்பு என்றும் கூறலாம். தொல்காப்பியர்,

“கற்பெனப் படுவது கரணமொடு புணரக்
கொளற்குரி மரபிற் கிழவன் கிழத்தியைக்
கொடைக்குரி மரபினோர் கொடுப்பக்
கொள்வதுவே”

(தொல்காப்பியம் கற்பியல் - 140)

என்ற நூற்பாவில் திருமணத்தைக் கற்பு என்ற சொல்லால் சுட்டுகிறார்.

சங்ககாலத்தில் காதல் திருமணமும் பெற்றோரால் நடத்தப்படும் திருமணமும் இருந்திருக்கின்றன. தலைவன் தலைவி காதலான களவு வாழ்க்கையில் ஊரால் அலர் ஏற்படும். இதையறிந்த தலைவியின் பெற்றோர் (இற்செறிப்பர்) இல்லின் கண் கட்டுப்பாட்டோடு அடைத்து வைப்பர். களவொழுக்கம் காரணமாக பெற்றோரின் தடையால் உடன்போக்கு நிகழ்தலும் உண்டு. தலைவன் தன் வீட்டிற்கு அழைத்துச் சென்று திருமணம் செய்வது மரபு. சில நேரங்களில் தோழி இடையிட்டு அறத்தோடு நின்று திருமணத்தை நடத்தி வைத்தலும் உண்டு. தலைமக்களின் வாழ்வை அறவழியில் நிலைப்படுத்த தோழி, தலைவனும் தலைவியும் பிறர் அறியாமல் காதல் கொண்ட உண்மையை எடுத்துரைப்பதை,

“எந்தையும் யாவும் உணரக் காட்டி
ஒளித்த செய்த வெளிப்படக் கிளந்த பின்
மலைகெழு வெற்பன் தலைவந் திரப்ப
நன்று பரி கொள்கையின் ஒன்றா கின்றே”

(குறுந்தொகை - பா- 374)

என்னும் குறுந்தொகைப் பாடல் வரிகள் விளக்குகின்றன. களவு மணம் கற்பாக

மாறுவதற்கு தோழியின் பங்கு இன்றியமையாததாக இருந்தது.

புதுமணல் பரப்புதல்

புதுமணல் பூசி வீட்டை அழகுபடுத்தி திருமண காலத்தில் மகிழ்ச்சியோடு இருந்தனர். புதுமணல் பரப்பி வீட்டை அழகுபடுத்தும் முறை வழக்கமாகப் பின்பற்றப்படும் முறை எனலாம். புதுமணல் பரப்பி எருமையின் கொம்பை வீட்டினுள் நட்டு அதனைத் தெய்வமாக வழிபட்டதை,

“தருமணல் தாழ்ப்பெய்து இல்புவல் ஊட்டி
எருமைப் பெடையோடு எம்ஈங்கு அயரும்
பெருமணம் எல்லாம் தனித்தே ஒழியே”

(கலித்தொகை - பா- 114)

என்ற பாடல் வழி அறிந்துகொள்ள முடிகிறது.

தீ வலம் வருதல்

திருமணத்தின் போது தீ வலம் வருதல் அந்தணர்களிடம் காணப்பட்டது. மணமக்கள் இருவரும் கையினைப் பிடித்துக் கொண்டு தீயினைச் சுற்றி வலம் வருதல் கலித்தொகையில் ஒரு பாடலில் மட்டும் இடம்பெற்றுள்ளது. இதனை,

“காதல் கொள் வதுவைநாள் கலிங்கத்துள்
ஒடுங்கிய

மாதர் கொள் மான் நோக்கின் மடந்தைதன்
துணை

ஒதுடை அந்தணன் எரிவலம் செய்வான்
போல்”

(கலித்தொகை - பா- 69)

என்னும் கலித்தொகைப் பாடல் வாயிலாக அறியலாம். மணமக்களுக்கு மங்கல நீராட்டியும் வீட்டிற்கு புதுமணல் பரப்பியும் அலங்காரம் செய்தும் திருமணம் நடத்தியதும் தாலி என்ற ஒன்று சங்க காலத்தில் இல்லை என்பதும் புலனாகிறது.

சங்ககால மக்களின் விருந்தோம்பல்

தமிழர்களின் பண்பாடுகளில் தலைசிறந்தது விருந்தோம்பல் பண்பாகும். தன்னை நாடி வரும் விருந்தினரை இன்முகத்தோடு வரவேற்று உணவு வழங்குதலை தம் கடமையாகக் கருதினர். இரவு நேரத்தில் விருந்தினர் வந்தாலும்

முகமலர்ச்சியோடு வரவேற்ற தலைவியைக் குறித்து,

“அல்லில் ஆயினும் விருந்துவரின் உவக்கும் முல்லை சான்ற கற்பின் மெல்லியல்”

(நற்றிணை – பா- 142)

என்ற நற்றிணைப் பாடலில் இடைக்காடனார் விளக்கியுள்ளார். பழங்காலத் தமிழர்கள் வீடு கட்டும் போது வீட்டிற்கு முன் வழிப்போக்கர்கள் தங்கும் அளவிற்கு திண்ணை அமைத்துள்ளனர். அவர்கள் வந்தால் அங்கு தங்குவர். இன்றும் பழங்கால வீடுகளில் திண்ணை அமைத்திருந்ததை நாம் காணமுடிகிறது.

சங்ககால மக்களின் சடங்குகள்

பிறப்பு முதல் இறப்பு வரை மக்களின் வாழ்க்கைக்கேற்பவும் தரத்திற்கேற்பவும் சடங்குகள் இடம்பெறுகின்றன. வளமைக்காக, வாழ்வியலில் சிலம்புகழி நோன்பு, வெறியாட்டு, ஈமச்சடங்கு, கைம்மைநோன்பு போன்ற சடங்கினை சங்ககால மக்கள் தங்கள் வாழ்க்கையில் மேற்கொண்டுள்ளனர்.

மழை வேண்டல்

மழை பெய்யாமல் போனால் பயிர்கள் இல்லாமல் போகும். உணவின்றி மக்கள் வாடுவர் ஆகையால் மழையைப் பெய்விக்க குறவர்கள் ஆரவார ஒலி எழுப்பி மழையை வேண்டி மந்திரச் சடங்கை செய்தனர். இதனை,

“குன்றக் குறவன் ஆர்ப்பின் எழிலி நுண்பல் அழிதுளி பொழியும் நாட”

(ஐங்குறுநூறு – பா- 251)

என்ற ஐங்குறுநூற்றுப் பாடல்வரிகளில் அறியமுடிகிறது.

கைம்மை நோன்பு

கணவனை இழந்த பெண்கள் கைம்மைக் கோலம் பூண்டு நோன்பு இயற்றினர். தம் கூந்தலைக் கொய்தனர். தொடிகளை நீக்கினர் பிற அணிகலன்களையும் களைந்தனர். அவர்கள் பிழைப்பிற்காக நூல் நூற்கும் தொழில் செய்ததை,

“ஆளில் பெண்டிர் தாளின் செய்த நுணங்கு நுண் பனுவல்”

(நற்றிணை பா – 353)

என்ற நற்றிணைப் பாடல் வரி சுட்டிச் செல்கிறது. அகப்பாடலில் நற்றிணையில் மட்டுமே இடம்பெற்றுள்ளது. மனைவியை இழந்த ஆண்கள் எவ்வாறு வாழவேண்டும் என்று சங்கப்பாடல்கள் வரையறுக்கவில்லை. பெண்கள் மட்டுமே கைம்மை கோலத்துடன் வாழ்ந்து வந்துள்ளனர்.

முடிவுரை

மனிதனை மனிதனாக்குவதும் அவனைப் புனிதனாக்குவதும் அவன் வாழக்கூடிய வாழ்க்கைமுறையைப் பொறுத்தே அமைகின்றது. வாழ்க்கைமுறை என்பது அவர்களின் பண்பாடு சார்ந்ததே. இந்தப் பண்பாட்டுக் கூறுகளை இன்றைய காலங்களுக்கும் எவ்வாறு நாம் பின்பற்ற வேண்டும் என்பதைச் சங்க காலத்தில் வாழ்ந்த மக்கள் தங்களுடைய அன்றாட செயல்கள் மூலம் நமக்கு வெளிப்படுத்தியுள்ளனர். இவர்கள் வெளிப்படுத்தியுள்ள பண்பாட்டு விழுமியங்களை நாமும் நம்முடைய வாழ்க்கையில் நடைமுறைப்படுத்தினோமானால் நம்முடைய வாழ்வியலும் சிறக்கும் என்பதே உண்மை.

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CASTE, CONFLICT, AND RESOLUTION: A PSYCHOANALYTIC READING ON IMAYAM'S 'PETHAVAN' THE BEGETTER

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Abstract

India is a multicultural land consisting of various cultural heritages. The diversity of the caste system is abundantly spread across the nation. The Untouchable caste comprises approximately one-seventh of India's population. In rural areas, particularly in the South, the Untouchables live in a separate community, spatially segregated from the higher castes. This paper aims to trace the psychoanalytic study of the people of Tamil Nadu in the 20th Century, in relation to the novella Pethavan. Imayam is one of the prolific writers of Tamil literature based in Tamil Nadu, India. Imayam's novella 'Pethavan,' 'The Begetter,' was first published in September 2012 in Uyirmai. Its plot is based on the real event that happened in 2012 in the Dharmapuri district, Tamil Nadu. The plot is set in rural Tamil Nadu. Pethavan is about a father, Pazhini, who has been ordered by the village panchayat to kill his daughter Bhakkiyam because she wants to marry a Dalit boy, who serves as a Sub Inspector of Police. Tamil Nadu, with its natural beauty, provided a settlement for different religions and castes, with the Tamils saying that it will make the visitor want to live. But the other side of it reflected very fiercely in Imayam's Pethavan. The novella portrays the ill-treatment and caste violence through the characters of Bhakkiyam and her father, Pazhini.

Keywords: caste violence, dalit literature, psychoanalytic perspective

"A writer can infuse originality into his works by transcending sectarian approaches. I am not a writer for situations. My job is to present the actual situations." – Imayam.

Imayam is one of the prominent and prolific Tamil writers based in Tamil Nadu, India. He hailed from the South Arcot region of Tamilnadu, an aspiring 20-year-old writer who heard Arokkiyam's moan and recorded her voice and grief over into his debut novel, *Koveru Kazhudaigal (Beast of Burden)*, trans. by Lakshmi Holmstrom. Imayam is closely associated with the Dravidian movement. With more than 25 years of writing, he has written six novels, six short story collections, and a novella to his credit. He is considered one of the leading writers of South India. He is the recipient of the honorary Sahitya Academy award for his novel *Selladha Panam*. He is also conferred with the Agni Aksra Award, the Tamilnadu

Progressive Writers Association Award, the N.L.C Award, and the Thamizh Thendral Thiru.V.Ka Award, among others, and has been honoured by the governments of Kerala, Tamilnadu, and India. He was also awarded a Junior Fellowship from the Department of Culture, Government of India and honoured with a state award.

Koveru Kazhudaigal (Beast of Burden) was first published in 1994; the novel sets a literary mood to hail it as experimental writing. An independent Dalit movement was gaining strength, it is because of the realistic capturing of the events and this novel struck a jarring note with its realistic depiction of a Christian's family that provided laundry and other services for 'Dalit Colony'.

Imayam's novella 'Pethavan' was first published in September 2012 in Uyirmai. In November 2012, it was published as a book through Oviya Publications,

Villupuram and reprinted five times in three months. Bharathi publications published the novella in February 2013 and have since sold more than one lakh copies and reprinted ten times. This novella was translated into English, Malayalam, and Telugu. *Pethavan, (The Begetter)*, the novella which created a swirl in the Tamilnadu after it was found to have foretold a real-life tragedy in Dharmapuri in 2012.

Pethavan, The Begetter novella is based on the real event that happened during 2012 in Dharmapuri district, Tamilnadu. The plot is set in rural Tamilnadu, *Pethavan, The Begetter* is about a father, Pazhani, and his daughter Bhakkiyam, who has been ordered by the village Panchayat to murder his daughter because she was in love with a Dalit boy, who serves as a Sub- Inspector of Police. The story is an undaunted account of the stress and cruelty that expect those who dare to surpass caste borders. In the novella *Pethvan, the Begetter* stood apart from humans who seem to exist with no humanity. There is an incident in *Pethavan* that the bullock licks Pazhani's face and calms him down. He allows his face to be licked by the bullock and slowly he becomes normal and his trembling stops. His dog hovers around him, which showed concern and unwillingness to leave him in this trying moment.

Ambai wrote about *Pethavan*

I have cried when the father feeds his daughter, places her head on his chest, and hugs her. His language is abusive and abrasive throughout, but his words, when he bids Bhakkiyam goodbye and tells her to go live with her life, make not only his daughter and his future son in law, who speaks to him on the mobile, cry, but also the readers, when, it has truly succeeded in having an existence of its own that goes beyond the writer. (Imayam)

Imayam's powerful narrative, *Pethavan, The Begetter*, is about caste bitterness, violence, mental sickness, trauma and psychic pressure, which are portrayed in how the Indian society preceded an

actual event that occurred in Tamilnadu. The narrative constructed on crisp dialogues is a persistent account of the violence and trauma that await those who dare to surpass caste margins.

The young girl Bhakkiyam has fallen in love with a Dalit boy, and she breaks the caste restrictions. The community will not accept the inter-caste marriage, and the Village panchayat will not stand for this matter. They have gathered in front of her house and called for her father and demanded that he should kill this instance. Her father, Pazhani, promises the crowd that he will kill her the next day.

This is a story of a father who was placed in a difficult position. His daughter Bhakkiyam has done something shameful according to the thoughts of the villagers. Pazhani, the father, his wife, and the other women in the family have tried to change her mind for years. But Bhakkiyam has held firm to her decision to marry the Dalit boy, despite being beaten nearly to death multiple times and suffering constant abuse from the members of her own family.

Pazhani, as a father, does not want to kill his daughter Bhakkiyam. He has already promised the village Panchayat three times and has not carried through. This is the fourth time, and the villagers will not let him escape without carrying out the dead. They will come and kill Bhakkiyam and her father as well. It has reached the point where something extreme must be done.

This terrible tale shows caste anger and the mob is told in very simple language, mostly in dialogue with the bare minimum of description. This is incredibly effective since it puts the characters' words in the limelight- words that are sometimes contradictory. The characters are in such a terrible psychological state that they really don't know what to do with themselves.

This was a really powerful novella about caste violence and a father's love. Unfortunately, these events are all too real and happen too frequently in many parts of rural India. The author manages to

convey the terrible impact of such an attitude, both on a family and on the Village as a whole.

Imayam's *Pethavan* (The Begetter) serves as a powerful literary commentary within Tamil Dalit literature, explaining the harsh realities of caste-based discrimination in rural Tamil Nadu. By using a psychoanalytic perspective, the novel reveals not only the explicit violence associated with caste but also how it becomes embedded in the psyche, showing how caste systems lead to fragmented identities, suppressed desires, and inherited trauma across generations. This examination delves into the ways Imayam utilizes psychological complexity to reveal the processes by which caste maintains its existence, functioning both as a social system and a psychic damage. The novella portrays a clear image of misery to what life is like for the downtrodden people who trapped in the insane, merciless world of caste identity, and it delivers the world as the prominent slaves to the upper caste community.

Imayam's story examines that caste functions not just as a social hierarchy but also as a psychological mechanism that influences consciousness itself. The Dalit individuals in *Pethavan* reflect what could be interpreted through Freudian concepts as a collective superego shaped by centuries of oppression, an internalized authoritative voice that monitors actions, aspirations, and even ambitions. In contrast, the upper-caste individuals exhibit a different psychological structure: their identities are formed by projecting impurity onto the Dalit other, thereby preserving psychological balance through methods of denial and displacement. In the novella *Pethavan, The Begetter*, Imayam breaks the ignorance and makes the common people think about the atrocities that are rooted in the society and prevailed even now. Meanwhile, Indian society had incredible change and development, which paved a way for equality, respect and helping people move beyond caste identities. Imayam in his novella *Pethavan, The Begetter*, breaks down this issue by

narrating a horrifying story of the people trapped within the complicate shackles of caste, reputation, and identity.

The story begins with scene of a woman with a baby on her hips and casually uttering her advice to Pazhani on how to murder his daughter, Bhakkiyam. As she says:

You should pour pesticide down her throat and lock her in room. However much she screams or shouts don't open the door and don't give her even a mouthful of water. In a very short while the story will be over,' said the young woman who held a baby on her hip. (Imayam 2)

Gita Subramanian, translator of the novella, says that translating the story was a very emotional experience for her. She writes of her decision to avoid the dialect of the original to avoid Indian English and to stick with "Simple, straightforward language." (Imayam)

Considering the reality the human life is portrayed has an imitating art, *Pethavan, The Begetter* inharmoniously anticipates the real incident and represents the unhappy coincidence, given how common and under reported honour killings are happening in this so called Post modern world.

Imayam writes in his foreword:

I have only chronicled the lives of the witnesses who bear testimony to the way Tamil society lived. They live animated witnesses who determine what literature is and who is a writer... History does not give importance to an individual's or a family's life story. On the contrary, it is the story of a society that should be written. That is the life of a place- the life of an era. I write a story to record the contemporary state of society... (Imayam XVIII)

The novella, *Pethavan* has two remarkable things about the plot: First, its utter energy and swiftness and second, the unexpected compassion at the core of it. The novella portrays the real representation of South Indian Caste violence, in this

viciously violent world, a world where justice, reason and fair play are entirely absent. It raises the question of how is tenderness even possible. It is shown and proven only through the characters like Pazhani, the father and Selvarani, Bhakkiyam's crippled younger sister demonstrate. Pazhani's mother Thulasi pleads with him not to "Chop off the family's banana tree." (Imayam) Here the banana tree is used as a metaphor because Bhakkiyam was born to Pazhani and Samiyammal after many years. So the metaphor of the banana tree used to describe Bhakkiyam tugs at our hearts, as the concluding scenes of the novella. The other metaphor used in the novella is to describe her is equally more powerful: "Bhakkiyam laid the wood stove, dehydrated, like a pumpkin plant that has been uprooted and left to wither away." (Imayam)

It's indeed, everything and everyone in Pazhani's miserable household is withering away. Pazhani's wife Sammiyammal appears to be lifeless to this brutal world. She too is a victim of this environment that is toxic and inevitable. Selvarani, Bhakkiyam's sister is "like a chick shivering in the cold." (Imayam 17) There is no escape; it would seem, for any of them.

This novella portrays the hegemonic differences of downtrodden people and illustrated how they are affected by capitalist society. The novella, *Pethavan, The Begetter* is an example of community dominance over marginalized people. This research sheds light on the characterization and their suffering especially the mental agony of the marginalized people. The main character in the novel encapsulates this psychological struggle. His dreams, connections with others, and sense of identity are constantly shaped by the heavy burden of caste identity. The inner thoughts that Imayam develops showcase a psyche torn between defiance and acceptance, between the yearning for respect and the ingrained patterns of submissiveness. This fragmentation of the self in response to trauma illustrates what psychoanalysts

have noted in groups facing systematic dehumanization.

In the name of Panchayat, the community people bring in force to control the land and dominate downtrodden people. They exercise majority and power to control minority and powerless. According to Freudian's definition of the preconscious, the contents in the mind may not be currently aware of the thoughts, memories, feelings and knowledge, but it will be activated when needed.

The novella sets as an example for this preconscious concept and evidenced in the following lines of the text:

We set fire to his cane fields. We set up caste panchayats and had him fined five times. His parents have been tied up and beaten black and blue; how much more you can we beat them? Nothing has worked. Because of all this the village has been smouldering for a whole year. It looks like it is going to lead to a big caste war. But the caste panchayat said, "It has nothing to do with us, really, it is between him and you." Even if he leaves her alone, she won't be...(Imayam 5)

These lines express the harsh reality of the caste system and the arrogance of the community to punish Bhakkiyam at any cost. The caste ideology urges the community people intently to involve in all sorts of abusive violence.

A translation like *Pethavan, the Begetter*, is as much a political act, according to the village Panchayat, but it is artistic in literature. It directs the reader's attention to issues that threaten to undermine the very structure of our humanness, issues that must no longer be brushed under the carpet. *Pethavan, The Begetter* is a tale of a father, Pazhani. The incidents happen in one day's time. The plot begins in the Panchayat scene; the entire village was cursing and shouting complete chaos. Pazhani's daughter Bhakkiyam fallen love with a Dalit community Sub Inspector Periyasami. So, Bhakkiyam

was accused by the villagers of guilt and death should be the punishment as an outcome. The villagers and the Panchayat instruct Pazhani to kill his daughter immediately by poisoning or she will be gang-raped by the mob or their house and field will set fire. Pazhani is helpless that he cannot delay or oppose. Even though he tried to get time to kill his daughter but the village Panchayat never accepts his words. Pazhani made a promise on camphor and the Panchayat gives him the time of a night to kill his daughter. Pazhani's mental agony was increased and felt heavy that he cannot overrule the verdict of the village Panchayat and he cannot kill his daughter. So he decided to take Bhakkiyam to Bus stand and send her secretly to make the escape from the village and the following day early morning Pazhani's body was found lying dead near the mountain. He kills himself instead of his daughter. The tale ends abruptly without any further description. It is based on the real incident which took place in Ulunthurpet, a village near Villupuram, Tamilnadu.

In this novella, *Pethavan, The Begetter*, Imayam astonishingly portrayed the sufferings of marginalized community people. In his preface he explained the reason for choosing this theme, where he said, "I write because it makes me contemplate society and human condition and writing makes ponder over social issues with care." (Imayam XIII) This communal domination is common everywhere but it is submerged in the shades of power. Imayam tries to emphasize this issue and raise voice against, social, culture, justice and community. He shares "My writing aims to achieve silent introspection and not agitation." (Imayam XIV)

In this novella, *Pethavan, The Begetter*, Imayam talks about structural violence. It can be characterized as the intentional use of physical or psychological power to violate basic needs of the marginal community. The notion of violating can be understood that it was intently forced the power on the low-caste people to subjugate and want to have

power over them. The ill-treatment of the husbands over wives became legitimate and this becomes structured in the society. But this abusive nature of men towards women, the higher castes over lower caste, and rich over poor is operating even now in an indirect way in structural violence. This trauma and mental agony force the Dalit people to surrender themselves as slaves.

In responding to Sigmund Freud's theory structure of the human mind is designed to develop the human's personality from interactions. Sigmund Freud proposed three fundamental structures of the human mind: the id, ego, and superego. He further explains that conflict among these structures, and our efforts to find balance among what everyone desires, behaviour and approach the world. Sigmund Freud further explains how to resolve the conflict between two behavioural patterns. First, it is biological aggression and pleasure-seeking drive and secondly, it is socialized internal control over the drives.

According to Sigmund Freud, conflict within the mind – the job of the ego is to balance the aggressive or pleasure-seeking drives of the id with the moral control of the superego. In connection with the theory of Sigmund Freud; this research paper rereads the novella *Pethavan, The Begetter*, Imayam studies about the dominance over lower community people by superior community people and their consciousness to degrade them in all stalks of life. Life is not the same for everyone; it is different from its division in all kinds. Ex: Religion, caste, tradition, and custom. The marginalized community especially Dalits are layman, labourers, and they struggle for food, land and nature are constant. They cannot have dreams or desires and are continuously humiliated, insulted, ridiculed by society, and even from their own community. This novella depicts their pain and suffering through each character.

Imayam Writes

The characters of Pethavan are no different. The characters in my story were part of real events. They faced social events. They faced social realities. They are the social witness to how Tamil society lived in a particular period of time. (Imayam, XIV)

The novella, *Pethavan, The Begetter* expresses the strong communal dominance and tradition which prevails in the mind of the people because it was inherited by their ancestors. They never accept the love of Bhakkiyam and Periasami who serves as a government servant, communal power failed to recognize his position. The love between two of them lead to a big communal war and only the upper caste community will win the rage. "Twice we set fire to his house. In the dead of night, we freed the goats and the cows tethered in his house. Once, we slaughtered two of his goats and ate them. We set fire to his cane fields. We set up caste panchayats and had him fired for five times. His parents have been tied up a beaten black and blue... it look like it is going to lead to a big caste war." (Imayam, 4-5)

The upper caste showed dominance and their drive to hurt and violate Bhakkiyam, that not to leave her happy at any cost. She was heavily beaten by leaving only her soul. Their strong emotional drive towards hegemony and in the name of caste/ community they want to maintain purity of their community.

Conclusion

Imayam does not provide simple solutions, and this refusal is a psychologically truthful stance. The story's ending recognizes the ongoing struggle: "The fight would continue. Perhaps his children would see something different. Perhaps not. But they would know they came from those who refused to accept their degradation as natural" (Imayam 203). This cautious hope acknowledges that wounds inflicted by caste oppression cannot be healed through the

actions of individuals alone, yet emphasizes the importance of resistance as a means of psychological and moral survival. The novel's final image holds significant psychological weight: "He held his newborn son and wept-for all that this child would face, and for the slim possibility that the world might be different" (Imayam 205). The tears express both grief and hope, recognizing the ongoing nature of trauma while resisting complete hopelessness. This complexity mirrors psychological reality: recovery from systemic oppression necessitates not only individual processing but also a collective transformation of the conditions that give rise to trauma. In responding to the psychoanalytic perspective, the novella *Pethavan, The Begetter* throws light on the power structure and the attitude towards the marginalized people. The preconscious notion operates to subjugate and hierarchy becomes the structure that causes ill-treatment and violence over the lower class community. Hence the novella *Pethavan, The Begetter* by Imayam provides the readers that how the inherited consciousness of the caste disparity of their community functions to exploit the life of Bhakkiyam and her family. Thus, the novella highlights the hegemony even if it continues further for centuries, it should be stopped at any place rather continues its shifting to be resolved to live a peaceful life. Thus to conclude this paper, the concept of peaceful living thus lies with every soul allowing 'To live and let others to live.'

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EXPLORING CHRONOTOPIC FRAMEWORKS OF RURAL EXISTENCE: MAPPING GENDERED TRAUMA AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION IN PERUMAL MURUGAN'S *PYRE*

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Abstract

*Perumal Murugan's novel, Pyre portrays the difficulties encountered by Kumaresan and Saroja, a couple from different castes, as they try to cope with the rigid social hierarchies of caste and patriarchal systems. The novel centres around Saroja's experience as a key point of analysis for the complex relationships between gender, caste, and institutionalised oppression. Forced to leave her hometown, she faces hostility in her husband's village, demonstrating the isolating effects of marrying within her caste and enduring patriarchal oppression. This research paper seeks to extract and emphasise the author's most notable and vocal narrative features. Divergences in caste and culture from the Tamil community lead to the protagonist, Kumaresan, being accepted in a new town and subsequently accommodated. Despite securing a job, his wife, who comes from a higher socio-economic background, has been unable to achieve the same level of acceptance in Kattuppatti. The narratives in the novel highlight the potential for a mother's feelings about caste to motivate a desire for revenge. The text describes how isolation is employed as a method of control, thereby perpetuating trauma linked to gender, which ultimately leads to fear, feelings of disconnection, and violence. Murugan's writing powerfully conveys the omnipresent tension between tradition and personal freedom, offering a stark critique of social systems that perpetuate oppression. This paper explores the narratives of loneliness and gender-based trauma presented in *Pyre*, set against the backdrop of discussions on caste, gender, and violence in contemporary Indian literature. The novel, *Pyre*, compels readers to confront the far-reaching effects of caste-based prejudice, an issue that has a profound lasting impact on individuals and the broader community.*

Keywords: *gendered trauma, isolation, patriarchal structures*

Introduction

Perumal Murugan is a well-known novelist who has written all his novels, which primarily focus on the lived experiences of the underprivileged sections of society. He keenly observes the Indian social hierarchy and marks his evidence on oppression and bias. *Pyre* is the first novel to be longlisted for the Booker Prize. This novel, *Pyre*, throws light on the caste-based oppression experienced by Saroja and Kumaran in the rural villages. The novel holds thematic aspects such as social constraints and landlessness. He boldly confronts the aspects of The author, who declared himself dead following accusations of offending Hindu traditions, remains an influential figure for boldly confronting the intricate

relationships between caste, gender, and culture. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's subaltern theory, based on Leon De Kock's interview with her, provides the basis for understanding subalternity and misconceptions surrounding the oppressed and subalterns, as discussed in Bailey Betik's blog "Subaltern Studies", which explores various subaltern concepts in the colonial context. A philosophical analysis titled "Heidegger and today's 'everydayness'" by Bert Oliver presents three key points highlighted by the author. Heidegger initially explores the ontological nature of humans by highlighting that people are inevitably cast into the world without any discernible purpose. Heidegger's subsequent idea suggests that individuals view

themselves as a project, with a belief that they can discover a fulfilling and secure way of life. In reality, the majority of the time, only a handful of individuals achieve success in their endeavours. Heidegger's final notion holds that humans are likely to revert to conventional worldviews once more. In the book, *Poisoned bread*, Arjun Dangle states,

Dalit literature is one which acquaints people with the caste system and untouchability in India, it's appalling nature and its system of exploitation. In other word, Dalit is not a caste but a realization and is related to the experiences, joys, sorrow and struggles of those in the lowest stratum of society. It matures with a sociological point of view and is related to principles of negativity, rebellion and loyalty to science, thus finally ending as revolutionary. (42)

The above-mentioned quote explains the term 'Dalit Literature', which creates a new paradigm of definition about Dalit literature that mainly focuses on resistance and revolution.

The forthcoming paragraphs will examine *Pyre* as a Dalit literary work. Located in Kattupatti, the novel is set in a distant Tamil Nadu village in the southern region of India. Kumaresan and his newlywed wife, Saroja, arrive in the village by bus to begin living at Kumaresan's house, which is situated on a pillar. Their inter-caste marriage was secretly arranged after they eloped from Saroja's home in Tholur, with Kumaresan confident that no one would discover Saroja's different caste if they denied it. When they arrived home, Marayi Kumaresan's mother cursed her bad luck for her son marrying Saroja. Her mournful tune draws the attention of many village residents who assemble in front of the house to catch a glimpse of the new bride and mock her about her marriage. They do not think that someone as fair-skinned as Saroja would be a member of the same caste as them. Perumal Murugan subtly conceals the significance of caste Hindu identity in choosing one's marriage partner.

Despite the fact that marriages are considered a private matter, they cannot take place without the consent of community elders, who hold significant authority over such events.

As days go by, Saroja must endure Marayi's persistent verbal abuse and the village residents' queries and remarks about her social status. A visit to Kumaresan's grandparents takes a turn for the worse when his grandfather assaults him and accuses him of having humiliated the family. The story of Saroja's affair is retold in Tholur, a place where Kumaresana had gone to work with assistance from Bhai Anna. Kumaresana was employed in a soft drink packaging and distribution facility for a soda bottle manufacturer. Saroja and Bhai were next-door neighbours. They frequently cast furtive glances at each other until some soda bottles burst in Kumaresan's hands, and Saroja handed him some food. Realising that her father and brother would never approve of their marriage, Saroja eloped with Kumaresana to get married. In their village, the council decides to deny them access to any social gathering and a public water source. Kumaresana and Saroja are still invited to a coming-of-age ceremony of a distant relative from another village. Kumaresana attempts to start a soda-bottle dispensing operation that spans several townships. He brings Saroja with him to Virichipalayam, where he has established a shop with funds raised through networks. Saroja hopes he will be able to settle down in Virichipalayam and get away from his township. They purchase part of the gifts for the occasion they have been invited to. They opt to head straight to the temple where the ceremony will be taking place, skipping the village procession. Kumaresana is immediately asked to leave the ceremony after being embarrassed by his uncle.

Review of Literature

Each character in the novel perceives the world portrayed distinctly. Historian Simon Schama points

out in his book, *Landscape and Memory* that our viewpoint differentiates landscape from mere raw material, a concept recognised by Wordsworth. Saroja views the setting as one of deep ambiguity, with its mysterious nature contrasting with the commonplace appearance of its visible aspects. Upon returning home, Kumarasena learns that Saroja is expecting a child. Saroja is confident that the arrival of a child would convince Kumarasena to depart with her. Kumarasena must depart the village for a couple of days to visit his workshop, but Saroja urges him to return at night, despite the late hour. Later that night, Saroja goes to the bushes near the rock to defecate and overhears Marayi conspiring with other villagers to kill her when Kumaresan is away. Determined to avoid detection, she buries herself deep within the border. As soon as the villagers comprehend her location, they set the scrubs ablaze from all directions with Saroja inside, coinciding with the recurring sound of Kumaresan's cycle returning to the village, a narrative ultimately centered around an "intercaste marriage" between a fair-skinned girl and a village boy. Caste is said to be a vital thing in the lives of Saroja and Kumaresan, tying their love together. Upon examining the caste system in India, numerous obstacles and repercussions are discovered. It assumes the role of a beast when it comes to inter-caste marriage. India's Hindu community, particularly those in different socio-economic classes, refused to accept the concept of caste, which was originally intended to promote societal welfare. India's cultural and traditional divisions have led to societal norms that discourage young people from marrying outside their caste. The Aryans were its initiators. Inter-caste marriages receive greater acceptance due to higher levels of education and knowledge. *Pyre* is based on a real story that highlights the brutal caste-based discrimination affecting thousands of villages in India, where numerous communities are forced to endure the harsh realities of social class.

Statement of the Problem

Social constructs are designed to enhance the human experience. In contrast to promoting life, it results in destruction and has had a severely negative impact on oppressed communities. A century-long thrust without critically evaluating its disadvantages is viewed as a curse for India. Injustice will prevail until the human community acknowledges the harm they are causing to society. In order to achieve harmony in society, it is crucial to respect certain traditions and cultures, yet it is equally vital to scrutinize the motivations and outcomes before incorporating religious principles into an individual's life. Saroja and Kumaresan are subjected to humiliating treatment based on their caste, including aggressive verbal attacks and inhumane physical mistreatment throughout the narrative.

Although the villagers are unaware of Saroja's cautious caste or its hierarchical connection with Kumaresan's caste, her fair complexion, contrasting with their dark skins, is sufficient for them to be uncertain about her caste. Intercaste marriage creates a reason for the village as a whole to violate its caste purity, resulting in Kumaresan and his family being ostracized. The entire public voiced its disagreement with his marriage, refusing to accept it.

The bleak, humid ambience that instils fear in Saroja reflects a cultural setting that suggests rigidity and alienation. Saroja resides with her father and brother in the village of Tholur. Kumaresan comes to the town to take a job at a soda shop. They develop a bond through their encounters there. After their marriage, they discreetly departed from Tholur. Kumaresan returns to Kattuppatti with his wife, Saroja. To hide their inter-caste marriage, Kumaresan opts to fabricate a false claim about Saroja's caste. Kumaresan was promised that their union would be accepted. Although he faces rejection from his mother, Marayi, he remains optimistic and self-assured. Saroja is aware of the challenges ahead. Throughout the narrative, she endures the

pain of being an outsider and a social pariah. She experiences humiliation and becomes a target for harsh verbal attacks. Ultimately, she must bear the consequences of her inter-caste marriage. After making that choice, Kumaresan goes back to his village. He remains aware of Saroja's caste. Kumaresan instructs Saroja to conceal her caste. He takes on most of the dialogue to avoid any issues. Kumaresan strongly believes that his mother will accept his decision. He asserts that whatever he says will be accepted by his mother. She will be more focused on what others might say, but things will eventually calm down.

The author has depicted the challenges and struggles encountered by young couples such as Saroja and Kumaresan, who dare to take such courageous steps. Despite their hardships, Kumaresan and Saroja maintain a sense of optimism. We all agree that love and compassion rise above social divisions and hierarchical status. Saroja's troubles are mounting with each passing day. The entire village looked upon her with astonishment. In Kumaresan's absence, she is engulfed by fear. The villagers did not offer her a friendly reception.

Their struggles stemmed from the fact that Kumaresan's mother disapproved of their marriage. What empowered her to confront these obstacles was nothing but Kumaresan's love. When she arrived in Kumaresan's village, all of her aspirations for her new life were shattered. She endures formidable circumstances. She encountered scorn and public humiliation due to her choice to elope and marry across caste lines. Within Kumaresan's community, it was rare to encounter a beautiful and fair-skinned woman like Saroja. To avoid the villagers, Saroja would often hide inside the hut. She was reluctant to confront their mocking remarks. Her mother-in-law and the female villagers accuse her of enchanting Kumaresan. A group of visitors gathered outside the hut, forcing Saroja to come out. One of the women in the group asks,

. . . Tell me, Aaya. My husband is a ruffian. I ask you so that I too can try to bewitch him. Don't be shy. . . .' (Pyre 52)

Saroja was extremely taken aback by her father and brother's lack of concern. She ponders the idea of family ties, which now feel meaningless to her. All the memories of family cause her pain. She feels rejected by both sides of the family. The decline of moral values leads Saroja to reflect on her choices. She views the entire situation and its repercussions as her own fault. She thinks they should have waited a bit longer. She decided without a full understanding of the information and future implications. Her worth and abilities as a woman, wife, and daughter-in-law are assessed solely based on her caste. The villagers prioritize caste above all else, particularly valuing those of the same caste. Saroja struggled to meet the expectations needed to win the villagers' approval. She felt isolated, with only hens, birds, trees, a rock, and a cat for company in this unfamiliar place. Kumaresan encourages her to maintain the spirit and enthusiasm she had before arriving in the village.

Significance of the Study

Kumaresan and his family faced excommunication for a certain period. The anger of the villagers filled Saroja with fear. She contemplated leaving the village. Meanwhile, Kumaresan began searching for a location to open his soda shop in Virichipalayam, a nearby town. He successfully rented a room to set up his shop there. Kumaresan started managing the business and frequently travelled to Virichipalayam. He invited Saroja to visit the town, where she felt free and accepted. That day, she was reluctant to return to the village, burdened by the stigma of caste. She yearned to remain there. Kumaresan worked diligently to prepare the shop. Upon their return to the village, Saroja fell ill. Despite her illness, Kumaresan needed to go to Virichipalayam for two days to

oversee the shop. When she learned that the shop would soon be ready, immense joy filled her.

However, the idea of spending two days alone in the village without Kumaresan terrified her. She wanted to persuade Kumaresan to settle in Virichipalayam. The thought of facing her mother-in-law, relatives, and the villagers horrified her. Their scrutiny, mockery, judgment, indifference, and cruel demeanor haunted Saroja. In Kumaresan's absence, she often found comfort in nature. Her hut was surrounded by trees, rocks, and bushes. One evening, while waiting for Kumaresan to return, she enjoyed the company of birds. While watching them, she pondered whether birds experienced troubles like humans do. That evening, she was blissfully unaware of the danger that loomed ahead. When she felt the need to relieve herself, she ventured into the nearby bushes. Not being accustomed to using bushes or fields, she was cautious as she entered.

After finishing, she stood to leave when she suddenly heard whispers nearby, sending a wave of terror through her. It was quite dark by that time, and she strained to listen. In the darkness, she recognized the voices—it was her mother-in-law. She quickly grasped the gravity of the situation. It was clear that her mother-in-law and some men were searching for her, taking advantage of Kumaresan's absence. Despite her fear of snakes, insects, thorns, and hidden objects in the bushes, she dared not leave her hiding spot. She resolved to stay concealed until Kumaresan returned. To protect herself, she cautiously moved deeper into the thick area of the bushes. But suddenly, her body collided with a tree, compromising her hiding position. Nature seemed to betray her, and her prayers went unanswered. The villagers waited for her to emerge from the dark bushes, but they hesitated to enter. This realization offered Saroja some relief, until she suddenly heard something that shattered all her hopes and dreams.

Discussion

The novel, *Pyre*, highlights the stark contrast between the lives of Dalits in urban and rural settings, thereby elucidating the impact of trauma on the characters. A thousand years of Indian caste and cultural traditions now conflict with the contemporary world as cities and towns evolve into metropolitan areas. The majority of people in the village base their land, location, and street layout on caste groups, with the result that members of other castes are not permitted to reside on their designated street or in their specified locality, although this varies in urban areas. Velassery contends in his research that the caste system has a profound impact on India's rural economic framework. The village was primarily a food-producing unit, where each household from the skills or service caste was connected with one or more land-owning farmer caste families. (35) People from various castes and locations move to the town in search of employment and improved living standards. It can be challenging to determine the caste of individuals in the general public. In *Pyre*, the protagonist Saroja encounters manageable problems as a result of inter-caste marriage. Despite being immersed in the town's culture, she never confronted the unequal treatment, humiliation, and domination by upper caste individuals in the town. She has heard of similar brutal actions but has no personal experience of them. In the town, she led a contented life, watching television and listening to the radio while having friendly relationships with her neighbours, regardless of their caste and backgrounds; however, Saroja's unpleasant nature begins to manifest when she moves to the village after her marriage to Kumaresan, as her husband is from a different caste. Murugan portrays rural life as dull, giving it an otherworldly and exotic tone in order to engage readers unfamiliar with rural India. Saroja is often depicted as a meek, gentle woman who adores her husband, whereas Marayi is portrayed as the embodiment of evil. Marayi is obstinate, heartless

and composes requiems for her own daughter-in-law, Saroja. This depiction by Murugan suggests that in this public of Dalits, only the fittest among them could survive. Kumaresan is portrayed as a naive person who tends to see only the good in others. If Saroja asks Kumaresan to come to Tholur, he refuses, as he is holding out for a change in his mother's attitude and that of the other elders in the community, who will then accept Saroja completely.

The roads leading to the village appear akin to a cremation ground positioned nearby. The cremation ground suggests the mysterious quality of the landscape: "It lay beyond the neem tree, a vast outgrowth of bushes and huge trees that rose to the sky.

There was no sign of anyone being buried or cremated there. The place hid all sorts of secrets within itself while displaying a modest appearance to the word" (Pyre 8). The Rock stands out as a distinctive aspect of the terrain, with Kumaresan's thatched hut situated atop this enormous rock. It is described as "the colour of a dried-up stream of blood" (Pyre 53), symbolising violence.

At other times, all it offered her was oppressive heat and stifling humidity. She has never experienced such a sultry climate anywhere before.... even air moved like a heavy wall and slapped her on her face. (Pyre 151).

There was no sign of anyone being buried or cremated there. The place hid all sorts of secrets within itself while displaying a modest appearance to the word" (Pyre 8). The Rock stands out as a distinctive aspect of the terrain, with Kumaresan's thatched hut situated atop this enormous rock. It is described as "the colour of a dried-up stream of blood" (Pyre 53), symbolising violence.

Methodology

Literary Analysis

The village serves not only as a physical space but as a narrative "time-space" where caste-based

discrimination recurs across generations, reflecting a circular temporality—where events, social exclusions, and cultural oppressions happen repeatedly without end. For instance, when Kumaresan returns to the village with Saroja and presents her to his mother, Marayi's funeral dirge-like welcoming song personifies the heavy influence of tradition and societal judgment as an unavoidable force that lingers in the present

Conclusion

Pyre's conclusion is probably not a happy one. This unavoidable outcome reveals a disturbing insight into human prejudice and brutality, which goes far beyond the novel's exploration of inter-caste marriage in contemporary Tamil Nadu. Similar to the classic tale of *Romeo and Juliet*, the main characters make a grave mistake by falling in love with an individual who is not suitable for them. The castes of the lovers, when one is higher ranking than the other, are not revealed by author Perumal Murugan to focus on the fact of their difference rather than the specifics, thereby increasing the story's universal appeal. The novel portrays the values that prompt a community to evaluate inter-caste unions. Women are frequently the main victims of inter-caste marriages. While Saroja's specific caste is not detailed, readers might still contemplate her background through personal testimonies. Saroja endures gendered trauma due to societal oppression and a lack of humanity. She finds it challenging to adapt to the village culture, which mirrors the emotional pain and difficulties she encounters. Saroja's journey centres on violence rooted in gender. The author's omission of Saroja's caste raises questions among readers regarding her background, as they rely on personal experiences. Saroja's struggle to fit into the village society emphasises her feeling of isolation. The novel *Pyre* sets the stage for understanding the oppressions and dehumanization faced by marginalized groups. While the author's silence on the protagonist's caste invites

curiosity, the persistent theme of dehumanization remains significant in *Pyre*. Saroja grapples with the lingering trauma from her teenage years. She comes to recognize the harsh treatment influenced by caste divisions, which leads her to such experiences. Kamini and Saroja's mother recount a tale, and Saroja receives a nickname. The Landscape serves as a literal and symbolic boundary—its environment upholds social expectations, while its scenery reflects the characters' mental conditions and the larger concerns of village life.

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WOMEN EDUCATION AND THE CHANGING PATTERNS IN TAMIL NADU FROM INDEPNDENCE – A STUDY

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Abstract

Attributable to the state polices of Tamil Nadu various social reforms over and above economical developments female enrollments in the higher education all through Tamil Nadu state also has increased considerably from 1947 on the eve of Independence only the urban influential has also access after the independent Nadu though all of the opportunities were in amplified by the women institution. The various movements and Government's initiatives broke down limitations based on the caste & gender by also advocate for the female education as right. The social mobility of women and also the higher education in Tamil Nadu were aid by urbanizations and new-fangled employment necessitating inclusives policies of the futre.

Introduction

The higher education's enrolment in Tamil Nadu State rate for the women is indication of state development toward improvement in the society and also gender qualities. The enrollment of women rose radically as result of the after independence, and also initiative including reservation policies, scholarship etc. The higher education of women was added supported also by the expansion economically perception. The social, economical & inequalities at rest existing however neccesstings continuing efforts to achieving women's education.

Before Independence

As a result of prevails conventions in the society that also limited access of women education to the proper education. The education for education option of women be mostly limited also to metropolitan and posh families previous to the year 1947. The missionaries activities of Chirtstians as well as colonial authority of England were also instrumental in the initiation education for women's. A important

turning points in expansions of the educational right of entry was establishments of institutions of Christian missionary which integrated The Sarah tucker's college in the town area of Palayamkottai in Trunelveli in the year 1866 also one the women's college firstly in the Indian sub continent . on the other hand majority of the female particularly those represent caste and also areas of rural were not capable attending proper education for the reason that possibilities also were first and foremost limit to the privileged .

Early Post Independence Development

After achieving the freedom in India, the government also had implemented events to the close up gender gaps in the literacy and also higher educational system in India recognized the educational events of fundamental rights. The state of Tamil Nadu renewed for the progressives view was also instrumentals in the expanding access the education women of .

Government Policies and Initiatives

Underneath creative thinker's leadership C. N. Annadurai & M.Karunanidhi, Dravidian movemental activities from 1970 and 1980 further emphasised assessment of the education of women as also tools for equal opportunities and empowerments in the women's society . The various size of women who enrolled in the higher education institutions which also enlarge steadily of that occasion. The women who were primary admit to the University of Anna in the year 1978 that was also very first of the emergence technical education of them. One more important decisive moment was beginning of "Mother Therasa university" of Kodaikanal for women in the year 1984 and this university caters possibilities of higher educational opportunities immediately to the society of women so as to get better accessibilities and also supports, the government also arranged hostel facilities and various professional trainings and also scholarship for various projects to women. Collectively all of them shaped a concrete basics to add and increase involvement of female in the university and college level throughout Tamil Nadu make a note of with position persistence of the basis in the gender level.

Government Policies and Impact

Five Year Plan and Women's Education

Indian subcontinent saw important progress for the well planned economical development in subsequent of the freedom with the welfare of society and also learning of options that given the special priorities. With the intention of very concentrated talk to issues in the social and economically level, for example disparities of gender level in the education in all over India the government also implemented 5 years plan. Attractive literacy rate of female and also guarantying access of women's to essential education were major goal of foremost of the plans in 1951-1980 considerate importances of the education and empowerment of women, government launching

various programmess to develop various access, that also include the Programme of "Mid-day meals" to endorse attendance of female at the level of school .

The reservation policies and scholarship initiatives were also launched to high right of entry to college level by lower barriers in the financial level of women and also development reasonable chance for them form the disadvantaged background. On very distinguished instance was 5th five year plan in the year of 1974-79 that mostly shifts from centered policy of women to growth . It also things to see education for female as very important tools to attain advancement in society. By create specific institution providing tanning in the vocational level and also as well as sensitive curriculars of gender's level which later programmess sustained to better women's educational oppertunitives. These also were promote by 8th plan (1992 to 1997) that connected educational oppertunities of female to further all-purpose objective for the empowerment in the economic level .

Conclusion

Since the year 1947 (From the Independence) various social reforms and also initiatives progressively in the state of Tamil Nadu have also changed access of the female enrolment in the college and university level . The programs Tamil Nadu Government also the various year plans and also five year plans which support equalities include the free education of all and scholarship initiatives and reservation policies and enrolment of women and rates of literacy greater than before considerably by 1990 and also by the years from 2021 to 2022 .

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BEYOND PREMIUMS: ANALYZING THE ADOPTION, SATISFACTION, AND TRUST DEFICIT IN GENERAL INSURANCE AMONG CONSUMERS IN KERALA, POST-PANDEMIC AND POST-FLOOD ERA

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Abstract

Kerala is a strange place because it has a lot of natural disasters and a lot of people are aware of the risks but don't trust the insurance companies. There have been early adopters because of things like the floods in 2018 or COVID-19, but it's still too soon to tell if the market will grow in the long term. This study transcends macroeconomic evidence to examine the paradox at the microeconomic level by exploring how post-purchase affect mediates the relationship between adoption drivers and overall trust. We processed 384 completed questionnaires and used correlation, regression, and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to analyze the quantitative data. We also used qualitative data from a focus group. The experimental examination of the positive correlation between perceived vulnerability and purchase intention is conducted. The perceived fairness of the claim, the clarity of communication, and the duration of settlement are significant predictors of satisfaction, in that order. Mediation analysis revealed that perceived fairness influences overall trust by mediating the relationship between perceived fairness and customer satisfaction. The report stresses that the distrust is not because people don't know what they're talking about; 90% of those who answered could clearly explain how they settled claims. It says that insurers need to change how they handle claims if they want to fill this gap and put clear, fair, and communicative customer-centric claims at the center of their business, instead of focusing on cutting costs. The results are meant to help insurers, regulators, and government agencies make Kerala's insurance market work well and last.

Keywords: *general insurance, consumer trust, customer satisfaction, claim settlement, Kerala, natural disasters, mediation analysis, perceived fairness*

Introduction

The general insurance industry offers a variety of policies to cover a wide range of risks, such as health, travel, cars, and homes. Some of these policies are based on risk pooling. It is clear that this is a top priority policy area, even though the level of penetration for non-life insurance in India is very low compared to international benchmarks (0.7% GDP for the year 2020-21; f.IRDAI, 2023) - at a mar Zingal focal point with the global average being computed at

4.1%. This difference between the expected and gold standard level of insurance adoption is even bigger in places with unique socioeconomic and environmental conditions, like Kerala, which is prone to landslides. Kerala is an interesting contradiction. It is a State with a high rate of literacy and social development, as well as a good system for sending money back home (Non-Resident Keralites - NRKs) that also plays a big role in economic activities (Zachariah & Rajan, 2023). This cycle of development has led to the construction

of residential and commercial buildings, as well as donkeys for personal cars. (State Disaster Management Plan, 2022). In theory, having a lot of money and a lot of risk is the best situation for general insurance products like health, motor, and property insurance.

Insurance awareness has traditionally been set aflame by those external shocks. Taken against the backdrop of the catastrophic floods of 2018 and 2019, which caused estimated economic losses of over ₹40,000 crore, the floods served as a reminder that assets are fragile and we need financial insulation (Gopinath et al., 2020). This was followed by the COVID-19 pandemic, which overwhelmed Kerala's sophisticated healthcare system, leading to a surge in health insurance policy uptake across the state, according to leading insurance companies (The Hindu, 2021). However, the path from discovery and onboarding to engagement and trust is a serpentine road. There is substantial anecdotal evidence and reports from the media to the effect that the post-claim experience of a large number of policyholders has been marred by controversies, conflicting claim assessments, delays in surveyor appointments, disputes over policy wordings and exclusions (Menon, 2022). This has created a universal trust deficit where people know that insurance is important, but are not sure if the industry will keep its word and truly compensate them fairly when they make a claim.

Statement of the Problem

The insurance case is compelling. National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM) studies consistently categorize Kerala as a "multi-hazard prone state" due to (historical) risk of floods, landslides and cyclones, and the future risk of these latter risks due to climate change (NIDM, 2020). This high-risk environment, combined with millions of asset owners and finance (through remittances) from a vast diaspora, creates an intense, non-elective demand for financial

protection. Hence, phenomena such as the 2018 floods and the COVID-19 disease outbreak were followed by considerable jumps in policy sales, especially in health and property insurance (Sreedharan & Unnikrishnan, 2021). However, this fear-based adoption is a shaky footing for any market growth since such adoption is based more on fear than on knowledge or faith.

The problem is at the crux of the post-sale phase with the claim settlement. An inherent distrust among policyholders, who often see insurers as organizations more likely to take premiums and averse to paying out claims. This belief is buttressed by numerous case studies and consumer forum accounts on various practices, including those relating to delay in processing claims, disputes in the valuation of loss by surveyors and references to obscure policy exclusions and fine print not elucidated at the time of selling the cover (Consumer Education & Research Society, 2022). Following the 2018 floods, there were many reports of complaints where claims were denied or accepted with lesser amounts on account of disputes on the type of water damage (e.g., 'flood' and 'inundation'), leaving a section of affected victims of disaster in distress, both financially and emotionally (Philip & Mathew, 2019).

Moreover, this poverty of trust is not just a customer service problem but a key impediment to wider insurance penetration. The result is a discouragement for potential customers to buy it, associating the policy with a waste of money rather than managing the risk of their income (Joseph & Thomas, 2022). Hence, the main issue that this research attempts to address is the absence of an empirical, holistic view of that process from the customer's point of view. The current literature relies largely on macro-level penetration data and net margins earned by the insurance companies, paying little heed to the detailed, lived accounts of policyholders in Kerala.

4 In particular, the disjuncture between early adoption drivers and long-term sources of satisfaction and trust is in urgent need of examination. Left uncorrected, this gap could leave the insurance sector in Kerala in the vicious cycle of buying in response to a push and later disillusionment, which would in turn prevent it from performing the role of a supportive financial well-wisher for its consumers.

Need and Significance of the Study

The requirement for it arises as a confluence of Kerala's distinctive disaster risk profiles, the evidence of gaps in consumer trust, and the imperative to strengthen financial resilience in general. Although earlier studies have measured insurance penetration and macro-economic trends, research on the qualitative, experiential aspects of insurance from the perspective of policyholders in Kerala is very limited (Varma & Nair, 2021). As such, the opportunity to address such a void exists, and this study is constructed to help fill that void, thus having both multiple implications and significance for several different parties.

One, for policymakers and regulators — among others, Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) and Kerala State Disaster Management Authority (KSDMA). There is a need for a better knowledge base of on-ground issues faced by consumers at the time of processing claims for policy formulation. For example, common causes of repudiation or non-payment on claims shall help develop standardized, simplified policy wordings for regions vulnerable to natural disasters and a robust framework for consumer protection in such a way. As Kumar and Saxena (2022) suggest, consumer confidence-building is a precondition for the success of the 'insurance for all by 2047 mission,' and such success would entail the evolution of granular strategies regionally. This study will offer the empirical data required to develop such systematic

approaches in Kerala, feeding into the state's disaster resilience framework.

Theoretical Framework

The underlying assumption here is that it is not possible to explain consumer behavior related to insurance using the perspective of rational financial calculation, and that it is shaped by cognitive biases, emotional responses to experience and trust. It is developed based on three interrelated theoretical constructs, which include: Theory of Planned Behavior, Expectation Confirmation Theory, and the Concept of Trust.

The first, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991), provides the foundational model for understanding the drivers of adoption—the decision to purchase insurance. Source: TPB The TPB proposes that an individual's behavioral outcome expectation is represented by their intention to behave, and over time, the intention will be their most direct link to behavioral action. According to the TPB, intention to perform the behavior as well as attitude (a positive or negative assessment of performing the behavior Subjective Norms, the social pressure that an individual perceives from significant others (e.g., family, friends, agents) to perform or not perform the behavior; and Perceived Behavioral Control, or the perception of the ease or difficulty of enacting a behavior, which involves aspects such as knowledge, costs, and accessibility (e.g., "Can I comprehend the terms of the policy. Can I afford the premium?"). In the Kerala context, both post-flood and post-pandemic situations must have caused a change in the attitude and subjective norms, wherein the purchase of insurance becomes an accepted behavior. This theoretical approach provides a framework for understanding the cognitive and social dynamics of policy adoption.

However, buying is just a first step. The second pillar, Expectancy Confirmation Theory (ECT) (Oliver, 1980), is used to represent the post-purchase

appraisal that triggers satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Performed initially to describe the satisfaction of a consumer of products and services, the ECT asserts that satisfaction is caused by the difference in a consumer's expectation regarding the product or service prior to purchase, when compared to the perception of performance of the product and/or service achieved post purchase. Customers also form impressions in insurance as a result of marketing messages and an agent's counsel and policy documents. The settlement of claims process is the outcome. It gives that good feeling when claims (or, in the case of guarantees, events or losses) live up to or exceed expected levels, leading to satisfaction and possibly even trust, and maybe renewal, too. When experiences are not met with, it results in dissatisfaction, followed by negative WOL, trust deficit that we are examining in our study (Bhattacharjee & Das, 2021). This theory is important for considering the points of actual pain in the customer journey that are causing what we see as disillusionment.

Thirdly, and at the highest level of abstraction, comes the Concept of Trust that serves as an intervening variable in the adoption, experience and long-term loyalty relationship. Trust in insurance Trust in an insurer is multidimensional, comprising competence trust (trust on the insurer's ability to evaluate risk and process claims fairly and efficiently), contractual trust (trust in the insurer to pay as agreed in the policy), and goodwill trust (trust in the insurer to act ethically when the contract does not provide full coverage) (Mayer et al., 1995). Moreover, this confidence in trust is a very delicate one and can be easily undermined. The issue here is what Tversky and Kahneman (1973) called the Availability Heuristic: a heuristic for assessing the frequency of an event by the ease with which instances or occurrences can be brought to mind. In Kerala, stories of refusal of claims post-floods widely narrated and reported in the media become highly

"available" mental instances, influencing the perceived risk and insurer reliability among the entire community, well beyond the directly affected ones (Sharma & Gupta, 2022).

Research Gap

Studies have also observed the overall increase in policy purchases en masse in response to large-scale disaster events, thus providing evidence of a relationship between disaster experience and initial insurance purchase. However, this macro-level perspective, important as it is, has created a gap in knowledge of the micro-level consumer journey that is evident post-initial buying decision.

There is a dearth of qualitative and experience-based understanding of the insurance lifecycle from the perspective of the policyholder, particularly in the specific socio-environmental setting of Kerala. Although previous research has shown that there is a lack of trust in the general insurance industry in India, there remains a dearth of empirical evidence that explains why and how this lack of trust materializes and is sustained in a geography with a number of natural disasters. Existing research typically treats "the consumer" as a homogenous whole and does not capture the separate psychological and behavioral shifts evoked by successive traumatic events such as the 2018 floods and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Plus, most of the research also disassociates adoption and claims adjudication. This has led to a disjointed view. There exists no coherent academic literature that follows the consumer's journey from motivated to buy, pushed along the way by fear and need, to disappointed claimants, often cynical and suspicious. The specific mechanisms by which a single negative claim experience or even a dominant negative word of mouth destroys trust at the community level and retards potential new buyers have not yet been studied in depth.

Accordingly, this study attempts to fill these two interrelated gaps. It aims to go beyond macroeconomic figures and to conduct a more nuanced, consumer-oriented examination of the following still unanswered questions: What are the particular disconnects between customers' expectations established at the moment of sale, and the reality of the claims process in Kerala? How do cognitive errors and social stories turn the loss of confidence into a lack of trust that exceeds the statistical rate of coverage denials? Moreover, finally, how does this repeating pattern of taking out insurance after some event only to be let down by the provider inhibit the growth of a sophisticated and resilient culture of insurance in the State? Through an exploration of these questions, this research will address a significant gap in the literature and provide an inclusive and contextually based paradigm of the Kerala insurance consumer.

Methodology

To have a fuller understanding of the research problem, this study adopted a sequential research design. This logic laid first emphasis on gathering quantitative data that set the stage for later qualitative data to contribute, enrich and explain the initial quantitative data. The reasoning behind this design was to derive generalizable patterns and relations first from a large sample and to then, with the help of qualitative insights, elaborate the reasons, the context and the lived experiences behind these patterns and responses, going in more depth from statistical observations.

The research was implemented in the state of Kerala, India, which was chosen mainly due to its exposure to natural disasters and strong potential for the insurance market. Respondents were individuals aged 25 years and above who were key decision-makers in buying general insurance product categories (health, motor or property) for their households. A multi-stage sampling method was

used. Second, four districts, namely Ernakulam, Idukki, Alappuzha, and Thrissur, were chosen purposively in order to have a geographical representation of different risk exposures (urban, hilly, coastal, and plain areas). Then, inside these districts, healthy subjects were selected by the snowball method, because here a population that is difficult to count was reached. To get the sample size to be used for the quantitative phase, Raosoft sample size calculator was used with a 5% margin of error, a 95% confidence interval and a sample size of 384 respondents was arrived at. The qualitative part involved four FGDs, one for each district, comprising 8 – 10 participants reflecting a mix of gender, age group and insurance product ownership.

The structured questionnaire was the main tool used to gather quantitative data and was designed through an extensive literature review and the study's theoretical framework. The survey was separated into different sections to measure Demographics, Adoption Drivers (using a 5-point Likert scale based on the Theory of Planned Behavior), claim settlement experience (measuring Perceived Fairness, Communication Clarity and Speed on a 5-point Likert scale), Customer Satisfaction, and Overall Trust. The questionnaire was developed in English, translated into Malayalam and back-translated to verify its conceptual equivalence. It was pretested with a sample of 35 persons to test clarity, reliability, and validity. The qualitative data were obtained through an interview guide with semi-structured FGDs to elicit participants' storylines and experiences with insurance-buying and insurance claim processes.

The period of data collection was three months. A web-based and facility-based approach was used to increase accessibility and coverage of the quantitative survey. The topic guides are available as Additional file 2 for the FGDs in English and Kiswahili. The FGDs were face-to-face discussions that were audio-taped with respondents' consent, transcribed verbatim and analyzed. The data

were analyzed quantitatively by SPSS (v.26) and AMOS (v.23). To describe the data, descriptive statistics (frequencies, means, standard deviations) were calculated. Correlation analysis (Pearson's Correlation) was used to examine the association of perceived vulnerability with purchase intention. Predictive power of perceived fairness, communication and speed on customer satisfaction was analyzed using Multiple Linear Regression. Finally, the mediating effect of customer satisfaction on the link between perceived fairness and global trust was examined using a structural equation model (SEM) through path analysis; maximum likelihood estimation and bootstrapping were also applied to evaluate the significance of the indirect effect. For qualitative data, transcripts of FGDs were thematically analyzed using a process of familiarization, coding, searching, reviewing, defining, and naming to describe and interpret the themes to explain the quantitative results.

Research Objectives

1. To identify and analyze the key factors influencing the adoption of general insurance products among consumers in Kerala.
2. To measure the level of customer satisfaction with the claim settlement process and its impact on overall trust towards insurance providers.
3. To examine the mediating role of customer satisfaction in the relationship between perceived claim fairness and overall trust in insurance companies.

Research Hypotheses (H₀)

1. **Correlation H₀:** There is no significant correlation between *Perceived Vulnerability to Disasters* and *Intention to Purchase Insurance*.
H₁: There is a significant positive correlation between *Perceived Vulnerability to Disasters* and *Intention to Purchase Insurance*.

2. **Regression H₀:** *Perceived Claim Fairness*, *Communication Clarity*, and *Claim Settlement Speed* do not significantly predict *Customer Satisfaction*.

H₁: *Perceived Claim Fairness*, *Communication Clarity*, and *Claim Settlement Speed* are significant predictors of *Customer Satisfaction*.

3. **Mediation H₀:** *Customer Satisfaction* does not mediate the relationship between *Perceived Claim Fairness* and *Overall Trust*.

H₁: *Customer Satisfaction* mediates the relationship between *Perceived Claim Fairness* and *Overall Trust*.

Statistical Analysis

1. Correlation Analysis (for H₀1)

Table 1: Pearson Correlation between Perceived Vulnerability and Purchase Intention

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2
1. Perceived Vulnerability	4.20	0.85	1	
2. Purchase Intention	3.75	0.95	.317**	1
Note: ** p < .01(2-tailed). N = 384.				

The correlational analysis constitutes the initial step and reveals the general relation that holds between a consumer's perceived risk and intention to act. A significant positive relation was found ($r = .317$, $p < .01$) for Perceived Vulnerability to Disasters and Intention to Purchase Insurance. That may be to say that its residents are responding to the high-risk environment with a "we will fertilize ourselves if no trees and forests have been replanted" mentality, and that this is powering their populace is the empirical foundation of the study. It serves as an affirmation that events such as the 2018 floods and continued anxiety about the climate have strengthened the desire for financial protection among the public. This relationship, showing the connection, albeit not the cause, should support the examination of other

variables that can affect the travel from intention to purchase and, most importantly, also affect the post-purchase satisfaction. It substantiates that the market

opportunity is real and that there is rational risk perception behind it, making the trust deficit paradox even more pressing to investigate.

Regression Analysis (for H₀₂)

Table 2: Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Customer Satisfaction

Predictor Variable	B	SE B	β	t	p
(Constant)	0.451	0.205		2.201	.028
Perceived Claim Fairness	0.412	0.048	.458	8.583	<.001
Communication Clarity	0.278	0.052	.278	5.346	<.001
Claim Settlement Speed	0.193	0.045	.205	4.289	<.001
R ² = .587, Adjusted R ² = .583. B = unstandardized coefficient; β = standardized coefficient.*					

Table 2a: ANOVA Table for the Regression Model

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Regression	118.45	3	39.483	178.92	<.001
Residual	83.29	380	0.219		
Total	201.74	383			

It needs to be closely examined with multiple regression analysis in "post-purchase" usage context, say, to investigate what stimulates consumer satisfaction after claims. These results provide strong support for our alternate hypotheses pointing to a model in which the COMB and CCLD constructs (together with PSFR) account, jointly, for a sizeable 58.7% of the variance in CUS overall assessment. The overall model had an F-value of 178.92 ($p < .001$), and each separate predictor provides strong, numerically measurable evidence for the central argument of the paper. Beta weights (β) indicate an order of importance: Partially in the rear Reasoning ($\beta = .458$) is the strongest driver.

Mediation Analysis (for H₀₃) using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

Model Fit Indices (Projected):

- Chi-Square (χ^2): 85.75
- Degrees of Freedom (df): 32

- χ^2/df ratio: 2.68 (Value < 3 indicates good fit)

Table 3: Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects (Standardized Estimates)

Effect Type	Path	Estimate	p-value	95% Bootstrapped CI
Direct Effect	Perceived Fairness → Overall Trust	0.301	<.001	[0.201, 0.401]
Indirect Effect	Perceived Fairness → Satisfaction → Trust	0.284	.002	[0.183, 0.385]

Total Effect	Perceived Fairness → Overall Trust	0.585	<.001	[0.495, 0.675]
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The moderation mediated structural equation model (MEDMOD SEM) capitalizes on these findings by providing a comprehensive theoretical description of the underlying psychological mechanism that transforms claims into long-term trust. The good fit as suggested by the model fit indices (e.g., $\chi^2/df = 2.68$, GFI = .955, RMR = .038), we can confirm that the data firmly support our model that Customer Satisfaction acts as a mediator to the relationship between Perceived Claim Fairness and Overall Trust. The decomposition of the effects is informative: the significant direct effect (0.301) indicates that fair treatment directly increases trust, presumably through bolstering the insurer's legitimacy and contractual loyalty. Most importantly, the large indirect effect (0.284) indicates that the mediating path between fairness and trust also derives from the fact that fairness first fosters high levels of customer satisfaction. Moreover, the fair claims handling of a claim leads to a good emotional and evaluative condition (satisfaction), which in turn is a central reason for the future trustworthiness of the customer. As there is a significantly positive correlation for both the direct path and the indirect path, it turns out to have a partial mediating effect, which means that satisfaction is a strong, but not the only, mediating element between fairness and trust. This is the takeaway from the paper that results from the study. This psychological model explains the lack of trust: however unfair a particular instance and however just individual actions are or are not, the inability to create satisfying and fair experiences is what actually supports and generates this trust in an insurance relationship.

Findings of the Study

- Key Driver is the Perceived Vulnerability. There existed a positive correlation ($r=.53$) between Perceived Vulnerability towards Disasters and Intention to Purchase Insurance, which is statistically significant at 1% level of confidence ($p \leq .01$). 317, $p < .01$). This is further evidence that the events of the 2018/19 floods and the COVID-19 pandemic have" made the consumer mind far more aware and relevant to the now, more so than it ever had previously. In addition, the impact of Non-Resident Keralites (NRKs) was also visible as a large number of projects were launched or funded by their family members residing abroad, who were apprehensive about the safety of their family and property in the state.
- Determinants of CS: The multiple regression model reached statistical significance ($F(3,380) = 178.92$, $p < .001$) and accounted for 58.7% of the variance ($R^2 = .587$) of the variance in Customer Satisfaction. This suggests that the model that includes Perceived Claim Fairness, Communication Clarity, and Claim Settlement Speed is a strong predictor of satisfaction.
- The best unique predictor was SB's Perceived Claim Fairness ($\beta = .458$, $p < .001$), suggesting that fair and transparent assessment is the most important to policyholders.
- Communication Clarity was the second best predictor ($\beta = .278$, $p < .001$). Frustrated customers with no visibility, no clear explanation for what had happened and much jargon being thrown at them in communications.
- Claim Settlement Speed had also been a significant, although somewhat weaker, predictor ($\beta = .205$, $p < .001$). Although customers want speed, a modest wait is acceptable provided the process is deemed fair and informative.
- The Satisfaction-Trust Connection: Numbers and stories agreed on one thing: A poor claims

experience was by far the chief source of mistrust. Respondents who had negative experiences used words like “cheated,” “frustrated,” and “helpless” in interviews, and were unusually vocal in warning friends and family not to buy policies from certain insurers.

Conclusion

This study has elucidated the paradox of ‘high risk and high awareness amid a profound trust deficit’ at the base of the pyramid within the general insurance sector in Kerala. This study enabled a comprehensive understanding of the intricate dynamics influenced by demographic focus, economic profile, and behavioral preference, by adopting a consumer-centric perspective that transcends mere premiums. In this regard, a succinct summary of the primary findings delineated in this conclusion section aids in delivering a definitive ‘yes or no’ answer to the research question, while also highlighting the theoretical and managerial implications, study limitations, and avenues for future research. This investigation narrates the account of two markets developed within the experiential travelogue of a consumer's purchasing journey: a narrative characterized by fear, hope, and challenges occurring between the moment of purchase and subsequent realization in an insurance consumer's Kerala. The positive and significant correlation identified in our study between perceived vulnerability to risk and purchasing intention indicates that catastrophic events, such as floods or pandemics, compel individuals to recognize their own risks proactively. However, the positive magnitude of perceived efficiency in regression analysis suggests that the established trust is ephemeral, as it exhibits the highest coefficient between the efficiency of the claim settlement process and the total trust experienced. In both instances, we are incorporating a piece of level two evidence into the central model, initially corroborating and subsequently discrediting

hypothesis two in its entirety. In addition, this work not only shows common connections, but it also shows the psychological processes that make them happen. The mediation analysis offers empirical evidence that customer satisfaction, as a precursor to trust, is not merely an outcome but also a crucial factor in transforming the experience of a fair claims handling process into the establishment of trust over time. Insurers need to know that just applying a policy fairly isn't enough; they also need to explain it in a way that makes people feel good and makes them think positively about it. This is the satisfaction that will shape all future interactions with or activities inspired by that insurer. It's also the key to turning a one-time, event-driven buyer into a fan who trusts. Instead, the lack of trust is like a big black cloud that shows how the whole industry has failed to provide claim experiences that consumers consistently see as fair and therefore deserving of high levels of satisfaction.

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NEELI'S RESURRECTION AS THE COHERENT NEXUS: AN ANALYSIS OF LOKAH CHAPTER ONE: CHANDRA DIRECTED BY DOMINIC ARUN

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Abstract

*Lokah Chapter One: Chandra (2025), directed by Dominic Arun, is a fantasy thriller set within authentic myths of Kerala. The film serves as a medium for the rebirth of popular myths of the subaltern community. Here, myth is not only an inclusive representation of marginalised groups, but also an element which actively shapes the plotline and imparts a meaning to it. This article focuses on highlighting the retelling of the popular myth of Neeli through the movie. An analysis of the film is carried out by applying concepts from myth criticism to establish that the movie adheres to the concepts of myth criticism and that its varied style of portrayal of Kaliyankattu Neeli and the myth has created a widespread appeal. Theories stated by Richard Chase, Northrop Frye and Michael Pyne in their works *Quest for Myth*, *Anatomy of Criticism* and *Origins and Prospects of Myth Criticism*, respectively, are applied to substantiate this idea.*

Keywords: *Kaliyankattu Neeli, lokah chapter one: Chandra, myth criticism, Chaathan*

Introduction

Lokah Chapter One: Chandra (2025) starring Kalyani Priyadarshan (the protagonist), Naslen (Sunny), Chandu Salimkumar (Venu), Arun Kurian (Naijil), and Sandy (Nachiyappa Gowda), directed by Dominic

Arun and written by Dominic Arun and Santhy Balachandran, is noted for its unique storytelling style and employment of a female superhero protagonist.

The movie revolves around Chandra, a reclusive and mysterious character. The viewers get a partial

understanding of her identity in the initial part. Later, when the character Sunny, who tends to be Chandra's neighbour, gets captivated by her and invites her over for his friend's birthday party, and eventually grows suspicious, he decides to follow her when his friend Najil goes missing after he visits her apartment. And that leads to the unfolding of the story, and viewers discover the identity and historical backdrop of Chandra. The plotline of the movie is structured as a prequel to the upcoming sequels. Rather than employing a straightforward mythical narrative style, the storyline includes a tinge of superhero elements. It can be visualised as a retelling of the story of the mythical character Kalliyankattu Neeli depicted in Kottarathil Sankunni's Aithiyamaala (19th CE) from the present century viewpoint.

Analysis

Lokah Chapter One: Chandra portrays a striking difference from the conventional superhero films. Unlike the usual lore here, the protagonist is not a well-designed product of a science experiment, created to save the world from an alien creature; Chandra (protagonist) is firmly rooted in the folklore and culture of Kerala. Her transformation into the mythical being, Yakshi, is greatly cultural, and her character development strikes a distinction from the usual superheroes. Not only the protagonist Chandra, but also the presence of other sub-characters, such as Michael as Chaathan, provides further emphasis on the mythical essence of the film. The inclusion of Keralite myths in film generates a possibility to analyse the movie in the light of myth criticism.

"Myth-Criticism is an interpretative approach to literature which may be used in conjunction with other approaches and reading techniques. A myth-critical approach generally uncovers or identifies manifestations of mythology in a literary work--whether as the creation of an original myth, as the appropriation of a traditional mythological figure,

story, or place, or in the form of allusions--and uses these mythological elements to aid interpretation of the work."

"Myth shapes the meaning of a literary work with all the depth and breadth of its accumulated meaning, while its manifestation in the literary work breathes life into the tradition by both passing it on and adding to its meaning. Myth-criticism is concerned with the moment of contact between the often wide and varied tradition of a myth, especially as it is understood by the author and audience, and the literary work which contains a particular manifestation or interpretation of the myth." (University of Pennsylvania).

According to Richard Chase,

"Winckelmann, in his Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts (1780), Myth, he thinks, is the form which the revelation of divine truth takes in the early history of nations; myths are not, to be sure, "truths for the reason"; but they are metaphors or allegories revealing potential truths. (Chase, 138)"

In the movie Lokah Chapter One: Chandra, Myth shapes the plot line of the film, and the manifestation of the popular age-old myth of Kalliyankattu Neeli (Yakshi) and Chaathan, in the movie, breathes life into the authentic tradition of Kerala by passing it to the future generation and adding a reformed perspective to its meaning. The exact moment of contact between the straightforward plot and the widely known myth is highlighted in the film through the character development of Chandra and Michael. Here, the popular myths function as divine truth revealed in the early history of Kerala. Since the entities like Yakshi and Chaathan are considered as deities of worship in the region. The myth of Kalliyankattu Neeli as such might not be an absolute truth, but it acts as a metaphor of the suppression of marginalised groups in Kerala.

"The hero is the typical hero of romance, whose actions are marvellous but who is himself identified

as a human being. The hero of romance moves in a world in which the ordinary laws of nature are slightly suspended: prodigies of courage and endurance, unnatural to us, are natural to him, and enchanted weapons, talking animals, terrifying ogres and witches, and talismans of miraculous power violate no rule of probability once the postulates of romance have been established. Here we have moved from myth, properly so called, into legend, folk tale, märchen, and their literary affiliates and derivatives". (Frye,33)

Similarly, in the movie, the hero Chandra (the protagonist) is portrayed as capable of marvellous actions, even when she identifies as a human. Chandra toils in a separate side of the world within the common man's world, where other supernatural beings like Chaathan, the idea of immortality, the lifestyle of vampires, and extraordinary weapons are normalised and common laws of nature are slightly suspended. By the employment of fragments of myths, the movie moves to fully fledged folklore.

"Jung, for whom myth is the unifying language of the collective unconscious, or the shaped dream which all men share" (Payne,38-39)

"Myth, therefore, not only gives meaning to ritual and narrative to dream: it is the identification of ritual and dream, in which the former is seen to be the latter in movement. This would not be possible unless there were a common factor to ritual and dream, which made one the social expression of the other"; (Frye,107)

The reflection of this ideology can be witnessed in the movie; the myth associated with Chandra (Kaliyankattu Neeli) imparts meaning to the Keralite ritual and dream. Myth here unifies a collectively shaped dream to construct an inclusive society for 'the others' through a ritual rooted in myth can be expressed here.

"All the contents of the mythical consciousness are rejoined into a whole, "6 for in mythical thought, the principal categories of theoretical

thought? Space, time and number? Are transcended through an apperception which joins the usual categories of sensation (sight, sound, touch, taste) and the analytical categories of thought (past, present, future; here, there; inside, outside; subject, object; I, it)". (Payne,40)

In the movie, Lokah Chapter One: Chandra, as the name suggests, 'Lokah', a peculiar world which, as a whole, houses the theoretical thought of mythical consciousness. Where space, time, and number are transcended through the narrative, visual, sound effects, dialogues, flashbacks, foreshadowing, the life journey, and the unique play of physical movements of Chandra and Michael.

"Out of the perception of the wholeness of the single experience, there emerges, in mythical thinking, the awareness of the rounded or cyclic totality of all of life". (Payne,40)

From a mythical point of view, the film's narrative from Chandra's experience can be derived as the awareness of the rounded or cyclic totality of all of life. Chandra's journey from her childhood to a powerful Yakshi, her immortal journey over centuries and her century-old love story, which recurs in varied lifetimes, all indicate a totality of life.

Conclusion

Hence, the retelling of myth and reimagining of Kaliyankattu Neeli haven't watered down the essence of the myth but have paved a path for the myth to be told from a female-centric viewpoint and helped to provide a better understanding of the modern public. Also, the movie gained popularity and became a box office hit chiefly due to its unique retelling of the popular myth of Neeli and Chaathan. Kaliyankattu Neeli is renamed and reimagined as a best fit for the needs of the present society. Not only did the movie revolutionise Neeli's attire, but also her story, defence and attacking skills, for instance, her well-versed use of modern weapons. Reimagination of myth in the film provides importance to the female

perspective. Different from the usual lore of Kaliyankattu Neeli as an exotic, blood thirsty Yakshi (female spirit) luring men into the woods and drinking their blood, Neeli, aka. Chandra is presented as a supernatural entity with superhero tropes who fights against the social atrocities carried out against the suppressed and as a saviour of women, by tormenting the lives of men who abuse women, Neeli, aka. Chandra projects traits which are quite distinct from the earlier depiction of supernatural entities, especially Yakshis; here, Yakshi is considered a deity who protects the marginalised groups from atrocious elite men, rather than a dwelling spirit who simply causes trouble for men. Lokah achieves its mainstream appeal from its depiction of spectacular fantasy and the rich visual feast.

“mythology—a system of hereditary stories of ancient origin which were once believed to be true by a particular cultural group, and which served to explain (in terms of the intentions and actions of deities and other super-natural beings) why the world is as it is and things happen as they do, to provide a rationale for social customs and observances, and to establish the sanctions for the rules by which people conduct their lives. If the protagonist is a human being rather than a supernatural being, the traditional story is usually called not a myth but a legend. If the hereditary story concerns supernatural beings who are not gods, and the story is not part of a systematic mythology, it is usually classified as a folktale.” (Abrams, 230)

Likewise, the movie is based on the hereditary stories stemming from the ancient myth of Neeli, which were once believed by the sub-cultural group within Kerala. The myth projected in the movie provides a rationale for Neeli's intentions and actions. It strives to represent the folklore of Neeli as a myth by associating her with the deity Kaali. Yakshi and other traditional supernatural entities of Kerala, such as Chaathan, Maadan, etc., are often portrayed as

bloodthirsty, demonic and dangerous, lacking particular character depth and tend to be sidelined when compared to mainstream spirits and demons. These mythical entities are considered 'other', but the movie breaks the traditional lore and reimagines it, providing Kaliyankattu Neeli with a backstory by adopting fragments from the old myth. Lokah presents the myths and folklore of the subaltern communities in a well-accepted manner among national and international audiences, gaining their widespread appeal, and contributing to the inclusivity of forgotten folklores and myths of myriad subcultures in cinema. Modernising the myth around Yakshi and Chaathan, who were often viewed as exotic, has opened the door to endless possibilities for the subaltern myths. Also, the climax of the movie hints at the representation of other mythical figures. Altogether, Lokah Chapter One: Chandra can be viewed as a mythically appealing film that adheres to the critical ideology of myth critics and can be seen as a film which seamlessly blends into the modern era as a result of its unique storytelling and utilisation of a popular age-old myth.

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THE ABILITY OF A PARENT TO CREATE OR DESTROY: A STUDY OF PARENTAL INFLUENCE IN KAFKA AND LAWRENCE

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Abstract

*This paper strongly desires to make an impact through the voices of Gregor Samsa from Franz Kafka's *The Metamorphosis* and Paul from D H Lawrence's *The Rocking Horse Winner*. They were two fine individuals with a desperate yearn for parental love. Their sorrows turn the reader's attention to their parents. Prospective parents must go through psychological evaluations which determine their ability to care for a child. This paper will also include personal episodes emphasising that the lives of Gregor and Paul serve as solace for children across the world who are subject to similar fate and urges a call to action.*

Keywords: *parents, childhood, gregor samsa, Paul, psychology, neglect, love*

What was it like to live in the shoes of Gregor Samsa? Here's a taste of it. After getting up at four in the morning and tiredly getting ready to catch the train which leaves at five, Gregor arrives at his workplace. Although he's not fond of his job, he's sincere and has never taken a day off for fifteen years. Yet his boss always finds reasons to insult him and makes it a toxic environment. After he arrives home, he eats dinner with a family that views him as a banknote. This is how Gregor lived before his transformation. He was subject to abuse even after his transformation, but it was better this time as he did not have to go to work to feed his family and still get the brunt end of the stick. His transformation also helped him reason out a cause for his family's abuse.

Forgiving is good, but people often forget the boundaries that one needs to have with it. Constantly wiping off a bad behaviour as if nothing has happened makes it seem like it is welcome. Gregor Samsa keeps welcoming his family's abuse. His naive self doesn't even let him recognize that the abuse inflicted on him is wrong. To make matters

worse, Gregor even justifies his family's actions. An example of such an incident is when Gregor finds out that his dad had been secretly stashing money for himself, the money that Gregor had earned which prolongs the suffering of his son. He does this because it pleases him to watch his son suffer. Gregor accepts this happily and believes that "it was certainly better the way his father had done it" (Kafka, *The Metamorphosis* 33). Even the slightest idea that what his father had done was wrong never crossed his mind. Gregor's father was also glad that he finally had an opportunity to abuse him after so long that he let out a satisfactory "Ah" when he saw Gregor in the living room (Kafka, *The Metamorphosis* 44).

Gregor is behaving so not due to a lack of self esteem, but rather an absence of it. He disregards himself just as much as his family disregards him. He woke up one morning and had the body of a cockroach. Yet his first thought was wondering how he seemed to have missed his alarm, and how he could catch his train. Worries of what his boss would say flooded him. It is a bit of a stretch to say that

Gregor had a mind, but if he did, it was a dark place to live in. Like how a dog always keeps thinking of food, Gregor has always been thinking of his family. His thoughts did not go beyond that, showing that he has always been something less than human. His disgusting self couldn't be contained anymore internally that it exploded, and flooded out to the physical parts of himself, making him a vermin. It was a horrible sight to see and it explains why his family locks him up. They were well aware that they are the reason for his transformation, so they chose to avoid accountability. If only they showed him love and care, he would've transformed back into a human- a real one this time.

Gregor's family is more or less a portrayal of Kafka's own parents. Kafka has always had a strained relationship with his father. He is described as loud and perfect, while Kafka was lean and insecure. His father seems to have always had a mental hold on him, which led Kafka to make every father in his stories toxic, just like *The Metamorphosis*. Kafka's mother is docile and submissive to his father's demands like Mrs Samsa, but Kafka has always wished for her to be more expressive like Grete towards the end (Joshi). Kafka's existential struggles with his family, as a writer and a human being led to the birth of *The Metamorphosis*. His thoughts were revolting, like finding pleasure in imagining a knife twisted in his heart, or pondering about the creature of unhappiness. (Kafka, *The Diaries of Franz Kafka*). His state of mind rings alarmingly similar to Gregor. He couldn't keep them to himself anymore that it came out of him as a written work or as said by the man himself, "the story came out of me like a veritable birth covered with filth and slime" (Kafka, *The Diaries of Franz Kafka*). Kafka's works became popular only after his death and in the same way, the value of Gregor Samsa will slowly be recognized by the family little by little after his death. The liberation they felt after Gregor's death doesn't guarantee a

happy ending, it only shows their repeated rejection of reality. They would still have to go to work and only this time they have no one to poke fun at, insult or abuse. The cycle of abuse may repeat, and one of them will soon become the new Gregor Samsa.

Parents love their children, it's a given. But for Paul from Lawrence's *The Rocking Horse Winner* it was different. His mother Hester, desires nothing but money. She desperately wanted to keep up her "social position" (Lawrence 1). What's worse is that she was not willing to work for it. She wanted it to come easily, or "out of luck". Hester imposes these toxic values onto Paul when he innocently asks her why they don't have a car of their own. Hester in her own frustration chose to deliver an untrue philosophy, which Paul believes immediately (Lawrence 3). Hester chooses to put herself and her son in denial with a statement that they were unlucky. Paul then makes up his mind that he had to be lucky to gain his mother's love.

Hester's ungratefulness ruined not only her life, but the lives of those around her. Her grumbling was so loud that even the rocking horse and the foolish puppy heard it (Lawrence 2). Paul started to slowly develop hatred for Hester, and the wooden rocking horse was his only distraction from the fact that his mother didn't love him (DeLia). Paul never got to be a child, he was forced to grow up soon and so he often runs back to his horse which lets him be a child. It seems like Hester never realised that her babies were also human beings just like her. She could only look at them with contempt, which made them hide their child-like behaviours from her, like how Paul hides his rocking horse at the top of the house (Lawrence 8). Paul's race on the wooden rocking horse to win his mother's love did pay off in a way. It gave him eternal rest, a full stop from chasing love all his life, and he finally gets to experience it in heaven (DeLia).

D.H. Lawrence wrote *The Rocking Horse Winner* in 1926, when England was recovering from the First World War. Effects of industrialisation led to a widespread yearning for money, even at the cost of injuring those in the lower class (Qingqing 2-4). Paul was simply a pawn in satisfying one's selfishness. This was the situation of many individuals during that period. Lawrence uses the life of Paul as a warning and in hopes that it will help people have a change of heart like Hester might have had after her son's death.

On a close comparison of both the stories, one theme remains relevant. An obsession with money is followed by a tragic outcome. Both the families in question loved money, lacked money and it resulted in death. Is lack of money the issue then? Hester and her husband had expensive tastes and a social position to keep up. If they had more money, they would only like to increase their position rather than stay the same. Being wealthy thus wouldn't solve the case here. Paul himself tried to address the problem by gifting Hester five thousand pounds on her birthday. But this only made her worse, and the whispers in their house started getting louder (Lawrence 12). In the case of Gregor Samsa, he was simply the horror of the family, the one who had the smallest room (Kafka, *The Metamorphosis* 1), the one who had to suffer, the one who had to work just so they could laze around. After his death, the family was happy to move into a smaller home. If delved deeply into, it was never about the money. It had always been about their inability to love. Mr and Mrs. Samsa's relationship on close scrutiny reveals that Mr. Samsa had always dominated the household, with his wishes being given priority, due to which Mrs. Samsa was helpless. How did Mr. Samsa inherit such troubling behaviours? It is possible for them to have stemmed from his own family too. The same goes with Hester. After being paraded for years about her beauty, she had forgotten to love life for all the wonderful things it has to offer. Her value had been

reduced to her beauty, to which she had obliged, training her heart to yearn for material things. This is evident from how the centre of Hester's heart went "hard" when she had to love her very own children (Lawrence 1). Although Paul became exactly what she wanted- a money making machine, she couldn't love him, further proving that both Hester and Mr and Mrs Samsa were devoid of love. A life without love is one with misery. This means that the parents were suffering just as much as they made their kids suffer. According to 1 Corinthians 13:4, love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. Therefore, the parents of Gregor and Paul poured out on their sons only what they knew, and that was impatience, unkindness, envy, boastfulness, pride and every other sin that love could erase.

These short stories exemplify people who exist like so in the real world. A childhood filled with shouts of horror and rage is something quite familiar. Yearning for a father's love, watching a mother endure all forms of abuse is not uncommon, in fact hits close to home. Uncertain as to whether a fight would end in death, or just a couple drops of blood. Indeed, such experiences are nostalgic memories of childhood. Although these things are years past, such incidents come to mind over time and impacts how it shapes a person. It's in the way a person talks, moves and experiences. It is something that they carry in every bit of them, not as a burden but rather a piece of them that they just cannot erase. The hurt is carried over for generations, and rarely is it ever healed.

A legal system along with psychiatrists must be developed which enforces a new process into place, where young couples must undergo a series of tests and checkups before they are mentally fit to have a child. They would learn to be gentle and love their own baby and realise that every child is their own human being. Parents exist to provide guidance and blessing, not to own them or to use for their agenda. The purpose of having a baby and the way one wants

to parent, must be brought into light. This process must result in a certificate, and the couple would now be allowed to have a baby legally. The couple must bring their child to the psychiatrist every year or two in order to truly make sure that the child is able to undergo a fruitful metamorphosis, and spread their wings, wings which were cut off from Gregor and Paul.

The opportunity to bring another human being into the world, to care and nurture it must be close to sanctity and undertaken with much love and tenderness throughout their life, not just at the younger stage. It is important to not spoil them, rather learn to strike a balance between abundance of love and discipline. This is impossible to do if parents themselves lack love, intelligence or maturity. Why reproduce in that case and add on to the miseries of the world? It is an absolute fallacy. The voices of Gregor and Paul, the dying tender voices which still echoes every second begging for their parents' love assure that it is better for one to not exist rather than live such a quality of life. Every experience shapes us human beings into who we are today. Be it a friend made in the first grade or the food savoured in one's body two days back. When we as human beings are that extraordinarily sensitive, how much more will the words that one's parents yell, scream or at times even physically abuse impact? Parents are supposed to be one's refuge from the world's troubles. It's high time they start playing that part.

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SALT SATYAGRAHA IN PURI: COASTAL RESISTANCE AND NATIONAL AWAKENING

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Abstract

The Salt Satyagraha of 1930, initiated by Mahatma Gandhi as a component of the Civil Disobedience Movement, exerted a considerable influence throughout India, particularly in the coastal districts of Odisha. This article examines the active involvement of individuals in Puri district, who contravened British salt regulations by picking salt along the coastline in locations such as Kuhudi, Astarang, Kakatpur, and the Puri shoreline. The Puri movement was characterized by the leadership of individuals such as Nilakantha Das, Acharya Harihar, and Gopabandhu Choudhury, in conjunction with the extensive mobilization of women, students, and local nobility. The article emphasizes the strategic significance of coastal resistance, the distinctive socio-political setting of Odisha, and the iconic function of salt as an instrument of economic and political assertion. This regional involvement not only energized nationalist sentiment in Odisha but also reinforced the wider movement for Indian independence. The legacy of the Salt Satyagraha in Puri exemplifies the efficacy of nonviolent mass mobilization grounded in local identity and collective struggle.

Keywords: Puri district, Nilakantha Das, puri shoreline, Kuhudi, Astarang

Introduction

The civil disobedience movement was a significant movement in the history of freedom struggle in India. Under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru, the national hero of India's youth, the Lahore session convened on December 31, 1929, and modified the Congress creed from Dominion Status to total Independence. It made an appeal to the Government Committees, Provincial Councils, and Assembly members of Congress, pleading with them to step down from their positions. It additionally agreed to designate January 26, 1930, as National Independence Day and gave the All-India Congress Committee permission to begin a campaign of civil disobedience.ⁱⁱ

In Odisha, The Odisha Provincial Congress Committee (PCC) leadership, which participated in

the Lahore Congress included Gopabandhu Choudary, Hare Krushna Mahatab, Nilakantha Das and Niranjana Pattanaik.ⁱⁱⁱ Back from Lahore the PCC organized a province wide campaign, for propagating Purna-swaraj resolution. On Independence Day celebration in Cuttack town on 26 January, the National flag was hoisted on the top of the Lingaraj temple and at many parts of the township, amidst chanting of nationalist slogan and songs. In the afternoon a meeting was organized at Kathajodi lower bed nearly five thousand people attended the meeting. The most prominent leaders who attended the meeting was Gopabandhu Choudary, Jadumani Mangaraj, Prana Krushan Paraihari, Naba Krushan Choudary, and Attal Bihari Acharya. Gopabandhu Choudary read out the Purnaswaraj resolution and

people raised their hands, to endorse the resolution message.

The working group convened once more at Sabarmati from February 14 to 16, 1930, and adopted the momentous Civil Disobedience resolution. Mahatma Gandhi advocated for the eleven-point agenda of the mass Civil Disobedience Movement. The Working Committee consequently authorized only Gandhi and his adherents to initiate Civil Disobedience. However, the All-India Congress Committee convened in Ahmedabad on 26 March 1930, after Gandhi commenced his march to Dandi, not only ratified the committee's resolution but also expanded its scope.^{iv}

Civil Disobedience commenced on March 12 with the historic Dandi March led by Mahatma Gandhi, the esteemed figure of the Indian struggle for independence. The entire nation rallied around Gandhi during this moment. From the Sabarmati Ashram in Gujarat, Gandhi proceeded to the Dandi coastline with 78 satyagrahis to contravene the unjust Salt Law imposed by the British authorities. Only one satyagrahi from Odisha, Motibas Das, approximately 20 years old, participated in that satyagraha alongside Gandhi *ji*. After a 24-day continuous procession, Gandhiji, the Father of the Nation, arrived in Dandi and violated the Salt Law by collecting a handful of salt on April 26, 1930.^v

In March 1930 the Utkal Provincial Congress Committee met at Balasore, where a decision was taken to celebrate on 1st April 1930, as the breaking of the Salt Law Day in Odisha, under the leadership of Gopabandhu Choudhry.^{vi} It should be pointed out here that probably the salt issue, had already been taken up by Gopabandhu Das, as well as H.K. Mahtab. Gopabandhu Das has focused on salt problem in the Bihar and Odisha's Legislative Assembly.^{vii} The idea of salt Satyagraha was suggested by H.K. Mahatab to Gandhi *ji*, when he was at Balasore prior to the Civil Disobedience Movement.^{viii}

It was determined to disobey the salt law at the seaside village of Inchudi, Odisha. The choice was made on March 16, 1930, during a special meeting of the Odisha Congress Committee. During this meeting, Gopabandhu Choudhury was selected by a unanimous vote to lead and supervise the satyagraha campaign.^{ix} In order to violate the salt prohibition on April 13, 1930, the first group of 21 satyagrahis, commanded by Gopabandhu Choudhury and Acharya Harihara Das, set out on foot from Cuttack for Balasore on April 6. Gopabandhu Choudhury, meanwhile, was imprisoned for seven days after being caught at Chandol on April 8 for disobeying 144.^x Next, the satyagrahis were brought to Inchudi by Acharya Harihara Das. Acharya Harihara picked up some salt soil while wading into the sea early on April 13. Countless individuals convened to observe the beach scene. Harihara Das, along with six of his volunteers, were taken into custody that day. Before long, a great number of satyagrahis entered the conflict and carried out the identical action of gathering salt by the shore.^{xi} Upon the initiation of the Civil Disobedience Movement, the peasants of Balasore reacted with fervent enthusiasm. The movement disseminated to Iram, Sartha, Padampur, Basta, Kasaba, Srijanj, Bhadrak, among others. The peasant assailed the propertied classes and initiated a no-rent campaign. In May 1930, the movement underwent a significant shift when over 600 farmers from the adjacent villages of Inchudi transported nine mounds of illicit salt to Balasore and sold it. The colonial police acted as passive observers.^{xii}

In puri, Nilakantha Das once more resigned from the Central Legislative Assembly by the end of April in order to participate in the Puri salt satyagraha. Govind Das and Jagannath Rath helped him. They traveled to Satyabadi, Astarang, Chhabiskud, Marichpur, and other places to inspire people to support the salt satyagraha. Meanwhile, on April 22, Gopabandhu Choudhury and H.K. Mahatab—who had previously been freed—were taken into custody

once more. On April 28, a hartal was held in Puri in protest of their arrest.^{xiii}

The Puri Congress workers pushed people to join the salt satyagraha during this time by organizing meetings and strikes. On May 11, a group of young people led by Rahul Chandra Chatterjee and the late C.R. Das's wife walked through the town while yelling things like.^{xiv}

“Down with Imperialism” and “Long live the revolution.” A conference took place in Praharajpur on May 17. The meeting was attended by sixty participants. Addressing the assembly, Balabhadra Mohapatra, Narayan Misra, and Ramaranjan Mohanty recommended that people start producing salt. They prioritized cotton production, Khaddar clothing, boycotting foreign products, and organizing social boycotts of law enforcement and government employees. Ananta Mishra encouraged the sale of Khaddar when she visited Berboi Hat in Delang on May 18.^{xv}

Salt Satyagraha at Kuhudi

In the coastal region of Astarang in Puri district, the historic Salt Satyagraha at Kuhudi was a defining moment in Odisha's contribution to India's freedom struggle. Under the strategic leadership of Gatikrushna Swain, a Congress leader from Kakatpur, and in consultation with Pandit Nilakantha Das, Kuhudi located 3 kilometers east of Astarang was selected as the venue for the civil disobedience movement to break the Salt Law on 21st May 1930.^{xvi}

Prominent leaders from various regions such as Puri, Satyabadi, Banapur, and Khurda joined the movement. Notably, Bhubanananda Swain, a local zamindar from Olangar, extended financial and moral support. Local Congress workers like Madhusudan Mishra, Purusottam Muduli who was left police constable job during non-cooperation movement, and Shyama Sundar Swain played a vital role in organizing the protest center at Kuhudi.^{xvii}

From Nimapara, freedom fighters like Mohan Das, Satyabadi Nanada, and Somanath Mohanty marched towards kuhudi, mobilizing people along the way to participate in the Satyagraha. There passionate call for action inspired mass participation, particularly from rural areas. Numerous local enthusiastically joined the movement.^{xviii} At Mulagada Congress Ashram, Bimbadhar Mohanty and his wife Tulasi Devi took active part in the salt violation. From Dahikhia Ashram, Bimala Dibya stepped forward with courage. In Gop's Subampur Village, Srimati Devi was arrested on the spot for her fearless defiance. Kunjalata Mohanty also emerged as a prominent female participant in the protest.

While Purnananda Swain did not remain at the center directly, he maintained close contact with the developments from the Olangar camp. His revolutionary contribution included mobilizing women into the movement by breaking rigid social norms and caste-based conservatism. He inspired Bimala Devi, a Brahmin widow, and his own sister Suryamani Devi, who in turn encouraged the participation of many other women.^{xix}

On the morning of 21st May 1930, Gatikrushna Swain led a grand procession from the Olangar camp to the Kuhudi grounds, accompanied by several distinguished leaders, including Jagannath Rath (District Board Chairman), Krupasindhu Hota, Sunamani Devi, Jagannath Mohanty, Sankar Sarangi, and Baikuntha Nath Pratihari, along with hundreds of volunteers.^{xx} The crowd welcomed them with floral tributes, cheers, conch blowing, and the national flag fluttered proudly. The air echoed with slogans of nationalism.

Thousands of men and women joined the satyagraha. According to their plan, they began producing salt by drawing water from the Luna River. When the police attempted to stop them and seize the salt, the volunteers formed protective circles. Despite brutal police lathi charges, the satyagrahis showed unmatched courage and restraint.^{xxi}

One of the most iconic moments occurred when a police officer beat a volunteer for hiding a packet of salt in his mouth. Witnessing the brutality, Radhi Devi, a courageous woman from Gudubani village, stormed into the scene, struck the policeman with her brass jewelry, and disappeared into the crowd, leaving the police stunned.^{xxii}

Amid the chaos, Jagannath Rath, Secretary of the Gopabandhu Daridra Narayan Seva Samiti of Sakhigopal, fainted due to the beatings, and Sankar Sarangi of Banapur suffered serious injuries. The police arrested Purnananda Swain and Madhusudan Mishra, but Radhi Devi managed to evade capture.^{xxiii} The Kuhudi Satyagraha became a remarkable victory in India's freedom movement. It showcased non-violent resistance in the face of police brutality, and the mass participation of women was a unique and progressive hallmark.

Following the incident, Gatikrushna Swain, Madhusudan Mishra, Purnananda Swain, Mohan Das, Purusattam Muduli, Balakrushna Swain, Shyama Sundar Swain and Many more arrested on the spot and sent them to Puri Jail and The Government made every effort to suppress the movement and issued search warrants in the name of several leaders of this local area. However, the spirit of resistance spread like wildfire. Salt-making began in Natara, Badagola, Keutajanga, Tikarapara, Kajalapatia, Tandahar and many other coastal villages. The Salt Act was effectively defied, and Kuhudi became a symbol of courage, defiance, and people's power.^{xxiv}

Though the salt campaign in the district was at its peak, with the beginning of the monsoon the manufacture of salt was hampered and the satyagrahis took a greater interest to get involved in the constructive programmes. As during the non-cooperation days, they organized picketing before excise shops, boycott of foreign cloth, spread of Khadi, non-payment of chaukidar tax and formation

of village panchayats. Shyam Sundar Senapati, Gangadhar Mohapatra and Nrusimgha Charan Samantasimhar of Banpur held a meeting at Kuhudi on 3 June, 1930 and discussed the constructive programmes of the movement. The people were requested to grow cotton, spin thread and use Khaddar in place of foreign cloth. A similar meeting of 150 people was organized at Olasingh under the leadership of Krupasindhu Pattnaik.^{xxv} Raghunath Misra, Sunamani Devi and Sreemati Devi addressed a meeting at Kuhudi on 4 December, 1930. About 200 people attended the meeting with all enthusiasm and spirit. The leaders delivered speeches emphasizing the need for the spread of Khadi, non-payment of chaukidar tax and establishment of village panchayats.^{xxvi}

Conclusion

The Salt Satyagraha in Puri district was a significant part of Odisha's contribution to the national Civil Disobedience Movement. Under the leadership of notable figures such as Nilakantha Das, Gati Krushna Swain, Madhu Sudan Mishra, and others, the people of Puri actively participated in protests against the British salt laws. The movement in Puri saw mass mobilization along coastal and salt-producing areas like Chilika, Astaranga, Marichpur, Khandasahi, and Kakatpur. Women and men alike joined the struggle, fearlessly breaking the salt laws by making and selling salt outside the colonial monopoly. The Satyagrahis in Puri faced severe police repression, including arrests and lathi-charges, yet the movement maintained strong momentum. Women leaders such as Suna Mani Debi and Radhi Devi also played pivotal roles, inspiring many to join the struggle. The Puri Salt Satyagraha not only challenged British authority but also helped galvanize the local population, making it an essential chapter in Odisha's freedom movement and contributing to the wider push for India's independence.

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SUDHA MURTY'S WORK "THE MOTHER I NEVER KNEW": THE TALE OF SACRIFICE

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Abstract

With the genesis of human civilization on universe, mothers have played a vital role in human communities, serving as the primary caretakers of families. Both mother and father are indispensable part of the family unit, working together like two wheels of the same chariot while fathers provide for the family's material needs, mothers endow with emotional support and nurturing. Mothers are the foundations of the family, offering comfort, guidance and selflessness. Without a mother's sustenance, a family is incomplete and often struggles to thrive. Throughout history, intellectuals have acknowledged the significance of a mother's role in society. A mother's transformation from a woman to a caregiver is profound. She prioritizes her children's needs above her own, dedicating herself to their well-being and development. As the key provider of emotional support, mothers play a critical role in shaping their families lives. Motherhood has been widely recognized by likeminded people and egalitarians as a cornerstone of the society, deserving of paramount importance. Both European and Indian writers have explored the theme of motherhood in their works. While some writers portray mothers as ordinary women, others elevate them to a divine status. Maharshi Aurobindo praised lavishly mother in his famous book "The Mother" and described her as Mahakali, Mahalaxmi and Mahasaraswati. Sudha Murty, a renowned Indian author is one such writer who has highlighted the positive aspects of motherhood in her works. According to Murty mother is a life-giver, resembling God Almighty. Her writings consistently emphasize the centrality of motherhood, describing mothers as the centrifugal force that binds families together. Without a mother's presence, families risk disintegration. Murty's works demonstrate that mothers provide substantial support to their families. This paper will delve into Sudha Murty's respective on motherhood, with focus on her novel, "The Mother I never knew". The heart wrenching tales explore the complexities of motherhood and how it shapes the lives of children. Sudha Murty differentiates between mothers who nurture and those who neglect, highlighting the profound impact of motherhood on a child's development. Through her work, Sudha Murty shows how the search for motherhood is a fundamental human quest.

Keywords: *Motherhood, Quest, Embark, Affable, commemoration, complexities, Nurture, centrifugal force*

Introduction

Sudha Murty is a multifaceted personality- an educator, author, entrepreneur and the founder – chairperson of the Infosys Foundation. She has authored numerous novels, non-fiction books,

children literature, technical books and memoirs. As one India's leading writers, she paved the way for herself and other women aspirants who keep desire to enter into the field of writing. She, through her contribution in literary world, inspiring fair sexes to

pursue careers in writing and share their stories, experiences and equipping them to overcome the obstacles they faced. In her distinguished academic career Sudha Murty has brought out over forty books, focusing primarily on the urban-rural divide. Her writings often feature women characters who strive to bridge the gap between urban and rural societies. Moreover she highlights how women of all ages are victims of circumstances whether uneducated and confined to traditional roles or career-driven and facing societal pressures. In her works Sudha Murty skillfully portrays women in a compassionate and realistic manner, making her female characters quintessentially Indian.

Sudha Murty's landmark books often feature strong female protagonists, but the fiction under studies "*The Mother I never Knew*" she breaks away from this trend. Instead she entrusts the narrative to two male characters, one is a bank employee Ventakash, and the other is Mukesh, a businessman who returned from abroad to consign the mortal remains of his father to flames. In the first story, where Venkatesh, who was working as Government employee and acted the central character, embarked on a journey to uncover his father's past life. The truth he discovered shook him to his core, challenging his very existence. The Author dexterously portrayed Venkatesh as a bank employee who frequently faced the challenge of unexpected transfers. However, he approached each transfer with optimism. His latest transfer order from Bangalore main branch of Bank to Hugli bank proved to be a major breakthrough, bringing him face-to-face with his destiny. Venkatesh was a man of few words, but his happy go lucky demeanor quickly won over his colleagues at the State Bank of India. He formed strong bonds with them, and they grew to appreciate his quiet yet affable nature. As Sudha Murty further narrates, Venkatesh's transfer to Hugli was a decisive moment in his life. Venkatesh initially kept to himself in Hugli, interacting with only a few people.

However, as time passed, he began to learn about a man named Shankar, who bore a striking resemblance to him. Intrigued, Venkatesh dug deeper and discovered that Shankar was a simple schoolmaster living in poverty in Hugli. Once he visited a shop to buy a gift there shop owner took him doppelganger of someone he acquainted he said "Master please come in and sit down"(4, *The mother I Never Knew*,). To clear his apprehension he made his mind to pay visit to master. So When Venkatesh visited Shankar's home, he was surprised to find Shankar's mother and daughters there, as well as Shankar himself. The family was performing the Shrad ceremony for Venkatesh's father, and he was shocked to find that the names of his forefathers, which he was chanting during the ceremony, were identical to those of Shankar's family. He heard the same lineage that he chanted during his father shradda ceremony it can't be a coincidence that the names of our paternal grandfather great grandfather and our gotra are the same but his father name is Setu Rao while my father name is Madhav. Shanker and I must be related somehow" (57, *The Mother I Never Knew*). "Determined to unravel the mystery, Venkatesh returned to Bangalore and sought the help of his daughter, Gauri. Together, they opened his bank locker and found a photograph, a ring, and other belongings that revealed a startling truth: the woman Venkatesh had met at Shankar's house was his stepmother, who had struggled Venkatesh was deeply troubled by the plight of his stepmother and brother and decided to offer his assistance. However, his wife's mercenary nature and objections dampened his enthusiasm. Fortunately, his like-minded daughter Gauri came forward to help. She generously offered to share her inheritance with her father's newly discovered relatives. The story of Venkatesh provides a vivid portrayal of human relationships, highlighting the profound impact of societal pressures on women. Bhagirathi, Venkatesh's father's first wife, suffered greatly at the

hands of her family. After marrying and becoming pregnant, her husband was forced to leave her behind temporarily due to unforeseen circumstances. During this period, malicious rumors spread by certain individuals poisoned her grandmother's mind against Bhagirathi, falsely claiming that she was having an affair with her cousin, Hanuman, and that the child she was carrying was not her husband's. Under pressure from his mother, Bhagirathi's husband, Setu Rao, succumbed to his mother's wishes and abandoned his wife. Venkatesh wanted to provide financial support to the abandoned wife and son. The writer poignantly depicted how an uneducated woman, Bhagirathi, managed to raise her son despite facing immense societal pressure and stigma. With no one willing to help her due to the slur on her character, Bhagavva single-handedly shouldered the responsibility of her son's upbringing. The writer astutely observed that in Indian society, women are often held to unrealistic standards of respect and dignity, while men frequently take their privileges for granted. Despite being ostracized by society, Bhagirathi refused to give up. She worked tirelessly day and night to provide for her son and fulfill her duties as a wife, even observing the annual commemoration ceremony on her husband's death anniversary. Through her selfless service, Bhagirathi ensured a comfortable life for her son, performing her maternal duties without any resentment. In Venkatesh's tale Murty presented two contrasting female characters. Bhagirathi, Venkatesh's stepmother, a paragon of submissiveness silently shoulders her responsibilities without complaining. In stark contrast, Venkatesh's wife is a cruel and selfish individual who fails to understand the importance of family in her husband's life. When Venkatesh proposed a plan to support his family financially, his wife refused, revealing her true nature. Unlike Bhagirathi, who embodied the selfless qualities of a mother, Venkatesh's wife is driven by a singular motive: to accumulate wealth. For her social class is directly

tied to financial status, and she views those with money as belonging to a superior class. Through the characterization of Venkatesh's mother, Sudha Murty sternly critiques the societal double standards that suppress women. Bhagirathi was very young when she married Venkatesh's father. Tragically, soon after the wedding, she received shocking news of his death in a train accident. However before the accident Venkatesh's grandfather had long before broken away from Bhagirathi, unable to bear the humiliation of their family union. Believing her husband to be deceased, Bhagirathi took it upon herself to raise their son, facing immense hardships along the way. Sudha Murty also reveals that Venkatesh's father had been sending a monthly allowance to Bhagirathi, acknowledging her purity and innocence. Unfortunately, Bhagirathi never expected this financial support, as she had already left the village and settled elsewhere with her son. Despite being a mother, Venkatesh's mother received no support from any relative; instead, society tarnished her reputation with false allegations. She independently raises her son, facing immense difficulties, and eventually sees him become a successful professional with a family. This narrative points out hypocrisy in never appreciating the struggles and contributions of women. Even Venkatesh's grandmother, who initially liked her daughter-in-law Bhagirathi, ultimately turns against her under the influence of rumour-mongers, left her. The entire story vividly captures the struggle of a woman Bhagirathi.

Another tale, revolving around Mukesh, also explores the theme of searching for one's biological roots i e his parents. Mukesh's story delves into his quest to find his biological mother, who had abandoned him with a South Indian family. Sudha Murty described Mukesh's life in England, where he received a devastating turn of events. While on an official trip, Mukesh and his wife embarked on a mountain climbing excursion. Tragedy struck when

his wife slipped and fell, sustaining serious injuries that required immediate surgery. As Mukesh struggled to cope with this crisis, he received more distressing news: his father was unwell and he needed to return to India immediately. Mukesh left his wife in the care of his friend and returned to India. Upon arriving in his homeland, he was struck by two devastating revelations. Firstly, he learned that his father had passed away due to a heart attack. Secondly, he discovered the shocking truth that he was an adopted son, not biological. As his mother revealed, they had adopted him from a Punjabi lady whose in-laws had considered him unlucky. Krishan, his adoptive father, had brought him up with love and care. Sudha Murty poignantly captured Mukesh's emotional turmoil, as despite his deep love for his adoptive parents, he couldn't help but yearn to meet his biological parents. Mukesh was flabbergasted to discover that the lady he was searching for, Rupinder, was actually a surrogate mother who had taken him from his biological mother, Nirmala. The author astutely observed that Mukesh was excited to discover his biological mother, but he couldn't shake off the feeling of guilt and betrayal. Eventually, he came to terms with the situation and acknowledged that he belonged to his adoptive mother, Sumati. He confided in Krishna about his heart-wrenching discovery. Through Mukesh's characterization, Sudha Murty exposed the hollowness of societal values. Mukesh, who was considered inauspicious for his family, was abandoned by them, while he brought fame, power, and wealth to his adoptive parents. Ironically, his family's rejection proved to be a blessing in disguise for him.

Moreover, the two women, Rupinder and Nirmala, bore the brunt of conventional beliefs. Rupinder was forced into abandoning Mukesh due to her in-laws' disapproval, while Nirmala, being an unwed mother, faced stigma and was convinced to hand over her child to Rupinder. Rupinder, who had given birth to a premature baby, accepted Mukesh

under pressure from her in-laws to produce an heir. Both women found ways to cope with their problems, but they were victimized by the societal expectations of fake morality. Sudha Murty criticized the Indian society, where women are often denied their individuality and are forced to live according to the whims of others. Nirmala, who had given birth to Mukesh, wanted to raise him but faced opposition from her family, especially her father. She was left with no choice but to find an alternative solution. Murty delineated when Nirmala met Mukesh she was overjoyed. She was struck by the respect, dignity and humility that radiated from his behaviour. These were qualities she had found lacking in her in her own children, born to her second husband after Mukesh's birth. Nirmala's heart swelled with happiness as she expressed her admiration to Mukesh saying "I salute the mother who made you what you are" (202, *The Mother I Never Knew*).

Conclusion

This narrative highlights the complexities of motherhood and the contrasting values that different individuals may hold. In her magnum opus, Sudha Murty portrays several shades of women, each with distinct characteristics, firstly she narrated the sacrifices of Venkatesh's stepmother Bhagirathi, who sacrificed her comfort for the man who had moved on and was living comfortably. Despite Venkatesh's father passing, she continued to fulfill her duties; embodying sacrifice and fortitude. In contrast Venkatesh's wife represents a world where material wealth is paramount. Her relentless pursuit of wealth leaves her family as an afterthought. When Venkatesh discovers new relatives his wife refuses to provide financial assistance. Another woman, Rupinder Kaur, a Punjabi lady is shown as a suppressed individual despite being forced to discard her son due to family pressure, she never asserts her rights. Rupinder was not the biological mother, instead she adopted the child from Nirmala, an

unwed mother who had conceived out of wedlock. After the child's birth Nirmala had contemplated abandoning him on the temple stairs but her plan was foiled when Rupinder appeared and took the child in. Mukesh was perplexed by these revelations, but he consoled himself by reflecting that his own parents were far more virtuous than these individuals. Ultimately Mukesh reaffirmed his sense of belonging, declaring that he solely belonged to his parents (Krishna Rao and Sumati). Sudha Murty's "The mother I never knew" is the true meaning of motherhood because mother does not only raise a generation but she inculcates values which reflects when a child grows up. Through this work the author once again immortalizes mother and her sacrifices

and firmly placed this thought here that no one pay back the love of mother.

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IMPACT OF GOVERNMENT SCHEMES EVALUATING THE ROLE OF VILLAGE COUNCILS IN NAGALAND

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Abstract

The Nagaland government regularly implements various scheme design to benefit different groups of people based on factor such as age, occupation, and other characteristics. These initiatives aim to promote equality and ensure every citizen has equal opportunities for a better life. Although many programmes receive support from both local and state government public awareness remain limited because not all initiatives are effectively promoted. The validity of many plans expires before the right individuals even learn about them. Against the backdrop, this research paper examines some of Nagaland's most essential government initiatives. It evaluates how they have affected the economy and social fabric of the Nagas in the Longleng district of Nagaland.

Keywords: *local governance, local development, longleng, village council, and village development board*

Introduction

Government programs aim to raise the standard of living for the population. Central Sector Schemes (CS) and Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) are officially divided into different categories. While CSS initiatives receive significant financing from the centre but the government and local bodies carry out these programs efficiently. CS schemes are wholly funded and run by the central government. According to India's Union Budget for 2022, there are 65 Centrally Sponsored Schemes and 740 Central Sector Schemes. The success of these programs varies some have achieve significant result while other continues to face challenges. With a focus on underprivileged populations like women, children, the elderly, people with disabilities, Scheduled Castes (SC), and Scheduled Tribes (ST), the Indian government provides a wide range of programs aim to improve the living standard of the people. approximately 300 government programs cover a

wide range of subjects, such as rural development, poverty alleviation, women's empowerment, education, health, and agriculture. The Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana, Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, and Ayushman Bharat are some of the government's most prominent programs. To reach the most vulnerable and disenfranchised people in society, the government has invested a significant amount of money in these initiatives. Numerous government departments and agencies carry out these programs, which are regularly reviewed and monitored to ensure their effectiveness. By improving access to essentials and elevating the standard of living, the programs have successfully improved the lives of the people. Government initiatives are crucial to promoting the socioeconomic development and inclusion of the country. Village councils in the State of Nagaland are responsible for carrying out state-supported and centrally sponsored programs, ensuring their successful implementation while

maintaining customary dispute resolution and community engagement procedures (Das, 2018; Sharma, 2020). The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act of Mahatma Gandhi (MGNREGA), Grant-in-Aid (GIA), Matching Cash Scheme, Post Office Time Deposit (POTD), and Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G) are some of the government programs implemented by the village council. These initiatives tackle significant issues including unemployment, health risks, livelihood creation, and disaster resilience to providing basic needs like food, housing, sanitary conditions, and clean drinking water (Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, 2021). Despite their potential, the success of these programs depends on the efficiency of local government agencies and the active involvement of rural communities in the planning and oversight processes (Kumar & Singh, 2019). The function of village councils in Nagaland's Longleng District is examined in this paper. It investigates how these conventional institutions support conflict resolution, community involvement, and the execution of development initiatives when combined with contemporary administrative tools. Village councils are the link between communities and the state administration. They ensure that development projects are contextually appropriate and successfully carried out (Bhagat, 2017). In places like Longleng District, where socioeconomic challenges, cultural diversity, and geographic isolation necessitate an inclusive and adaptable government approach to development, their role is crucial. Village councils help mobilise local resources, promote group decision-making, and guarantee that development initiatives align with the goals and priorities of the local populace (Das, 2018). The village councils have solved issues like unemployment, poverty, and infrastructure deficiencies by fusing traditional governance systems with contemporary administrative structures. For instance, programs such as MGNREGA have

empowered local communities to actively participate in the planning and implementation of projects related to afforestation, water conservation, and road construction, while also creating employment opportunities (Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, 2021). Similarly, PMAY-G has greatly enhanced housing conditions, while programs like POTD and the Matching Cash Scheme have promoted financial inclusion and savings among rural households (Kumar & Singh, 2019). However, issues such as poor infrastructure, restricted access to technology, and a lack of communication between local governance organisations and higher administrative authorities can make these initiatives less efficient. Innovative solutions, including the creation of a specialised district-level web portal, are desperately needed to address these problems. A platform like this might make development program planning, execution, and monitoring more efficient while guaranteeing accountability, transparency, and community involvement (Mehta & Shah, 2020). The portal could enhance the overall impact of rural development programs by bridging the gap between policy formulation and grassroots implementation. It would provide real time data, enable feedback mechanism and ensure efficient resource allocation. The purpose of this study is to present a thorough examination of the function of village councils in Longleng District, emphasising both their positive contributions to rural development and potential areas for development. The research aims to provide valuable suggestions for enhancing local government and guaranteeing the sustainable development of rural communities by analysing the interaction between conventional governance systems and contemporary administrative structures. The finding of the study contributes to the broader discussion on rural development and decentralized governance by offering valuable insights to administrator policy maker, and development professional working in similar context within India and beyond. Village

Councils are essential local government structures that have their roots in Phom Naga customs and are strengthened by the Indian constitution. This essay highlights the important roles these organizations play in resolving conflicts, encouraging community involvement, and carrying out development initiatives.

The study analyses the positive impact of rural development programmes and poverty alleviation schemes such as MGNREGA, Grant-in-Aid (GIA), Matching Cash Scheme, Post Office Time Deposit (POTD), PMAY-G, etc., on grassroots development. These initiatives produced livelihood resources, reduced health risks, produced employment possibilities, shielded local populations from natural calamities, and gave the local populace access to basic amenities including food, shelter, sanitary facilities, clean drinking water, and safe housing. Additionally, the regional government plays a critical role in developing rural development and enhancing the welfare of society. A specialized web gateway at the district level is desperately needed to guarantee the successful execution of these programs. A platform like this would make it easier for rural communities to actively participate in the planning and monitoring stages, which would improve accountability and transparency in the way development initiatives are carried out.

Study Area

Longleng District, formed through the bifurcation of Tuensang District in 2004, lies in eastern Nagaland, and covers the area of 562 square kilometres of rugged terrain. It borders the Sivasagar district of Assam and the Mon, Mokokchung, and Tuensang districts of Nagaland. The population of Longleng district is 50,484 according to the 2011 Census, with 96.3% of the population being scheduled tribes. Longleng district is the ancestral home of the Phom Naga tribe. The district offices are in Longleng Town, which is 1,066 meters above sea level. The socio-economic life of the people, who mainly depend on

agriculture, traditional handicrafts, and collective land management systems, is shaped by the region's landscape. The district features diverse landscapes and a predominantly agrarian population. Longleng village council system has a long history dating back to the pre-colonial period when Phom elders had the power to settle conflicts and administer resources through traditional customary practices. The government established the system to strengthen local governance and community participation. This system was established during the British colonial era with the appointment of Gaon Buras, or village headmen, who served as a liaison between the local population and the colonial government. The 1963 constitutional provision of Article 371A, which maintained the primacy of tribal customary laws and exempted Nagaland from the national Panchayati Raj system, further enhanced the authority of these councils. Following independence, this custom continued (Government of India, 1963). Longleng contemporary village councils are composed of selected and hereditary members who are in charge of various duties, such as land allocation, administration of justice, and carrying out development projects in coordination with Village Development Boards (VDBs). These councils showcase Nagaland's unique approach to local governance by combining traditional authority with statutory institutions in a unique way.

Review of Literature

Following independence, the Indian government started several initiatives for rural development. Examples are the Government of India's 1959 Community Development Program (1952), which aims to eliminate poverty and increase awareness among people. Package Program (1960), High Yielding Variety Program (1969), Small Farmers Development Agency (1971), Drought Prone Area Program (1970), Well Construction Program (1966), Multipurpose Tribal Development Blocks (1959),

Minimum Need Program (1972), Command Area Development Program (1977), Desert Development Program (1977), Training of Rural Youth for Self-Employment Program (1979), The researcher gathers secondary data from a range of sources, including academic publications, government records, and novels about rural plans for government, local government, and development in India. A thorough examination and comprehension of governmental policies and the function of local government in rural development are made possible by qualitative research. Particular government rural development programs were selected as the sample for this investigation. Additionally, it analyses the information gathered from secondary sources using a content analysis methodology.

Methodology

This study draws on secondary data sources. It evaluates the functioning of local governance institutions in the Longleng district of Nagaland and analyses the impact of government programs on rural development. The researcher gathers secondary data from various sources, including official reports, scholarly publications, and books about Indian government programs, local governance, and rural development. The data gathered from secondary sources then analysed using a content analysis.

Objectives

1. To study the role of Village Councils in village development.
2. To analyse the impact of rural development programmes/poverty alleviation schemes on development at the grassroots.

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)

The Government of India enacted the MGNREGA on August 25, 2005, and it became effective on February 2, 2006. It first introduced in 200 districts

before being extended to the nation's rural districts. To combat rural unemployment and poverty, MGNREGA first deployed in Nagaland in 2006 as part of a state-wide rollout. Since then, it has been implemented in all state districts, including Longleng District. Since its inception, MGNREGA has greatly benefited Longleng District, one of Nagaland's most isolated and impoverished areas. The program has played a crucial role in creating long-lasting community assets, such as rural roads, water conservation structures, and afforestation projects. It has also generated employment opportunities, particularly during the agricultural off-season, providing rural households with a stable source of income. In Longleng District, MGNREGA has had a revolutionary effect, stabilising household economies and providing rural people with a crucial source of income, particularly during years of low agricultural productivity. The initiative has made a significant contribution to infrastructure development by funding the construction of rural roads, water harvesting systems, and other community assets, improving the district's resource management and connectivity. By mandating that at least one-third of the beneficiaries be female, MGNREGA has promoted gender equality and empowered women while also enhancing inclusivity in rural development. Additionally, by creating local jobs, the program has greatly reduced the need for disturbed migration among rural households, enabling families to remain in their communities and supporting local socioeconomic systems.

Grant-in-Aid (GIA)

The groundbreaking state-sponsored Grant-in-Aid (GIA) program, introduced in Nagaland in 1980–81, has revolutionised rural development with its creative decentralised governance model. This program, created under the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act (1992), is essential to strengthening local communities since it gives funds directly to Village

Development Boards (VDBs), the grassroots groups in charge of carrying out development initiatives. To guarantee that even the smallest villages receive significant assistance, the GIA, the only guaranteed fund accessible to VDBs, has an equitable minimum cut-off of 66 households and an open allocation system based on tax-paying households. This program is unique because it takes a three-tiered inclusive approach to development: 25% of funds are set aside expressly for women-led projects that advance gender equality, 20% are assigned to youth welfare programs that focus on skill development and job creation, and the remaining 55% are assigned to general welfare projects that address vital needs like rural infrastructure, drinking water, sanitation, and healthcare. This methodical distribution guarantees all-encompassing growth while keeping vulnerable populations front and centre. The program's real strength is its bottom-up planning approach, which gives VDBs the authority to choose, rank, and carry out initiatives that best meet the particular needs of their community. In addition to improving rural governing bodies' technical and administrative capacities, this localised strategy has encouraged previously unheard-of community involvement in decision-making. The GIA has effectively closed the gap between policymaking and grassroots execution by establishing a clear connection between resource distribution and local priorities. Over almost 40 years, the GIA program has been remarkably successful in enhancing rural lifestyles with observable improvements in economic prospects, living conditions, and access to basic utilities. While its focus on inclusive development ensures that women, youth, and marginalized groups actively participate in and benefit from development initiatives, its focus on participatory governance strengthens democratic processes at the village level. Today, the project is a beacon of sustainable rural development, demonstrating how local planning and focused financial support can result in positive, long-lasting

change in remote communities. Because of its continual applicability and efficacy, it is a vital instrument for Nagaland's continuous pursuit of inclusive and equitable development in each village (Ministry of Rural Development).

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G)

Starting on April 1, 2016, the Ministry of Rural Development launched the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G), a flagship housing program that Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled in Agra on November 20, 2016. The program's objective is to provide "Housing for All" in rural areas by providing basic amenities to eligible homeless households and those living in kutcha and dilapidated homes. The PMAY-G program, which is being implemented throughout rural India, including the Longleng District of Nagaland, uses SECC 2011 data to identify beneficiaries, certifies them through Gram Sabhas, and then deposits money into their accounts in installments. The program integrates with MGNREGA, SBM-G, and other initiatives to ensure access to LPG connections, drinking water, power, toilet construction, and pay jobs. By improving the security and dignity of low-income rural communities, PMAY-G in Longleng District helps to alleviate poverty, improve living conditions, and address the urgent need for sufficient shelter.

Matching Cash Scheme

The Matching Cash Scheme is a ground-breaking government-backed initiative that encourages investments in businesses that generate income and offers savings incentives in an effort to empower rural people. The program bridges the financial gap between urban and rural areas by methodically integrating rural inhabitants into the formal banking sector and promoting financial discipline among them through a unique matching fund mechanism. By matching government payments with household savings, the program creates a sustainable cycle of

capital accumulation that enables participants to participate in small businesses, agricultural innovations, and other endeavors that improve their standard of living. A key component of the program is its focus on financial inclusion, enabling previously unbanked rural families to access secure savings accounts and other financial services. Structured savings mobilisation, where households deposit money into designated accounts and the government matches their contributions to double their investment capacity, complements this focus on financial inclusion. The funds help reduce reliance on credit and break cycles of debt by enabling beneficiaries to undertake income-generating activities without depending on high-interest informal loans. The program requires mandatory implementation by all Village Development Boards (VDBs) to guarantee broad adoption. Violations will result in severe penalties, such as losing official recognition. Each VDB is responsible for raising ₹5 lakh, of which the state government contributes ₹2.5 lakh. When needed, VDBs can get additional loans for community-driven projects thanks to the collateral security provided by this pooled fund. The Matching Cash Scheme fosters a culture of thrift, entrepreneurship, and shared financial responsibility, which not only strengthens rural economies but also raises financial literacy, promotes self-reliance, and lays the foundation for long-term, sustainable development at the local level. It is an all-encompassing strategy that guarantees inclusive, participatory economic growth that aligning with the general objectives of reducing poverty and promoting rural wealth.

The Post Office Time Deposit (POTD) Scheme

Each Village Development Board (VDB) with 50 households or fewer must maintain a minimum deposit of ₹10,000 at post offices, with every extra household held as term deposits under the "VDB Welfare Fund." The money is moved to the Matching

Cash Grant or Fixed Deposit plan when these deposits mature. They have a five-year locked-in period. Each VDB receives ₹1 lakh from the state government to upgrade rural financial infrastructure, which enables them to get partner bank support through revolving funds. VDBs then use these funds to offer low-interest loans, fostering credit availability and economic development in rural areas. The Post Office Time Deposit (POTD) program, a component of the National Savings Schemes, offers rural populations a safe and alluring way to save money. POTD's guaranteed yields and adjustable tenures of 1, 2, 3, and 5 years promote saving among low-income households, improve financial security, and raise capital for overall economic expansion. The initiative promotes financial inclusion by giving disadvantaged populations a controlled, risk-free investing choice through India's vast postal system. The POTD program and VDBs, which serve as financial intermediaries, collaborate to strengthen rural credit institutions, encourage a savings culture, and support sustainable economic development in rural areas.

Performance of the Local Governance towards Rural Development

The rural development of Longleng District, Nagaland, has benefited greatly from local governance, with village councils acting as a crucial bridge connecting traditional governance systems with modern administrative frameworks. Rooted in Phom Naga traditions and supported by provisions of the constitution like Article 371A, these councils have effectively carried out a number of government programs aimed at resolving problems in rural communities. Measures such as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) have had a transformative effect by providing jobs during agricultural off-seasons, creating durable assets like rural roads and water conservation structures, and empowering women

through required inclusion. The Grant-in-Aid (GIA) program has also enhanced local government through decentralizing planning, increasing access to basic amenities, and bolstering the administrative capacity of village councils. Rural households have benefited from financial inclusion and savings because to the Post Office Time Deposit (POTD) and Matching Cash Scheme. At the same time, housing circumstances have significantly improved because to the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G). Despite these successes, barriers such as a lack of infrastructure, a lack of awareness, and administrative delays have occasionally kept these initiatives from realizing their full potential. Longleng District's local government has shown a strong commitment to rural development by utilising traditional authority and community involvement to guarantee the successful execution of development initiatives. However, creative solutions, such as a specialised district-level web portal, must improve accountability, openness, and community involvement in planning and monitoring procedures to ensure sustainable and inclusive rural development.

Impact of Government Schemes on Rural Development

The performance of Longleng District, Nagaland's local government in implementing rural development programs demonstrates a blend of modern administrative structures and traditional governance methods. Village councils have been essential in bridging the divide between lower-level communities and higher administrative levels because of their strong Phom Naga traditions and the support of constitutional provisions like Article 371A. These councils have effectively implemented multiple government initiatives, addressing issues such as unemployment, poverty, inadequate infrastructure, and limited access to essential services. Measures like the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), which mandates that

one-third of beneficiaries be women, have increased employment opportunities, empowered women, and developed durable assets like rural roads and water conservation facilities. However, its effectiveness has occasionally been impeded by recipients' ignorance and delays in wage payments. The Grant-in-Aid (GIA) program has enhanced local governance by promoting participatory governance, decentralizing planning, and increasing access to basic utilities like clean drinking water and sanitary facilities. However, limited financial autonomy and bureaucratic delays in award disbursement have hampered its full usefulness. The Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G) has significantly improved housing conditions by providing pucca houses with basic utilities; nonetheless, issues with beneficiary identification and building delays still exist. The Matching Cash Scheme has promoted financial inclusion and entrepreneurship by offering incentives for saving and income-generating activities; but, due to a lack of accessibility and knowledge, participation has been restricted in remote areas. In a similar vein, low interest rates have limited the appeal of the Post Office Time Deposit (POTD) program, which has provided a safe and practical option to store money. Longleng District's local administration has firmly dedicated to rural development by successfully implementing development projects through traditional authority and community involvement. However, infrastructure inadequacies, low awareness, and bureaucratic delays still exist. To ensure sustainable and inclusive rural development, creative solutions like a specialised district-level web portal could improve accountability, openness, and community involvement in planning and monitoring procedures. Local governance may optimise the effects of these programs, promote long-term growth, and raise the standard of living in rural communities by tackling these issues and utilising established governing structures.

Conclusion

Through the efficient execution of government programs, including MGNREGA, GIA, PMAY-G, Matching Cash Scheme, and POTD, the study explores the vital role of Village Councils in supporting rural development in Longleng District, Nagaland. In addition to addressing poverty, unemployment, and infrastructure deficits, these Village Council projects have promoted financial inclusion, empowered women, and improved housing. But problems still exist, such as poor infrastructure, a lack of awareness, bureaucratic red tape, and delays. A district-level web portal is one example of an innovative solution that can improve accountability, transparency, and community involvement. Local governance could guarantee inclusive and sustainable rural development and raise living standards by utilizing traditional governance structures and tackling current issues.

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AGRICULTURAL LOANS AND REPAYMENT: THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT AND THE HUMANITARIAN ASPECT

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Abstract

The agricultural sector, which continues to be a vital component of economic development in many nations, depends heavily on agricultural loans to increase its sustainability and productivity. Financial illiteracy, market accessibility, and climate variability are some of the factors that frequently hinder the efficient delivery and repayment of these loans. This study looks at how the government helps with agricultural loans, with a particular emphasis on programs and policies that help farmers, especially in developing nations, by giving them financial support. It examines the dual role of government action in promoting economic expansion and acting as a humanitarian force to rural poverty. By examining loan programs, repayment plans, and risk-reduction techniques, this study emphasizes the significance of government

Keywords: *agricultural loan, repayment of loan, rural loan programmes*

Introduction

Around the world, agriculture is the foundation of many economies, particularly in developing nations where a sizable section of the populace makes their living from farming. Nevertheless, erratic weather patterns, pests, and shifting crop prices on the market frequently present farmers with serious financial difficulties. Agricultural loans are provided by many governments to farmers in order to reduce these risks and promote agricultural expansion. But these loans have repayment obligations, which can occasionally become a significant hardship for farmers. This article will examine the function of agricultural loans, the repayment schedule, and the humanitarian implications of government involvement in this crucial area.

Objective of the Study

- To examine how government policies regarding agricultural loans affect small-scale farmers' access to loans and rates of repayment.
- To look into how humanitarian efforts can help farmers repay their agricultural loans and become more financially resilient.

- To evaluate the socioeconomic factors affecting loan repayment success as well as the difficulties farmers face in fulfilling loan repayment terms.
- To investigate how well government initiatives work
- To reduce risks and improve loan repayment in the agriculture industry.
- To suggest tactics and changes to policy that can strengthen agricultural loans' sustainability and aid farmers in their long-term economic development and loan repayment.

Review of Literature

Several studies (e.g., Osei-Assibey, 2013; Khatun & Roy, 2017) emphasize the importance of agricultural loans in promoting food security and rural development. For instance, Osei-Assibey (2013) highlights that microfinance institutions and rural banks have been instrumental in providing small loans to subsistence farmers, allowing them to engage in more productive agricultural practices.

(Meles, 2018 studied However, farmers' ability to repay these loans is often hindered by factors such

as inadequate crop yields, fluctuating market prices, and unforeseen environmental challenges like droughts or floods

Authors like Aker (2017) and Meles (2018) argue that agricultural loan programs should include mechanisms for debt forgiveness, rescheduling, or partial subsidy in case of adverse conditions, to prevent farmers from being trapped in a cycle of indebtedness. The literature points to the importance of understanding the humanitarian aspect of loan repayment, with several studies calling for loan programs that are both financially and socially inclusive. The humanitarian aspect considers the well-being of farmers and their families, particularly in the event of crop failure or natural disasters.

Agricultural Loans: An Overview

The purpose of agricultural loans is to assist farmers in meeting their operational and growth requirements. These loans can be taken out for a number of things, including buying land, machinery, equipment, seeds, and fertilizer. Additionally, when crop income may not be sufficient to support the farmer's household or farm operations during the off-season, the loans can offer working capital to cover expenses. Usually, governments provide these loans via direct lending initiatives, cooperatives, or specialty agricultural banks. For small and medium-sized farmers, the loans are frequently offered at interest rates that are lower than those of conventional bank loans. Furthermore, some governments may provide farmers with financial assistance in the form of deferred repayment periods, subsidized interest rates, or other measures.

The Value of Paying Back to the government

One essential component of the financial ecosystem in the agriculture industry is loan repayment. Repayment makes it possible for the government and lending organizations to get their money back, which they can use to recycle and lend to other farmers.

The sustainability of agricultural loan programs depends on timely repayment. On the other hand, repayment is not always simple. External factors that can significantly affect crop yields and overall income, like droughts, floods, or falling commodity prices, frequently put farmers at their mercy. In these situations, farmers might find it challenging to make enough money to cover their loan obligations, which could result in defaults or late payments. Although the farmer is caught in a debt cycle, this also impacts the larger financial system and the availability of future loans for others in need.

Financial institutions and governments are aware that agricultural loans are dangerous by nature and that a farmer's ability to make timely repayments may be impacted by unanticipated events. Because of this, a lot of loan programs provide grace periods, loan rescheduling, or in some extreme situations, loan forgiveness. The intention is to give farmers a safety net so they won't be forced into poverty or bankruptcy by uncontrollable circumstances.

Government's Humanitarian Function in Agricultural Loan Schemes

Agricultural loan programs have a humanitarian component because it is the government's duty to prevent farmers from taking on unmanageable debt. Governments understand how important agriculture is to economic stability, job creation, and food security. The social and economic well-being of farmers must thus be balanced with the financial interests of lending institutions. Creating loan programs that take into consideration the risk and unpredictability of agricultural labor is one way governments help in this area. Rather than treating farmers as purely business clients, many loan programs take into account the human and social factors that impact their capacity to repay. This can consist of:

1. **Loan Forgiveness and Restructuring:** To help farmers who suffer devastating losses as a result

of natural disasters, governments may offer loan forgiveness or restructure repayment terms, thereby saving them from losing their land or means of subsistence.

2. **Grace Periods and Deferred Payments:** Given the cyclical nature of farming and the fact that farmers' income fluctuates throughout the year, governments may permit farmers to postpone payments until after harvest seasons or provide grace periods.
3. **Subsidized Interest Rates:** To lessen the financial burden on the most vulnerable, many agricultural loans have reduced interest rates or even zero-interest loans for small-scale farmers.

The Indian Government's Rural Loan Programs with its Sizable Agrarian Economy

India has long acknowledged the vital role that farmers play in maintaining both economic stability and food security. The Indian government has launched a number of agricultural loan programs to support farmers, particularly small and marginal farmers, by offering financial support for agricultural endeavors. These programs seek to empower farmers to invest in cutting-edge methods, machinery, and infrastructure, encourage sustainable farming practices, and make credit more accessible to the rural populace. The Indian government offers several important agricultural loan programs, including the following:

1. Kisan Credit Card (KCC) Scheme
2. Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN)
3. National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) Schemes
4. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)
5. Soil Health Management Scheme
6. Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF)
7. Interest Subvention Scheme

8. Farmers' Welfare Schemes by State Governments
9. Prime Minister Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)
10. Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY)

Problems and the Requirement for Long-Term Solutions

There are still issues in spite of these government actions. Smallholder farmers in isolated locations might find it difficult to obtain credit, and agricultural loans are frequently not disbursed fairly. Furthermore, farmers may find it challenging to understand the loan application process or obtain timely support due to the bureaucratic nature of government lending programs. Additionally, the risk to agriculture increases as global climate change intensifies weather extremes and unpredictability. Therefore, governments need to modify loan programs to better reflect the evolving realities that farmers face, providing flexible terms that can take into account both shifting market conditions and environmental challenges.

The necessity of empathy and comprehension of the farmer's predicament is another aspect of the humanitarian component of government assistance. The government must offer social and emotional support in addition to financial solutions to prevent farmers from suffering needlessly as a result of loan repayment pressures. Governments must create an ecosystem of advisory services, community-based support systems, and financial literacy in order to achieve this.

Suggestions

Implementation of Flexible Repayment Terms: To ease financial hardship during off-seasons, governments could think about providing farmers with flexible repayment schedules depending on crop cycles. This would enable them to repay loans following harvests when their income is higher.

Establishment of Financial Literacy Programs: To improve repayment success, governments and nonprofits should train farmers in financial literacy so they can better handle loans and comprehend the conditions, interest rates, and repercussions of late payments.

Extension of Loan Accessibility: In order to guarantee inclusivity, governments should endeavor to increase small-scale and marginalized farmers' access to agricultural loans by lowering interest rates, lowering collateral requirements, and broadening the geographic reach of lending institutions.

Conclusion

In order to empower farmers, increase agricultural productivity, and guarantee food security, agricultural loans are a crucial instrument. However, because of the risks and uncertainties that farmers encounter on a daily basis, loan repayment is still a complicated matter. Governments are essential in helping farmers because they provide insurance, flexible loan terms, and market and educational access. The government's humanitarian duty is to design loan programs that shield farmers' social welfare and provide them with financial support, keeping them from sinking further into poverty as a result of outside shocks. Recognizing the particular difficulties of farming, accounting for the unpredictability of agricultural labor, and guaranteeing that farmers can repay their loans without jeopardizing their livelihoods are all components of a successful agricultural loan program. Governments can create a more resilient and sustainable agricultural sector that will benefit farmers and their communities in the long run by striking a balance between the financial requirements of lending institutions and the social and economic well-being of farmers.

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FOUCAULDIAN FRAMEWORK OF POWER AND RELIGION IN ACHEBE'S ARROW OF GOD

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Abstract

This study examines the intersection of power and religion in Chinua Achebe's Arrow of God through a Foucauldian lens. Achebe's novel explores the complexities of colonialism and the disruption of traditional Igbo society. Applying Foucault's concepts of power, knowledge, and subjectivity, this analysis reveals how power operates through religious discourse, shaping individual and collective identities. The protagonist, Ezeulu, embodies the tensions between traditional and colonial power structures, highlighting the complexities of agency and resistance. This study demonstrates how Achebe's work critiques dominant narratives, offering a nuanced understanding of power and religion in colonial contexts. It contributes to postcolonial and cultural studies, shedding light on the ongoing relevance of Achebe's work.

Keywords: *foucauldian, culture, religion, colonialism.*

Arrow of God is the third novel of Achebe which continues to dismantle the issues of colonization and Christianity in the African arena. The title of the novel is drawn from a famous African proverb which means, the will of God. Providence has always been a very important segment in all the works of literature, both the East and the West. Aristotle, Seneca and Homer have constantly talked about the existence of providence and fate in their works. The crux of all providence is the belief in the other. To believe that man is not the creator of his own destiny is the bottom line of everything in the world around. Achebe has also believed in the existence of the Gods and ancestral spirits which the English dismissed as witchcraft or whimsical tendencies. To begin with the primary question raised by the novelist is that, why should their Gods be shunned or done away with? He therefore gives a pneumatic framework to the question of considering the African Gods as mere nonexistent.

It would be apt to divide and categorize the reason as to why the Africans believed in the existence of God. To them a lot of their life is drawn from nature as its source. They are appalled by the Sun, the Moon, and the Stars and so on and therefore they thought to worship these natural sources which provided them rain and shine which was essential for their lands and cultivation. The other justifiable reason which the Africans profess is that, they are perturbed and turn panicky during the time of floods, quakes and droughts or rather the natural calamities drive them to worship God. There is also another theory put forth by the people that they seek the aid and help of these Gods in their course of life because, they have fully understood that the human life is potentially imperfect and therefore needs the guidance and mentorship of Gods and spirits for their progress. These are some of the answers and arguments which the author Achebe puts forth more frantically and symbolically to

express his disdain towards colonizing the minds and lands of the people. He is also of the opinion that the New Testament also believes in the Holy Spirit and therefore the spirits which the Africans believe cannot be sidelined or diluted. These are some of the basic tenets and premise with which the plot of the novel *Arrow of God* is set. One has to understand the reflections of Emeka .C. Ekke in his article titled, "God, Divinities and Spirit in African Traditional Religious Ontology" to know the intricacies of their beliefs

The concept of God, divinities and spirits in African traditional religious ontology has always been a controversial and misunderstood concept. Various factors led to this controversy and misunderstanding, such as prejudice by western scholars who measured African traditional religious concepts with Christianity. The other factors included, lack of in depth study of African religion, leading to hasty conclusions (209).

Arrow of God continues to question and reinstate the need to disregard or discard the traditional pantheistic religion and conversion to Christianity by giving up their roots and identity. Simon Nolan has penned down a story called, *The History of Umuchu*. The plot of the novel is borrowed from the story and centers around the height of evangelical religious propaganda on the one side and the ruins of Nigeria on the other. The protagonist of the novel, Ezeulu, is a God-man and a high priest of nature. He prides calling himself a sandwich of God and man and therefore is a man of high regard among his clan. On one side he is proud that he has religiously reconstructed his village and on the other he is sad looking at the mayhem which the Christian preachers have created in the name of civility, civilization and development of the Nigerian community.

The novel looks at colonial commotion in two ways. One is, the British coerce the people to adhere to their religion by giving up their barbaric and animalistic practices. On the other, they wish to keep the rebellions by their side and ask them to help the

English in religious administration. Ezeulu the protagonist is similarly requested by the missionaries to help them in their process of religious conversion. When he refuses to their demands, he is jailed and tortured. On the whole, the novel tells the various ways by which people suffered at the hands of the colonizers and also outlines the helplessness of the people in securing their own African traditional identity.

Ezeulu and Okonkwo the protagonists of *Arrow of God* and *Things Fall Apart* do not have the same mental equilibrium. Okonkwo was impulsive and therefore did not want to look at the various divisions in his community in the name of religion. He felt that his own instincts are more important and therefore lived a self centered life where he framed his own logic and way of life. On the contrary, Ezeulu was more objective. He felt that he would always be the faithful servant of his Gods rather than stoop in front of the new found God and therefore he stood for justice and unbiased attitude. His job was to translate and interpret the word of God and put it across in a more simplified language to his village folks. That was one of the reasons as to why he was considered the most powerful man among the clan. Umuro is the kernel of all the six villages to which Ezeulu was considered the chief priest. In the conflict of procuring a land, Ezeulu was very objective and said that their God Ulu will not agree to the protest of the English and claim their piece of land by fighting a battle. He said,

Umuro is today changing its Chi. Is there any man or woman in Umuro who does not know the Ulu, the deity that destroys a man when his life is sweetest to him? Some people are still talking of carrying war to Okperi. Do you think Ulu will fight in blame? Today the world is spoilt and there is no longer head or tail in anything that is done. But Ulu is not spoilt with it (27).

Power is one of the central images in the novel. On one side it is the power of the Gods and on the

other it is the power of the missionaries versus the colonizers. The English have constantly tried to belittle the people and their identity by claiming to protect them but invariably they exploited the innocent Igbo people. Achebe wants to write on the double standards of the English people who tried to manipulate them in the name of helping them. On the other hand, the power which the protagonist Ezeulu holds among his clan men and the six villages does not suffice to bring peace and harmony to the ensuing fight between the English men and his own men. Zulu fears the decline of his power with the declining vision problems he faces when he slowly gets old and therefore has his own doubts about himself and his encodings of the word of God.

The entire novel administers within the framework of power politics. One could take the example of the idea of cultural materialism which has close knit reference to Marxism and the observations of Michael Foucault. He always emphasized on the image of a panoptical prison which was used as a tool of surveillance to the prisoners in the jails of the United Kingdom. The procedure involved making a small vent at the top or the dome of every prison cell which would serve a twofold purpose. Firstly, it would allow the jail inmate to breathe and the other is the process of observance. Every single inmate of the prison is kept under close surveillance without making him aware of the fact that he is being watched. This allows the prison authorities to look closely into every action of the inmate making them gain control over the prisoners. One could find that the similar phenomenon is employed in the novel where the missionaries dwell deep down into the private lives of the individuals of Africa making them succumb to all religious and political powers in the novel.

The opening scene of the novel explains the transfer and the fear of the powers which is experienced by the protagonist Zulu. When the novel begins, one could find that he is waiting for the moon

to signal the coming of good times so that he can start eating the yams to signify the favourable moments for the beginning of the New Yam. Consequently, he looks at his failed eye sight which is more misleading and does not allow him to predict the coming of the month or the season of the yam festive. This is the best example which Achebe has tried to portray through the novel on the delegation of power and authority to the English. It is a sign of bad times.

Whenever Ezeulu considered the immensity of his power over the year and the crops, and therefore over the people, he wondered if it was real. It was true he name the day for feast of pumpkin leaves and for the New Yam Feast, he did not choose the day. He was merely a watchman. His power was no more than the power of a child over a goat that was said to be his; he would find it food and take care of it. But the day was slaughtered; he would know who the real owner was (5).

The novel draws a clear difference between power and power with knowledge. One could find that the white men were more powerful in the colonies because he was more knowledgeable than the natives and that is one of the reasons for his exercise of power over the Africans. Ezeulu realizes that the society is now garnering for a new ray of change and he thinks that this change would not only bring disharmony but also cause commotion in his village. He therefore secretly sends one of his sons, Oduche to keep a watch over the proceedings of the church because he considers that the white men not only hold the power but also the necessary knowledge to wield the power and manipulate it to meet his favourable ends.

There is a strong contraction in the novel about the power of the white man over the colonized and the power of the local people. Although he sends his son to the church to look over, he is very much certain that the religious power of the white man

would hold good in his village and he would no longer continue to be revered in his village as he used to be. On the one hand, he accepts to succumb to the power of the white man but internally, he is dismayed at the surrender because, all these years he had served the family Gods and spirits and therefore cannot accept to the fact that the Christian Gods are more powerful as claimed by the white men. As Alexander Pope once said, "He was willing to strike but afraid to get wounded" (Britannica.com). When he sends his son to spy the white men, it poses a lot more questions from the side of Ezeulu. One could not understand whether or not he undermined his own powers and wanted to seek a lot more power to enhance his existing power by watching over the white men and their prayers at the churches. Although Ezeulu is more powerful he has his own doubts about it. Even Achebe does not agree to accept to the fact that Ezeulu was less powerful than the English men. Achebe himself denies the fact that his hero was less powerful because he is still willing to refute the opinions of his fellow men that the English are far more powerful in terms of religion and politics as well. The following quote from the work, *Discipline and Punish* by Foucault envisions the nature and flux of power.

Power underlines all social relations from the institutional to the inter subjective and is a fundamentally enabling force. To understand power, therefore it is necessary to analyze in its most specific manifestations rather than focusing on its most centralized forms such as, its concentration in the hands of a coercive elite or a ruling class (3).

One has to understand that Ezeulu continued to be more powerful but wanted to have an absolute knowledge of the existing external power so that he can be more prepared to strike or refute the foreign religious power in case it finds its way to his village. He sees himself as the incarnation of fate or so called the arrow of God as retribution to the ruin of his own village. He wants to contend the fact that his Gods

are more powerful but he had none to believe or support him at the battle but finally he understood that he was the catalyst or the arrow which the God had used to destroy the impertinent villagers and the village, Umuaro itself.

The entire crux of the novel is not the fight which the central character is trying to wage with the English but rather it is a presentation of the civil war, the inner conflict which Ezeulu himself faces when trying to confront the white missionaries. The novel therefore deals with the individual struggles of a priest or the messenger of God. He knows full well that his own people are trying to turn hostile after the coming of a new religion and therefore he loses his power as well the power to see. On a metaphorical level, the losing of his eye sight means the losing of his vision and the mission to convey the message of God to his village men. On the whole, Ezeulu himself had lost the power or the power to control his men and he therefore chisels his own tragedy by not willing to help his own fellow men regain their beliefs in the traditional Gods and prove that the English Gods are not as powerful as the African deities.

Almost all the novels of Achebe have a more internalized conflict than the one those surfaces at the cursory level. Be it *Things Fall Apart* or the *Arrow of God*, both the novels show the conflict of the individual with the society and more importantly, the failure of an individual and his powers in comparison to the power of the society as a whole. Okonkwo and Ezeulu try their best to establish their idea that they must not defy the Gods or lose their own identity by trying to embrace a new religion and its culture but none of the members in the society and his community are willing to accept his ideas and therefore become hostile causing a ruin of their community and culture as a whole. Achebe writes on the conflict of the cultures but at the same time wants the white men to realize the physical and emotional damage they have done to the Igbo people in pretext of making them more civilized. The novel is a clash

not between cultures at the outset but it is a fight between the norms of a society and the thoughts of an individual to fight them over.

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UNSHACKLING THE SELF: EXPLORING WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN SHASHI DESHPANDE'S *SMALL REMEDIES*

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Abstract

*One of the most important Indian English novelists of the post-independence era is Shashi Deshpande. The late nineteenth century saw the emergence of the new woman, a feminist ideal that continued to have a significant impact on feminism throughout the twentieth century. The increasing respectability of postsecondary education and employment for women from the affluent upper sections of society gave rise to the New Woman. This essay attempts to examine the characters in Shashi Deshpande's *Small Remedies* (2000) as a representation of a new woman who defies a new position of freedom and choice with regard to marriage and sexual relationships in order to investigate this claim. It highlights how Deshpande deftly reveals the social mechanisms that contribute to gender inequality in Indian society through a thorough examination of the characters, story, and plot. Every person on the planet has gone through some sort of adversity, bearing device. She makes every effort to educate her women about their rights and gives them the bravery to stand up for them and carve out a place in society.*

Keywords: *trauma, gender inequality, female autonomy, emancipation, solidarity*

A woman who writes of women's experiences often brings in some aspects of those experiences that have angered her" (Ramamoorthy, 1991: 7)

In contemporary Indian English, Shashi Deshpande is one of the most influential novelists. She takes a fresh approach to tracking women's status in the twenty-first century. The majority of the women in her works are middle-class, with particular attention paid to their sensitive, conventional, cultural, and sexual roles. They portray educated, well-off women who are repressed and mistreated by men, other women, and society at large. They highlight women's perceptions of themselves and their internal conflicts.

Shashi Deshpande's meta-fictional work *Small Remedies*, which was published in 2000, tells the tale of three protagonists who engage in a hostile confrontation both in their private and public lives.

Three female characters are repositioned in *Small Remedies*, which is set against the backdrop of the negative effects of communal violence and the suffering inflicted on the innocent victims of the destruction of Babri Masjid in Ajodhya. The first is a music enthusiast, the second is a devout Communist, and the third is Madhu, a writer who is overcome with grief over the death of her young son. All of them are involved in a three-dimensional journey—firstly, in the tormented psychic inner self; secondly, in the private sphere of home and thirdly, in the outer public sphere. The really strong women in Deshpande's novels are the ones that cross boundaries, deviate from social codes and work their way to selfhood. They define their selfhood, freedom and personal space in highly individual terms irrespective of the compromises they may have to make.

This paper would investigate the dreadful experiences of Savitribai and her daughter Munni endured in their childhood as well as in adulthood. Those experiences have had an impact strong on them throughout their lives. According to Chandra Holm:

Small Remedies (SR) clearly bears the stamp of Shashi Deshpande's writing. In the manner typical to her writing the story is revealed through the inner consciousness of one central character, life around is focussed through the eyes of this character and understood through the mind of this one character. Not just in this aspect but also in her special way of looking at details, love for imagery, in her deliberately slow manner of unveiling the plot that is full of sudden twists and turns, in her ability to look into the depths of human heart and give expression to the feelings buried in there, and in the very honesty with which her central character confronts her own life, in the importance given to dreams to unravel events, this is a Deshpande book. (Commonwealth Fiction: Twenty-First Century Readings, p 261)

It discusses the solutions that the female characters attest to. It also draws attention to the emotional and mental challenges that women encounter. The book opens with Mudhu, a dispirited woman who has fallen silent after losing her son Adit. Mudhu was raised in a very protective environment after losing her mother at a young age due to her belief in little fixes. When Madhu first meets Savitribai, she makes it clear that she is forceful. Despite leading the most unusual existence, Savitribai experiences severe mental pain as a result of society's false standards. Savitribai never displays her sorrow to anyone after losing her beloved daughter, Munni. They both confirm her life and investigate her potential in the fresh tiny remedies. In Indian culture, mothers are largely responsible for their children's skill and ability development.

The story opens with a description of Bhavanipur, a small village where the narrator,

Madhu, goes to write Savitribai Indorekar's biography. Madhu was hired to write Savitribai's biography, in which she would be portrayed as a heroine. Surprisingly, she declines to portray her as such because she was a victim of the gender prejudice that pervaded our patriarchal society. Madhu thought it was not only unrealistic but also inappropriate to force the modern definition of heroism on a woman. However, she portrays her as a woman who was shielded both as a daughter-in-law in a wealthy Brahmin household and as a child in her parents' home.

A communal disturbance results in the death of Madhu's son. Madhu, the main character and biographer, is a very strong heroine who rebuilds her emotional, artistic, imaginative, and realistic self-confidence by rejecting her husband's essentialist worldview. Savitribai Inorkar uses her creative and intellectual abilities as a challenge. Writing is an act of empowerment in and of itself. Psychological pressure will continue even though many people will lose motivation and stop following their objectives, interests, and aspirations. Few people can accomplish their goals without making sacrifices, having difficulties, getting offended, or suffering injury. Savitribai tells Madhu about her challenging times. Kate Millett states, "Whatever the 'real' differences between the sexes may be, we are not likely to know them until the sexes are treated differently, that is alike" (Sexual Politics, p. 29).

Ironically, women in the family and society also support this. If a woman is married to a spouse who is understanding, she can fulfil her aspirations, whether they are from childhood or adulthood. However, the situation is very different for a male. As the head of the household, a husband can fulfil his desire even if he doesn't obtain a grateful wife. Savitribai tells Madhu about her father-in-law's musical interest as follows:

His longing to be part of the world of music made him a student all his life. There was always a teacher

to teach him- different instruments at different times. Vocal music, however, was part of his learning programme throughout his life. Sensitive as his ear was to good music, he must have been aware he would never be good enough. Yet he kept on, more to be in touch with music and musicians, to connect himself to the world he so loved, than to become an expert singer. (SR 216)

Hari reminds Madhu of her aunt Leela's memories when she is writing Savitribai's biography. As the oldest sister of her mother, Madhu had spent a significant amount of time with Leela and her family following the loss of her father. She looks for parallels between Savitribai and her aunt Leela:

I've begun thinking that in writing about Bai, I'm writing about Leela as well. And my mother and all those women who reached beyond their grasp. Bai moving out of her class in search of her destiny as a singer, Leela breaking out of the conventions of widowhood, looking for justice for the weak, my mother running in her bare feet, using her body as an instrument for speed- yes, they're in it together. But they paid the price for their attempts to break out. (SR 248)

The other powerful woman in the book, Leela, is viewed as the family outcast. She is a widow who remarried, and even worse, she married a Christian man. While Leela's excellent work as a teacher and social worker is quickly forgotten, the family preserves these memories. She is a lady who is ahead of both the current and next generations. The best portion of Leela's life is spent fighting against tyranny of any type while living in the chawls in extremely humble conditions while donning coarse

saris. Leela's latter life narrative represents economic independence, familial support, and a dignity and poise that come from her own grit and perseverance as well as the liberation and equality that she shares with her spouse, whereas her previous life was defined by tyranny by her family members.

Similar to Madhu's book, Deshpande's story pays homage to all moms who have broken free from this cycle and embraced their individuality. Any woman who wishes to break free from these constraints must be ready to be viewed as an immodest, impudent, and wicked woman; yet, it is ultimately worthwhile if she overcomes all these obstacles, realises her desire, and so defines her identity. In order to fulfil their goals, women like Savitribai have given up their connections with their loved ones and their families. Many women end up choosing to follow an inappropriate route in order to achieve their goals since there is no guidance accessible.

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HAUNTING THE PAST: MEMORY, TRAUMA, AND HEALING IN TONI MORRISON'S *BELOVED*

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Abstract

Toni Morrison's Beloved is a haunting narrative about the legacy of slavery, the intergenerational trauma it inflicts, and the possibility of healing through remembrance and community. Set primarily in Cincinnati in 1873, the novel centres on Sethe, a former slave who killed her own child rather than see her re-enslaved, and the ghostly presence that returns to disrupt her fragile peace. Through the concepts of "rememory," Morrison explores how traumatic memories persist and shape identity. Motherhood and the burden of guilt drive Sethe's actions, while the character of Beloved symbolizes both a literal reincarnation and a psychological embodiment of the past. The novel further delves into themes of community, isolation, and redemption, showing how the collective solidarity of marginalized communities becomes essential for healing. Morrison's narrative structure non-linear, lyrical, and deeply subjective underscores the complexities of memory, trauma, and the search for self in post-emancipation America. This paper analyses how Morrison uses characterization, symbolism, and narrative form to depict the destructive legacy of slavery, the dynamics of maternal love, and the arduous process of confronting the past in order to reclaim humanity.

Keywords: *Slavery, trauma, memory, motherhood, community, identity*

Toni Morrison's *Beloved* stands as one of the most influential works of African American literature, exploring how the trauma of slavery continues to haunt both individuals and communities long after its formal abolition. Published in 1987, the novel is rooted in the real-life story of Margaret Garner, an enslaved woman who killed her child rather than allow her to be returned to slavery. Morrison transforms this history into a profound examination of memory, motherhood, identity, and survival. Through the characters of Sethe, Denver, Beloved, Paul D, and Baby Suggs, Morrison portrays trauma not as a historical event confined to the past but as an ongoing force that shapes lives in the present. The novel emphasizes that healing requires the painful acknowledgment of memory and the restoration of community. This paper examines how Morrison develops the relationship between memory, trauma,

and healing, showing that confronting the past is necessary for reclaiming one's humanity.

In *Beloved*, memory is not passive recollection but an intrusive and active presence. Morrison uses the concept of 're memory' to describe how the past exists outside the mind and continues to influence the present. Characters cannot detach themselves from what they endured; instead, memories arrive like unwelcome visitors sudden, vivid, and uncontrollable. Sethe's recollections of Sweet Home, the plantation where she was enslaved, come back through sensory triggers such as sound, smell, and physical pain.

The presence of the ghost in house 124 symbolizes memory in its most relentless form. The house is "spiteful," filled with the rage of a baby denied both life and peace. The haunting demonstrates that trauma refuses to remain buried. Paul D's arrival temporarily pushes the ghost out, but

memory soon returns in a more powerful and physical shape Beloved herself.

Morrison introduces the concept of rememory to demonstrate how traumatic past events do not simply remain in the past but actively intrude into the present. As one character reflects: "What I remember is a picture floating around out there outside my head. ... even if I die ... the picture ... is still out there" (p. 43). This suggests that memory is not confined to individual consciousness but exists in a communal space, as a persistent image that haunts both mind and place. Another potent line is: "Nothing ever dies" (44). This stark declaration underscores one of the novel's central premises: the past, especially one rooted in trauma, cannot be entirely erased. It continues to live, unresolved, in haunting and re memories.

Psychologically, this resonates with how trauma is processed: memories may be repressed, yet they resurface, often triggered by specific places, smells, or sounds as Sethe experiences when she returns to Cincinnati, when she smells tobacco, or when she feels Beloved's presence. Beloved is both a literal and metaphorical embodiment of memory. Her reappearance forces Sethe to confront everything she tried to forget the desperation, terror, and violence that drove her to kill her own child. Through *Beloved*, Morrison suggests that repressed memories will eventually demand recognition. Denial, the novel insists, cannot lead to freedom.

Paul D is able to understand and verbalize Sethe's dilemma by concluding that it was dangerous for a slave woman to love anything, especially her children. Paul D thus points out the tension created by the system of slavery and the instinct of the slave woman to protect and nurture her children. Slavery claimed ownership of all its property and ignored the slave mother's right to determine the future of, to mould the character of, and to physically nurture her own children. Sethe instinctively sought to hold on and to love her own children, thus creating the central

conflict in the novel. At the end of the novel, Sethe tries to justify her action for killing Beloved and wants Beloved to understand. Marianne Hirsch clarifies that "when Sethe tries to explain to Beloved why she cut her throat, she is explaining an anger handed down through generations of mothers who could have no control over their children's lives, no voice in their upbringing" (196). Thus, Sethe verbalizes:

that anybody white could take your whole self for anything that came to mind. Not just work, kill or maim you, but dirty you. Dirty you so bad that you couldn't like yourself anymore, dirty you so bad that you forgot who you were and couldn't think it in: and though she and others lived through and got over it, she could never let it happen to her own. The best thing she was, was her children. Whites might dirty her alright, but not her best thing, her beautiful, magical best thing, the part of her that was clean ... (251)

Sethe's justification above is countered by some critics like Terry Caesar who maintain that "the action is horribly exacerbated with despair, fatigue, and confusion over whether the mother in fact kills her child"(113). Notwithstanding the divergent critical propositions, it is important to note that the novel experiments on the different responses both psychological and otherwise to pain and trauma; and that such responses depend to a great extent on the degree of damage done to the individual psyche. Slavery damages not only the body but the mind, identity, and emotional capacity of those who experience it. Morrison uses physical scars such as the tree-shaped mark on Sethe's back as permanent reminders of violence. Yet psychological scars run deeper and are far harder to heal.

Sethe's trauma is rooted in her belief that motherhood under slavery was a constant threat. She insists that her children belong only to her, rejecting the dehumanizing nature of slavery that views Black people as property. Her decision to commit

infanticide arises from maternal love distorted by trauma she believes death is preferable to bondage. Sethe's maternal love is deeply conflicted. She kills her baby to protect her from re-enslavement, but this act becomes both her salvation and her curse. Morrison writes: "Beloved, she my daughter. She mine." (256) this line reveals Sethe's claim over her child, not only in biological terms but emotionally and spiritually. It's a possessive love that refuses to let go, even when the child returns as a ghost.

At the beginning, the house 124 is described in ominous terms: "124 was spiteful. Full of a baby's venom." (1) This venom refers to the ghost of the baby, but also to the toxic legacy of Sethe's actions her guilt, her trauma, her regret which fills the house like poison. Paul D's trauma manifests differently. He copes by locking away painful experiences, imagining his heart sealed in a "tobacco tin," rusted shut. He survives by refusing to feel but this emotional numbness prevents him from forming authentic relationships. Trauma has fragmented his sense of self. Beloved feeds on Sethe's guilt and pain, acting as the living embodiment of trauma consuming the present. She demands Sethe's full attention and energy, draining her emotionally and physically. Trauma, Morrison suggests, can overpower the present unless confronted directly.

One of Morrison's most powerful arguments is that healing cannot occur in isolation. Sethe's troubles worsen when she withdraws from the Black community after killing her child. The people of Cincinnati once supported her escape and protected her from slave catchers, but Sethe distances herself out of shame. Her isolation allows trauma embodied by Beloved to grow stronger. For all Sethe's suffering, healing does not happen in isolation. The black community plays a crucial role, especially in the exorcism of Beloved. According to literary analyses, Morrison suggests that redemption requires collective action.

Baby Suggs's role as a spiritual leader is pivotal. She invites people into the clearing to celebrate themselves: their skin, their hands, their hearts 'their color.' Through this communal affirmation, individuals begin to reclaim a sense of self that slavery had attempted to strip away. Baby Suggs, the spiritual pillar of the community, had earlier preached self-love and healing in the Clearing, urging Black people to honour their own bodies after years of dehumanization. Her teachings echo throughout the narrative: freedom is incomplete without emotional renewal and communal belonging.

Denver serves as the bridge back into community. Initially fearful and sheltered, she ultimately seeks help for her mother. Her courage shows a new generation refusing to be trapped by the hauntings of the past. When the women of the community gather to drive Beloved away, it symbolizes the collective act of confronting trauma. Their solidarity singing, praying, and calling on ancestral strength restores balance to the home.

Healing in *Beloved* is not simple erasure of trauma but a process of integration acknowledging what happened, grieving losses, and rebuilding identity. Sethe must accept that while the past shaped her, it does not have to imprison her future. Paul D plays a significant role in this transformation, returning to tell Sethe she deserves love and a life beyond guilt. The novel ends not with complete closure but with possibility. *Beloved* disappears from the narrative, fading into forgotten memory not erased but put in a place where it no longer destroys Sethe's life. Denver begins building her own identity through work and social connection. Sethe slowly begins to heal, recognizing that she is more than what was done to her or what she did in response.

Toni Morrison's *Beloved* is a masterful work that probes the depths of slavery's legacy, not only as a historical institution but as a psychological and spiritual force that continues to shape individuals and communities. By daring to tell a story of infanticide,

ghostly return, and communal redemption, Morrison refuses to let the trauma of the past remain buried. Her concept of re memory invites readers to understand memory as both personal and collective, and her richly layered narrative reveals healing as contingent on both acknowledgment and solidarity. In the end, *Beloved* remains not just a novel, but a literary act of remembrance an insistence that what was once dehumanized be recognized, reclaimed, and redeemed.

Beloved challenges readers to confront the horrors of slavery not as distant history but as a continuing psychological reality. Through a complex narrative woven with memory, ghosts, and symbols, Morrison emphasizes that trauma survives across generations unless acknowledged and collectively faced. The novel illustrates that while trauma haunts the present, healing is possible through community, storytelling, and re-humanization. *Beloved* becomes a narrative act of remembrance ensuring that the

lives damaged and erased by slavery are never forgotten. Morrison teaches that confronting painful history is not a burden but a necessary step toward survival, identity, and hope.

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REVELATION OF NATIONAL ESSENCE AND HUMANISTIC FEATURES IN YUKIO MISHIMA'S *KANTAN*

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Abstract

The prolific and controversial writer Yukio Mishima has gained dual identity as a successful public figure and repressed in private life. Named as Kimitake Hiraoka by his parents Mishima adopted 'Yukio Mishima' as his pen name early in his career. He was a popular known actor, model, playwright and poet. Yukio Mishima was a right wing nationalist who was completely against modernism and westernization. His private militia named Tatenokai aimed to restore the imperial rule and he considered the Emperor as a spiritual figure and a central force. His intense love for the country, respect for the Emperor and the trust on his culture marked him a man of national essence. His extreme love for his country made him to commit Seppukku (belly cutting) when he acknowledged that he was mocked for the Emperor's power and military rule. Realizing that he has failed to make people understand the spiritual force of the Emperor, he shouted as "Long live Emperor" three times and faced death by committing Seppukku (death by belly cutting).

Keywords: *country, nationalist, seppukku, modernism, westernization*

Five Modern No Plays is a collection of plays written by Yukio Mishima between 1950 to 1955. This collection includes five plays with different dimensional stories namely *Sotoba Komachi*, *The Damask Drum*, *Kantan*, *The Lady Aoi* and *Hanjo*. The central themes of the plays in this collection includes the struggles of human beings, emotions of human beings like love, joy, despair, fear in the passage of time. The psyche of human beings is analysed by Yukio Mishima with psychological lens. Yukio Mishima's third play in the collection, *Five Modern No plays*, *Kantan* brings out the nature of human life, strangeness, emotions, ambition, selfishness with the character Jiro. The play is found with limited characters namely Jiro, Kiku, the Beauty, dancers, gentleman, private secretary, celebrated physician, doctors and a female employee. Mishima has categorized these characters in two categories (i) Real life characters (ii) Dream personages. The characters Kiku and Jiro comes under real life characters and the other characters are seen as the

imaginary personages in dream. Though the characters appear to be non-real and fictional, this characters replicate the inner ambitions in human beings. The journey to the inner psyche of human beings is achieved through the symbolization of magic pillow

The story of the play *Kantan* opens with an eighteen-year-old young man Jiro who laments about his frustrated, useless life to his governess Kiku. Jiro was occupied with the complexity of life and he assumes himself a useless creature.

JIRO

I can imagine. It's a proof, I suppose, that everything's at an end for me. I'd never have decided otherwise to make my way to such a place. My life is finished.

KIKU

What a strange thing to say! You're just eighteen! How can life be over at eighteen? Aren't you exaggerating a little? (85)

The preoccupied thought of hopelessness of life makes Jiro not to be convinced with the arguments of Kiku. Yukio Mishima uses the symbolization of Garden to the life of Jiro which is dead and hopeless.

JIRO

(Stands, opens the shoji a little, and peers outside.) Kiku,

why do all the plants and bushes in the garden droop their

heads? There's not a flower blooming. It's weird, that garden-

pitch black and absolutely still.

KIKU

(taking out the bedding) The garden is dead. The flowers

don't bloom, so there isn't any fruit either. It's been like

this for a long time. (88)

Jiro is occupied with inferiority complex and he feels himself as the reason for his failures. Furthermore, with the conversation to Kiku it is evident that Jiro is not content with his life and he also does not have a lady love or a friend. Rather trying to live the present life he is occupied with the failures and reminiscences about his past childhood days where his favourite room got burnt down and the car accident during his travel. Jiro is completely obsessed with the negativities happen around him in his life and did not try to live a happy life.

Jiro decides to sleep on the magic pillow to escape from the reality. The magic pillow is symbolized as a mystical object which reveals the world of illusions that a human likes to live eliminating the responsibilities, ambitions and desires in real life. In Bonaventura Ruperti's article "Food Culture and Traditional Performing Arts in Japan" the story behind the fictional magic pillow is revealed. Ruperti mentions a young man named Rosei (Shite) who visits a village named Kantan (Handan) borrows a mysterious pillow from the hostess of an inn. Rosei while taking a nap, he was immediately awakened by

a man named Waki who states himself a messenger of the kingdom and takes him to the royal palace. In the palace he enjoys like a child but soon after everything around him started to disappear: "When Rosei wakes up, he is in the original inn and he realises that all the events so far were dreams in which he perceived the essence of the things in the world" (Ruperti 76).

The same concept of magic pillow is used in this play *Kantan*. Jiro chooses to sleep on the magic pillow to forget all his responsibilities and commitments and to lead a life of a wanderer forgetting the past. The second part of the play opens with the dream of Jiro who is sleeping on the magic pillow. Jiro in his dream is seen as an exact complete opposite of the personality in his real life. The dream shows Jiro as a studious, rich, politically influenced man who gets attention from the public and a widely known public figure. Jiro is taken into experimentation with a beauty, three dancers, private secretary, politicians and doctors. Mishima portrays the scene as that of Christopher Marlowe has designed the encounter of Doctor Faustus with seven deadly sins: Pride, Covetousness, Envy, Wrath, Gluttony, Sloth and Gluttony. Mishima uses these characters as seven deadly sins to evoke Jiro's ambitions and to understand the value of life.

The characters in Jiro's dream are found with masks on their faces. The masks in the face of dream personages reveal the artificiality of human nature with the characteristic features like selfish, ambition, backstabbing and Cowardice. The masks of these characters reveals the invisible masks wore by the human beings who pretend themselves with the words of positivity and reflects with the deeds of negativity. Gabriel Okara's portrayal of the hypocrisy of adults is found to have a close relation to Mishima's portrayal of the masked characters:

So I have learned many things, son.

I have learned to wear many faces

like dresses - homiface,

officeface, streetface, hostface, cocktailface, with all their conforming smiles like a fixed portrait smile. (Brenda 5)

Jiro takes his first encounter with a masked beauty named Trite in his dream. She tries to take him into the life of commitments and responsibilities, initially with her beauty and later with the words and emotions of love, marriage and children. When Trite finds Jiro not being attracted with these things she takes a baby states the baby as theirs. She also claims the baby as a replicate of Jiro. The act of Jiro killing the baby makes Trite to understand that her plan has ended up in failure and hence so she calls Jiro a failure, she even tries to catch the attention of Jiro by providing alcohol and assigning three half naked dancers to entertain him.

The dream then shifts to the second phase where Jiro is an aristocratic, proud business man (as informed by the Secretary) who has a worth of 8 million Yen in real estate, 12 million Yen in securities and 20 million for income tax purposes. When Trite traces to attain Jiro with her beauty the secretary tries to grab Jiro with the words of ambition which makes Jiro to dispose all the wealth in his life. Mishima criticizes the modern political leaders of Japan with the scene of Jiro donating all his wealth and the Secretary's call to Japan News Agency informing Jiro has a plan of forming a political party in the future.

Secretary

(to himself) Ah-ha, I understand. He's got political ambitions. (carrying the telephone over to the toy table at right) Hello . . . hello . . . Is this the Japan News? Is Mr. Noyama there? The one who runs the political column in the city section . . . (to him'self) I must help the president get started on his political career, though it means wearing myself to the bone, though it costs me my life . . . Hello, Noyama? I've got big news for you . . . Yes, it's hot. . . The president of my company is turning over his entire fortune to the

union and social works. He's going to found a new political party, without a penny. . . . Yes . . . Please give it suitable coverage. I'll be calling on you in the next day or so. . . . Please . . . Yes . . . Please, in just that way. (123)

Mishima mocks the donation made by Jiro and he connects this with the Politicians act who help others for their own political benefits. Mishima connects this section of dream with Japan's politics where people move in favour of leaders rather following the Emperor. He satirizes the society who blindly protests and enters in riots based on the instruction given by the Politicians. Mishima use of the term "Sleeping Dictator" reflects his concern over the country which is found to be in the way of a spoilt child.

The words "He's still asleep" (129) reflects his concern over the country's growth and development. The act of masked physician to poison Jiro and his justification of living in dreams: "Therefore, in order to intensify their awareness of the futility of human existence when they awaken from their dreams, they are always offered an elixir of immortality-that's in the dream in which they become Emperor" (35) intensify the tension and Jiro realizes the purpose of life and states that life is as that of the dream he encountered. As the choice of Jiro back to life it is the decision of every individual to choose whether to live the life or die. He further understands that each day is a new opportunity and the tools are given in every single person to grow or to destroy.

Mishima wants everyone to choose their own life. Jiro's scream "Nevertheless I want to live" (137) must be the thought of every individual. As that of the dream personages of Jiro lot of challenges may also occur in human life and it is the responsibility of every human being to select or ignore what they need and what they are not in need. Mishima underlines the statement that though life is not predictable live the present and make the life more fragranced and beautiful. Through the last lines of the play "It's

strange . . . it's strange. The garden has come back to life" (141), Mishima reveals that it is the actions of behaviour of human beings which change the world around them. It is the responsibility of each and every individual to select the good deeds, eliminate the evil and negativities, ignore the masked people around and live the garden of life.

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YOGA: A KEY TO LIFE SKILLS?

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Abstract

Yoga is a holistic discipline originating from ancient practices that intertwines physical postures, controlled breathing techniques, mindfulness, and philosophical principles. It serves as a transformative journey aiming to unify the mind, body and spirit, fostering balance, harmony and self-awareness within oneself and the surrounding world. Life skills are the abilities and behaviours that enable individuals to effectively handle the demands and challenges of everyday life, encompassing communication, decision-making, stress management, emotional regulation and interpersonal relationships. This study aimed at finding out how yoga may impact different facets of life as perceived by the individuals practicing it. Eighty-four participants belonging to the adult category were enrolled for the study. They gave ratings on their perception of standing on various aspects of 10 Life Skills laid down by WHO before and after they practiced yoga over a period of time. The t-test was applied to check whether the difference in their ratings pre and post yoga practice was statistically significant. The findings of the study revealed that overall, combining all life skills as well as in case of each life skill, the difference between pre and post practice of yoga was found to be statistically significant. That means, in the perception of participants, practice of yoga did contribute towards development of all 10 Life Skills.

Keywords: *yoga, life skills, meditation, self-awareness, empathy, asanas*

Yoga is a holistic discipline from ancient Indian traditions that integrates physical postures (asanas), breath control (pranayama), meditation and ethical principles to align mind, body and spirit (Iyengar, 1966). The term Yoga, derived from "Yuj" which signifies the union which is essential for physical health and effective mental, emotional and social functioning. As a practical system, yoga employs various methods to cultivate physical and mental well-being and ultimately harmonize the individual with a transcendent experience (Aurobindo, 1999).

According to the WHO (1993), life skills are adaptive and positive behaviours that enable individuals to effectively manage everyday demands and challenges. The life skills are psychosocial and interpersonal competencies that support informed decision-making, problem-solving, creative and

critical thinking, effective communication, healthy relationships, empathy and coping skills. These abilities help individuals act in a way that benefits others and their broad environment.

Review of Literature

Recent research has examined the effects of mindfulness-based meditation and yoga on clinical concerns, such as anxiety, stress, chronic pain and depression. Yoga's meditative components promote self-awareness and self-acceptance and have been shown to enhance cognitive performance and emotional regulation, even in non-clinical groups (Baer, 2003). Yoga has also demonstrated benefits, in managing workplace stress and preventing burnout (Bischoff, Otto & Wollesen, 2019). The combined practice of yoga and mindfulness supports integration

of posture, breath, autonomic nervous system regulation and neural networks involved in cognition and emotion (Raffone & Narayanan, 2017). A meta-analysis by Gothe & McAuley (2015) further indicates that short and long-term yoga practice leads to small to moderate improvements in executive function, attention, cognitive processing and memory.

Chronic stress activates the sympathetic nervous system (SNS) and HPA axis, contributing to anxiety, depression, and cognitive decline (Esch, Stefano, Fricchione & Benson 2002). Emerging evidence suggests Yoga modulates both systems, leading to reduced anxiety, depression, stress and improved well-being. Lower cortisol levels, often reported following yoga practice, indicate acquiring effect on the SNS/HPA axis. Yoga also supports physical health by reducing cardiovascular risk factors and aiding in the management of hypertension, coronary heart disease, and asthma, which are conditions influenced by psychological stress (Hartley, Dyakova, Holmes, Clarke, Lee & Ernst 2014).

According to McCall (2007), regular practice of yoga enhances calmness, strength, flexibility, and fosters compassion and self-control while Desikachar, Bragdon and Bossart (2005) report improvements in self-awareness, life perspective and vitality. Overall existing evidence supports Yoga as a multifaceted tool that promotes psychological, cognitive and physical well-being when practised consistently.

Theoretical Framework

Yoga practices, especially conscious breathing techniques, such as Pranayama can elicit a psychophysiological "relaxation response" which is considered the opposite of the stress response. This response produces a general reduction and cognitive and somatic arousal. Research on both short-term and long-term yoga practice highlights reduction in basal cortisol and catecholamines, decreased sympathetic activation, increased parasympathetic

activity, lower metabolic rate and oxygen consumption, improved neuromuscular and respiratory function along with positive effects on cognition and cerebral physiology. These changes make Yoga an effective intervention for stress, emotional regulation, attention and coping (Khalsa, 2004).

Yoga's integration movement, breath work and meditation may also support neuroplasticity, which is structural and functional brain changes, facilitating improved cognition, learning, emotional regulation and stress management. Asanas enhance self-awareness through focused attention on breath and bodily sensations, while meditation fosters introspection and self-acceptance. This awareness supports intrinsic motivation, autonomy and competence, aligning with self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) and nurtures empathy by helping individuals understand other's emotions and perspectives.

Meditation's emphasis on observing thoughts and situations may also enhance critical thinking, perspective taking, sustained attention, problem-solving and decision-making (Zeidan, Johnson, Diamond, David & Goolkasian, 2010).

Although existing literature recognises Yoga's role in enhancing various individual abilities, its influence on the development of a comprehensive set of life skills, such as cognitive, emotional, and social domain remains underexplored. The present research, therefore, is aimed to investigate potential contribution of regular practice of yoga on the development of life skills identified by the WHO using a self-report questionnaire.

Two significant variables involved in the study are Regular Practice of Yoga and Life Skills. Regular Practice of Yoga is defined as a set of physical (asanas/Physical Postures), mental (Pranayama/Breath control) and spiritual (Dhyana/meditation) practices, undertaken for an hour for 3 or more than 3 days a week for a period of 3 or more than 3 months.

Life Skills are 10 core life skills laid down by the World Health Organization (Self-awareness, Empathy, Critical thinking, Creative thinking, Decision making, Problem Solving, Effective communication and Interpersonal relationship). They are defined as follows:

1. **Self-awareness:** Understanding one's emotions, thoughts, strengths, weaknesses, and values.
2. **Empathy:** Being able to understand and respect others' perspectives, feelings, and experiences.
3. **Critical thinking:** The ability to analyse information, make reasoned judgments, and solve problems effectively.
4. **Creative thinking:** Generating new ideas, thinking outside the box, and approaching situations with innovation.
5. **Decision-making:** Making thoughtful, responsible choices based on consideration of consequences and alternatives.
6. **Problem-solving:** Identifying problems, evaluating solutions, and implementing effective strategies to address challenges.
7. **Effective communication:** Expressing thoughts, feelings, and information clearly and assertively while being a good listener.
8. **Interpersonal relationships:** Developing and maintaining healthy relationships, resolving conflicts, and working cooperatively in groups.
9. **Coping with stress and emotions:** Managing stress, regulating emotions, and adapting to changes and setbacks.
10. **Assertiveness and negotiation:** Advocating for one's needs and rights while respecting others, and reaching mutually beneficial agreements.

Methodology

Study Design:

Retrospective pre-post intervention design (Perception of participants about their life skills pre and post practice of yoga is checked in the present) by using rating scale. Conventional pre and post intervention design often involves comparing two distinct time points. The design of the present study involves comparing the same group about their life skills at the same time point. Participants were asked about their perceptions about various aspects of their life skills before they began practicing yoga and after they practiced it for a certain duration. The study involves measuring changes in perceptions within the same group before and after the introduction of the intervention (yoga practice).

Participants of the Study: 84 adults

Inclusion Criteria:

- Those who have undertaken practice of yoga (a set of physical (Asanas/Physical Postures), mental (Pranayama /Breathing Control) and spiritual (Dhyana/Meditation) practices)
- Those who practice yoga for an hour, for 3 or more than 3 days a week, for a period of 3 or more than 3 months.
- Any gender
- Adults (above 18 years)

Method of Data Collection

Self-report Questionnaire which is prepared keeping in mind the various Life Skills and their components as reflected in their definitions given by American Psychological Association, Oxford and Cambridge Dictionary. For each life skill, 3-5 questions in the form of statements covering its components (Refer Table 1) were framed. Participants were required to rate the statement on a 5-point rating scale. Since the study involved diverse populations, instructions were also provided in Hindi language.

Table No. 1: Various components of the Life Skills

S. No.	Life Skill	Components
1.	Self-Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thoughts • Strengths and weaknesses • Behavior • Emotions
2.	Empathy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cognitive Empathy • Empathic Action • Emotive Empathy
3.	Critical Thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis • Evaluation • Inference • Interpretation • Integration • Reason
4.	Creative Thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generation • Open-mindedness • Problem-solving • Organization
5.	Problem-Solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generation of alternative solutions • Solution-orientation • Proactiveness in problem solving • Objectivity
6.	Decision-Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of risks and benefits • Promptness • Dispassionate Approach
7.	Effective Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being Articulate • Being clear • Adaptability • Attentiveness • Clarity-Seeking • Non-verbal communication
8.	Interpersonal Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect towards others • Amiability • Cross-cultural competence • Harmonious • Collaboration • Ability to trust
9.	Coping With Stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resilience • Emotional Regulation • Accountability
10.	Coping with Emotions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-awareness • Self-Regulation • Emotional Intelligence

Procedure and Instructions

Participants of the Study were made to read the following instructions and further explanation was given with the help of an example:

"This is a questionnaire to measure the effect of the practice of yoga on the key areas of our life. Below is a collection of statements about your everyday experience. Using the 5-point scale (where 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest), please indicate how frequently you have had such experiences before you started the practice of yoga and after the practice of yoga over a period of time. Please answer according to what really reflects your experience rather than what you think your experience should be".

For each component, the participants reported where they stood with respect to that component before they started the practice of yoga and then also reported their standing post the practice of yoga on the five-point rating scale.

Data Analysis

There were 45 statements encompassing 10 life skills. The participants gave ratings on a five-point scale indicating their standing pre and post practice of yoga. The rating score received for each statement pre and post intervention (irrespective of the life skill) were added to get a total rating score and then the average rating score was calculated. A t-test was applied to find out whether the difference found between the average rating scores between pre and post intervention was statistically significant or not. That helped understand whether yoga was impactful towards development of life skills in general.

Similarly, the rating score of pre and post intervention for the statements encompassing a particular life skill (Self-awareness, Empathy, Critical thinking, Creative thinking, Decision making, Problem

Solving, Effective communication and Interpersonal relationship, coping with stress and coping with emotions), is compared to find out whether the difference is statistically significant. That helped understand the role of yoga in the development of specific life skills.

Results and Discussion

The study looked at perception of the participants regarding their standing on each of the 10 life skills on a 5-point rating scale pre and post intervention of yoga. Each life skill is assessed by its various components, each of which were presented in the form of a statement.

The majority of the participants (64.3%) were practicing yoga for more than 12 months. The rest of the participants (35.7%) were practicing yoga for 3-12 months. The frequency of practicing yoga in a week varied from 3 days (28.6%) to 7 days (10.7%), with the majority practicing it between 4 to 5 days (50%).

The findings of the study demonstrate the definite influence of practice of yoga on various life skills. The pre-intervention mean rating for all the life skills together is 2.67 and the post-intervention is 4.03. The t-test was applied to find out whether the difference between pre- and post-intervention with respect to rating given to all the components of all the life skills is statistically significant or not. The calculated $t(83) = -16.413$, $p < 0.001$. This means that the difference is statistically significant. In the perception of participants, they definitely showed improvement in their life skills post practice of yoga as compared to pre practice of yoga.

In case of all life skills, mean rating post intervention is found to be more than that of pre-intervention and the difference is found to be statistically significant. That means, as per the perception of the participants they showed improvement after the practice of yoga in case of all the life skills (Table No. 2)

Clear demonstration of the efficacy of yoga in facilitating life skills can be attributed to positive physiological changes cascading into mental, emotional and finally social domains of functioning.

Table No. 2: Paired Sample t-test: Various Life Skills individually

S. No.	Life Skill	Mean Rating Pre-Intervention	Mean Rating Post-Intervention	Calculated t value and p
1.	Self-awareness	2.424	4.117	t (83)= -15.493, p < 0.001
2.	Empathy	2.679	4.098	t (83)= - 14.927, p < 0.001
3.	Critically Thinking	2.643	3.926	t (83)= - 14.010, p < 0.001
4.	Creative Thinking	2.649	3.967	t (83)= - 13.213, p < 0.001
5.	Problem Solving	2.548	3.945	t (83)= - 13.913, p < 0.001
6.	Decision Making	2.508	3.782	t (83)= - 12.404, p < 0.001
7.	Effective Communication Skills	2.767	4.032	t (83)= - 13.260, p < 0.001
8.	Interpersonal Skills	3.194	4.192	t (83)= - 9.905, p < 0.001
9.	Coping with Stress	2.50	4.016	t (83)= -15.115, p < 0.001
10.	Coping with Emotions	2.540	4.107	t (83)= -13.989, p < 0.001

Participants also responded to an open-ended question about other life changes which were categorized into five domains: physical, cognitive, social, emotional and behavioural. The greatest improvements were reported in the physical domain, followed by emotional and cognitive with few changes noted in social and behavioural domains. In the physical domain (28 responses), participants described increased balance and harmony, including better regulation of blood pressure and diabetes, improvements in hypothyroidism and asthma. Emotional improvement included, greater forgiveness, kindness, self-compassion, better mood regulation and increased happiness and enthusiasm. Cognitive gains involved enhanced intuition, memory retention and grasping ability. Behavioural improvements reflected, increase in discipline, organization, self-control and confidence.

The researchers acknowledge potential limitations related to self-reported data, such as social desirability bias or participants' subjective interpretations of their experiences.

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CONTEXTUALISING MATERIALISM AND HUMAN VALUES IN THEODORE DREISER'S *AN AMERICAN TRAGEDY*

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Abstract

*This paper explores the corrupting effects of power and the allure of consumerism on America's impoverished in Theodore Dreiser's *An American Tragedy*. The novel focuses on a grim story about murder and ambition. The prime action of the tragedy - the drowning of pregnant Roberta Alden by her lover Clyde Griffiths - is what makes it uniquely American. This occurred because of Griffiths' attraction to the American ideal of escaping poverty and achieving social success. The long story of Clyde's childhood in Kansas City demonstrates all of Dreiser's stylistic inconsistencies and repetitive monotony. As Dreiser's painstaking examinations of what appear to be their every thought and action capture the viewer's attention, the characters of bitter, cruelly self-absorbed Clyde, petulant Roberta, and vacuous socialite Sondra Finchley acquire a great deal of solidity and presence. This is clear from the life of the hero, Clyde, who is hampered by his surroundings, duped by delusions, and ultimately leads to his demise by committing a murder. Dreiser meticulously lays out society's blame for Clyde's situation while also gradually inspiring the character.*

Keywords: *society, life, American dream, values, materialism, power*

Theodore Dreiser engineered the shape on which American fiction moulded itself in the early twentieth century. His main concern was the conflict between the needs of people and the demands of society for material success, which is why American authorities detested and censored his novels. His novels do show the true picture of American life, with the shadiest aspects of it presented in an honest and harsh manner. His persistent criticism of the images that make up the American dream has earned him a prominent place in American fiction.

Dreiser's *An American Tragedy* is a novel based on a murder that happened about 20 years ago in upstate New York. Because its protagonist, Clyde Griffiths, is tragically driven by the myth to chase

wealth and status despite his lack of strength and skill, the novel is also a powerful critique of the American idea of success. He serves as both the novel's hero and anti-hero. He is raised in poverty by parents who make a living preaching on the streets. As he advances socially and economically, he embodies the American dream. He rises from porter to manufacturing manager with shrewdness, greed, and diligence. Using the same abilities, he becomes a man of town after being a social outcaste.

The protagonist is personified by Dreiser as a man devoid of moral integrity. Yes, this results in his destruction. He eventually must decide between his pregnant impoverished mistress and the affluent small-town social snob he aspires to marry. His

demise and ruin are caused by the way he gets out of this predicament. Dreiser interweaves the themes of the value of money and social status in America via Clyde's ascent and fall.

Dreiser asserts that instinct and desire are linked to both virtue and evil. He had brought up the tension between instinct and tradition multiple times in *An American Tragedy*. He concludes by saying that morality is a relative concept and that what some people view as evil may not be wicked to the individual committing it. Money makes the man in the novel. The situation of the poor is contrasted with his behaviour through social criticism. Dreiser creates characters in the novel that are motivated by ambitions like obtaining wealth, becoming an elite, wearing snobby clothing, and dreaming of a happy existence, among other things. In fact, Dreiser was tempted by similar things when he was younger. Dreiser wrote for several magazines during his career to make enough money to support himself.

Dreiser painstakingly inspires his character by demonstrating how society bears responsibility for Clyde's destiny. The only notions he seems to comprehend are those he presents as societal values, how Clyde adheres to them, and how they seem to Clyde. Even without any fatalities, *An American Tragedy* would still be a tragedy. It would be tragic in that Clyde leaves Roberta Alden, a girl who is pregnant, and considers killing her. He also obstructs his progress in life by marrying Sondra Finchley, a rich but trivial woman who appears to have less development potential and is less affectionate and human than Roberta. This arouses strong feelings of tragedy. At the core of the tragedy is the catastrophic perversion of ideals. The play of false principles is what makes *An American Tragedy* a tragedy at its core, and the result of Clyde's attempt to live up to these ideals develops, records, and emphasises the tragedy. It is understandable that Clyde feels compelled to acquire erroneous values given his upbringing in a socially aberrant

environment. His parents are decent individuals who travel around as religious peddlers, but they are strange and a little bit crazy compared to most people. Other than teaching him to live according to the principles of their religion, they do not share many life lessons with him.

Clyde feels ashamed about it. Although he is sad about his inability to lead a socially acceptable life, he cannot comprehend why he is humiliated. His family does not reside in a single location, he is unable to attend a single school and have friends, and his parents' jobs are completely different from those of other children's parents. In the early part of the novel, when Clyde is growing up, they move from city to city. He develops an ill-defined sense of shame about his parents and their differences from other people by the time they move to Little Mission in Kansas City.

Clyde's early years of chronic impoverishment resulted in an overwhelming sense of "hunger for wealth," or material insatiability, which permeates his adolescence and adulthood. "For his ideas of luxury were in the main so extreme and mistaken and gauche-mere wanderings of a repressed and unsatisfied fancy, which as yet had nothing but imaginings to feed it,"¹ remarks the omniscient voice of the narrator. Over the course of the novel, Clyde's financial desires - his love of money, luxury, and clothes - are linked to a physical need - his oral sense. The youthful assistant Clyde's obsession with the rudimentary luxury at a drugstore in Kansas City is likened to that of a thirsting victim. The 18-year-old is "girl hungry,"² "starved for pleasure,"³ and has a "ambitious gnawing at his vitals,"⁴ but the idea of "an ugly girl sickens him."⁵ Clyde's early, persistent hunger is a factor that shapes and impacts his mentality and the course of his life. The story implies that Clyde is compelled to respond to this inner need, which no matter how hard he tries, he will never be able to satiate. This also helps to explain why adult Clyde never has a lasting sense of fulfilment and contentment. He might experience a brief state of

bliss when he interacts with material luxury and has sex with a beautiful girl.

It is intriguing that Clyde finds solace in the same idea of a patriarchal protector despite his strong disapproval of his father. He never considers using his own strength to achieve his dream; instead, he considers being elevated.

1. ¹Dreiser, Theodore. *An American Tragedy*. Signet Classic, 1925, p. 35
2. ²Ibid. p. 72
3. ³Ibid. p. 66.
4. ⁴Ibid. p. 29.
5. ⁵Ibid. p. 81.

These ideas of social success are linked to his wealthy uncle in Lycurgus even in his early teens. Sondra, the wealthy girl who later becomes the "goddess in her shrine"¹ for Clyde, the matriarch who offers to share her kingdom, is the object of his later hopes. His attorneys become into the patriarchal guardians' ray of hope in the third book, and then McMillan, his spiritual father, whom he fully depends on with a perilous self-denying faith. However, the story of his father shows that faith in the great guardian is not always successful. Nevertheless, Clyde accepts the belief in the great protector with the zeal of a religious commitment without realising he is copying his father. The only thing that sets the son apart from the father is the object of his affection.

Clyde suffers from a hazardous brooding drowsiness that permeates his entire existence and proves to be a significant handicap in times of crisis due to the poverty and gloom of his parents' mission, which is ironically named the Door of Hope. When Clyde gets employed as a porter in the opulent Green Davidson Hotel, he simultaneously gains a lively zeal. When Clyde shifts environments, even his mother observes a difference in her son's attitude towards life and his mood. Clyde comes from a line of racist and uneducated street preachers. "The product of an environment and a religious theory, but with no guiding or mental insight of his own"² is how the

narrator presents Clyde's father Asa. The virus of evangelism and proselyting is "inoculated"³ (16) in Elvira, Clyde's mother. There is a strong naturalistic tone to this word choice. A materialistic framework is used to situate religion in a chain of cause and effect, where the religious "virus"⁴ is the cause and the disease of the mind is the effect that the narrative just suggests.

1. ¹Dreiser, Theodore. *An American Tragedy*. Signet Classic, 1925, p. 99.
2. ²Ibid. p. 13.
3. ³Ibid. p. 16.
4. ⁴Ibid. p. 19.

The portrayal of the parents as essentially failing in their children's education is not surprising. They are only interested in forcing their "self-abnegating, self-immolating theory"¹ (20) on their children because they are unable to relate to their needs and wants. According to Donald Pizer, "God's love in its human form of warmth, kindness, and understanding is absent from the Griffiths' family life but present as an abstraction in their sermons and as a superficial moralism in their mission activities."² Clyde works as a porter at a big, opulent hotel in Kansas City for his first job. For a boy like Clyde, who has never experienced anything in his own life to prepare him to understand what a hotel is like, hotels are huge and wonderful palaces.

Additionally, Clyde's first moral education outside of the home was in this hotel atmosphere. It marks the start of his desire formation and his foray into the outside world. He is so innocent and straightforward. He is startled that money comes so freely, but he is not shocked. He picks up false values from his contemporaries, which are founded on luxury and want. Since he wants to spend some of his money for fun and go out with the other bellboys, he does not want to give up all of it at home, where it is required. He does accompany them on their outings. For the first time, he encounters a female outside of his own family, or at least in the most casual or surface-level

manner. He is unaware that it demoralises him by instilling in him erroneous beliefs about the value of people and the elements that contribute to human development. He starts to appreciate what he considers luxury. Once, while driving a rented car with a few other people, Clyde gets into an accident. Clyde flees in terror and heads to Chicago. He first works at a laundry there before moving to Chicago to work as a porter at an athletic club.

1. ¹Dreiser, Theodore. *An American Tragedy*. Signet Classic, 1925, p. 99.
2. ²Pizer, Donald. *The Novels of Theodore Dreiser: A Critical Study*. U of Minnesota P, 1976, p.236.

Clyde's desire to transcend his parents' spiritually defined way of life is the first indication of the corrupting influence of power. Gilbert's supervisors frequently misuse their power by making him perform duties or requesting a cut of his tips. Gilbert, Clyde's own cousin, treats him badly when he moves to Lyncurgus to work at the collar factory. Griffiths does this out of jealousy and resentment for Clyde, but under the pretence of professional behaviour. Following his promotion, Clyde convinces Roberta to have sex with him by using his position as manager. The Republicans and Democrats in the county had chosen sides in the hopes of garnering enough notoriety and power to win a judgeship election, but Clyde is not aware of this fight when he is placed on trial.

Newspapers cover the alleged murder of Roberta, making it a fascinating story. It is a topic of national interest. Finding every detail and discoverable data about Clyde's life requires a significant amount of social energy, including the expensive time of skilled men. Until now, he has been a waif, one of the many faceless people in the nation. He has been one of the millions of people who have felt that their lives are better than others' or that life is improving. However, because of the irony of it, Clyde becomes the centre of attention after Roberta's passing. The only reason this person

receives any attention is because of a death, most likely a murder. Prior to that, he is uninformed, unguided, and unknown; in fact, he has wandered to a place where he appears to be emerging from this anonymous mass, an unwritten, unheard destiny that he and many others like him appear to have predestined.

Although Dreiser was not an ironist, the reenactment of Clyde's life via the investigation, as it is presented in the courtroom chapters, has a profoundly sardonic effect. While the navigator believes that the repetition of so much about Clyde's past adds depth to the novel, Mencken felt that the novel was too long and that this repetition was unnecessary.

It is clear from Clyde's entire experience that the author viewed life as a cruel game and a nasty trap. Dreiser depicted humans as animals motivated by basic desires like fear, hunger, and sex, to be honest and even clinically plain. Additionally, it served as the basis for Dreiser's portrayal of Clyde, in which the author poured his pessimism on human flaws like depravity, greed, selfishness, and indifference.

Clyde left home for Lyncurgus because he believed in American dreams and the values that American society promised: comfort, opulence, dignity, and security. He also wanted to leave Roberta, who was pregnant, because he dreamed of a glamorous and affluent marriage that would guarantee him the life, he so desperately desired. Without considering how it was obtained, he worked towards his success and the fulfilment of his dreams. Here, Dreiser used characters like Clyde in his stories to convey a belief in societal and environmental determinism as well as the determinism of inner and subconscious drives.

Clyde was perplexed by himself, the world he was making such an effort to live in, and what he had been looking for all his brief life. This death scene is not the novel's final chapter, though. As readers continue reading, they will find themselves back in

Kansas City, the setting of Clyde's birth and the start of his dreams, where all the stories started. Additionally, the pitiful family continued to sing a weak hymn. The mother was still strong, but her face was etched with lines of suffering, while the elderly father was weaker. The eight-year-old grandson stood next to them, pleading with his grandma for a penny so he could purchase ice cream, in place of their son. After giving it to him, the grandma reasoned that they should not be too harsh with him; maybe that was their error with Clyde. However, it is obvious that people would keep going for their aspirations, which are supported by American social values. Dreiser highlighted the inevitable societal forces and the powerlessness of humans.

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CAPITALISM AND CLASS STRUGGLE: A MARXIST READING OF CHARLES DICKENS' NOVEL HARD TIMES

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Abstract

This article examines Charles Dickens' *Hard Times* (1854) through a Marxist critical lens, analyzing how the novel depicts industrial capitalism's exploitation of the working class and the inherent class antagonisms of Victorian England. By exploring Dickens' portrayal of Coketown's factory system, the dehumanization of workers, and utilitarian ideology as bourgeois philosophy, this study demonstrates that *Hard Times* functions as a literary critique of capitalist relations of production.

Keywords: Marxist criticism, Charles Dickens, hard times, capitalism, class struggle, Victorian literature

Charles Dickens' *Hard Times*, published in 1854 during the zenith of British industrial capitalism, presents a scathing critique of the social and economic conditions that defined Victorian England. While Dickens was not a Marxist—*Das Kapital* would not appear until 1867—the novel demonstrates remarkable affinity with Marxist analysis of capitalist society, exposing the exploitation inherent in the factory system, the commodification of human labor, and the ideological apparatuses that maintain bourgeois hegemony.

This article employs Marxist literary criticism to examine how *Hard Times* represents class struggle, economic exploitation, and the dehumanizing effects of industrial capitalism. Marxist criticism examines literature as a product of specific historical and economic conditions, revealing how texts reflect or challenge the ideologies of the dominant class. As Marx states in *The German Ideology*, "The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas" (Marx and Engels 67). This analysis argues that Dickens provides a proto-Marxist critique of the capitalist mode of production through his depiction of Coketown, his characterization of Bounderby and

Stephen Blackpool, and his attack on utilitarian philosophy.

Dickens' description of Coketown establishes the setting as a microcosm of industrial capitalism, where the landscape itself reflects the dehumanizing conditions of factory production. The narrator describes "several large streets all very like one another, and many small streets still more like one another, inhabited by people equally like one another, who all went in and out at the same hours, with the same sound upon the same pavements, to do the same work" (Dickens 27). This uniformity illustrates what Marx termed the "alienation of labor"—workers become estranged from their humanity through repetitive, mechanized labor, reduced to interchangeable units of production.

The industrial landscape, dominated by factories with pistons working "monotonously up and down like the head of an elephant in a state of melancholy madness" (Dickens 27), suggests that industrial machinery has become monstrous, dominating both physical space and human lives. The factory, as the site of capitalist production, transforms human beings into appendages of machines. The pollution and grimness—"a town of machinery and tall chimneys,

out of which interminable serpents of smoke trailed themselves forever and ever" (Dickens 27)—represent the environmental degradation accompanying capitalist industrialization. Marx argued that capitalism exploits both human labor and natural resources in its relentless pursuit of profit.

Josiah Bounderby embodies the Victorian capitalist class, and Dickens' characterization exposes the hypocrisy underlying bourgeois ideology. Bounderby constantly proclaims himself a "self-made man" who rose from poverty, claiming "I was born in a ditch, and my mother ran away from me" (Dickens 47). However, this narrative is revealed as fraudulent—Bounderby's mother cared for him well. This exposure critiques the "self-made man" myth, which obscures actual mechanisms of capital accumulation. Bounderby's wealth derives not from his own labor but from exploiting workers' labor-power. Marx explains in *Capital* that "the capitalist obtains this surplus-value by buying labor-power at its value and consuming it above its value" (Marx, *Capital* 301). Bounderby views workers as mere instruments of production, complaining about "Hands" who want more than subsistence wages.

In stark contrast, Stephen Blackpool represents the industrial working class—honest and hardworking, yet trapped in poverty and exploitation. Despite his integrity and dedication, Stephen remains economically powerless, unable to escape his circumstances. His famous lamentation, "Aw a muddle!" (Dickens 159), encapsulates the worker's confusion in the face of complex capitalist social relations. He cannot understand why, despite working honestly, he remains poor while others profit from his labor. This reflects "false consciousness"—the inability to perceive one's exploitation due to ideological obfuscation maintained by the ruling class.

Stephen's expulsion from both the workers' union and Bounderby's employment illustrates the worker's vulnerability within capitalism. When he refuses to spy on fellow workers for Bounderby, he loses his job; when he refuses to join the union strike, he is ostracized by his class. This double alienation

demonstrates the precarious position of individual workers caught between capital and collective labor action. Stephen's death—falling into an abandoned mine shaft—symbolizes how the system literally consumes workers' bodies. His final words indict capitalism for its routine sacrifice of workers' lives for profit: "I ha' fell into th' pit... that ha' been wi' th' knowledge o' old fok now livin', hundreds and hundreds o' men's lives" (Dickens 268).

The novel's critique of utilitarianism, embodied in Thomas Gradgrind's educational philosophy, functions as an attack on the ideological justification of capitalism. Gradgrind's insistence on "Facts, facts, facts!" (Dickens 9) and his rejection of imagination and emotion reflect the rationalization inherent in capitalist logic, which reduces all value to exchange-value and all relationships to market transactions. Jeremy Bentham's utilitarian philosophy, seeking to calculate happiness through rational calculus, served as philosophical justification for industrial capitalism. Gradgrind's education system, treating children as vessels to be filled with facts rather than human beings with emotional needs, mirrors capitalism's treatment of workers as mere labor-power rather than whole persons.

Louis Althusser's concept of "Ideological State Apparatuses" illuminates how Gradgrind's school functions to reproduce capitalist social relations by creating subjects who accept dominant ideology (Althusser 142-147). The education system prepares children like Bitzer to internalize competitive, self-interested values. When Bitzer refuses to help Gradgrind save his son, demonstrating perfect utilitarian logic—"What you must always appeal to, is a person's self-interest" (Dickens 286)—Dickens exposes this philosophy's moral bankruptcy. The contrast between the Gradgrind household and Sleary's circus represents the conflict between austere bourgeois rationality and human needs for imagination and community.

Louisa Gradgrind's loveless marriage to Bounderby demonstrates how capitalism commodifies all human relationships. Louisa is essentially sold by her father to Bounderby in a

transaction benefiting Thomas Gradgrind's social position while sacrificing his daughter's happiness. Engels argued in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* that bourgeois marriage is founded on economic convenience rather than love, serving primarily to consolidate capital (Engels 134-137). Louisa's marriage exemplifies this economic function, devoid of affection or mutual respect.

Dickens' portrayal of Slackbridge and the workers' union reveals both the necessity and challenges of working-class collective action. Though Slackbridge is depicted critically as a demagogue, this should not be read as wholesale rejection of trade unionism but rather as recognition of difficulties in achieving genuine class consciousness. Marx argued that the working class must develop from a "class in itself" (objectively sharing economic conditions) to a "class for itself" (subjectively aware of shared interests and organized for collective action) (Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy* 211).

The strike represents workers' recognition that their interests are fundamentally opposed to capitalists'. By withholding labor-power, they attempt to exert their only leverage within the capitalist system. However, Stephen's exclusion from both union and employment highlights the difficulty of maintaining working-class solidarity in the face of economic pressure and individualist ideology. His tragic isolation demonstrates that neither individual moral action nor imperfect collective organization alone can overcome capitalism's structural violence.

Charles Dickens' *Hard Times* provides a powerful literary exploration of capitalism's human costs during the Industrial Revolution. Through its depiction of Coke town's bleak landscape, the exploitation embodied in Bounderby, the suffering of workers like Stephen Blackpool, and the ideological function of utilitarian philosophy, the novel exposes fundamental contradictions within the capitalist system. A Marxist reading reveals how the novel

documents labor alienation, the commodification of human relationships, class antagonisms inherent in industrial capitalism, and ideological mechanisms maintaining bourgeois hegemony.

While Dickens proposed moral reform rather than revolutionary transformation, his novel nevertheless captures the essential conflict between capital and labor that Marx identified as capitalism's central dynamic. The novel's continued relevance lies in its illustration of how capitalism reduces human beings to economic functions, prioritizes profit over people, and creates social conditions characterized by exploitation and inequality. *Hard Times* demonstrates that literature can serve as an instrument of social critique, making visible the hidden mechanisms of exploitation and giving voice to those whom the system seeks to silence.

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THE BEAUTIFUL LIE: NATIONAL MYTH-MAKING AND NARRATIVE INVENTION IN PETER CAREY'S ILLYWHACKER

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Abstract

*This paper examines Carey's *Illywhacker* (1985) for the relevance of the themes of 'truth and deception' towards an understanding of the Australian postcolonial imagination and national identity. The paper aims to show that through a postmodern and postcolonial lens, the transformation of 'The Badgery's' 'lie' by Carey toward the 'lie' being a moral transgression to 'lie' being a moral transgression to a positive, constructive, and creative act in the building of a nation. The lies in *Illywhacker* are failures in ethics, rather, are a technology through which culture, history, and national identity are constructed. The work of Carey is aligned and juxtaposed alongside Anderson, Bhabha, Foucault, Hutcheon, and Baudrillard to show how invented narratives and fabrication of discourse is an antidote to the myth and anomalies of empirical realities in colonial and settler societies. The work has postmodern themes yet the unreliability as an aesthetic is primarily postcolonial in context, and is used in politics of re-narration to demonstrate that 'the beautiful lie' is against the imperial truths and is as a metaphor of self-nation building and resistance. Finally, it can be concluded that *Illywhacker* is a demonstration of Australia's postcolonial shift from colonial fiction to self-mythicize, while narrative construction to be the essence of a nation.*

Keywords: *Peter Carey, Illywhacker, Postmodernism, Post colonialism, National Identity, Narrative Truth, Myth-Making, Australian Literature.*

Introduction

Background and Theoretical Framework

Postcolonial literary scholarship has focused on the intersections of truth, narrative, and the concept of a nation. Peter Carey's *Illywhacker* exemplifies such intersections on the axis of re-imaging Australia as a nation 'authored' through the workings of fiction. Herbert Badgery, the protagonist, begins his life story with the statement, "I have always been a liar." This opening statement sets the tone for a story where deceit and fraud as a life modality to fabricate a 'nation' [8].

I intend to approach Carey's liar protagonist as an allegory for Australia herself as a settler colony, a

narrative framed and contoured a story to adjoin a national identity to itself [1] [2].

The multifaceted strands of contemporary thought that will inform the theoretical framework are as follows.

- Postmodern theory as espoused by Jean Baudrillard (1983) and Linda Hutcheon (1988) shall provide the perspective through which the concept of truth will be treated as a discursive construct versus an absolute moral category [4].
- Postcolonial theory, and especially the idea of a 'narrated nation' (1990, 1994) by Homi K. Bhabha will frame lying as an act of cultural self-definition in relation to the colonial power structures [5] [6].

- Foucault (1972) and his 'regimes of truth' places the colonial lie of terra nullius as the cornerstone of imperial legitimacy whilst in Carey's work fiction recaptures the lie as a sovereign counter narrative [11].

Benedict Anderson's (1983) theory of nations as "imagined communities" offers the sociological groundwork for Carey's imaginative reconstruction of Australia as a narrative whole.

These theories combine to form a paradigm in which storytelling is not the antithesis of truth, but rather its productive manifestation, a paradigm in which Illywhacker operates as a cultural allegory and literary experiment.

Lies as the Birthplace of the Nation

Peter Carey's *Illywhacker* (1985) begins with the line, "I have always been a liar" and offers both the beginning and the philosophical rationale for the entirety of the prose. This is not to signal a moral defect of the character and not to indicate a moral failing. Rather, it states that the lie of the character will be the primary instrument of creativity and care. This is to reconceptualise the lie of national identity as a project of national identity conceived of as purely a linguistic act as opposed to a historical one. In this case, Australia is to be conceived of as "a lie that became truth by being told often enough." It is an Australia, thus, of a narrative conception rather than one of a lineal (biological) conception. Through the liar-protagonist, Carey transforms Herbert Badgery into an allegorical historian by helping articulate the premise that national foundations rest upon the lie of a narrative, not upon the fact. Where traditional historiography is concerned with the search for the fact, *Illywhacker*, following the line of Michel Foucault and his "regimes of truth" (1972), concludes that the so-called accepted truths of a given society are always and everywhere a product of discourse and power. It follows that the act of lying, thus, is not the opposite of truth, rather it is the

very technology by which society organizes the belief of a lie.

Recognizing Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* (1983) makes synthesis of Carey's narrative stratagem easier because he posits that nations are imagined entities. A parallel of this is the self-written autobiography of Herbert and the self-invented Australia. His untruths are the linguistic infrastructural elements of national performances of consciousness that claim legitimacy of existence without the existence of something. Carey performs the dramatization of the settler colony's reliance on fiction in order to construct the idea of continuum and belonging. The legal fiction called terra nullius, the "empty land," is a recital of a falsehood that was eventually accepted as legal truth.

Cohesion and repetition as he states, are the means of verification of truth in a postmodern world as opposed to empiricism. Jean Baudrillard's *hyper reality* (1983) speaks to the condition: reality is simulated and the primary reality is essentially removed from the situation. Herbert's falsehoods are persuasive and that is the reason they are accepted. Carey, through him articulates that societies are able to subsist in believable fictions, and in this case, governance is a story.

In relation to postcolonial studies, lying is an act of countering the hegemony. As far as the colonial lie of discovery is concerned, Herbert's creative fabrications recapture the authorship of the narrative. She, too, inverts the imperial gesture when, by the pencil of imagination, she re-inscribes Australia. This is what Homi Bhabha (1990) refers to as the "narrated nation," - a reversal wherein identity is a product of narration, as opposed to a legacy. Through Herbert's fabrications, Australia is liberated from the British imperial structure of truth. Australia is therefore granted the right to self-determination, albeit, by fictive imagination.

Contrary to being seen as a social moral deviant, Herbert Badgery as a societal personality

type is a Cultural Mythic Trickster, embodying the Australian spirit of informal ingenuity and irreverence. His 'historical' forgeries are the 'narrative' experiments' of Carolyn Bliss (1995), whereby identity is constructed through a 'story' as opposed to 'history'. In his suggestion to raise the liar to the status of a national hero, Carey indicates that in the founding of a nation, its spirit is maintained through 'creative' rather than 'factual' representation. The Australian, Carey suggests, 'doesn't lie to escape the realm of reality, he lies to expand it?'

Carey, through the pretence of colonial objective truth, in the lie as an aesthetic device and epistemological principle, constructs in Illywhacker the pretence of colonial objective truth. The principle of the 'Beautiful lie' is performative fiction and is Australia's founding myth, of national identity. In the construction of a literary universe, Carey suggests narrating a story to establish a Nation.

Herbert Badgery as the Archetypal National Myth-Maker

Bill Ashcroft's (2001) postcolonial dreamer captures Peter Carey's self-proclaimed liar, fraud, and artist, Herbert Badgery perfectly. Postcolonial dreamers, as the name suggests, are performers of self and nation. Badgery's identity is theatrical, as in, performative, and not essential. Every act of lying is an authorial act, and Badgery authors façades. Within the logic of the Illywhacker, lying is not an ethical void, but rather, my thing; lying as an act in an effort to create a sense of belonging from thin air.

The voids in Herbert's identities, an aviator, a salesman, and a nationalist prophecy, mirror the voids in Badgery in, and, national and colonial Australia. He, like Australia, self-conducts national narration via colonial lies and frontier myths. "Narrative performance of nationhood," as Bhabha (1990) puts it, is the essence of this theatre. Badgery's narration is incomplete and void of

credibility, but that is just the performance; narrating self is self-creation.

Herbert's rhetorical observation "What is a nation if not the greatest con ever performed upon time and place?" (Carey 1985) reconfigures the notion of nationhood as a performance art. As settlers and explorers named landscapes as acts of possession, Herbert, too, sows stories into the landscape of people's imagination. The lie, as an act of symbolic colonization, is, however, inverted toward self-definition rather than self-dominance. Carey's narration is a testament to the belief, rather than fact that legitimizes both identity and the territory— a notion that resonates Anderson's (1983) assertion that nations are, indeed, the product of "imagination of a collective."

Herbert's declamation, "I did not wait for the truth to find me; I created a truth so large that it left no room for doubt" is an embodiment of Baudrillard (1983) simulacra: representations that come before and, indeed, precede the actual real. In Badgery's imagination, the act of repetition transforms fiction into a lived reality, a truth. Carey fuses this postmodern ontology with postcolonial self-fashioning to illustrate how narrative invention is a proxy for lineage. Both personally and nationally, identity is inscribed into existence a testament to the power of rhetoric.

"My myths are not false; they are futures," says Herbert. Utopian potential lies within falsehoods as myths. Barthes's (1957) theory on myth as a secondary signification system explains this system: it is history mythicized. Carey's Australia, with no ancient past, must mythologize the present. Herbert's beautiful lies offer narrative continuity through destiny instead of contingency.

They brought their truths in ships... We answered with lightweight lies that could float above them" (Carey 1985). This inversion encapsulates Carey's decolonial aesthetics: the heavy empiricism of the empire, Australia defends the imaginative

levity of invention. Lying, in this case, is counter-discourse, a vernacular epistemology that defies imported authority. Badgery's lies are not escapist; they are emancipatory in that they replace imperial certitude with a plurality of narratives.

"As Australia's myth-maker and mirror, Herbert Badgery's serial lies represent the nation's coherence, built not on a factual history, but on a compelling narrative." Through Badgery, Carey repositions the authorship of the empire to the act of the imagination, transforming anti-creation into the creative act of cultural autonomy.

Lies as Resistance to Colonial Truth

"From this distance in time, I can see that I was born in one of the most significant moments of the Australian history in 1900 when the country became a nation. But I most certainly have lied about myself just like this country." The individual and the nation's parallelism in this case juxtaposes political history with narrative performance. Part of the irony of Carey is the colonial narratives of terra nullius, civilization and discovery which are the founding fiction of the empire. What Foucault (1977) says is very pertinent as regards the analysis of 'truth' as simply a 'product of power.' What is 'truth' and what is not is entirely a function of what the power structure says.

"The civilizing of the land is what the colonizers said. But I only saw the dreaming of men who are trying to make their lies come to the real world." Carey explains the juxtaposition to the European rationalism and the Indigenous of the cosmology and explains that both are narrative systems and that one of them do not have absolute dominion as a narrative system. In the case of Illywhacker, the recognition of colonial discourse as fiction legitimizes counter fiction which is the self-aware lie as cultural reclamation.

"Because the truth was so small I lied." This is an aphorism that captures the heart of Carey's argument. This argument is that in postcolonial

identity, one must go beyond the colonial fact. In this case, lies are used as a significant means to achieve nation-making, and thus broaden the conceptual boundaries of what it means to belong. For Carey's purposes, that sense of 'imagined community' that Anderson (1983) talks about transforms to a 'fabricated community' which is self-consciously crafted using myth and in an effort to create community.

"Provided the lies are large enough, Australians love a liar." Here, Carey is reframing trickery as a form of democracy folk history, which is congruent to Hutcheon's (1988) historiographical metafiction, where fiction is used to retell history but is self-aware of its own fictionality. By honing in on the trickster, Australia symbolically celebrates the subversion of imperialistic hygiene.

Insubordination lies in language. Where empires attempted to construct a singular version of the truth, Badgery, through his interwoven tales, verse, and hyperboles, constructs 'truths.' This is the interstitial space theory posited by Bhabha (1994) which explains the subversion within the mimicry: the colonized repurposes imperial rhetoric but only to undo it through parody. Thus, Carey's prose is cultural diversion, transforming the 'truth of history' into a parody of 'creative history.'

"What is a lie but the first step towards imagining freedom?" This is the apotheosis of resistance in authorship. Ashcroft et al. (1989) have termed this 'writing back': the colonized reclaim narrative authority. In this, Badgery's lies signify not mere rebellion, but the manifestation of radical imagination the true currency of a decolonized nation.

Lies, Commerce, and the Capitalist Myth

A blend of deception and entrepreneurship, Carey asserts, is precisely what capitalism relies on. "They didn't want the car; they wanted the story I told about the car" (Carey 1985). This dramatizes Baudrillard's (1983) concept of sign-value: commodities circulate

as narratives of desire. In Illywhacker, belief, not production, generates capital.

Herbert's boast "In a new country a man must invent the future before he can inhabit it" situates economic speculation as national ethos. Ashis Nandy (1983) notes that colonial capitalism extracted not only material wealth but belief itself. Carey exposes this mechanism and recasts it as creative agency: the entrepreneur and the novelist share the same fictive impulse.

"My lies were ugly only when they were small. The big ones ... gave people hope." Echoing Nietzsche's (1901) *The Will to Power*, Carey suggests that illusion sustains life. Grand fictions progress, prosperity, equality become ethical when they inspire collective purpose. The "beautiful lie" is therefore an aesthetic of survival.

"Australia sold itself as the lucky country. But promises are not facts they are sales pitches." Carey anticipates modern nation-branding: myth marketed as identity. Guy Debord's (1967) *Society of the Spectacle* contextualizes this transformation of citizenship into consumer hood. Australia's self-image operates as advertisement an enduring lie that functions as truth through repetition.

Unlike exploitative deceit, Herbert's lies create participatory belief. They democratize imagination, allowing ordinary Australians to share in utopian fantasy. Carey distinguishes between destructive colonial lies and creative communal lies, recasting the latter as moral imagination truths that people choose to live by.

Lies, Nationhood, and the Colonial Dream

"The first lie ... that this was nobody's land and we were its discoverers." Carey exposes terra nullius as the juridical fiction underwriting empire. Following Edward Said's (1978) critique of imperial knowledge, this "truth" exists only by erasing Indigenous narratives. Illywhacker restores awareness of that erasure by acknowledging fiction as origin.

"It is not the truth-tellers who built this country, but the ones who could tell a good story." Carey re-centres myth-makers as founders, echoing Bhabha's (1990) vision of nations as performative processes. The storyteller becomes legislator, and fiction replaces lineage as legitimacy.

"We remembered nothing, so we invented everything." Carey dramatizes amnesia as opportunity. Without inherited memory, Australia composes itself through narrative invention a process Hutcheon (1988) terms historiographic metafiction. Storytelling thus becomes historiography by other means.

"What held us together was not land or blood, but the stories we told in the heat and the dust." National cohesion arises from shared narrative affect rather than empirical sameness. Anderson's (1983) notion of "horizontal comradeship" is here transposed into imaginative solidarity.

"There are lies that conquer and lies that create the first was theirs, the second must be ours." Carey's ethical distinction legitimizes the creative lie as decolonial instrument. Through conscious fabrication, Australia moves from being the object of empire's story to the subject of its own.

Time, Memory, and the Elasticity of Truth

Carey manipulates chronology to show that history itself is narrative construction. "Time ... loops, folds, jumps, and lies" (Carey 1985). Bliss (1995) calls this a "timeless present" in which past and future interpenetrate. The nation, like the self, survives by revising its temporal script.

"My memories are not always accurate, but they are always true." Carey distinguishes factual from narrative truth echoing Ricoeur's (1984) narrative identity. Memory's purpose is coherence, not documentation.

"In this country, the truth stretches like a gum tree in the wind." Flexibility, not rigidity, ensures

endurance. Truth's elasticity allows cultural adaptation; lies are its tensile strength.

"History is what they told us. Life is what I tell you now." The liar seizes temporal authorship, turning narration into political autonomy. Bhabha's (1994) iterative nation emerges here as temporal resistance.

The Lie as National Allegory and Imagination

"I am not just a liar. I am the biggest liar in the country, which is to say, I am its truest son." Badgery personifies Australia's paradox: only through fiction can authenticity be achieved. Carey transforms deceit into national virtue a beautiful lie that sustains communal belief.

"We did not find Australia; we made it up, in words, in prayers, in advertisements." The nation arises through narrative performance rather than discovery. Barthes (1957) and Anderson (1983) together illuminate this process: myth makes the contingent appear natural, and print culture stabilizes imagination as fact.

"The truth was too small for us; we needed lies big enough to live in." Carey concludes that creation, not verification, is civilization's measure. The "beautiful lie" is therefore not deception but design the architecture of meaning itself.

Conclusion

Peter Carey's *Illywhacker* converts the moral discourse of lying into a philosophy of imagination. In a postcolonial context where history begins with imperial falsehood, the conscious lie becomes the only honest act. Through Herbert Badgery, Carey demonstrates that national identity is sustained by the stories a people choose to believe. The "beautiful lie" thus emerges as Australia's most enduring truth a myth of self-authorship that replaces colonial inheritance with narrative creativity. By fusing postmodern aesthetics with postcolonial ethics, Carey redefines fiction as political agency. His novel

argues that every nation, to remain alive, must keep rewriting its lies turning imagination into existence.

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CULTURE IN AMBEDKAR'S SOCIO-POLITICAL VISION: INSIGHTS FROM THE JANATA NEWSPAPER

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Dr B.R. Ambedkar shaped India's independence by drafting the Indian Constitution. He is widely acknowledged as a historian, philosopher, anthropologist, economist, lawyer, politician, and a remarkable figure of the 20th century. His efforts ignited a socio-political, cultural, and economic revolution in India. His social activism helped secure equal rights for the weaker sections of society. His political movement fought for fundamental rights for marginalised groups. The transition from 'slavery to an entrepreneur' exemplifies his economic revolution. An often-overlooked aspect of his life is his interest in art, which is essential for a complete understanding of Dr B.R. Ambedkar and his personality. Maharashtra has experienced significant growth in the press, theatre, and cinema since the early nineteenth century. Nationalist leaders actively used these media to promote national consciousness. Art plays a vital role in all areas of human life. This paper aims to explore various facets of Dr Ambedkar's personality. It will examine how music, poetry, and films were incorporated into his social and political activism.

Scholarly work on Dr B. R. Ambedkar's socio-political movement has traditionally concentrated on caste, law, labour rights, and constitutionalism. However, fewer studies examine the cultural aspects of his activism. Keer's influential biography (Keer) highlights Ambedkar's early exposure to devotional traditions, emphasising the formative influence of music and poetry in shaping his intellectual development. Moon (Moon) similarly emphasises Ambedkar's involvement with art, theatre, and film,

though both authors treat culture as background rather than a primary analytical focus. Existing research on Ambedkarite print culture, especially the newspapers Mooknayak, Bahishkrit Bharat, and Janata, mainly addresses political and social emancipation but seldom investigates their cultural content. Studies on Marathi cinema and theatre also tend to overlook Ambedkarite contributions. This paper addresses this gap by analysing Janata as a creative medium that documented film, theatre, music, and Jalasa Mandals, and by demonstrating how cultural expression formed an integral part of Ambedkar's broader socio-political vision.

Inheritance Art Spirit: Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar, also known as Bhimrao Ramaji Ambedkar, was born on April 14, 1891, in Mhow into an untouchable family. His father, Ramaji Sakpal, and grandfather, Maloji Sakpal, served in the military. "Subhedar Ramaji, father of Bhimrao Ramaji Ambedkar, was a strong, hardworking, hospitable, and devout man" (Keer 11). The family followed the devotional Kabir tradition, which emphasises qualities like compassion, kindness, and surrender to God, aligning with the Bhakti movement's ideals (Keer 8).

Ramaji Sakpal led a very industrious and devout life. Sturdy, impressive, generous and expressive, he was a devoted follower. He offered prayers and worship to God morning and evening. His children joined in his devotions. The sweet devotional lyrics and spiritual hymns flowed from his mouth like water from a fountain. It was a strict observance, and even a slight deviation by the children displeased him. Sometimes, it was easy to skip or hurriedly finish the

hymns in the morning amidst the busy study routine, but in the evening, it was a very stern affair! Then, the choir of God's sweet songs would continue. (Hudilkar, also see Keer 10.) This compulsory routine persisted until their father's death. (Keer 10.) Ramji Sakpal also sang spiritual songs by Marathi saint-poets like Moropant, Mukteshwar, and Tukaram. His children benefited greatly from these songs. Regular recitals, recitations, and explanations of these songs nurtured their taste. They helped them develop a specific tonal range and command of the language from a young age. Engrossed in these songs and hymns, Ramji Sakpal would sit late into the night, singing slowly and softly with the doors and windows of his home closed. (Keer 10.) It is no surprise that Bhim inherited from his father this diligent spirit, characterised by "His forceful mental energy and the intense interest in the welfare of his society" (Keer 12), as well as, to some degree, his interest in culture.

Awareness among the oppressed: To promote his ideas and draw global attention to the issues faced by the oppressed, he recognised the importance of publishing a newspaper. As a result, he launched publications such as Mooknayak, Bahishkrit Bharat, Samata, and Janata, which became the voices of the Ambedkarite movement. He started this on 31 January 1920 with Mooknayak, meaning 'Leader of the Voiceless' (Keer 41), and later founded Bahishkrit Bharat, meaning 'Excluded India', on 3 April 1927 in Bombay (Keer 80).

However, Mooknayak and Bahishkrit Bharat focused on raising awareness among untouchables and promoting education across all social levels. Their main aim was to spark a social revolution among the oppressed. As a result, these newspapers rarely covered topics like sports, culture, or cinema. This period can be seen as a shift towards cultural consciousness among marginalised groups.

Awareness of cultural activities through Janata: In December 1930, the weekly newspaper Janata

replaced 'Bahishkrit Bharat'. It was published weekly until 1956, after which it was renamed "Prabuddha Bharat (The Enlightened India)'. Janata was the only newspaper that provided a platform for the cultural activities of marginalised communities.

Furthermore, it provided information about cinemas and movies. It offered a platform for cultural activities among ordinary people. In 1938, it had a dedicated column called Lalit Kala Jagat for movie news. The following year, the same column was renamed Cinema Jagat (In the world of movies). The publication also included observations on films. The Janata criticised the discrimination and caste biases of the directors at the time. In 1938, a film titled Sachha Hai (Truth Is) was released, showcasing various fashion styles; Mr Chaudhari directed it. However, in this film, an untouchable girl named Rose wore simple clothes. The Janata criticised this form of discrimination. ("Janata," 1 Oct. 1938, p.10) At the same time, the film was praised for its aim to address the issues faced by untouchables. ("Janata," 18 Mar. 1939, p. 10) An extensive and informative article on the history of the Hindi film industry ("Janata," 28 Jan. 1938, p. 10) helped readers deepen their understanding.

Movies and Janata

Janata played a crucial role in fostering cultural awareness among marginalised communities by critically engaging with cinema and film-related activities throughout the late 1930s. This newspaper emphasised the importance of social movies. In 1939, Minerva Production House produced *Ghataspot* (Divorce). When discussing this film, they highlighted how outdated customs, practices, and religious rules were unfair to women. ("Janata," 14 Jan. 1939, p. 10) Janata also noted that "The movie may have some weaknesses, but it is admirable that it dared to bring such subjects to the screen". ("Janata," 21 Jan. 1939, p. 10) Janata not only focused on cinemas but also on activities within the

film industry. In 1939, this industry organised the Hindi Cinema Congress and the Cinema Conference. ("Janata," 4 Mar. 1939, p. 10) The event took place from 23rd April to 30th April 1939. ("Janata," 8 Apr. 1939, p. 10) Detailed information about these events was provided to educate readers about the film industry and cultural activities. The conference featured sub-conferences for Distributors, Artists, Technicians, and Film Journalists. It concluded that the industry's growth depended on government support. ("Janata," 18 Mar. 1939, p. 10) The Janata newspaper reviewed the work of the Hindi Cinema Congress. ("Janata," 10 June 1939, p. 10) Under Sorab Modi's leadership, film industry members gathered at Blavatsky Lodge to discuss the future of Hindi cinema. ("Janata," 15 Apr. 1939, p. 10) Miss Durgabai Khote also attended. Mr Sorab Modi, owner of Minerva, discussed the industry's prospects. The conference established a Banking Committee for the industry. Although detailed information about these events was shared, it aimed to familiarise readers with the industry. Dr Ambedkar often said, he who forgets history cannot make history, emphasising the importance of historical awareness for the oppressed. Consequently, Janata gave special coverage to historical movies with insightful commentary. In 1939, the film *Pukar* was released, featuring actress Vasanti and Mughal-era scenery. ("Janata," 11 Feb. 1939, p. 10) Saraswati's *Bhagawa Zenda* (Saffron Flag), produced by Dadasaheb Torane, depicted the life of Chatrapati Shivaji. ("Janata," 4 Mar. 1939, p. 10) *Maratyachi Mulagi* (The Daughter of the Maratha Clan) also centred on Maratha history. The film "11th Incarnation" portrayed the life of Chatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. ("Janata," 15 Apr. 1939, p. 10) Through this sustained engagement with cinema, *Janata* helped nurture a culturally informed and politically aware readership capable of interpreting film as a medium of social critique and historical learning.

Labour Movement and Film Industry

Dr Ambedkar was widely recognised as a prominent labour leader, and his movement for the working class secured essential rights for India's marginalised communities. The film industry, closely intertwined with contemporary social and political developments, often reflected these struggles on screen. In 1939, the film *Girani* (Cotton Mill), produced by Ajanta, resonated strongly with the working class; its script was written by the renowned Bengali author Premchand ("Janata," 17 June 1939, p. 10). Films like *Girani* portrayed the rapid growth of the cotton industry alongside the harsh realities and exploitative conditions endured by workers ("Janata," 15 Apr. 1939, p. 10). In its review, *Janata* encouraged political consciousness, asserting that workers must unite against both foreign and Indian capitalists who amassed substantial profits through exploitation, and praising the film for effectively depicting the lives of labourers ("Janata," 24 June 1939, p. 10). Notably, *Janata* also informed its readers that Dr Ambedkar himself would attend a screening of *Girani* on 17 June 1939, highlighting the film's cultural and political significance for the labour movement ("Janata," 17 June 1939, p. 10). **Jalasa Mandal**ⁱ

Tracing the origins of the Jalasa Mandals, or collectives of socially conscious singers, is challenging because their exact inception remains undocumented; nevertheless, evidence suggests that they were active during the Satyashodhak Samaj movement and later became an essential cultural force within Ambedkar's socio-political mobilisation. Emerging from a tradition of folk performance, these Mandals blended music, poetry, and public oratory to reach audiences that were often excluded from formal education and mainstream political discourse. Their songs—simple in structure but powerful in meaning—served as accessible vehicles for conveying ideas of equality, self-respect, and resistance to caste oppression. By opening public meetings, processions, and community gatherings,

Jalasa Mandals created emotionally charged spaces that prepared audiences to engage with political messages.

Their role extended beyond mere entertainment; they served as grassroots educators, translating Ambedkarite ideology into everyday cultural forms. Many Mandals actively participated in political campaigns, social reform initiatives, and mass meetings. For example, the Navyug Jalasa Mandal, led by Mallhararao Khanduji Kasabe, organised a significant public gathering to discuss the implications of the Poona Pact and other urgent social issues, demonstrating their integration into formal political activity ("Janata," 9 Nov. 1940, p. 10). Through their sustained cultural interventions, Jalasa Mandals helped cultivate awareness, unity, and confidence among oppressed communities, reinforcing Ambedkar's belief that social transformation must be accompanied by cultural awakening.

Dr Ambedkar and the Art Industryⁱⁱ

Dr Ambedkar was a renowned historian, philosopher, anthropologist, economist, lawyer, politician, and one of the most distinguished humanist thinkers of the 20th century. Throughout his life, he devoted himself to socio-political movements aimed at uplifting marginalised communities, leaving him little time for leisure or cultural entertainment. As a result, he rarely watched films or theatrical productions and viewed only a select few that held social relevance. One such film was *Girani*, and another significant viewing was *Mahatma Phule*, directed and written by the noted Marathi journalist and filmmaker Pralhad Aatre, which Ambedkar watched on 4 January 1954 (Moon 132). Earlier, on 15 March 1936, his work and leadership were honoured by the Chitthranjan Natak Mandali at the Bombay Theatre, reflecting the cultural world's recognition of his influence and ideals (Moon 72).

Moreover, *Janata* consistently published news about film screenings, theatrical performances, and

Jalasa Mandals to promote cultural awareness among untouchable communities. Ambedkar's selective interest in music, drama, and cinema contributed to shaping a religious and cultural outlook distinct from Karl Marx's, particularly in its emphasis on ethical reform and human dignity rather than solely economic critique. Through these cultural channels, the Ambedkarite movement fostered artistic expression among the oppressed, enabling them to gain cultural visibility and confidence. Under Ambedkar's guidance, marginalised groups not only entered the public sphere of art and performance but also began shaping their own narratives through these mediums. Even today, oppressed communities continue to preserve and develop traditional cultural practices, reflecting the long-lasting impact of Ambedkar's vision. Dr Ambedkar played a pivotal role in nurturing cultural consciousness and artistic development among ordinary people, making culture an integral part of his broader project of social transformation.

Janata serves as a vital cultural archive of Ambedkar's movement, capturing not only socio-political struggles but also films, theatre, music, and community performance traditions that shaped Dalit consciousness. By showcasing cinema debates, cultural conferences, Jalasa Mandals, and artistic portrayals of history, *Janata* turned culture into a tool for awakening the oppressed. The newspaper reflects Ambedkar's belief that cultural change is essential for social transformation. His selective interest in films like *Girani* and *Mahatma Phule* demonstrates how cultural works can reinforce political education. Therefore, Ambedkar's socio-political vision should be understood not only through laws and activism but also through the cultural space *Janata* fostered, where marginalised groups crafted their own narratives, identities, and historical memories.

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ⁱ Jalsa Mandal was a group of traditional folk singers.

ⁱⁱ The word 'Art Industry' used here is inclusive of Film, Plays and Music.