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Editor's Message

It is with a heartfelt sense of responsibility and commitment that I address you as the new Editor-in-Chief of “Indian Journal of Psychological Issues” (A Double-Blind, Peer-Reviewed, Open Access Journal). As many of you know, my affectionate father, the late Prof. Binoy Kumar Chaudhary, was deeply dedicated to this Journal and always sought improvement, aspiring to the highest standards. He viewed this Journal not only as a publication but as a family of thinkers and authors. He always appreciated talent and encouraged the authors' hard work.

In taking up this responsibility, my principal goal is to uphold the standards of scholarship and the spirit of international collaboration that my father promoted. I ensure you that “Indian Journal of Psychological Issues” will remain a prestigious home for your work.

On behalf of my late father and the entire Editorial Board, I would like to thank you for being a part of the legacy my father built and your patience and support during this transition. Your research work will remain an elixir of this journal. We look forward to continuing this intellectual journey together.

Prof. Shilpa Chowdhary

Editor-in-Chief

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Dormant Fascism

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Abstract

In this article, I examine the evolutionary trajectory of Homo Sapiens Sapiens from a biological anomaly to a global hegemon, arguing that the same tribalistic instincts that ensured our survival now manifest as “dormant fascism.” I begin by analyzing our staggering dominance over mammalian biomass to frame the human species as history’s ultimate conqueror. I contend that ancient parochialism was a vital survival strategy for protecting technological and resource advantages within limited groups. However, as society scaled through trade—evidenced by the Mehrgarh and Harappan complexes—and organized religion, these tribal boundaries shifted but did not vanish. I argue that fascism is not merely a political phenomenon but a psychological “procedural guide” formed in childhood through the normalization of domestic discrimination. By tracing this lineage from Ashokan tolerance to modern-day xenophobia, I conclude that our survival now depends on balancing our genetic predisposition for “otherness” with rational empathy. Ultimately, I warn that without this equilibrium, we risk the fate of the Yadavas, perishing in mutual conflict despite our apparent global victory.

Keywords: *Dormant Fascism, Evolutionary Tribalism, Biomass Hegemony, Parochialism, Ashokan Dhamma, Socio-Psychological Normalization*

Homo Sapiens Sapiens or modern-day human beings account for 34% of the total biomass of mammals. If we add to this the livestock which is maintained by humans, the total figure comes to a staggering 96%, with the livestock contributing to about 62% of the biomass. Thus only 4% is contributed to by the wild mammals. Such a dominating influence over the animal kingdom and perhaps even the Earth, is something we take for granted in the modern day. When we think of



conquerors, what comes to our mind are the kingdoms of the past, the Alexanders and the Napoleons. But perhaps the greatest conqueror would be the human itself, for he did not always have a hegemonic control over nature. The humble Australopithecus could have never imagined that its descendants would not only reach every nook and cranny of the earth, but also step on the moon itself. But what helped the hairless apes to achieve such a great feat, even though these apes are among the weakest animals that roam the earth? Neither do they have sharp teeth like the big cats, nor can they carry enormous weights like the humble ant, nor do they have any great speed, capable of being outrun by the mighty hippopotamus. Thus, it seems that humans were just a bad permutation in the evolutionary ladder and should have been extinct long ago. But the reality is quite opposite. It seems that to compensate for our weakness, there is something in our cranium, which is a unique evolutionary product in us human beings.

The human brain is disproportionately large for its body's constitution as well as having a greater number of fiber connections within the brain. All of this results in us being able to do things which differentiates us from other animals. One of the major reasons why specifically the Homo Sapiens Sapiens was able to prevail over even other species of our own genus, such as the Neanderthals, was their communication skills resulting in better social organization. While the Neanderthals were significantly stronger than the modern humans due to their anatomical buildup, their social organization lacked the cohesiveness of that of the humans. While the Neanderthals could only gather in groups of up to 20, the modern humans could form groups of up to 60 people. Other factors like a complex division of labour also helped us in the battles, though it meant the wiping out of every other species of the genus Homo. However, emerging as the sole victor on the face of planet Earth did not ensure perpetual security for the humans, as now the biggest threat to humans are humans themselves.

The tribalism among human beings was and still is, the means to achieve the premier position among different animals and Homo species as discussed above. Tribalism, as the name suggests, refers to a tendency to form tribal groups or tribes, in which there is enhanced cooperation between members of the same group, as well as a parochial attitude towards the members of other tribal groups. One might condemn parochialism in today's day and age, but at a time when the population was very limited and humans were living in the harshest environments, this parochialism and self-centeredness was somewhat necessary for the survival of the immediate kith and kin. To explain this rather unsettling argument defending parochialism in the ancient times, I will demonstrate an example. Imagine if you were living in a hunting-gathering society about 70,000 years ago, with primitive tool technology. Now if your tribal group discovered a new way of chipping a stone tool, such that the new weapons made were both more lethal and more convenient to construct, you would try your level best to keep that particular technique a secret from other tribal groups. In that day and age, sharing your prized technique with other tribal groups could mean your own tribal group losing the edge with far reaching consequences. In the worst case, your tribal group could be slaughtered by the rival tribal groups with larger numbers using these techniques. In the best-case scenario, the rival tribal groups could hunt and deplete the population of game in your surroundings, using the same techniques, with



which you could have maintained an edge, had you not shared the secret. Thus, we see how parochialism and narrow mindedness was not just preferred, but the need of the day at a time when the human society was organized into tribal groups.

However, we are also aware of the fact, that as society progressed, larger and larger associations of people came into existence. At the genesis of these associations were simple trade relations. We know about the mighty Harappan civilization and how it encompassed an area as large as western Europe. This represents a particularly massive association of humans collaborating with each other in the north-western part of the Indian subcontinent. The precursor to this great civilization were the village farming communities of the region. It is interesting to know that even in the earliest levels of one such farming communities at Mehrgarh, which go back to 7000 BC, lapis lazuli has been found. Lapis Lazuli is not available in the region locally and could only have been procured through long-distance trade. This implies that even in that day and age, there was some type of cooperation between different tribal groups, which ensured mutual benefits for both. However, even the association at this stage between the tribal groups was possible only when the concerned tribal group saw an immediate benefit to itself, and not necessarily arising out of a principle of universal brotherhood. The tussle between exclusivity and inclusivity in the context of tribalism continued throughout the ages. Situations demanded the tribe to become exclusionary at some points and inclusionary at others. Again, the connotations of good and bad attached to inclusion and exclusion are mostly products of personal romanticism, as most of the times these processes were guided by the exigencies of the time and specific needs.

The organizational capacity of the humans also saw itself in the existence of organized religion. Most of the religions started with mere philosophies by some 'enlightened' individuals. Over time it snowballed into something massive comprising its own daily code of conduct, prayer rituals, dietary habits, clothing etc. All these things contributed to the centripetal forces of religion, which heavily shaped a person's worldview right from their birth to their death. Thus, a religious denomination can be explained as a giant tribe with its membership not in tens or hundreds but in thousands and millions. The largest religions today, Christianity, Islam and Hinduism have their membership in the billions, which isn't something less than sheer astonishing from an organizational point of view. In each human, the surviving strategies have been passed down from generations to generations. As discussed earlier, the parochial views of the tribe are also one among them. Whether it is good or bad is a topic for another debate. But it is when this genetic parochialism coincides with the identifying of one's immediate tribe as one's co-religionists, that the feeling of communalism emerges-my religion is the best. When the object of concern is a race or a nation instead of a religion, fascism takes birth as it did in the Third Reich. In a way this is just a modification of the previous parochial feelings towards other tribal groups at a time when they were somewhat necessary. The parochial attitudes are passed down from generation to generation not only through explicit indoctrination but also through the implicit observation by children of their parents' daily habits, their behaviour towards other people. Something as basic as good or bad behaviour towards others can play a huge role in shaping the



child's mindset by normalizing their behaviour. Thus, if a child is born and brought up in an environment where discrimination and abusive behaviour against servants and women is normalized, he is much more likely to become a fascist, discriminating against not only the women and servants as he had explicitly seen in his childhood, but also discriminate against any variety of people as this is now his dominant pattern of thinking. The procedural guides residing in his mind follow a fascist path, no matter the subject. The inherent nature of a person becomes such which is reflected in every aspect and every decision of his life.

Such people display some interesting characteristics. They may not overtly show their true emotions at their workplace due to fear of ostracization, perhaps even freely intermingling with the group of people they secretly abhor for social validation. It is only when there is a general change in the nature of the crowd around them, that they feel confident enough to come forward with their fascism. This is a fact seen in the testimonies of rioters who killed and raped people of other communities, but also claimed to have previously lived with them normally for decades. It was only when the environment was polarized and they felt confident enough to hide behind the crowd for their unspeakable acts, that they emerged and committed genocides. Though they were living with the victims normally, their thinking procedure had been shaped long back by their environment which left them with no empathy for the people they massacred. Also, it isn't necessary that this dormant fascism manifests itself only in this extremity of massacring other communities, it can take many shapes and forms and exists on a wide spectrum. So, even people who aren't overtly violent but don't find it necessary to protest against such actions of people who may belong to their own community also implicitly give their acceptance to such actions and are, in fact, dormant fascists.

It becomes necessary to nip the problem in its bud. Right education and more importantly good behaviour and empathy towards others is an absolute requirement. It is no wonder that Ashoka mentions such qualities to be followed by his people in his inscriptions, considering the fact that he ruled the first such empire in our subcontinent which traversed tribal affiliations and was perhaps the first glimpse of modernity in an ancient age. In fact, it is a pattern seen with every huge empire that has existed, as they have mostly espoused tolerance among sects and an abandonment of sectarian thinking. Even the Mongol Empire which had a very bloody start had the same tradition of tolerance among sects once the administration was settled. Considering how the feelings of otherness are inherent in every human being, our success lies in balancing out this genetic bane with modern empathy and rationalism.

In the modern day and age, when the hand to mouth living of the stone ages no longer exists, at least for most people, this parochialism and xenophobia becomes somewhat of an impediment in the growth of a society, a religious group or a nation. The modern society is not built upon petty rivalries upon immediate matters of concerns, although these do exist, but it is built upon sustained relations both in trade and culture, and cooperation at every level of human engagement as well as a general understanding that every human belongs to one giant family or one big tribe- Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam. The problems of modern day such as global warming, world hunger, universal access to education



and sanitation, cannot be solved through wars and looting the territories of others, as was the modus operandi for solving any problem in the medieval times, but through sustained cooperation and an abandonment of parochialism and xenophobia.

On the other hand, maybe it is nature's way of restoring equilibrium against the dominance of the Homo Sapiens Sapiens as I discussed in the beginning of the article. Perhaps the world has become too saturated with humans for its own good and the very tendencies which enabled us to reduce the world to our vassalage are the very forces which are exterminating us from within. Perhaps we all are the Yadavas who perished in mutual conflict even after being victors.

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Becoming The Self : A Psychological Reading Of the Mystic Masseur

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Abstract

*V.S. Naipaul's *The Mystic Masseur* (1957) functions as a sophisticated psychological study of identity formation within the complex socio-cultural landscape of postcolonial Trinidad. This article examines the protagonist Ganesh Ramsumair's trajectory from a directionless young man to a celebrated political and religious leader through the frameworks of psychoanalytic theory. Drawing upon Erik Erikson's concept of identity crisis, D.W. Winnicott's theory of the false self, and Erving Goffman's analysis of performance, this article argues that Ganesh's journey represents a deliberate psychological construction of identity in response to the pressures of cultural displacement, economic instability, and the absence of stable social structures. Central to this analysis is the novel's embedded autobiographical device, *The Years of Guilt*, which functions as a narrative mechanism for imposing coherence upon a life characterized by strategic adaptation. The article explores key psychological interventions in Ganesh's development: the manipulative influence of his father-in-law Ramlogan, the transformative mentorship of Mr. Stewart, the strategic adoption of the pundit persona as a functional false self, and the eventual transition from religious healer to political figure. Through close reading of the novel's narrative techniques and character interactions, this analysis reveals how Naipaul's satirical portrait of Caribbean life constitutes a profound meditation on the psychological costs and strategies of self-construction.*

Keywords: *Identity Formation, False Self, Performance, Guilt, Postcolonial Psychology, V.S. Naipaul, *The Mystic Masseur**



Introduction

V.S. Naipaul's debut novel, "The Mystic Masseur", has traditionally been read as a satirical comedy of manners and a critique of colonial society. While these interpretations hold merit, they often overlook the novel's profound psychological depth. Beneath its comic surface lies a meticulous exploration of identity formation under conditions of cultural displacement, economic precarity, and social marginality. The protagonist, Ganesh Ramsumair, born into a Hindu Brahmin family in rural Trinidad, navigates a world where traditional structures of caste, religion, and family are perpetually destabilized by colonialism and modernity. His rise from a struggling young man to a celebrated Member of the Legislative Council is not merely a story of social mobility but a carefully rendered psychological journey.

This article argues that "The Mystic Masseur" constitutes a sophisticated psychological inquiry into the construction of the self. Ganesh's trajectory can be understood through several psychological frameworks: Erik Erikson's theory of 'identity crisis', which illuminates Ganesh's early state of confusion; D.W. Winnicott's concept of the 'false self', which explains his strategic adoption of the pundit persona; and Erving Goffman's analysis of performance, which provides a lens for understanding how Ganesh manages his public identity in a society where social roles are often theatrical. Central to this analysis is the novel's embedded autobiographical device, "The Years of Guilt", which serves as a narrative mechanism for imposing retrospective coherence upon a life characterized by adaptation and strategic self-construction.

The novel's exploration of guilt is particularly significant. The title of Ganesh's autobiography suggests an existential condition rather than a specific moral transgression. Guilt emerges as the psychological residue of living without a stable identity—the anxiety of occupying a liminal space between cultures, between tradition and modernity, between authenticity and performance. Ganesh's journey represents an attempt to transform this guilt into agency, to convert the anxiety of displacement into the purposeful construction of a functional self.

The Crisis of Inheritance

The psychological foundations of Ganesh's character are established through his relationship with his father, Mr. Ramsumair, and the subsequent rupture caused by his death. Ramsumair represents a man of stability and worldly wisdom—a figure who has achieved a synthesis of his Indian heritage and his Trinidadian context. His death, arriving at the moment of Ganesh's graduation from teacher training college, precipitates a profound crisis. Ganesh is left without financial support, without clear direction, and without the paternal structure that had defined his place in the world.

This condition corresponds to what Erik Erikson identified as an "identity crisis"—a period of intense confusion during which the individual struggles to integrate various aspects of self into a coherent whole. For Ganesh, this synthesis is disrupted. He has been educated in British colonial schools, absorbing values of modernity, yet he returns to a village setting where traditional Hindu structures still hold sway. He is neither fully Trinidadian nor fully Indian; his education has prepared



him for a world that does not fully accept him, while his cultural inheritance offers paths that feel increasingly anachronistic.

This psychological limbo is exacerbated by the loss of his father's oil royalties, which cease shortly after Ramsumair's death. The sudden removal of financial security strips away the last external structure supporting Ganesh's identity. He is left as a man without role, without income, and without direction—a psychological vacuum ready to be filled by whatever influences present themselves.

Manipulation and Dependency: The Psychology of Ramlogan

The character who first fills this vacuum is Ramlogan, Ganesh's future father-in-law. Ramlogan represents a sophisticated study in psychological manipulation. A shopkeeper whose physical shabbiness contrasts with his shrewd understanding of human psychology, his approach to Ganesh is carefully calculated to create dependency while appearing as benevolent assistance.

Ramlogan's primary technique is narrative manipulation. He recounts the story of Ramsumair's death, emphasizing the suffering caused by the doctor's failure to diagnose appendicitis and the financial burden of treatment. This narrative serves multiple psychological functions. It evokes pity, creating an emotional bond based on shared loss. It implicitly criticizes modernity, positioning Ramlogan as a guardian of traditional wisdom. Most importantly, it establishes a narrative of vulnerability that requires a solution—a solution that Ramlogan conveniently provides in the form of his daughter, Leela.

The psychological depth of this manipulation lies in its exploitation of Ganesh's grief and isolation. Having lost his father, Ganesh is psychologically primed to accept a surrogate paternal figure. Ramlogan's apparent solicitude fills this need while simultaneously advancing his own interests. The subsequent marriage to Leela is presented not as a free choice but as a psychological inevitability—the only available path out of loneliness and uncertainty. The dowry dispute that follows further reveals the collective psychological framework within which individual identities are negotiated in Trinidadian Indian society.

The Mentor and the Birth of Purpose: Mr. Stewart

If Ramlogan represents manipulation, Mr. Stewart represents authentic psychological guidance. Stewart, an Englishman of Kashmiri descent living as a recluse, embodies a form of psychological integration that Ganesh has not yet achieved. Having participated in the 'Great War' and subsequently rejected both 'Christianity' and 'Western' materialism, he has deliberately constructed a life of simplicity and contemplation. His tolerance of children's taunts suggests a self so integrated that external attacks cannot disturb it.

Stewart's conversation with Ganesh provides the psychological foundation for Ganesh's future development. His counsel is direct and transformative: "Don't think you are wasting your time meditating. I know the things that are worrying you, and I think one day you may find the answer. One day you may even bring it all out in a book." This advice validates Ganesh's internal state and



reframes his anxiety as creative potential. The instruction to “stop being worried about life” is not a dismissal of worry but a reorientation: worry becomes material for creation.

Stewart’s subsequent advice to write is equally significant: “You must write your thoughts. They may help other people.” This suggestion plants the seed of authorship as a psychological solution. Writing becomes a way to externalize internal conflict, to give form to chaos, and to construct a meaningful self. Stewart’s ultimate fate—returning to England and dying in Italy—does not diminish his psychological legacy. He has provided Ganesh with a model of how to transform displacement into strength, demonstrating that identity can be deliberately constructed and that cultural hybridity can be a resource rather than a liability.

The False Self: Ganesh as Mystic Masseur

The most significant phase of Ganesh’s psychological evolution is his transformation into the ‘Mystic Masseur’. This transformation represents a deliberate adoption of what D.W. Winnicott termed the “false self”—a protective facade that allows the individual to function in the world while preserving an inner, vulnerable core. For Ganesh, the pressures are multiple: economic necessity, cultural displacement, and the absence of any clear social role.

The construction of Ganesh’s false self is carefully detailed in the novel. His adoption of the pundit’s attire—the dhoti and khurtha—represents a sartorial performance of authenticity. The clothes are chosen because they signify tradition to others. This is performance in Goffman’s sense: ‘the management of appearance to create a desired impression in an audience’.

The content of Ganesh’s practice further illuminates the nature of his false self. His treatment of patients is psychological rather than physical. When a thin, bony boy comes to him with an ailment, Ganesh’s “medicine” is the phrase “come tomorrow.” This simple instruction creates a structure of expectation and hope that alleviates the boy’s anxiety. Ganesh understands intuitively that his power lies not in physical therapy but in the psychological act of winning confidence and managing belief.

The success of Ganesh’s practice depends upon the willing participation of his clients. The women of the community, in particular, become both his customers and his advertisers. Their belief in his powers is necessary for those powers to be effective. This creates a symbiotic relationship in which Ganesh’s false self and his clients’ needs reinforce each other. Yet the false self, for Winnicott, always carries a cost. It protects the true self but also distances the individual from authentic experience. Ganesh’s success comes at the price of ongoing performance.

Envy, Opposition, and the Role of Women

Ganesh’s rise generates opposition from Narayan, the editor of “The Little Bird”. The psychological dynamics of this opposition illuminate broader patterns of collective psychology within marginalized communities. “The Great Belcher’s” observation—“Is the thing about Indians here. They hate to see another Indian get on”—identifies a collective dynamic of resentment that emerges when resources and status are perceived as limited. One person’s success becomes another’s loss; achievement



provokes envy rather than celebration.

Narayan's creation of the "Homes for Destitute Fund" and his use of the newspaper to attack Ganesh reveal a psychology organized around competition rather than conviction. The revelation that he has used the 'Destitute Fund' for personal enrichment exposes the gap between his performance of virtue and his actual behavior. The conflict between Ganesh and Narayan escalates into a war of ideas, mirroring the larger historical context of the Second World War. This reduction of global conflict to local rivalry illustrates the psychological principle that large-scale social dynamics are often replicated in microcosm.

Throughout the novel, women function as crucial psychological anchors for Ganesh. Leela, the 'Great Belcher', and Suruj Mooma provide emotional support, practical wisdom, and social infrastructure for his rise. Leela's evolution is particularly significant. Initially presented as a young woman married through her father's machinations, she develops into a figure of practical wisdom and emotional strength. Her management of the food center and her involvement in community decisions demonstrate a capacity for organization that the novel treats with respect. The psychological function of these women is to provide a "holding environment"—a relational context that supports psychological growth.

The Autobiography as Psychological Consolidation

Central to understanding the novel's psychological architecture is the use of the fictional autobiography, "The Years of Guilt". This embedded text serves multiple functions. It provides a narrative frame for the novel, offers Ganesh's retrospective account of his life, and introduces guilt as an organizing psychological category. Most significantly, it demonstrates the psychological need for narrative coherence—the human impulse to transform a life of contingency and adaptation into a story of purposeful development.

The title "The Years of Guilt" suggests that guilt, for Ganesh, is not a momentary feeling but a temporal condition—a period characterized by the anxiety of having no fixed identity. Yet the autobiography itself represents an attempt to redeem this guilt through narrative. By telling his story, Ganesh imposes order upon chaos, meaning upon contingency, and purpose upon what might otherwise appear as mere opportunism.

The novel's use of the autobiography as a source creates a layered psychological structure. The reader never receives Ganesh's experience directly; instead, it is filtered through his retrospective interpretation. This structure mirrors the psychological process of identity formation: we become who we are by telling the story of who we have been. The autobiography also allows Naipaul to explore the relationship between individual psychology and collective history. Ganesh's personal development is interwoven with Trinidad's history—the transition from colony to independent nation, the impact of the Second World War, the emergence of political movements. This suggests that individual and collective identity are mutually constitutive.



Conclusion

V.S. Naipaul's "The Mystic Masseur" emerges as a profound psychological text that anticipates many themes of contemporary identity theory. Ganesh Ramsumair's journey from existential guilt to strategic performance illustrates the psychological mechanisms by which individuals construct selves capable of navigating multiple cultural demands in postcolonial contexts.

The novel's achievement lies in its refusal to judge Ganesh's performance as either authentic or fraudulent. Instead, it presents identity as always performative—constructed through the management of appearance, the adoption of roles, and the narration of experience. Ganesh's success is not the discovery of a true self but the successful authoring of a self that functions within his social world.

This reading has significant implications for understanding both Naipaul's work and the broader literature of postcolonial identity. Rather than treating identity as a stable essence that colonialism disrupts, "The Mystic Masseur" suggests that identity is always constructed, always performed, always narrated. The novel's psychological depth lies in its recognition that this condition is not unique to postcolonial subjects but is a fundamental feature of modern selfhood. "The Years of Guilt" remains as the record of that journey—a narrative that, like all narratives, imposes meaning upon experience and, in doing so, creates the self it claims to describe.

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Diversity And Fragmentation Of South African Literature

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Abstract:

South African literature reflects the complex cultural, linguistic, and historical diversity of the nation. With eleven officially recognized languages, namely Afrikaans, English, Zulu, Xhosa, Sotho, Pedi, Tswana, Venda, Siswati, Tsonga, and Ndebele, the country possesses multiple literary traditions that coexist within the same geographical space. This diversity has resulted in both richness and fragmentation in the literary landscape. Among these traditions, Afrikaans literature has emerged as the most structured and institutionally established national literature through education, publishing, journals, critical reviews, and academic recognition. English literature in South Africa often remains connected to broader international English traditions, while African-language literatures extend beyond national borders and are shaped by regional readerships and cultural identities. The article examines how colonialism, apartheid, language politics, and cultural divisions have influenced literary production in South Africa. It further explores the contribution of Afrikaans prose writers and the development of literary forms such as the farm novel, town novel, and border literature. The study highlights the need to understand South African literature as a collection of interconnected yet distinct literary systems rather than a single homogeneous national tradition.

Keywords: *Polysystems, Entrenchment, Expressionism, Modernism, Dadaism*

The first problem any student of South African literature is confronted with is the diversity of the literary systems. Olivier notes, “While it is not unusual to hear academics and politicians talk about a ‘South African literature,’ the situation at ground level is characterised by diversity and even fragmentation.” Mossman further adds that “One of the enduring and saddest legacies of the apartheid system may be that no one White, Black, Coloured, or Asian can ever speak as a ‘South African.’” The problem, however, significantly predates apartheid, as South Africa is a country made up of communities



that have always been linguistically and culturally diverse. These cultures have retained autonomy to some extent, making a compilation such as the controversial Southern African Literatures by Michael Chapman difficult.

Chapman raises the question of whose language, culture, or story can be said to possess authority in South Africa when the end of apartheid has raised challenging questions regarding identity, nationhood, memory, and the future of the country. The search for a unified South African identity remains difficult because the nation itself consists of numerous cultures and traditions.

South Africa has eleven national languages: Afrikaans, English, Zulu, Xhosa, Sotho, Pedi, Tswana, Venda, Siswati, Tsonga, and Ndebele. Any definitive literary history of South Africa should therefore discuss literature produced in all eleven languages. However, Afrikaans literature is the only literary tradition that has developed characteristics of a national literature. Through institutional support such as education, publishing, literary journals, and critical review culture, Afrikaans literature established itself as a separate and organised literary system.

English literature in South Africa has often been viewed within the broader context of world English literature because of the global status of English as a lingua franca. Consequently, it has not always been regarded as autonomous or indigenous to South Africa. African-language literatures, on the other hand, extend beyond South African borders. Tswana is spoken in Botswana, Tsonga in Zimbabwe, and Sotho in Lesotho. The borders created during British colonial rule ignored the cultural and linguistic realities of the people living within them.

This raises important questions in literary history. Should all Tswana writers be included in South African literary history, or only those with South African citizenship? Another challenge is accessibility and readership. Since African languages are regional languages, they do not possess the national readership enjoyed by Afrikaans and English. Sotho, for example, is primarily spoken in the Free State and differs considerably from Zulu spoken in Natal. These linguistic realities make it difficult to construct a single national literary tradition.

Olivier argues that there is no obvious reason why it should be considered unhealthy or abnormal for different literary systems to coexist within one country, each possessing its own infrastructure and theoretical framework. Yet political idealism advocating a unified South Africa has also demanded a unified national literature. Such a literary identity, however, often appears artificial.

It is unrealistic to regard South Africa and South African literature as completely homogeneous because the country itself was shaped through colonial intervention. This issue is not merely racial but deeply connected to culture, heritage, and tradition. Therefore, it is more appropriate to discuss South African literature as literature produced within the national borders by various linguistic and cultural groups. Otherwise, one literary system may be privileged at the expense of another, particularly English literature dominating over African-language literatures.

The distinction between “black” and “white” literature is itself a colonial construct and should be replaced by distinctions based on language affiliation and literary systems rather than race.

Afrikaans is a language related to Germanic languages, particularly Dutch. It originated in the



seventeenth century but gained official recognition in 1875 with the establishment of the Genootskap vir Regte Afrikaners. Afrikaans is spoken throughout South Africa and serves as the mother tongue of both white and coloured communities. Although its literary history is comparatively short, it is remarkably vibrant.

Major literary histories include H. P. van Coller's *Perspektief en Profiel*, J. C. Kannemeyer's *Geskiedenis van die Afrikaanse Literatuur*, and Dekker's *Afrikaanse Literatuurgeskiedenis*. Lewis Nkosi observes that "in South Africa there exists an unhealed split between black and white writing." According to Nkosi, black writers remained largely unaffected by European cultural movements that shaped white writing.

In contrast, the Afrikaans literary system engaged extensively with European artistic movements such as Symbolism, Expressionism, Modernism, Postmodernism, and Dadaism. This engagement made Afrikaans literature more familiar to European and American audiences. Because South Africa was historically an agricultural society, the plaasroman or farm novel became an important literary form. One of the classic examples is C. M. van den Heever's *Laat Vrugte*, which later inspired parodies and reinterpretations in works such as Etienne Leroux's *Sewe Dae by die Silbersteins*, André P. Brink's *Houd-den-Bek*, and Eben Venter's *Ek Stamel Ek Sterwe*. Even English novels such as J. M. Coetzee's *Disgrace* reveal the influence of the farm novel tradition.

With increasing urbanisation during the World Wars, the dorpsroman or town novel also emerged. Important examples include Lettie Viljoen's *Karolina Ferreira*, Etienne van Heerden's *Die Swye van Mario Salviati*, and Alexander Strachan's *Die Werfbobbejaan*.

Afrikaans writing often criticised conservative culture and apartheid politics. André P. Brink and Etienne Leroux deserve special mention. Brink gained recognition because he wrote in both English and Afrikaans, making his works accessible to wider audiences. Leroux's novels frequently feature outsider characters and employ symbolic, Jungian, alchemical, and Cabbalistic themes.

The Angolan War also contributed to the rise of grensliteratuur or border literature. Important works in this category include Dine van Zyl's *Slagoffers*, Christiaan Bakkes' *Skuilplek*, and Alexander Strachan's *'n Wêreld Sonder Grense*.

Following the political changes of 1994, many South African writers focused on revisiting the past in order to understand the nation's history and identity. Dan Sleigh's *Eilande* and André P. Brink's *Duiwelskloof* are significant examples. Marlene van Niekerk's *Triomf* examines the lives of poor Afrikaners in a Johannesburg suburb built after the destruction of the black township Sophiatown.

André P. Brink became the first Afrikaner writer to be banned by the government after publishing *A Dry White Season*, a novel dealing with police brutality and racial injustice. Contemporary Afrikaans literature has also begun exploring issues related to gender and sexuality, as seen in the works of Johann de Lange and Eben Venter.

Political transformation and globalisation after 1994 encouraged many writers to move abroad or write about life outside South Africa. Contemporary literature increasingly addresses themes such as migration, crime, corruption, and social instability.



In conclusion, South African literature remains one of the most diverse and complex literary traditions in the world because it emerges from a society shaped by colonialism, apartheid, migration, multilingualism, and cultural plurality. The coexistence of multiple languages and literary systems has created a rich but fragmented literary landscape in which questions of identity, race, nationhood, and cultural belonging continue to dominate literary discourse. Rather than functioning as a single unified tradition, South African literature represents a network of interconnected yet distinct literary cultures, each shaped by its own historical experiences, readership, and linguistic identity.

Afrikaans literature, in particular, has developed a strong institutional and artistic presence through publishing networks, educational systems, literary criticism, and engagement with international literary movements. At the same time, African-language literatures preserve regional histories, indigenous knowledge systems, and cultural memories that remain essential to understanding the nation's social reality. English literature in South Africa further connects local experiences with global literary traditions, creating another layer of complexity.

Contemporary South African writers continue to confront issues such as political corruption, economic inequality, migration, gender identity, violence, and historical trauma. Their works reveal an ongoing effort to reinterpret the past while imagining new possibilities for the future. Ultimately, South African literature should not be viewed as a homogeneous national tradition but as a dynamic and evolving body of writings that reflects the country's multicultural reality, intellectual diversity, and continuing struggle for social and cultural transformation.

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The Wounded Psyche : Narrating Childhood Trauma In The Literature Of Conflict Zones

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Abstract

This article examines the representation of childhood trauma in the selected novels of Khaled Hosseini and Naguib Mahfouz, employing a psychological and literary theoretical framework to analyze how narrative form reflects the complexities of traumatic experience. Drawing upon trauma theory, particularly the work of Cathy Caruth and Judith Lewis Herman, as well as psychoanalytic and postcolonial perspectives, this study investigates how these authors depict the psychological fragmentation, repressed memory, and fractured identities resulting from socio-political conflict and domestic authoritarianism. Through a qualitative analysis of key texts—including “The Kite Runner”, “A Thousand Splendid Suns”, and “The Cairo Trilogy”—the article argues that these narratives function as testimonial acts, transforming unspeakable suffering into a communicable form. The analysis reveals that trauma in these works is portrayed as an event that shatters narrative coherence, often expressed through fragmented chronology, silence, and symbolic imagery. Furthermore, the study explores the dual processes of psychological wounding and resilience, demonstrating how characters navigate guilt, displacement, and systemic violence in their quest for identity and redemption. By situating individual psychological distress within broader historical and cultural contexts—such as the Soviet-Afghan war, the rise of the Taliban, and British colonialism in Egypt—the article posits that literature serves as a crucial archive of collective trauma, offering a space for witnessing and ethical engagement. The findings underscore the potential of literary analysis to illuminate the intricate relationship between socio-political upheaval and the developing psyche, contributing to a deeper understanding of trauma’s enduring impact across cultures.

Keywords: Childhood Trauma, Literary Trauma Theory, Resilience, Narrative Identity, Postcolonial Psychology, Khaled Hosseini, Naguib Mahfouz



Introduction

The study of childhood trauma in literature offers a unique vantage point from which to explore the intersection of individual psychology and socio-political history. Literature does not merely reflect reality; it constructs it, offering a structured space where the fragmented, often non-linear nature of traumatic experience can be rendered intelligible. As trauma scholar, “Judith Lewis Herman”, notes, traumatic events become “frozen in time,” leaving survivors’ memories and feelings trapped, accessible only through a process of safe reconnection and narrative integration (Herman). This article posits that the literary works of Khaled Hosseini and Naguib Mahfouz serve as profound explorations of this very process, portraying children as the ultimate witnesses to societal collapse and familial dysfunction. The significance of this inquiry lies in its capacity to move beyond clinical case studies, using the narrative form to access the emotional weight and psychological complexity of trauma in a way that conventional documentation may overlook.

This article undertakes a psychological analysis of childhood trauma as depicted in selected novels: Hosseini’s “The Kite Runner”, “A Thousand Splendid Suns”, and “And the Mountains Echoed”, alongside Mahfouz’s “The Cairo Trilogy” (Palace Walk, Palace of Desire, Sugar Street) and “Children of Gebelawi”. The central argument is twofold. First, the narratives employ a distinct literary form—characterized by fragmented memory, silence, and symbolic repetition—that mirrors the psychological mechanisms of trauma described by theorists like Cathy Caruth and Sigmund Freud. Second, the portrayal of traumatized children reveals how historical forces (war, occupation, patriarchy) are not merely external backdrops but are internalized, shaping identity, memory, and the capacity for resilience. By integrating psychoanalytic theory, postcolonial studies, and narrative analysis, this article provides a multidisciplinary framework for understanding how these Arab and Afghan narratives give voice to the unspeakable, transforming personal suffering into a collective testament of survival.

Theoretical Framework: The Language of the Wounded Psyche

To effectively analyze the psychological depth of these literary works, a robust theoretical framework is essential. This study integrates three primary perspectives: literary trauma theory, psychoanalytic theory, and postcolonial theory. Together, they allow for an analysis that spans the intrapsychic, the narrative, and the socio-political.

Literary trauma theory, particularly as articulated by Cathy Caruth in *Unclaimed Experience*, provides the foundational premise that trauma is not a singular event but a structure of experience that resists direct representation. Caruth posits that trauma is defined by a “belatedness”—the event is not fully experienced at the moment it occurs but is instead possessed as a recurring, intrusive memory that defies narrative integration (Caruth). This theory explains the narrative techniques prevalent in the selected novels: nonlinear timelines, gaps in memory, and the use of repetition compulsion. The child characters in Hosseini and Mahfouz do not simply recall their pasts; they are haunted by them, living in a perpetual present where past horrors resurface unbidden.

Psychoanalytic perspectives, rooted in the work of Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung, provide the



tools to explore the internal landscape of these characters. Freud's concept of "repetition compulsion" (Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*) is central to understanding how trauma binds the psyche, forcing the individual to unconsciously repeat painful experiences. This is vividly illustrated in Hosseini's 'The Kite Runner', where Amir's adult life is a repeated attempt to master the childhood guilt he failed to confront. Jung's concept of the "shadow" and the process of individuation further illuminate the characters' struggles. The archetypal conflict between light and shadow, as seen in the internal conflicts of characters like Kamal in Mahfouz's "Palace of Desire", represents the psychological work required to integrate traumatic experience and move toward wholeness (Jung).

Finally, postcolonial theory situates individual psychological distress within the larger structures of power. The work of Frantz Fanon, particularly his analysis of colonial violence on the colonized mind, is crucial for understanding how external domination becomes internalized oppression (Fanon). The authoritarian patriarchy in Mahfouz's "Palace Walk", embodied by Al-Sayyid Ahmad, operates as a microcosm of colonial rule—rigid, distant, and demanding absolute obedience. Similarly, Hosseini's depiction of ethnic and political violence in Afghanistan shows how national trauma, such as the Soviet invasion and the Taliban's rise, fractures the individual psyche, creating a condition of displacement and fractured identity that is both personal and collective.

Psychological Mechanisms in Narrative Form

The novels under examination are not merely stories about trauma; their very structure is shaped by it. The authors employ specific narrative techniques that function as literary correlates to psychological defense mechanisms.

Fragmentation and the Failure of Linear Narrative: A hallmark of traumatic experience is its resistance to linear recall. Caruth argues that trauma "is not locatable in the simple violent or original event in an individual's past, but rather in the way that its very unassimilated nature—the way it was precisely not known in the first instance—returns to haunt the survivor later on" (Caruth, 4). Hosseini mirrors this through the narrative structure of "The Kite Runner". The novel opens with a fragment: "I became what I am today at the age of twelve." This event—the rape of Hassan—is not presented in a straightforward chronology but is hinted at, delayed, and circled back to, forcing the reader to experience Amir's own process of avoidance and eventual confrontation. Similarly, in "A Thousand Splendid Suns", Mariam's childhood is presented in discrete, painful vignettes—the rejection by her father, the suicide of her mother—that coalesce not into a smooth backstory but into a repetitive pattern of abandonment that structures her entire adult life.

Silence and Testimonial Form: Trauma often results in a profound silence, a loss of voice that Shoshana Felman describes as inherent to the testimonial process. The survivor's story is not a simple recollection but a "performative and dialogic process" where meaning is co-created with a listener (Felman). In "The Kite Runner", the silence is deafening. Amir's silence after witnessing Hassan's assault is the central wound of the novel. He reflects, "I watched Hassan get raped," and wishes someone would wake up to hear him, to free him from the lie. This silence is not an absence but



a presence; it becomes a character in itself, driving the plot forward. Hassan's own silence—his refusal to reveal Amir's betrayal—is a form of loyalty that paradoxically deepens the traumatic gulf between them. The novel itself functions as Amir's testimony, a belated attempt to break that silence and integrate the dissociated experience.

Symbolism and the Encoding of Trauma: Psychological trauma often expresses itself symbolically when direct language fails. In *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, the pomegranate tree is a recurring symbol. For Mariam and Laila, it is initially a place of solace and shared experience. As their suffering at the hands of Rasheed deepens, the tree becomes a silent witness to their shared trauma, embodying their enduring bond forged in pain. In Mahfouz's *Children of Gebelawi*, the alley (hara) itself functions as a symbol of the state, a microcosm where the power dynamics of the wider world are enacted. The children of Gebelawi are trapped not just in a physical space but in a psychological one, born into a legacy of poverty and systemic neglect that replicates the trauma of their ancestors.

Socio-Political Trauma and the Fractured Self

A central insight from this analysis is the inseparability of individual psychology from the socio-political context. The authors demonstrate that historical violence is not merely a backdrop but a direct cause of psychological fragmentation.

Afghanistan: The Casualty of Geopolitics: Hosseini's novels illustrate how the child becomes a casualty of geopolitics. In "The Kite Runner", the Soviet invasion shatters the "golden age" of Kabul that Amir remembers. The trauma of displacement, symbolized by the fuel truck that refugees use to escape, is a literalization of the suffocation of the Afghan middle class. The character of Sohrab represents the ultimate degradation of childhood under the Taliban; his experience of sexual slavery (bacha bazi) is a metaphor for a nation whose future is being exploited by its corrupt rulers. In "A Thousand Splendid Suns", Laila's loss of her parents in a rocket blast is not a random tragedy but a direct consequence of the civil war. Her body, and Mariam's, bear the scars of both domestic and political violence, illustrating how the patriarchal household and the war-torn state operate as systems of overlapping oppression.

Egypt: Colonial Scars and the Shadow of Patriarchy: Mahfouz's "The Cairo Trilogy" presents a different but equally devastating picture of socio-political trauma. The authoritarian rule of Al-Sayyid Ahmad in "Palace Walk" is a direct reflection of the British colonial administration—authoritarian, distant, and rigid. The family home is a microcosm of the colonial state, where the citizen (the child) fears the ruler (the father). The trauma of the children, particularly Fahmy's death as a revolutionary, and Kamal's intellectual and spiritual crises, is shown to be a direct result of the collision between traditional authority and the forces of modernity and colonial occupation. Mahfouz shows that even after the colonizer leaves, the "structures of dominance" remain, perpetuating trauma through new forms of authoritarianism and bureaucratic neglect.

Resilience and Psychological Transformation

Despite the profound suffering depicted, the narratives are not solely about despair. They are



also explorations of resilience—the human capacity to endure and, in some cases, to transform pain into a foundation for new meaning.

Resilience as Endurance and Witness: In “A Thousand Splendid Suns”, resilience is not depicted as heroic victory but as a quiet, relentless endurance. Mariam’s decision to sacrifice herself for Laila is a final act of agency, transforming a life of subjugation into a meaningful death. Her resilience lies in her ability to forge a bond of solidarity with Laila, transforming their shared trauma into a source of mutual strength. As the text notes, their companionship gradually transforms into solidarity, demonstrating that courage can emerge from shared trauma.

Redemption through Narrative: For Amir in “The Kite Runner”, the path to psychological transformation is through narrative action. His return to Afghanistan to rescue Sohrab is a belated attempt to master his past through a repetition of the traumatic scene—this time with a different outcome. The novel suggests that redemption is not about erasing the past but about re-engaging with it, bearing witness to the suffering one caused or failed to prevent. The final scene, where Amir runs a kite for Sohrab and says “for you, a thousand times over,” is not a cure but a commitment to a continuous process of care and acknowledgment, symbolizing a partial but significant integration of his fractured identity.

The Search for Meaning: In Mahfouz’s “Palace of Desire”, Kamal’s psychological journey is one of disillusionment. His intellectual rebellion against his father’s values and his unrequited love for Aida represent the struggle to forge a modern identity in a society caught between tradition and modernity. His trauma is not a single event but a slow, accumulating pressure. His transformation is ambiguous; he does not find a clear resolution but instead embodies the crisis of a generation grappling with the loss of certainty. This representation is psychologically realistic, showing that transformation is often a process of fragmentation and questioning, not a neat return to wholeness.

Conclusion

The literary works of Khaled Hosseini and Naguib Mahfouz offer a profound psychological archive of childhood trauma in the context of socio-political conflict. By employing narrative forms that mirror the fragmented, repetitive, and symbolic nature of traumatic memory, these authors transform unspeakable suffering into a communicable, testimonial experience. This analysis, grounded in trauma theory, psychoanalysis, and postcolonial studies, reveals that trauma in these narratives is not merely an individual psychological event but a complex interplay between the inner world and external forces of war, colonization, and patriarchal authoritarianism. The child, in this literature, becomes a powerful symbol—the nation’s “unconscious archive”—carrying memories that official histories often erase.

The study highlights the crucial role of narrative in the psychological process of witnessing and, potentially, healing. While these stories do not offer easy resolutions, they illustrate that resilience is found not in the absence of pain but in the capacity to endure, to bear witness, and to forge meaning through connection. For the field of psychology, these literary texts provide invaluable insights into the lived experience of trauma, demonstrating how cultural and historical forces shape the developing



psyche. They remind us that the wounds of history are often written first upon the most vulnerable, and that the act of storytelling itself can be a profound, albeit complex, step toward integration and ethical understanding.

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Old Age Homes : A Sociological Study Of The Karnataka Region

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Abstract:

India is currently experiencing a noticeable shift in its population structure, with a growing number of elderly people. This change is not just demographic—it is also transforming family life and systems of care. Karnataka, where rapid urban development exists alongside strong rural traditions, provides a useful setting to understand these changes.

This study looks at old age homes in Karnataka from a sociological perspective. It explores how changing family relationships, economic pressures, and personal experiences are shaping the lives of older adults. In the past, elderly care was mainly handled within joint families. However, factors such as urbanization, migration, and changing lifestyles have weakened this system, leading to a rise in institutional care.

Using qualitative insights and existing research, the study examines why elderly individuals move into old age homes. These reasons range from neglect and financial dependency to health issues and even personal choice for companionship and safety. The emotional experiences of residents are also explored, highlighting feelings of loneliness, adjustment, resilience, and changing identities.

The study further points out that old age homes are not only places of abandonment but can also become spaces where new social relationships are formed. At the same time, issues like mental health, quality of care, and social isolation remain concerns. Overall, the study emphasizes the need for better policies and culturally sensitive approaches that balance family responsibility with institutional support.

Keywords: Ageing, Old Age Homes, Karnataka, Sociological Study, Elder Care, Family Structure, Institutionalization, Social Change



Introduction:

Ageing is not merely a biological process; it is deeply embedded in social relations, cultural expectations, and economic realities. In India, old age has historically been associated with respect, authority, and familial security. Yet, this perception is undergoing a gradual shift. Karnataka, a state experiencing rapid urbanization alongside persistent rural traditions, offers a compelling context to examine these changes.

The rise of old age homes in Karnataka reflects broader transformations in Indian society. Migration of younger generations, increasing participation of women in the workforce, and the shift from joint to nuclear families have altered caregiving patterns. As noted by Rajan and Balagopal (2017), these transitions have led to a growing demand for institutional elderly care across India.

This study seeks to understand the sociological implications of this shift, focusing on how elderly individuals experience life within institutional settings and how these spaces reshape notions of family, belonging, and dignity.

Methodology:

This study adopts a qualitative and descriptive research design based on secondary data, case studies, and interpretative sociological analysis.

- **Data Sources:** Academic journals, government reports, and prior studies on ageing and elder care in Karnataka and India.
- **Approach:** Thematic analysis of sociological factors influencing institutionalization.
- **Scope:** Focus on Karnataka, with references to both urban (Bengaluru, Mangaluru) and rural regions.

Sociological Dimensions of Old Age Homes in Karnataka

1. Transformation of Family Structures

The transformation of family structures in India has significantly altered the traditional system of elder care. Historically, Indian society was organized around the **joint family system**, where multiple generations lived together and shared responsibilities. In this arrangement, elderly individuals were cared for within the household and held positions of respect and authority. However, in recent decades, this system has gradually shifted toward **nuclear family structures**, particularly in urban regions like Karnataka.

One of the key reasons for this shift is **urbanization and migration**. Younger family members often move to cities such as Bengaluru in search of education and employment opportunities. This geographical separation reduces daily interaction with older parents and weakens intergenerational bonds. As a result, elderly individuals are increasingly left to manage independently or rely on external support systems.

The rise of nuclear families has further limited the capacity for caregiving. Smaller households, focused on economic stability and privacy, often lack the time and resources needed to care for ageing



members. Research indicates that this transition has reduced the availability of informal family-based support for the elderly (Dhillon et al., 2016).

Additionally, changing gender roles have played an important part. With more women entering the workforce, traditional caregiving roles within the household have declined. This has created practical challenges in providing continuous care for elderly family members.

At the same time, changing values and aspirations emphasize independence and self-reliance. Many older adults prefer not to depend entirely on their children, while younger generations prioritize mobility and career growth. This mutual shift has contributed to the growing acceptance of old age homes as an alternative form of care. Overall, changing family structures reflect not just a breakdown of tradition but a broader **reorganization of social life**. While these changes have increased vulnerability among the elderly, they have also led to the emergence of new support systems that attempt to address their needs.

Economic and Health Factors

Economic insecurity and health vulnerability are central factors influencing the increasing reliance on old age homes in India. Many elderly individuals experience a decline in income after retirement, particularly those who worked in informal sectors without pensions or savings. This financial dependency often limits their ability to meet basic needs, including food, housing, and healthcare. Studies show that economic vulnerability significantly affects the overall well-being of older adults and increases their dependence on institutional care (Srivastava & Muhammad, 2022).

Health challenges further intensify this situation. Ageing is commonly associated with chronic illnesses such as diabetes, hypertension, and mobility-related conditions. Access to affordable and continuous medical care remains a major concern, especially for those living alone or in rural areas. Research highlights that healthcare costs and limited accessibility make elderly individuals more susceptible to physical and psychological distress (Sheikh et al., 2012).

The combination of financial instability and declining health often places a burden on families, who may lack the resources or time to provide adequate care. As a result, old age homes emerge as a practical solution, offering medical assistance, regular monitoring, and basic security. While these institutions address essential needs, they also reflect broader structural gaps in social security and public healthcare systems for the ageing population.

Social Isolation and Psychological Dimensions

Social isolation is a significant issue affecting elderly individuals in old age homes, deeply influencing their psychological well-being. Separation from family, loss of long-standing social roles, and limited meaningful interaction often lead to feelings of loneliness and emotional neglect. Studies conducted in India show that elderly residents in institutional settings are more vulnerable to mental health concerns such as depression, anxiety, and reduced cognitive functioning (Mishra et al., 2023; Desai et al., 2016).



The transition to institutional living can be emotionally challenging. Many elderly individuals struggle with a sense of abandonment, especially when relocation is not voluntary. The absence of close familial bonds and familiar environments can intensify feelings of insecurity and helplessness. At the same time, the structured environment of old age homes may provide opportunities for social interaction, yet these connections often lack the emotional depth of family relationships.

Research also highlights that inadequate social support is directly associated with higher levels of psychological distress (Gurrapu & Ammapattian, 2024). However, participation in group activities and peer bonding can partially reduce loneliness and improve emotional well-being. Overall, addressing mental health through counselling, social engagement, and supportive care systems is essential to enhance the quality of life among elderly residents.

Cultural Shifts and Perceptions of Care

Cultural shifts in Indian society have significantly influenced perceptions of elderly care, particularly the growing acceptance of old age homes. Traditionally, caring for ageing parents was considered a moral and familial duty, deeply rooted in values of respect, reciprocity, and intergenerational bonding. Living with one's children in old age was not only expected but also seen as a source of emotional security and social identity. However, modernization and globalization have gradually reshaped these cultural norms.

One major shift is the increasing emphasis on individualism and autonomy. Contemporary lifestyles prioritize personal independence, career mobility, and privacy, leading to a redefinition of family responsibilities. As Lamb (2005) notes, care in old age is no longer viewed solely as a family obligation but is increasingly shared with formal institutions. This transition reflects a broader cultural movement from dependence within families to structured, professional care systems.

Additionally, perceptions of old age homes have evolved. Earlier associated with abandonment and social stigma, these institutions are now, in some contexts, seen as spaces offering dignity, safety, and companionship. Studies indicate that some elderly individuals voluntarily choose institutional living to avoid burdening their families and to maintain a sense of independence (Janbandhu & Phad, 2022).

At the same time, this cultural transition is not uniform. Many communities still view institutional care with hesitation, reflecting a tension between **traditional values and modern realities** (Sarkar & Batabyal, 2023). Thus, the rise of old age homes represents not merely a decline in cultural values but an ongoing negotiation between changing social expectations and enduring moral frameworks surrounding care.

Illustrations: Bengaluru – Voluntary Transition

In metropolitan Bengaluru, several elderly individuals choose to move into retirement communities. A retired teacher, for instance, may opt for such a facility to avoid loneliness after children settle abroad. Here, old age homes function as active ageing spaces, offering social engagement and healthcare.



Rural Karnataka – Compelled Relocation

In contrast, in districts like Kolar or Kalaburagi, elderly individuals often enter old age homes due to neglect or economic hardship. Nagesha (2013) notes that weakening rural support systems contribute to this trend.

Gendered Experiences

Elderly women, particularly widows, are more vulnerable. Clark (2018) documents cases in Bengaluru where abandoned elderly women find refuge in care homes, rebuilding social ties despite past trauma.

NGO-Run Homes

NGO initiatives in North Karnataka provide shelter and community support. Sivamurthy and Wadakannavar (2001) observed that such homes often create a familial atmosphere, blending care with cultural familiarity.

Old age homes in Karnataka cannot be reduced to symbols of familial breakdown. Instead, they represent a complex social adaptation to changing realities. These institutions simultaneously reflect:

- The erosion of traditional caregiving systems
- The emergence of alternative support networks
- The negotiation between dependency and autonomy

While they address material needs, emotional fulfilment remains uneven. The challenge lies in integrating institutional care with community and family engagement.

Conclusion

The growth of old age homes in Karnataka underscores a critical sociological transition. Ageing, once anchored in family structures, is increasingly mediated through institutions. This shift is neither entirely negative nor wholly progressive; it reflects the tensions of a society in transformation.

To ensure dignified ageing, there is a need for:

- Stronger social security systems
- Community-based elder care models
- Policies regulating quality standards in care homes
- Efforts to rebuild intergenerational connections

Ultimately, ageing is not just about survival but about belonging. Old age homes must evolve beyond shelters into spaces where dignity, companionship, and meaning are preserved.

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A Comparative Study Of Anxiety among Arts, Science And Commerce Degree College Students

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Abstract

Anxiety has emerged as a major mental health concern among college students due to increasing academic demands, social pressures, financial stress, and future uncertainties. The present study aimed to examine the levels of anxiety among undergraduate students and to investigate gender differences and stream-wise differences in anxiety across Arts, Commerce, and Science disciplines. A between-group research design was employed using a purposive sample of 200 undergraduate students aged between 18 and 22 years, comprising 100 males and 100 females. Anxiety was assessed using the Comprehensive Anxiety Test (CAT) developed by Bharadwaj, Sharma, and Bhargava, a standardized instrument with satisfactory reliability and validity indices. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, independent samples t-test, and one-way ANOVA.

The findings revealed a high prevalence of anxiety among college students, with a majority of participants falling within the high, saturated, and very high anxiety categories. Female students demonstrated significantly higher anxiety levels compared to male students, indicating the influence of gender on psychological well-being. However, although variations in mean anxiety scores were observed across academic streams, the differences were not statistically significant. The results suggest that anxiety is a pervasive concern affecting students irrespective of academic discipline. The study highlights the growing need for mental health awareness, preventive interventions, and psychological support services within higher educational institutions. The findings also contribute to the existing literature on student mental health by emphasizing the role of gender in anxiety while underscoring the universal nature of anxiety across academic streams.

Keywords: *Anxiety, college students, gender differences, academic streams, mental health, undergraduate students, psychological well-being.*

Introduction:

Anxiety is one of the most common psychological concerns experienced during late adolescence and emerging adulthood, particularly among college students. It involves feelings of apprehension,



nervousness, tension, and physiological arousal associated with anticipated threats or uncertain situations (Barlow, 2002). While moderate anxiety may facilitate alertness and motivation, excessive and persistent anxiety can impair academic performance, emotional stability, interpersonal relationships, and overall well-being (Spielberger, 2013). The college period is characterized by academic pressure, identity exploration, social adjustment, financial difficulties, peer competition, parental expectations, and uncertainty regarding future careers, all of which contribute significantly to psychological distress among students (Beiter et al., 2015). Contemporary educational environments have increasingly become associated with mental health concerns, making anxiety a major issue within higher education settings.

Research evidence indicates a growing prevalence of anxiety among university students globally. According to the National Institute of Mental Health (2017), anxiety disorders are among the most prevalent mental health conditions affecting young adults. Similarly, the American College Health Association (2019) reported that nearly 66% of undergraduate students experienced overwhelming anxiety during a single academic semester. Theoretical perspectives such as Beck and Clark's (1997) cognitive model emphasize the role of maladaptive thoughts, fear of failure, and catastrophic interpretations in the development of anxiety, while Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) transactional model explains anxiety as the outcome of perceived imbalance between environmental demands and coping resources. Social cognitive perspectives proposed by Bandura (1997) further highlight the influence of self-efficacy, interpersonal comparison, and social validation on emotional well-being.

Several psychosocial and environmental factors contribute to anxiety among students. Academic workload, examination stress, time management difficulties, and performance expectations have consistently been identified as major predictors of anxiety (Jones et al., 2018). Additionally, social isolation, financial instability, interpersonal problems, and uncertainty regarding employment opportunities intensify emotional distress among students (Lenny, Doleck, & Bazelaïs, 2019). Anxiety has also been associated with concentration difficulties, procrastination, burnout, depression, sleep disturbances, emotional exhaustion, and reduced quality of life (Jia, 2024).

Gender differences in anxiety have been widely documented in psychological literature. Studies by Bottesi et al. (2018), Tuncay et al. (2020), and Kumari (2025) reported that female students generally experience higher levels of anxiety compared to males due to emotional sensitivity, sociocultural expectations, and coping differences. Academic stream also appears to influence anxiety experiences. Chandra and Misra (2024) observed variations in stress and anxiety across Arts, Science, and Commerce students due to differences in workload, evaluation systems, and career expectations. Similarly, Waghmare (2022) highlighted the role of academic environment in influencing students' mental health and emotional adjustment.

Despite increasing awareness regarding student mental health, there remains a need for comprehensive studies examining anxiety across gender and academic streams simultaneously. Existing research often focuses either on general prevalence or isolated demographic factors without adequately exploring the combined influence of educational context and gender. Furthermore, post-pandemic educational changes, technological pressures, and heightened competition have intensified



psychological distress among students. Therefore, the present study aimed to assess anxiety among Arts, Science, and Commerce degree college students while examining gender differences and stream-wise variations in anxiety levels. The findings may contribute to the growing body of literature on student mental health and assist educators, counsellors, policymakers, and mental health professionals in developing evidence-based psychological interventions and mental health promotion programs for college students.

Need for the Study:

Anxiety has emerged as a major mental health concern among college students, particularly during the transition from adolescence to adulthood. Students in higher education experience multiple stressors such as academic competition, examination pressure, financial difficulties, social adjustment problems, and uncertainty regarding future careers. Although moderate anxiety may enhance motivation and performance, excessive anxiety can negatively affect emotional well-being, academic achievement, interpersonal relationships, and quality of life (Barlow, 2002). In recent years, technological demands, changing educational systems, and post-pandemic academic adjustments have further intensified anxiety among students.

Existing literature suggests that anxiety among college students is highly prevalent and influenced by demographic and academic factors. However, many previous studies have focused mainly on general anxiety levels without adequately examining differences across academic streams and gender simultaneously. Students from Arts, Science, and Commerce streams experience different curricular demands, workload patterns, and career expectations, which may influence anxiety differently. Science students often face rigorous academic pressure, while Arts and Commerce students may experience stress related to career uncertainty and societal expectations.

Gender differences in anxiety also require systematic investigation. Studies by Bottesi et al. (2018) and Tuncay et al. (2020) reported that female students experience significantly higher anxiety levels compared to males due to emotional vulnerability and sociocultural expectations. Anxiety has also been linked with poor concentration, academic difficulties, depression, sleep disturbances, and social withdrawal (Jia, 2024). Therefore, the present study is important for understanding anxiety among Arts, Science, and Commerce degree students and for developing effective mental health interventions and counselling programs within higher educational institutions.

Methodology and procedure:

The present study aimed to assess anxiety among Arts, Science, and Commerce degree college students and to examine differences in anxiety based on gender and academic stream.

The objectives of the study were

- To determine the level of anxiety among undergraduate students
- To identify gender differences in anxiety level between male and female students
- To examine stream-wise differences in anxiety among Arts, Commerce, and Science students.

Based on these objectives, two null hypotheses were formulated:

1. No significant gender differences in anxiety level would exist among college students.



2. No significant differences across academic stream would exist in anxiety levels among college students.

Research Design

In the present study, gender (male and female) and academic stream (Arts, Commerce, and Science) served as the independent variables, while anxiety functioned as the dependent variable. A between-group research design was adopted to compare anxiety levels across the selected groups. Purposive sampling was employed to select participants. Descriptive statistics were used to determine anxiety levels, while inferential statistics were employed to examine gender and stream-wise differences in anxiety among college students.

Participants

The sample consisted of 200 undergraduate students, including 100 males and 100 females, aged between 18 and 22 years, studying in different degree colleges. Students from Arts, Commerce, and Science streams were included.

To control extraneous variables, students with severe physical illness, diagnosed psychiatric conditions, or those undergoing intensive psychological treatment were excluded from the study. Prior permission was obtained from institutional authorities, and informed consent was secured from all participants. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the research process.

Tools:

Comprehensive Anxiety Test (CAT) (Bharadwaj, Sharma, and Bhargava, 1997): The present study used the Comprehensive Anxiety Test (CAT) developed by Bharadwaj, Sharma, and Bhargava (1997) to assess anxiety among Arts, Science, and Commerce degree college students. The CAT is a standardized psychological tool widely used in educational and clinical settings to measure anxiety-related symptoms among adolescents and adults. The instrument conceptualizes anxiety as a multidimensional construct involving emotional, cognitive, behavioural, and physiological components. It evaluates an individual's tendency to experience apprehension, nervousness, tension, insecurity, emotional instability, and stress in challenging situations.

The CAT consists of statements reflecting common manifestations of anxiety experienced in everyday life. It assesses several important dimensions such as emotional instability, apprehension, guilt proneness, self-consciousness, lack of confidence, mental fatigue, and tension. Based on the obtained scores, individuals can be classified into categories including very low, low, average, high, saturated, and very high anxiety.

The tool possesses satisfactory psychometric properties. Bharadwaj, Sharma, and Bhargava (1997) reported a test-retest reliability coefficient of 0.85 and a split-half reliability coefficient of 0.92, indicating good stability and internal consistency. The CAT also demonstrates satisfactory content validity, construct validity, and concurrent validity (0.62). In the present study, the CAT was considered appropriate because it provides a comprehensive evaluation of anxiety experiences relevant to undergraduate student populations. The tool was administered according to standardized instructions.



After data collection, responses were scored appropriately.

Analysis of Results:

Descriptive statistics, including frequency and percentage analysis, were computed to assess the distribution and levels of anxiety among degree college students. Independent samples t-test was used to examine gender differences in anxiety between male and female students. One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was further employed to compare anxiety scores among students belonging to Arts, Commerce, and Science streams.

Results and discussion:

The results examined anxiety prevalence and gender and stream differences using descriptive statistics, independent samples t-test, and one-way ANOVA.

Demographic details of the sample:

The demographic characteristics of the participants included in the present study are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Degree College Students (N = 200):

Areas	Categories	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	100	50
	Female	100	50
	Total	200	100
Age	18–19 years	62	31
	20–21 years	96	48
	21–22 years	42	21
	Total	200	100
Academic Stream	Arts	50	25
	Commerce	50	25
	Science	100	50
	Total	200	100
Year of Study	First Year	74	37
	Second Year	68	34
	Final Year	58	29
	Total	200	100
Type of Family	Nuclear Family	146	73
	Joint Family	54	27
	Total	200	100
Locality	Rural	88	44
	Urban	112	56
	Total	200	100
Category	SC/ST	46	23
	OBC	88	44
	GM	66	33
	Total	200	100
Residence Type	Hostel	72	36
	Day Scholar	128	64
	Total	200	100



The sample included 200 undergraduate students from Arts, Commerce, and Science streams with equal male and female representation. Most participants were aged 20–21 years, belonged to nuclear families, urban localities, middle socioeconomic backgrounds, and were day scholars. Diverse demographic variables ensured broader representation for assessing anxiety among degree college students.

Distribution of Anxiety Levels:

The distribution of anxiety levels among students is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Distribution of Comprehensive Anxiety Levels among Degree Students (N = 200):

Anxiety Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very Low	1	0.5
Low	14	7.0
Average	37	18.5
High	36	18.0
Saturated	44	22.0
Very High	68	34.0

Table 2 presents the distribution of anxiety levels among 200 degree college students assessed using the Comprehensive Anxiety Test (CAT). The findings indicate substantial variations in anxiety levels, with the majority of students experiencing elevated anxiety. Only 1 student (0.5%) showed very low anxiety, while 14 students (7.0%) demonstrated low anxiety, suggesting that minimal anxiety was uncommon within the sample. A total of 37 students (18.5%) exhibited average anxiety levels, reflecting moderate emotional functioning.

However, a large proportion of students reported heightened anxiety levels. Specifically, 36 students (18.0%) fell under the high anxiety category, 44 students (22.0%) demonstrated saturated anxiety, and the largest group, consisting of 68 students (34.0%), showed very high anxiety. These findings indicate considerable emotional tension and psychological distress among undergraduate students.

Overall, 74% of the participants belonged to the high, saturated, and very high anxiety categories, whereas only 7.5% fell within the low and very low anxiety categories, highlighting the significant prevalence of anxiety among degree college students.

The findings of the present study are consistent with earlier research highlighting increasing anxiety levels among college students worldwide. Beiter et al. (2015) identified anxiety as one of the most common psychological problems among university students, mainly associated with academic pressure, workload, fear of failure, and future uncertainty. Similarly, the American College Health Association (2019) reported that many undergraduate students experience overwhelming anxiety that



interferes with academic functioning and daily life. The present study supports these findings, as the majority of students demonstrated moderate to severe anxiety levels, while only a very small proportion reported low anxiety.

The high prevalence of anxiety observed in the study may be linked to multiple academic and psychosocial stressors faced by college students. Jones et al. (2018) emphasized that examination pressure, time management difficulties, and academic expectations significantly contribute to anxiety among students. Likewise, Lenny, Doleck, and Bazelaïs (2019) reported that social isolation, peer pressure, and unmet social acceptance needs increase emotional distress. Present-day students also face technological demands, financial concerns, academic competition, and career uncertainty, which may intensify psychological strain.

The findings are further supported by Jia (2024), who observed that anxiety negatively affects concentration, motivation, sleep quality, emotional stability, and social functioning among higher education students. The large proportion of students classified under saturated and very high anxiety in the present study suggests persistent emotional distress that may interfere with academic adjustment and psychological well-being.

From a theoretical perspective, Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) transactional model explains anxiety as resulting from imbalance between environmental demands and coping resources, while Beck and Clark's (1997) cognitive model highlights maladaptive thinking and fear of negative evaluation as contributors to anxiety.

The findings also correspond with Indian studies by Waghmare (2022) and Chandra and Misra (2024), who reported elevated anxiety among undergraduate students due to academic competition and educational demands. Overall, the study emphasizes the need for counselling services, mental health awareness, and stress-management interventions in colleges and universities.

Gender Differences in Anxiety

The comparison of anxiety scores between male and female students is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Independent Samples t-test for Gender Differences

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	df	p
Female	100	48.26	13.15	2.81	198	0.005
Male	100	43.6	10.08			

The present study examined gender differences in anxiety among degree college students using an independent samples t-test. Female students reported higher anxiety levels ($M = 48.26$, $SD = 13.15$) compared to male students ($M = 43.60$, $SD = 10.08$). The obtained t-value of 2.81 was statistically significant at the 0.005 level, indicating meaningful gender differences in anxiety. The findings suggest that female students experience greater emotional tension, apprehension, and anxiety-related experiences than male students.

The present findings are consistent with earlier studies reporting higher anxiety levels among



female students in academic settings. Bottesi et al. (2018) found that female students experienced significantly greater anxiety, stress, and emotional distress than males. Similarly, Jones et al. (2018) observed that female college students demonstrated higher academic anxiety due to academic pressure, emotional sensitivity, and performance-related concerns. Female students were also reported to experience greater worry regarding examinations, future goals, and social expectations.

The findings are further supported by Tuncay et al. (2020), who reported higher anxiety and emotional vulnerability among female university students. Likewise, Naceanceno et al. (2020) found that female students experienced greater stress and anxiety because of academic workload, psychosocial pressures, and adjustment difficulties. These findings suggest that female students are more likely to internalize stress and exhibit heightened emotional responsiveness to academic and interpersonal challenges.

The higher anxiety levels among females may be explained through biological, psychological, and sociocultural factors. Beck and Clark's (1997) cognitive model of anxiety proposes that fear of failure, negative automatic thoughts, and heightened self-evaluation contribute significantly to anxiety symptoms. Female students may demonstrate greater sensitivity toward academic achievement, interpersonal evaluation, and societal expectations, thereby increasing vulnerability to anxiety. Sociocultural pressures related to academic success, family responsibilities, and future career planning may also intensify emotional distress. Kumari (2025) similarly reported higher anxiety among female students due to emotional stress and future-related concerns. Spielberg (2013) additionally suggested that hormonal and physiological differences may contribute to greater anxiety prevalence among females.

Although male students reported comparatively lower anxiety, anxiety remained prevalent among both genders. This observation supports Beiter et al. (2015), who emphasized that college students generally experience psychological distress due to academic competition, financial concerns, and career uncertainty. Overall, the findings highlight the importance of gender-sensitive counselling services, stress-management programs, and mental health interventions within higher educational institutions.

Stream-wise Differences in Anxiety

The descriptive statistics and ANOVA results for academic streams are presented in Table 3.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics and One-Way ANOVA for Academic Streams:

Stream	N	Mean	SD	F	df (Between, Within)	p
Arts	50	47.32	13.16	2.3	(2, 197)	0.103
Commerce	50	42.84	10.03			
Science	100	46.78	11.98			

The present study examined differences in anxiety levels among degree college students belonging to Arts, Commerce, and Science streams. Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics and one-way



Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) results comparing anxiety scores across the three academic streams. The findings indicate variations in the mean anxiety scores among students from different academic backgrounds.

Among the three groups, Arts students reported the highest mean anxiety score ($M = 47.32$, $SD = 13.16$), indicating comparatively higher levels of emotional tension, apprehension, and anxiety-related experiences. Science students also demonstrated relatively elevated anxiety levels with a mean score of 46.78 ($SD = 11.98$). In contrast, Commerce students obtained the lowest mean anxiety score ($M = 42.84$, $SD = 10.03$), suggesting comparatively lower anxiety levels when compared to Arts and Science students.

Further, the obtained F-value of 2.30 with degrees of freedom (2, 197) was not found to be statistically significant at the 0.05 level ($p = .103$). This indicates that although differences were observed in the mean anxiety scores across Arts, Commerce, and Science streams, the variations were not statistically significant. In other words, the differences in anxiety levels among students from the three academic streams may have occurred due to chance variation rather than representing meaningful group differences.

Overall, the findings suggest that anxiety is prevalent among students across all academic streams, irrespective of disciplinary background. Although Arts students demonstrated comparatively higher anxiety scores and Commerce students reported relatively lower anxiety levels, the absence of statistically significant differences indicates that anxiety is a widespread psychological concern affecting undergraduate students across different fields of study.

The findings of the present study are partially consistent with earlier research examining anxiety across academic streams. Chandra and Misra (2024) reported that students from different educational streams experience varying levels of stress and anxiety due to differences in academic workload, evaluation systems, and career expectations. Science students often experience pressure related to extensive syllabi, laboratory work, and competitive educational environments, while Arts students may experience anxiety associated with career uncertainty and societal perceptions regarding employability. Commerce students may encounter stress related to professional and financial expectations.

Although the present study observed comparatively higher anxiety among Arts students, the absence of statistically significant differences suggests that anxiety is not confined to a specific academic discipline. This finding supports Beiter et al. (2015), who emphasized that anxiety among college students is a widespread phenomenon influenced by academic competition, fear of failure, interpersonal concerns, financial stress, and future uncertainty. Similarly, Jia (2024) reported that anxiety among higher education students is multifactorial and influenced by academic, psychological, social, and environmental factors rather than academic stream alone.

The comparatively higher anxiety observed among Arts students may be explained through psychosocial and occupational concerns, whereas Science students may experience anxiety due to academic workload and performance pressure. However, the lack of statistically significant differences



suggests substantial overlap in anxiety experiences across streams. The findings also correspond with Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) transactional model of stress and coping, which explains anxiety as resulting from perceived imbalance between environmental demands and coping resources.

In contrast, Waghmare (2022) and Selvaraj et al. (2024) reported significant stream-wise differences in stress and emotional well-being. Variations between studies may be due to differences in samples, sociocultural background, institutional settings, and measurement tools.

Overall, the present study suggests that anxiety is a generalized concern among degree college students irrespective of academic stream, highlighting the need for counselling services, stress-management programs, and mental health awareness initiatives within colleges and universities.

Conclusions:

The study revealed a high prevalence of anxiety among degree college students, indicating that anxiety is a major mental health concern in higher educational settings. A majority of students fell under the high, saturated, and very high anxiety categories, while only a small proportion demonstrated low anxiety levels. Academic pressure, social expectations, financial concerns, adjustment difficulties, and uncertainty regarding future careers may significantly contribute to anxiety among undergraduate students. Significant gender differences were observed, with female students reporting higher anxiety levels than male students. Female students may be more vulnerable to emotional stress and anxiety-related experiences due to psychological, biological, and sociocultural factors. Although Arts students demonstrated comparatively higher anxiety levels and Commerce students relatively lower anxiety levels, stream-wise differences were not statistically significant. The findings suggest that anxiety is a generalized psychological issue affecting students across all academic disciplines.

The study highlights the importance of early identification of anxiety symptoms among college students. The findings emphasize the need for counselling services, stress-management interventions, mental health awareness programs, and supportive educational environments within colleges and universities.

Educational institutions should implement gender-sensitive psychological support systems and student wellness programs to promote emotional well-being among undergraduate students.

Limitations of the Study

- The study was limited to 200 undergraduate students, reducing generalizability to wider student populations.
- Purposive sampling may have limited sample representativeness and increased sampling bias.
- Only Arts, Commerce, and Science students were included, excluding professional course students.
- The cross-sectional design prevented the establishment of causal relationships.
- Anxiety was measured using self-report tools, which may involve response bias and subjective



interpretation.

- Important variables such as personality, coping strategies, family environment, and social support were not examined.
- The study did not differentiate between state anxiety and trait anxiety.
- Cultural and institutional differences among colleges were not considered.

Implications of the Study

- The findings highlight the urgent need for mental health awareness programs in colleges and universities.
- Educational institutions should establish accessible counselling centers and psychological support services for students.
- Early identification and intervention for anxiety symptoms are important to prevent long-term psychological, academic, and social difficulties.
- Since female students reported higher anxiety levels, gender-sensitive mental health interventions should be developed.
- Colleges should organize stress-management workshops, mindfulness programs, relaxation training, and coping-skills development programs.
- Faculty members and academic administrators should be trained to recognize signs of psychological distress among students.
- Supportive academic environments should be created to reduce excessive performance pressure and promote emotional well-being.
- Mental health promotion strategies should be implemented across all academic streams because anxiety was prevalent irrespective of disciplinary background.
- The findings may help psychologists, counsellors, educators, and policymakers develop evidence-based intervention programs.
- The study emphasizes integrating mental health education and emotional well-being programs into higher education systems.

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Exploring AI Integration In Human Resource Management: Redefining Indian Labour Laws For The Future Of Work

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Abstract

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has emerged as a key driver of transformation in modern organizations, significantly reshaping Human Resource Management (HRM). This study explores the integration of AI in HRM and examines the need to redefine Indian labour laws in the context of the future of work. AI-enabled technologies such as machine learning, chatbots, predictive analytics, virtual training systems, and automated monitoring tools are increasingly used in recruitment, employee training, performance evaluation, engagement, and workforce planning. The adoption of AI in India is expanding rapidly due to the growth of the digital economy, IT sector, e-commerce, and platform-based industries. While AI creates opportunities such as new job roles, enhanced productivity, flexible work arrangements, and innovation-driven growth, it also presents challenges including job displacement, skill gaps, income inequality, privacy concerns, and algorithmic bias. This study is exploratory and descriptive, based on secondary data from journals, policy reports, Labour Codes, ILO publications, and other credible sources. The findings indicate that AI has improved efficiency and decision-making in HRM, although concerns remain regarding fairness in AI-based systems. The study concludes that Indian labour laws require reforms to address emerging issues such as platform work, algorithmic transparency, and worker protection. A balanced approach integrating innovation, ethics, and accountability is essential for a sustainable and inclusive labour market.

KEYWORDS- *AI Integration, Robotics, Cybersecurity, Digital Services, Employees, Algorithmic Transparency, Algorithmic Bias, ILO, Labour, Digital Economy.*



Introduction

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has emerged as one of the most disruptive forces shaping the future of work across the globe. From automating routine tasks to enabling predictive decision-making, AI is rapidly transforming the way organizations manage people, productivity, and performance. Human Resource Management (HRM), traditionally dependent on human judgment and interpersonal interaction, is now witnessing a structural shift through AI-enabled recruitment systems, employee analytics, virtual training platforms, performance monitoring tools, and intelligent workforce planning. These technological advancements are redefining the management of human capital and creating new organizational possibilities. In the Indian context, the relevance of AI is particularly significant due to the country's large workforce, growing digital economy, expanding IT sector, and demographic advantage. Indian organizations are increasingly integrating AI into HR functions to enhance operational efficiency, improve employee engagement, reduce hiring time, and strengthen retention strategies. Sectors such as information technology, business services, finance, e-commerce, and platform-based industries are leading this transformation. AI tools such as chatbots, machine learning algorithms, predictive analytics, and personalized learning systems are gradually becoming integral parts of modern HR practices. However, alongside these opportunities, AI also raises critical economic, legal, and ethical concerns. The increasing use of algorithmic management challenges conventional notions of employer–employee relationships, workplace fairness, and human dignity. Issues such as job displacement, data privacy, digital surveillance, biased recruitment systems, unequal access to reskilling opportunities, and lack of accountability in automated decisions have become central concerns in emerging labour markets. These challenges are more complex in India, where a substantial proportion of the workforce remains informal, vulnerable, and outside formal social protection systems. Existing labour legislations in India were largely designed for traditional industrial and service environments, where employment relations were direct and physical. The rise of digital platforms, AI-managed workplaces, remote employment models, and gig-based labour systems has exposed significant regulatory gaps. While the Labour Codes, 2020 represent an important step toward reform, they provide limited clarity on algorithmic transparency, platform worker rights, technological displacement, and governance of AI-driven employment systems.

The future of work in India, therefore, depends not only on technological adoption but also on the ability to balance innovation with inclusion, efficiency with ethics, and productivity with labour justice. Human collaboration, empathy, and strategic judgment remain indispensable even in highly automated environments. AI should be viewed as an enabler of human potential rather than a substitute for human value. Against this backdrop, the present study explores the integration of AI in Human Resource Management and examines the need to redefine Indian labour laws for the future of work. The study seeks to analyse the opportunities, challenges, and policy implications of AI adoption while proposing a balanced framework that supports organizational growth, worker protection, and sustainable employment in the digital age.

Research Problem



Artificial Intelligence is rapidly transforming Human Resource Management through automated recruitment, performance evaluation, surveillance, and workforce analytics. While AI improves efficiency, it also creates serious concerns such as job displacement, algorithmic bias, privacy risks, and reduced human judgment. Indian labour laws were designed for traditional workplaces and may not adequately address AI-driven employment practices. The major problem is the growing gap between technological advancement and legal protection of employees. Therefore, there is a need to examine how Indian labour laws can be redefined to ensure fairness, accountability, and a balanced future of work.

Objectives

1. To examine the role of Artificial Intelligence in transforming Human Resource Management practices.
2. To analyze the impact of AI on key HR functions such as recruitment, training, performance appraisal, and employee engagement.
3. To identify the opportunities and challenges created by AI in the Indian labour market.

Literature Review

- **Roy, (2025)** The literature mainly focuses on the growing impact of Artificial Intelligence on employment relations and labour regulation. Studies reveal that AI is transforming traditional HR practices through automation, surveillance, and algorithmic decision-making. Researchers highlight concerns such as job insecurity, privacy risks, bias, and reduced human interaction at the workplace. Existing studies also emphasize that Indian labour laws were framed for conventional employment systems and are less prepared for gig work, platform labour, and AI-managed workplaces. Literature on the gig economy shows that workers often face weak legal protection, uncertain income, and limited social security. Global studies further stress the need for transparency, accountability, and ethical regulation of AI in employment practices.
- **Kumar, (2025).** Literature highlights that Artificial Intelligence is reshaping India's human capital by changing traditional job roles and skill requirements. Studies show that AI creates both disruption and new growth opportunities in the labour market. Researchers identify emerging competencies such as AI literacy, cognitive flexibility, digital skills, and socio-emotional intelligence as essential for future employability. Industry and policy reports further emphasize the need for large-scale skilling programs, education reforms, and lifelong learning systems. The literature suggests that India can utilize its demographic advantage by preparing a future-ready workforce for the AI-driven economy.
- **Shaji, Jeggumantri, Poojasree, Pandithurai,(2025).** Literature reveals that Artificial Intelligence is significantly transforming the Indian labour market by changing traditional employer–employee relationships. Studies show that organizations are increasingly using AI for recruitment, labour allocation, performance management, and automated decision-making. While AI improves efficiency and productivity, researchers highlight serious concerns such as workplace discrimination, algorithmic bias, privacy risks, and job displacement.



Existing research further emphasizes the need to reform labour legislations in areas like employee rights, collective bargaining, workplace protection, and regulation of automated systems. Studies also discuss both opportunities and challenges of AI in the Indian economy and stress the importance of ethical governance and legal safeguards in labour-related matters.

- **Moon, (2025).** Literature indicates that Artificial Intelligence is positively transforming Human Resource Management in India's IT sector. Studies using mixed-method approaches found that AI integration significantly improves key HR functions such as employee retention, engagement, and decision-making. Researchers highlight that AI tools like personalized learning systems, chatbots, predictive analytics, and virtual reality enhance workforce management and create a more efficient HR environment. These findings reflect a growing shift toward technology-driven human capital management.
- **Basnet, (2024).** Literature highlights that AI and Machine Learning are transforming Human Resource Management through smarter recruitment, better decision-making, and streamlined HR processes. Studies show that these technologies improve efficiency, productivity, and data-based workforce management. Researchers also emphasize that technology alone is insufficient without human collaboration, empathy, ethics, and managerial judgment. Existing studies recommend a balanced HRM model where AI supports human capabilities rather than replacing them, ensuring both organizational success and employee well-being.
- **Hammer, Karmakar, (2021).** Literature shows that automation and AI are reshaping the future of work in India with mixed outcomes. Studies indicate that while AI can improve productivity and innovation, its benefits may remain uneven due to India's large informal workforce, surplus labour, and structural inequalities. Researchers note that jobless growth, rising unemployment, and low female labour participation increase these concerns. Sectoral studies reveal higher automation impact in manufacturing, IT, BPO, and financial services, while adoption in agriculture remains limited. Existing research also highlights skill gaps, weak access to quality training, and insecure platform-based employment. The literature emphasizes the need for inclusive policies, reskilling initiatives, and context-based AI strategies for India.

Research Methodology

The present study is exploratory and descriptive in nature, focusing on the emerging impact of Artificial Intelligence on Human Resource Management and its implications for Indian labour laws. The study is based on secondary data collected from research journals, books, government reports, policy documents, Labour Codes, ILO publications, company reports, and credible online sources. A qualitative analytical approach has been used to examine AI applications in HRM such as recruitment, training, performance appraisal, and employee monitoring. Further, comparative analysis has been applied to identify gaps between existing Indian labour legislations and the changing requirements of AI-enabled workplaces. The study aims to provide conceptual insights and policy-oriented suggestions



for creating a fair, ethical, and future-ready labour framework in India.

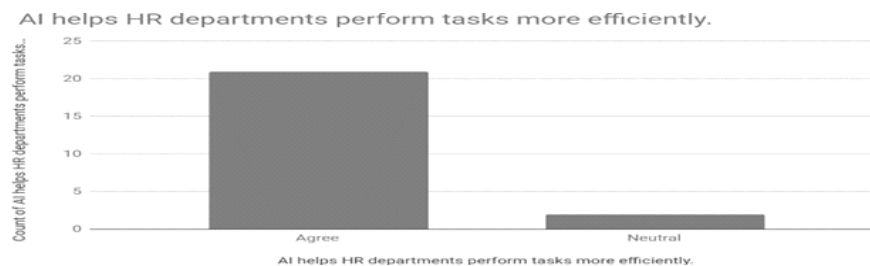
Opportunities created by AI in Indian Labour Market

- New jobs in AI, data analysis, robotics, cybersecurity, and digital services.
- Higher productivity and faster work processes.
- Better recruitment and talent matching.
- Growth of startups and innovation ecosystem.
- Remote work and flexible employment opportunities.
- Improved training through personalized learning platforms.
- Better decision-making using data analytics.
- Global employment opportunities through digital platforms.

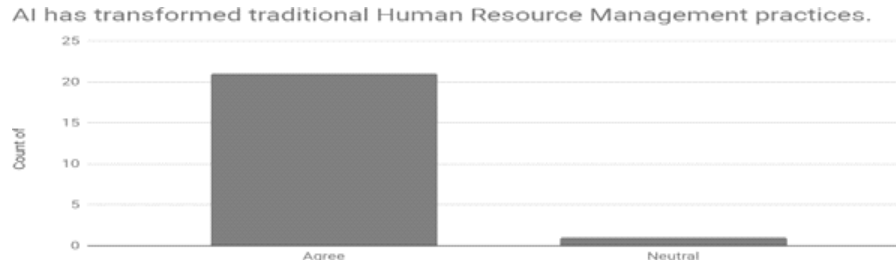
Challenges created by AI in Indian Labour Market

- Job displacement in repetitive and low-skill work.
- Skill gap and need for reskilling/upskilling.
- Income inequality between skilled and unskilled workers.
- Job insecurity and contractual employment growth.
- Bias in AI-based hiring or appraisal systems.
- Employee privacy and workplace surveillance concerns.
- Unequal access to technology in rural/poor areas.
- Weak labour laws for gig work and AI-managed jobs.
- Dependence on technology reducing human judgment.
- Stress and adaptation pressure on workers.

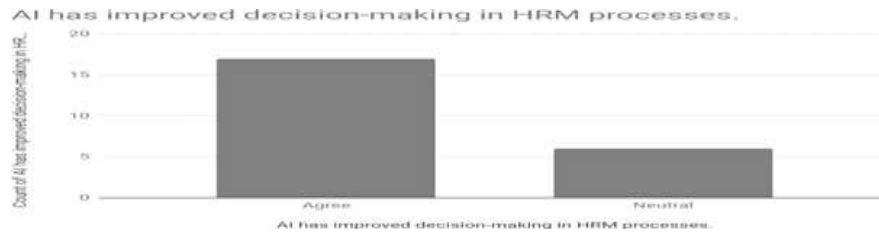
Data Analysis



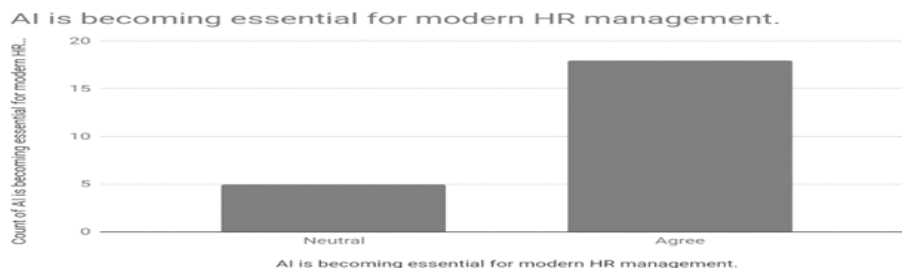
The bar graph indicates that most respondents agree that AI helps HR departments perform tasks more efficiently, with around 21 responses in favor. Only a few respondents remained neutral, with about 2 responses. No respondents expressed disagreement. This shows a positive perception of AI in improving efficiency, productivity, and overall HR operations.



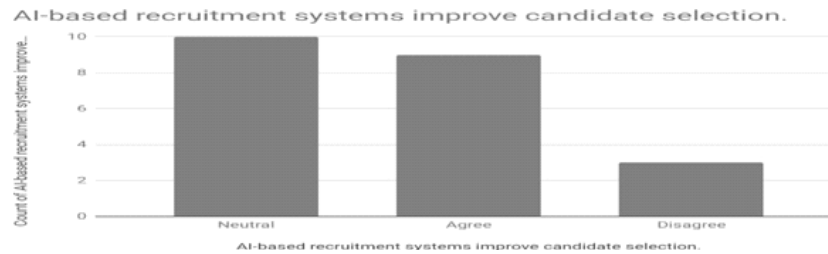
The bar graph shows that most respondents agree that AI has transformed traditional Human Resource Management practices, with around 21 responses. Only a small number of respondents remained neutral, with about 1 response. No respondents selected disagreement options. This indicates a positive perception that AI has significantly modernized and improved traditional HR practices.



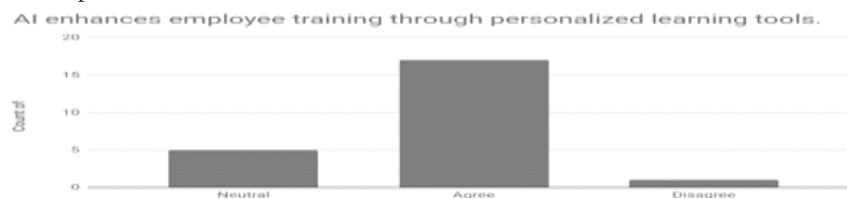
The bar graph indicates that most respondents agree that AI has improved decision-making in HRM processes, with around 17 responses. A smaller number of respondents remained neutral, with about 6 responses. No respondents selected disagreement options. This reflects a positive perception that AI supports better and faster decision-making in Human Resource Management.



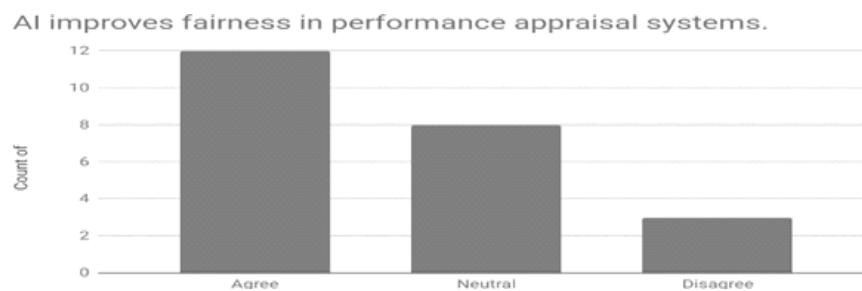
The bar graph shows that most respondents agree that AI is becoming essential for modern HR management, with around 18 responses. A smaller number of respondents remained neutral, with about 5 responses. No respondents selected disagreement options. This indicates a strong positive perception that AI is increasingly important in modern Human Resource Management practices.



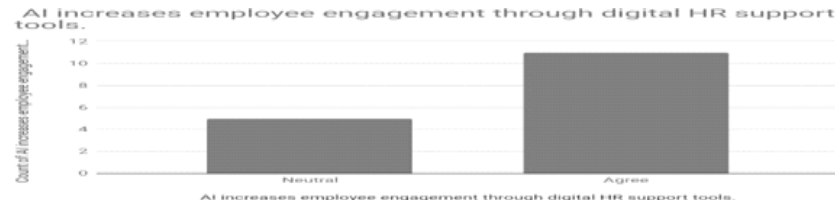
The bar graph indicates mixed responses regarding whether AI-based recruitment systems improve candidate selection. Most respondents selected Neutral with around 10 responses, followed by Agree with about 9 responses. A smaller number of respondents selected Disagree, with around 3 responses. This suggests that while many respondents see benefits of AI in recruitment, some remain uncertain or skeptical about its effectiveness.



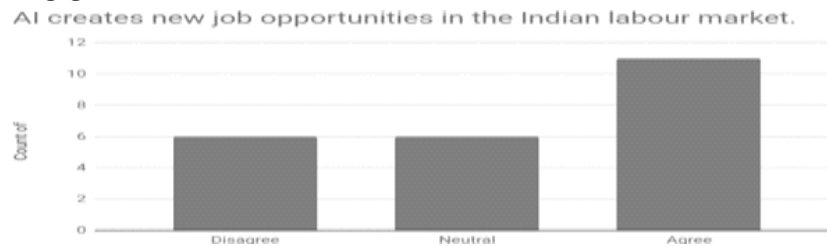
The chart shows a strong positive consensus, with **17 respondents** agreeing that AI enhances employee training via personalized tools. In contrast, only 5 participants remained neutral and 1 disagreed. Overall, approximately **74%** of the group supports the statement, indicating significant confidence in AI's role in professional development.



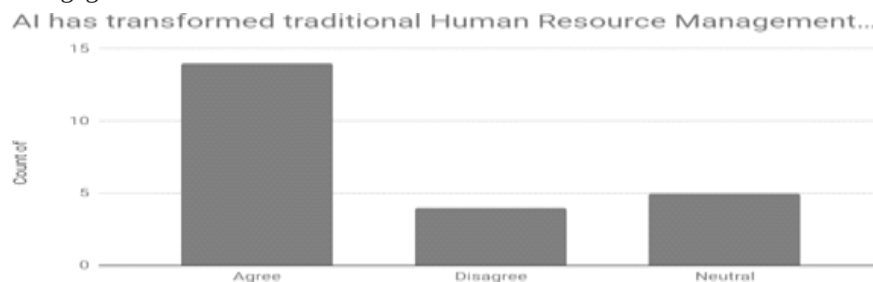
The chart indicates a generally positive but more cautious outlook on AI's impact on performance appraisal fairness. **12 respondents agree** with the statement, making it the most common sentiment. However, a significant portion (**8 people**) remains **neutral**, while **3 disagree**. While a majority (approx. **52%**) supports the idea, the high number of neutral responses suggests some uncertainty or skepticism regarding AI's ability to ensure objective evaluations.



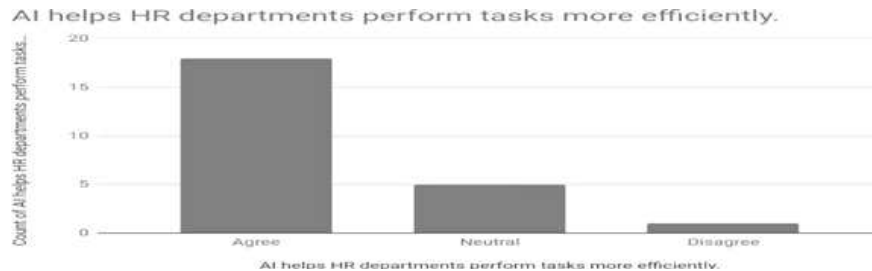
The data shows a clear leaning toward agreement regarding AI's role in employee engagement. **11 respondents agree** that AI increases engagement through digital HR support tools, while **5 respondents remain neutral**. Notably, there were zero recorded disagreements, suggesting that while about 31% are still undecided, the majority (69%) views AI support tools as a beneficial factor for workplace engagement.



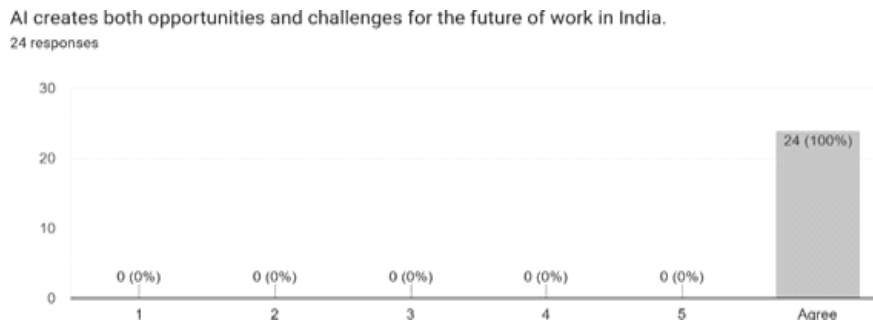
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The survey results indicate a **strong consensus** that AI has transformed traditional Human Resource Management. Out of 23 total respondents, **14 (61%) agreed** with the statement, while only **4 (17%) disagreed**. A small group of 5 (22%) **remained neutral**, suggesting that while the majority recognizes a significant shift, nearly a quarter of the group is either undecided or seeing a more gradual integration of AI in their HR processes.



The second chart shows an even stronger conviction regarding AI's practical benefits. Out of 24 respondents, a dominant **18 (75%) agree** that AI helps HR departments perform tasks more efficiently. With **5 (21%) neutral** and only **1 (4%) disagreeing**, the data confirms that efficiency is seen as one of the most tangible and widely accepted advantages of AI integration in the field.



The results for this statement show **total unanimity**. Out of 24 respondents, **100% agreed** that AI creates both opportunities and challenges for the future of work in India. There were zero neutral or dissenting votes, reflecting a universal recognition of AI's dual impact on the Indian labor market.

Discussion

The study shows that Artificial Intelligence (AI) is significantly transforming Human Resource Management by improving efficiency, recruitment, training, and decision-making processes. Most respondents agreed that AI has modernized traditional HR practices and increased workplace productivity. However, mixed responses were found regarding fairness in AI-based recruitment and performance appraisal, showing concerns about bias, privacy, and overdependence on technology. AI creates new job opportunities in digital sectors but also increases the risk of job displacement for low-skilled workers. The study concludes that Indian labour laws need reforms to address AI-driven workplaces, gig employment, worker rights, and ethical use of technology. A balanced approach is necessary to combine innovation with employee protection and inclusive growth. The findings confirm that AI is transforming HRM by improving productivity and operational efficiency. However, concerns



regarding fairness, privacy, and overdependence on technology remain significant. AI contributes to economic growth but also increases the risk of job displacement, especially among low-skilled workers. Therefore, regulatory reforms are necessary to ensure ethical and inclusive implementation of AI in workplaces.

Conclusion

The study concludes that Artificial Intelligence (AI) is transforming Human Resource Management by improving recruitment, training, productivity, and decision-making. It creates new opportunities for growth and innovation but also brings challenges such as job displacement, skill gaps, privacy risks, and bias. The study further finds that existing Indian labour laws are not fully equipped to address AI-driven workplaces and gig employment. Therefore, labour reforms are needed to ensure fairness, worker protection, transparency, and ethical use of AI. A balanced approach between technology and human welfare is essential for the future of work in India. AI is reshaping HRM by enhancing efficiency, innovation, and decision-making. However, it also introduces challenges such as job displacement, bias, and privacy concerns. Indian labour laws must evolve to address these emerging issues. A balanced approach integrating technological advancement with worker protection and ethical governance is essential for the future of work.

Suggestion

- Introduce separate legal provisions in Indian labour laws for AI-based recruitment, performance appraisal, and workplace monitoring to ensure transparency and fairness.
- Launch large-scale national reskilling and upskilling programs to prepare workers for AI-driven jobs and reduce unemployment risks.
- Make human supervision compulsory in major HR decisions so that AI supports decision-making rather than fully replacing human judgment.
- Extend social security, minimum wage protection, and legal rights to gig workers and platform employees affected by AI-managed systems.
- Establish an independent AI Ethics and Labour Regulatory Authority to monitor bias, privacy violations, and responsible use of AI in workplaces.

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Humanism And Universalism In The Dramatic Imagination Of Rabindranath Tagore : An Extended Critical Essay On Dak Ghar, Raktakarabi And Chitrangada

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Abstract

The dramatic works of Rabindranath Tagore represent a unique synthesis of philosophical reflection and artistic imagination. Tagore's plays embody a profound humanistic vision rooted in the spiritual and cultural traditions of India while simultaneously engaging universal concerns about freedom, dignity, and social justice. This essay explores the themes of humanism and universalism in three major dramatic works of Tagore: Dak Ghar, Raktakarabi, and Chitrangada. Through a detailed examination of their narratives, characters, and symbolic structures, the study demonstrates how Tagore constructs a theatre of moral and spiritual liberation. While Dak Ghar emphasizes spiritual freedom and the universal quest for transcendence, Raktakarabi critiques industrial exploitation and authoritarian power structures, and Chitrangada explores gender identity and the universal values of love and equality. Taken together, these dramas reveal Tagore's enduring commitment to the ideals of universal brotherhood and human dignity. The essay argues that Tagore's dramatic imagination continues to offer valuable insights for contemporary discussions on globalization, cultural harmony, and ethical humanism.

Keywords: Tagore, humanism, universalism, drama, freedom, spiritual philosophy

Introduction

The literary and philosophical legacy of Rabindranath Tagore occupies a central place in modern Indian and world literature. As a poet, novelist, dramatist, philosopher, and educationist, Tagore developed a unique vision of humanity that transcended national and cultural boundaries. His works reflect a deep concern for the dignity of the individual, the harmony of nature and humanity, and the possibility of universal brotherhood. Tagore's concept of humanism does not merely celebrate the individual but situates the human being within a larger spiritual and cosmic order. In this sense, his humanism is inseparable from universalism, a belief in the fundamental unity of all people beyond



divisions of race, nation, religion, or gender.

Tagore wrote during a time of immense political and cultural transformation in India. The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were marked by colonial domination, nationalist movements, and the emergence of modern industrial society. These historical forces raised important questions about identity, freedom, and cultural values. Tagore responded to these challenges not through political propaganda but through literature that explored the deeper moral and spiritual dimensions of human existence.

Among the many genres in which Tagore wrote, drama occupies a special place. His plays combine lyrical poetry, symbolic storytelling, and philosophical reflection. They often present characters struggling against oppressive social structures while searching for inner freedom and moral truth. Tagore's dramatic imagination therefore becomes a powerful vehicle for expressing his ideas about human dignity and universal harmony.

This essay focuses on three of Tagore's most significant dramatic works: *Dak Ghar*, *Raktakarabi*, and *Chitrangada*. Although these plays differ in style and subject matter, they share a common concern with human freedom and universal values. Through detailed analysis of their narratives and characters, the essay seeks to demonstrate how Tagore uses drama to express a vision of humanity that transcends the limitations of time and place.

Literature Review

The philosophical and literary contributions of Rabindranath Tagore have been the subject of extensive scholarly debate across disciplines such as literature, philosophy, political thought, and cultural studies. Contemporary scholarship increasingly emphasizes Tagore's concept of humanism and universalism as a central framework for understanding his creative works. Although Tagore is widely recognized for his poetry and songs, recent research has paid growing attention to his dramatic writings, which reflect profound reflections on human freedom, dignity, and social harmony.

Modern scholars have argued that Tagore's philosophy of humanism emerges from a synthesis of Eastern spirituality and Western liberal thought. According to Souvik Halder (2023), Tagore's humanism is grounded in the belief that every human being possesses inherent dignity and spiritual worth. Halder suggests that Tagore's writings emphasize the interdependence of individuals within a universal human community, thereby transcending divisions of nationality, religion, and culture. This philosophical orientation forms the foundation of Tagore's literary imagination and informs the themes of freedom and moral responsibility found in his works.

Similarly, recent research has highlighted the global relevance of Tagore's universalist philosophy in addressing contemporary social challenges. Sonia Kathuria (2025) argues that Tagore's vision of universal humanism offers a framework for promoting cross-cultural dialogue and global solidarity in the modern world. According to Kathuria, Tagore rejected narrow forms of nationalism and instead advocated a broader concept of humanity that embraces cultural diversity while emphasizing shared moral values. This perspective is particularly significant in the context of globalization, where issues such as social inequality, environmental crises, and cultural conflict demand cooperative and ethical responses.



Another significant area of research concerns Tagore's critique of modernity and mechanized civilization. Scholars have noted that Tagore was deeply critical of industrial systems that reduce human beings to mere instruments of economic production. Dr. Anjani Kumar (2024) observes that Tagore consistently opposed social hierarchies and technological systems that undermine human freedom and spiritual development. According to Kumar, Tagore believed that true progress must be measured not by material wealth but by the capacity of society to nurture compassion, creativity, and moral consciousness.

Scholarly discussions also emphasize the spiritual dimensions of Tagore's humanism. Unlike secular humanist traditions that focus solely on human agency, Tagore's philosophy integrates spiritual values derived from Indian philosophical traditions, particularly the Upanishads. According to Biraj Lakshmi Ghosh (2020), Tagore's concept of "spiritual humanism" emphasizes the unity between the divine and the human. This philosophical outlook rejects rigid institutional structures and promotes a holistic understanding of education, culture, and social life. Ghosh argues that Tagore's humanistic vision remains highly relevant in contemporary societies characterized by increasing materialism and educational commercialization.

Another dimension of Tagorean universalism is its interreligious and intercultural character. Ichhimuddin Sarkar (2019) notes that Tagore's writings reflect an engagement with multiple religious traditions, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam. According to Sarkar, Tagore's universal humanism emerges from his belief that the essential truths of different religious traditions converge in their recognition of the unity of humanity and the divine. This inclusive approach allowed Tagore to articulate a vision of cultural harmony that transcends sectarian divisions.

Recent academic studies have also explored the socio-political implications of Tagore's universalism. Bidyut Chakrabarty (2025) describes Tagore as a "universalist voice" within the context of nationalist debates in colonial India. While Tagore supported India's cultural and political awakening, he remained critical of aggressive nationalism that promotes exclusion and hostility toward other nations. Instead, he advocated an ethical internationalism based on cooperation and mutual respect among cultures.

For example, studies of *Dak Ghar* emphasize its allegorical representation of spiritual freedom and transcendence. Critics interpret the character of Amal as a symbol of the human soul yearning for liberation from social and physical constraints. The play's minimalist structure and poetic dialogue highlight Tagore's belief that true freedom lies in the imaginative and spiritual dimensions of human existence.

Similarly, scholars analyzing *Raktakarabi* often focus on its critique of industrial capitalism and authoritarian power structures. The fictional kingdom of Yaksha Town has been interpreted as a symbolic representation of modern societies driven by greed and mechanization. In this context, the character of Nandini represents the life-affirming force of human compassion and creativity that challenges oppressive systems.

The play *Chitrangada* has received particular attention in feminist literary criticism. Researchers argue that Tagore's reinterpretation of the Mahabharata narrative challenges traditional gender roles and promotes the idea of equality between men and women. Through the transformation and self-realization



of Chitrangada, the play explores the relationship between identity, beauty, and authentic love.

Although existing scholarship has examined various aspects of Tagore's philosophy and literature, there remains a need for integrated studies that connect his philosophical humanism with the symbolic structures of his dramatic works. Much of the earlier research has focused either on Tagore's philosophical writings or on individual literary texts without fully exploring the relationship between these two dimensions.

The present study seeks to address this gap by analyzing three major plays—*Dak Ghar*, *Raktakarabi*, and *Chitrangada*—within the broader framework of Tagore's humanistic and universalist philosophy. By examining the narratives, characters, and symbolic motifs of these dramas, the study aims to demonstrate how Tagore's dramatic imagination articulates a vision of humanity rooted in freedom, dignity, and universal harmony.

In doing so, this research contributes to contemporary discussions on Tagore's relevance in the twenty-first century. As global societies confront challenges such as cultural conflict, social inequality, and environmental crisis, Tagore's philosophy of universal humanism offers a powerful ethical framework for imagining a more inclusive and compassionate world.

Spiritual Humanism in *Dak Ghar*

The play *Dak Ghar* (The Post Office), written in 1912, is one of Tagore's most symbolic and philosophical dramas. At the center of the play is a young boy named Amal who suffers from a serious illness and is confined to his home by the orders of a physician. Amal's guardian Madhav strictly follows the doctor's instructions and prevents the child from leaving the house. However, Amal's mind remains free and curious. Sitting by the window, he observes the world outside and dreams of traveling to distant lands.

The story unfolds through Amal's conversations with various visitors who pass by the house. These characters include the watchman, the village headman, the flower girl Sudha, and the royal messenger. Through these interactions, the audience learns about Amal's deep longing to explore the world. Despite his physical weakness, he remains cheerful and imaginative.

One of the central symbols of the play is the newly built post office of the king, which stands near Amal's house. Amal believes that the king will one day send him a letter from this post office. The idea of receiving a letter from the king fills him with excitement and hope. In reality, the letter never arrives in a literal sense, yet the expectation itself becomes a symbol of spiritual aspiration.

As the story progresses, Amal's health deteriorates. Toward the end of the play, the royal physician arrives with a message that the king will soon visit Amal. The child falls into a peaceful sleep, suggesting his death, but the moment is portrayed not as tragedy but as liberation. The king's arrival symbolizes the ultimate union of the individual soul with the universal spirit.

The play thus expresses Tagore's concept of spiritual humanism. Amal represents the human soul yearning for freedom and connection with the infinite. His innocence and openness allow him to transcend social boundaries. He treats every visitor as a friend and never shows fear or prejudice.

Through Amal's character, Tagore suggests that true freedom does not depend on physical



mobility or social power. Instead, it arises from the ability to imagine, to hope, and to connect with others. In this sense, *Dak Ghar* embodies a universal message about the dignity of the human spirit.

Social Humanism and Critique of Power in *Raktakarabi*

While *Dak Ghar* explores spiritual liberation, *Raktakarabi* (Red Oleanders), written in 1924, addresses social and economic oppression. The play is set in a fictional place called Yaksha Town, a kingdom dominated by the relentless pursuit of gold. The ruler of this kingdom, known simply as the King, remains hidden behind a mask and rarely appears in public. His authority is enforced by a network of officials who control the workers in the mines.

The workers of Yaksha Town live under harsh conditions. They are forced to dig endlessly for gold, and their identities are reduced to numbers rather than names. This dehumanizing system reflects the mechanized and exploitative nature of industrial capitalism. Tagore uses the setting as an allegory to criticize societies that prioritize wealth and power over human welfare.

Into this oppressive environment enters Nandini, a young woman whose vitality and courage challenge the rigid structure of Yaksha Town. Unlike the other characters, Nandini refuses to accept the authority of the king or the logic of the mining system. She speaks openly and encourages the workers to rediscover their sense of dignity.

Nandini becomes a symbol of life, beauty, and freedom. Her presence disrupts the mechanical routine of the mining community and awakens a desire for change among the workers. Through her interactions with various characters, including the king himself, Nandini exposes the emptiness of a society driven solely by material gain.

The king eventually becomes fascinated by Nandini and begins to question his own authority. He realizes that his obsession with gold has isolated him from genuine human relationships. The transformation of the king suggests that even those in positions of power can rediscover their humanity through compassion and self-reflection.

Through this narrative, Tagore presents a powerful critique of social systems that suppress individuality. *Raktakarabi* affirms the importance of human dignity and emotional freedom in a world increasingly dominated by industrial and bureaucratic structures.

Feminist Humanism in *Chitrangada*

Unlike the other two plays, *Chitrangada* draws its narrative from ancient Indian mythology. The story is based on an episode from the Mahabharata involving the warrior princess Chitrangada and the hero Arjuna. Tagore reinterprets this mythological story to explore questions of gender identity, selfhood, and love.

Chitrangada is the only child of the king of Manipur and has been raised as a warrior rather than a traditional princess. She is brave, skilled in combat, and proud of her abilities. One day she encounters Arjuna, who is living in exile. Chitrangada immediately falls in love with him, but she fears that her warrior-like appearance may prevent him from reciprocating her feelings.

In desperation, Chitrangada prays to the gods of love and beauty, asking them to transform her



into a conventionally beautiful woman. The gods grant her request, and she appears before Arjuna in a new form. Arjuna becomes enchanted by her beauty, unaware of her true identity.

However, the transformed Chitrangada soon realizes that Arjuna loves only her outward appearance and not her true self. This realization causes her deep inner conflict. Eventually she reveals her real identity to Arjuna and declares that she wishes to be loved not as an illusion but as the person she truly is.

Arjuna finally recognizes her courage and sincerity and accepts her as an equal partner. The play ends with the affirmation of love based on mutual respect rather than superficial attraction.

Through this story, Tagore challenges traditional gender roles and highlights the importance of authenticity. Chitrangada's journey represents the struggle for self-recognition and equality. The play therefore expresses a form of feminist humanism that values both individuality and universal love.

Conclusion

The plays *Dak Ghar*, *Raktakarabi*, and *Chitrangada* collectively reveal the depth and diversity of Tagore's humanistic philosophy. Each drama addresses a different dimension of human experience: spiritual aspiration, social justice, and gender equality. Yet all three works affirm the same fundamental principle—the dignity and unity of humanity.

Through symbolic storytelling and powerful characters, Tagore invites audiences to reflect on the meaning of freedom and the importance of compassion. His dramatic imagination transcends cultural and historical boundaries, offering insights that remain relevant in the modern world.

In an age marked by political conflict, economic inequality, and cultural division, Tagore's vision of universal humanism continues to inspire readers and scholars alike. His plays remind us that true progress lies not in material accumulation or political domination but in the cultivation of empathy, understanding, and respect for the shared humanity of all people.

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The Psychological Conflict Of Brutus In Shakespeare's Julius Ceasar

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Abstract

William Shakespeare's Julius Caesar presents a powerful exploration of political ambition, moral responsibility, and the complexity of human decision making. Among the characters of the play, Brutus stands apart as a figure motivated not by envy or personal gain but by a sincere concern for the welfare of the Roman state. His decision to join the conspiracy against Caesar emerges from a deep internal struggle between personal loyalty and civic duty. This psychological tension becomes the foundation of the tragedy.

Written during the Renaissance, the play reflects the period's renewed engagement with classical history and its emphasis on human reason and moral responsibility. Shakespeare draws heavily upon Plutarch's Lives to reconstruct the political world of ancient Rome while simultaneously reshaping historical material into a dramatic study of human character. Brutus represents the Renaissance ideal of the thoughtful and honourable statesman who places public welfare above private relationships.

However, the play also demonstrates the limitations of moral idealism when it is separated from political reality. Brutus imagines that Caesar's growing influence may eventually threaten the liberty of Rome and therefore convinces himself that assassination is a necessary act for the preservation of the republic. Influenced by Cassius and persuaded by apparently supportive public opinion, he joins the conspiracy believing that his actions will protect Roman freedom. Instead, the assassination produces chaos, civil conflict, and the eventual collapse of the republican cause. Through the tragic fate of Brutus, Shakespeare reveals the complexity of human motivation and the fragile relationship between moral intention and political consequence.

Keywords: Brutus; Julius Caesar; Renaissance humanism; moral responsibility; political tragedy; Shakespearean drama



The Renaissance was a period of intellectual revival in which scholars rediscovered the classical texts of Greece and Rome. These works were not merely valued for their historical significance but also for the ethical and political insights they offered to contemporary society. Renaissance writers believed that the study of ancient history could illuminate the nature of power, leadership, and moral responsibility. Shakespeare's Roman plays reflect this intellectual climate by transforming classical narratives into dramatic explorations of human behaviour.

Julius Caesar occupies a distinctive place among Shakespeare's tragedies. Although the play is named after Caesar, the central dramatic conflict revolves around the character of Brutus. Caesar's assassination occurs midway through the play, yet Brutus remains the emotional and moral focus until the final scene. Shakespeare portrays him as a man respected for his integrity and philosophical temperament. Unlike the other conspirators who are motivated by jealousy or resentment, Brutus believes that he is acting in the interest of Rome.

This belief, however, places him in a profound moral dilemma. Brutus respects Caesar and does not accuse him of tyranny. Nevertheless, he fears that Caesar's rise to power may eventually threaten the liberty of the Roman Republic. The tragedy of the play emerges from this conflict between friendship and political principle. Shakespeare thus presents a character whose admirable qualities ultimately contribute to his downfall.

Renaissance Context:

Renaissance humanism emphasized the capacity of human beings to reason, deliberate, and shape their own destinies. Education in classical literature encouraged individuals to cultivate virtues such as honour, courage, and civic responsibility. Brutus reflects these ideals throughout the play. He is portrayed as a learned and reflective individual who values honour above personal advantage.

Shakespeare's portrayal of Roman politics is also deeply influenced by Renaissance interpretations of history. Historical narratives were often treated as moral examples illustrating the consequences of virtue and corruption. By dramatizing the fall of Caesar and the collapse of the Roman Republic, Shakespeare invites the audience to consider the dangers that arise when political ambition conflicts with civic responsibility. At the same time, the play reveals the limitations of human judgment. Brutus attempts to anticipate the future consequences of Caesar's authority rather than evaluating the present reality. His reasoning is guided by the belief that power inevitably corrupts those who possess it. While this belief reflects a genuine concern for liberty, it also leads him to act upon speculation rather than evidence.

Psychological Conflict of Brutus:

The internal struggle experienced by Brutus is one of the defining features of the play. When he first appears, he is described as distant and contemplative while others celebrate Caesar's triumph. This contrast immediately suggests that Brutus is troubled by thoughts that he cannot easily resolve. The central source of his conflict is the tension between private loyalty and public duty. Brutus values



Caesar as a friend, yet he fears that Caesar's increasing popularity may lead to absolute power. In his famous soliloquy in Act II, Brutus compares Caesar to a serpent's egg that must be destroyed before it becomes dangerous. This metaphor demonstrates that his reasoning is based on anticipation rather than direct experience.

Brutus therefore attempts to justify the assassination as a preventive action. By persuading himself that Caesar's ambition will eventually threaten Rome, he transforms a speculative fear into a moral obligation. This process reveals the complexity of his psychological state. He does not act impulsively; rather, he carefully constructs an argument that allows him to reconcile his affection for Caesar with his belief that Rome must be protected.

Persuasion and Influence:

Cassius plays a crucial role in shaping Brutus's decision. Recognizing Brutus's influence among the Roman citizens, Cassius understands that the success of the conspiracy depends upon his participation. Through subtle persuasion, Cassius appeals to Brutus's sense of honour and his pride in his ancestral heritage.

Cassius reminds Brutus that his ancestors once defended Rome against tyranny. By invoking this historical legacy, he encourages Brutus to view himself as the natural defender of Roman liberty. The forged letters placed in Brutus's house further strengthen this impression by suggesting that the citizens of Rome expect him to act.

Brutus accepts these messages without questioning their authenticity. His willingness to believe them reflects his sincere commitment to the common good. However, it also reveals a lack of political caution. Because Brutus assumes that others share his moral principles, he fails to recognize the personal motives that drive many of the conspirators.

Idealism and Misjudgement:

Once he joins the conspiracy, Brutus attempts to guide it according to his own moral standards. He insists that the conspirators must behave honourably and avoid unnecessary violence. For this reason, he refuses Cassius's suggestion that Mark Antony should also be killed. This decision illustrates the tension between ethical idealism and political reality. Brutus believes that the assassination should appear as an act of justice rather than revenge. However, his refusal to eliminate Antony allows one of Caesar's most loyal supporters to survive and eventually challenge the conspirators.

The contrast between Brutus and Antony becomes most apparent during the funeral speeches. Brutus speaks calmly and logically, explaining that Caesar was killed for the sake of Roman liberty. Antony, by contrast, appeals directly to the emotions of the crowd, reminding them of Caesar's generosity and displaying the wounds of his body. The citizens respond more strongly to Antony's emotional appeal, demonstrating the power of rhetoric in political life.



Tragic Outcome:

After the assassination, Rome descends into turmoil. The unity of the conspirators gradually dissolves as suspicion and rivalry emerge among them. Brutus himself becomes increasingly burdened by grief and uncertainty. The death of his wife Portia deepens his emotional isolation and weakens his confidence in the cause he once believed righteous. The final confrontation at Philippi brings the tragedy to its conclusion. When defeat becomes unavoidable, Brutus chooses death rather than captivity. His decision reflects the Roman ideal of honour and personal dignity. Even his enemies acknowledge the sincerity of his motives. Mark Antony famously declares that Brutus was “the noblest Roman of them all,” recognizing that he alone acted out of genuine concern for the welfare of Rome.

Conclusion:

The character of Brutus represents one of Shakespeare’s most profound explorations of moral conflict. His participation in the assassination of Caesar is motivated not by ambition but by a sincere belief that he must defend the liberty of Rome. Yet the tragedy of the play demonstrates that good intentions do not always produce good results. Brutus’s failure lies in his inability to recognize the complexity of political reality. His philosophical reasoning leads him to imagine dangers that have not yet appeared, while his idealistic nature prevents him from understanding the emotional forces that influence public opinion.

Through the rise and fall of Brutus, Shakespeare reveals the fragile balance between honour and judgment. The play remains a timeless reflection on the responsibilities of leadership and the consequences of moral choice.

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Tradition, Reform And National Identity: A Comparative Study Of Rabindranath Tagore's Chokher Bali And Jogajog

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Abstract

This paper explores the themes of tradition, reform, and national identity through a comparative study of Rabindranath Tagore's Chokher Bali (1903) and Jogajog (1929). Both novels reflect the tensions of colonial Bengal, where orthodox customs confronted emerging reformist ideas shaped by the Bengal Renaissance and nationalist movements. By focusing on family structures, marriage, and the roles assigned to women, the study demonstrates how Tagore used domestic spaces to stage larger cultural debates. Chokher Bali highlights the restrictions imposed on widows and the conflicts between individual desire and social expectation, while Jogajog portrays the decline of feudal values and the rise of capitalist ambition, symbolized in the struggles of Kumudini. Through textual and contextual analysis, the research reveals Tagore's nuanced critique of both rigid traditionalism and uncritical modernity. Rather than advocating one extreme, he emphasized balance, dignity, and ethical reform as essential to India's search for a national selfhood. The findings underline the evolution of his ideas from early concerns with gender and reform to later reflections on economy, morality, and identity. This study contributes to Tagore scholarship and postcolonial literary criticism, offering insights that remain relevant to contemporary debates on culture, gender, and nationhood.

Keywords: Chokher Bali, Jogajog, Tradition and Reform, National Identity, Postcolonial Literary Criticism, Gender and Society

**Introduction:**

Rabindranath Tagore holds a central place in Indian literature as a poet, novelist, essayist, playwright, and philosopher whose works capture the cultural and intellectual awakening of modern India. Beyond his literary brilliance, he contributed significantly to shaping national consciousness during the colonial era. His novels, in particular, serve as mirrors of a society in transition, where deep-rooted customs encountered emerging ideas of reform and self-definition. Among them, *Chokher Bali* (1903) and *Jogajog* (1929) remain powerful narratives that reveal the complex negotiations between inherited traditions and the desire for change.

The period of Tagore's writing coincided with the Bengal Renaissance, a time of social, religious, and political ferment in late 19th and early 20th century Bengal. It was an age marked by the clash between conservative values and reformist movements inspired by Western education, women's emancipation, and nationalist aspirations. Families became battlegrounds where issues of inheritance, widowhood, education, and women's rights unfolded. This socio-cultural background makes Tagore's novels valuable texts for understanding how literature reflected and responded to the dilemmas of modern India. The research problem at hand is to explore how *Chokher Bali* and *Jogajog* engage with the intertwined themes of tradition, reform, and national identity. Both works portray families caught between orthodox expectations and the pressures of modernity, while also highlighting how personal choices intersect with larger historical and political currents. Examining these novels together allows us to trace how Tagore's vision evolved over time and how he negotiated the tension between social continuity and the need for transformation. The objectives of this study are twofold. First, it seeks to examine how Tagore represents traditional values and the conflicts that arise when these values confront reformist ideas. Second, it aims to analyze how national identity is constructed through the narratives and characters, particularly by linking domestic struggles to broader social and political concerns.

To guide this inquiry, the following research questions are posed: In what ways do these novels reflect colonial-era debates on social reform and tradition? How the portrayal of women—often positioned between the private and public spheres—shape discourses of cultural identity and nationalism? These questions help in situating the novels not only as literary works but also as historical commentaries. The significance of this study lies in its contribution to Tagore scholarship and to Indian postcolonial literary criticism. By examining the intersections of tradition, reform, and identity in *Chokher Bali* and *Jogajog*, the research underscores Tagore's relevance in contemporary discussions about cultural transformation, women's roles, and the search for a balanced national selfhood.

Literature Review:

Rabindranath Tagore's novels have attracted wide scholarly attention, especially for their portrayal of society in transition. *Chokher Bali* and *Jogajog* stand out for their sharp engagement with questions of tradition, reform, and identity formation in colonial Bengal. This section reviews critical works on



both novels, examines comparative studies, and situates them within broader theoretical perspectives. Chokher Bali has been studied extensively as a text that foregrounds the complex position of women in Bengali society. Scholars such as Radha Chakravarty (2011) argue that the novel redefines female desire by depicting Binodini as a character who resists the passive role traditionally assigned to widows. Uma Das Gupta (2004) contextualizes the novel within the reformist debates of the Bengal Renaissance, pointing out how it interrogates widowhood, arranged marriage, and women's education. Tanika Sarkar (2001) emphasizes how the narrative exposes the moral double standards of patriarchy, revealing tensions between individual freedom and social norms. These studies establish Chokher Bali as a crucial text for understanding the early literary interrogation of gender and modernity.

While Jogajog has received relatively less critical attention, scholars underline its deep engagement with the decline of traditional feudal families and the rise of capitalist values. Swapan Chakravorty (2011) interprets the novel as a critique of consumerism and the commoditisation of relationships. Krishna Dutta and Andrew Robinson (1997) highlight how the narrative contrasts two families—the Chatterjees and the Ghosals—to dramatize the erosion of old values in the face of economic ambition. According to Sisir Kumar Das (2005), Jogajog also demonstrates Tagore's evolving perspective on women, as seen in the struggles of Kumudini, who becomes a symbol of endurance in a changing social order. Scholars view the novel as a bridge between tradition and the modern commercial ethos. Comparative analyses often focus on how Tagore uses domestic spaces to stage larger cultural debates. Amrit Sen (2013) shows that Tagore's fiction, including Chokher Bali and Jogajog, reflects shifting attitudes toward gender and authority within the family. Most comparative studies examine Chokher Bali alongside Ghare Baire or Gora, leaving Jogajog relatively understudied. This gap suggests the need for a closer comparative reading of Chokher Bali and Jogajog to trace the continuity and transformation in Tagore's treatment of reform and identity.

Postcolonial theorists like Partha Chatterjee (1993) discuss how Indian nationalism created a division between the "inner" spiritual world of tradition and the "outer" material domain of modernity. This framework is useful for analyzing Tagore's novels, which often place women at the centre of this negotiation. Scholars like Sudhir Chandra (1992) have also examined how reform movements in Bengal were entangled with questions of colonial power, religion, and modern education. These perspectives provide a foundation for interpreting how Chokher Bali and Jogajog engage with reformist discourse. Postcolonial criticism highlights how Tagore both critiqued colonial modernity and challenged blind adherence to outdated customs. Feminist critics such as Jasodhara Bagchi (1990) and Radha Chakravarty (2011) stress the centrality of women's experiences in Tagore's vision of social change. Cultural nationalism studies emphasize how his novels contributed to debates about defining an Indian identity that balanced tradition with reform. Together, these approaches show how Tagore's narratives move beyond individual stories to reflect larger historical processes. While Chokher Bali has been widely examined for its radical treatment of female subjectivity, Jogajog remains less discussed, particularly in comparative frameworks. This study addresses that gap by analyzing both novels together, using feminist and postcolonial approaches to uncover Tagore's nuanced vision of tradition,



reform, and national identity.

Research Methodology:

The present study adopts a comparative literary analysis as its research design. This approach is most appropriate because it enables a systematic examination of how Chokher Bali and Jogajog engage with overlapping themes of tradition, reform, and national identity. A comparative lens highlights both the continuities and the differences in Tagore's vision across two decades of writing, allowing us to understand the evolution of his ideas. The study draws upon a combination of primary and secondary sources. The primary materials are Tagore's novels Chokher Bali (1903) and Jogajog (1929), accessed in both Bengali originals and English translations. Secondary sources include scholarly critiques, journal articles, and books that discuss Tagore's literary contributions, as well as historical records that provide context for colonial Bengal. This combination ensures that the analysis remains grounded in the texts while being enriched by critical and historical perspectives. The analytical framework operates on two levels. First, textual analysis is applied to the novels, focusing on character development, thematic concerns, and narrative techniques. This helps in identifying how Tagore stages conflicts between social customs and reformist thought, particularly through the portrayal of women and family structures. Second, historical-contextual analysis situates the novels within the Bengal Renaissance and the broader colonial modernity of the period. This step is crucial for understanding how literature interacts with contemporary debates on education, gender roles, and national identity. The justification for this methodology lies in its ability to bridge literature and history. Tagore's novels cannot be read in isolation from the social transformations of his time. By combining textual close reading with contextual study, this research not only interprets the novels as artistic creations but also as cultural documents that illuminate India's search for modernity while grappling with tradition.

Analysis and Discussion

Tagore's novels reflect the weight of tradition in shaping family life and social expectations. In Chokher Bali, the customs surrounding widowhood are central to the plot. Binodini, a young widow, is denied remarriage and expected to live a life of restraint, highlighting the rigid framework imposed on women in colonial Bengal. Family structures reinforce such expectations, where duty, loyalty, and reputation matter more than personal happiness. The household becomes a microcosm of society, where individual choices are judged through the lens of established customs. In Jogajog, tradition is embodied in the old feudal values of the Chatterjee family, which stands in contrast to the rising mercantile Ghosal household. Here, Tagore presents the persistence of orthodoxy through arranged marriage, the demand for female submission, and the glorification of endurance in silence. Kumudini, the female protagonist, is bound by these codes, representing the social constraints that continue to dominate even in a changing world. Together, both novels underline how customs act as instruments of control, especially over women, while simultaneously shaping collective identity. Amidst these restrictions, Tagore introduces reformist elements to show society's struggle for renewal. In Chokher



Bali, education emerges as a force of empowerment. Mahendra and Behari, both products of modern learning, are symbols of the new intellectual class. Yet, while education opens spaces for questioning, it also creates dilemmas, as seen in Mahendra's indecision and susceptibility to passion. Binodini's intelligence, though sharp, is limited by her lack of opportunity, pointing to the contradictions in reform movements that did not fully address women's aspirations. In Jogajog, the reformist spirit is seen less in open defiance and more in subtle resistance. Kumudini's endurance can be interpreted as strength, but her silence also becomes a critique of the limited scope of reform available to women. The clash between generations is visible: the Chatterjees cling to moral authority and landed wealth, while the Ghosals embrace capitalist ambition and aggressive individualism. Tagore's stance toward reform is cautious—he does not advocate blind imitation of Western ideals, nor does he endorse blind loyalty to oppressive customs. Instead, he calls for a balanced transformation that respects human dignity.

Both novels are deeply connected to the broader question of how India should define itself during colonial rule. In *Chokher Bali*, the private domain of the family becomes a stage where the struggle between tradition and reform unfolds, reflecting the larger search for a national selfhood. Women, particularly Binodini and Asha, embody this negotiation—they represent both the spiritual inner world and the burden of cultural authenticity. Their struggles echo the nationalist discourse that sought to preserve Indian values while selectively adopting modern practices. In *Jogajog*, the idea of identity is complicated by economic change. The decline of landed aristocracy and the rise of capitalist families symbolize the transformation of social power. Kumudini, trapped between these two forces, becomes a metaphor for the nation caught between past and present. Her endurance, though tragic, mirrors India's challenge of holding on to cultural roots while moving toward modernity. The novels thus illustrate how national identity is shaped by the complex of personal desires, gender roles, and collective memory. A comparison of *Chokher Bali* and *Jogajog* reveals both continuities and differences in Tagore's vision. In terms of similarities, both novels treat the family as a symbolic arena where larger questions of reform and identity are contested. Women occupy central roles in both narratives, highlighting their symbolic position as carriers of cultural tradition and as potential agents of change. Both texts criticize rigid orthodoxy and the moral contradictions of patriarchal structures. The differences are equally striking. *Chokher Bali* presents a more dramatic portrayal of female agency, with Binodini actively challenging boundaries, even if her rebellion ends in isolation. The narrative is charged with youthful passion, uncertainty, and moral ambiguity. *Jogajog* offers a more mature, restrained critique, where Kumudini's quiet suffering reflects a deeper disillusionment with both tradition and reform. The structure of *Chokher Bali* is dynamic and emotionally intense, whereas *Jogajog* is slower, reflective, and more concerned with the decline of social values in a rapidly changing economy. The progression from 1903 to 1929 also reflects Tagore's evolving thought. In *Chokher Bali*, his focus is on the conflict between traditional widowhood and emerging reformist ideals during the Bengal Renaissance. By the time of *Jogajog*, his attention shifts to the broader socio-economic transformations of colonial India, where capitalist greed begins to replace feudal morality. This shift demonstrates continuity in his



concern for human dignity but also change in the issues he chose to highlight, moving from gender and household reform to questions of class, economy, and cultural identity.

Findings:

A close reading of *Chokher Bali* and *Jogajog* brings out both parallels and differences in the way Tagore addresses tradition, reform, and identity. In both novels, the family serves as the central stage where wider cultural debates unfold. Customs, marriage, and women's roles become markers of social continuity, while education, economic change, and personal aspirations represent the forces of transformation. Women characters such as Binodini, Asha, and Kumudini occupy crucial positions in these stories, symbolizing both the weight of inherited values and the possibilities of change. At the same time, the two texts differ in tone and emphasis. *Chokher Bali* presents a more direct challenge to social norms, particularly through the character of Binodini, whose intelligence and desires disrupt the orthodox structure of widowhood. *Jogajog* offers a more subdued portrayal, focusing on Kumudini's endurance within a household that reflects the clash between fading feudal values and rising capitalist ambition. While both works critique patriarchal systems, the former is more concerned with women's agency in early reformist debates, whereas the latter expands the focus to include the erosion of moral values under materialist pressures. Tagore's position is neither in favour of blind traditionalism nor uncritical adoption of modernity. He critiques rigid customs that suppress individuality, but he also warns against reforms that merely imitate the West without addressing deeper human needs. His emphasis lies in balance—respecting cultural roots while embracing change that fosters dignity and justice. Together, the novels reveal the evolution of Tagore's thought on national identity. In *Chokher Bali*, identity is negotiated mainly through gender and domestic life, while in *Jogajog*, it is shaped by broader socio-economic shifts. This progression reflects Tagore's recognition that India's search for selfhood required both gender justice and ethical responses to modern economic realities.

Conclusion

This study set out to examine how *Chokher Bali* and *Jogajog* explore the themes of tradition, reform, and national identity. The objectives were to understand how Tagore represents social customs and their tensions with change, and how his characters embody the struggles of a society negotiating between the past and the future. Through comparative analysis, these aims were met by showing both the parallels and contrasts in the two novels, highlighting Tagore's evolving vision of India's cultural selfhood. Tagore's contribution lies in his ability to question oppressive traditions while also resisting shallow imitations of modernity. In *Chokher Bali*, he presents the challenges faced by women like Binodini within rigid family structures, drawing attention to early debates on widowhood and reform. In *Jogajog*, he shifts focus to the decline of feudal morality and the rise of capitalist ambition, exposing how new social orders also carried dangers of exploitation. Across both novels, his central concern remains human dignity, balance, and the search for an ethical foundation for social change. For postcolonial literary studies; these works are significant because they reveal how literature functioned as a space for negotiating identity under colonial rule. The portrayal of women as symbolic figures of



both continuity and transformation resonates with nationalist debates, while also speaking to contemporary issues of gender justice and cultural renewal. Tagore's insights remind us that questions of identity are never fixed but are shaped by history, economy, and human relationships. Future research could compare these two novels with other works by Tagore, such as *Ghare Baire* or *Gora*, to further trace his engagement with nationalism, religion, and modernity. Comparative studies with contemporaries like Bankim Chandra Chatterjee or Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay would also deepen our understanding of how Bengali literature collectively shaped discourses of reform and nationhood.

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Beyond Access : The Psychological Empowerment Of Women Through Education

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Abstract

While education is widely recognized as a cornerstone of women's empowerment, its impact extends far beyond economic opportunity and political participation. This article explores the role of education in women's empowerment from a psychological perspective, arguing that formal and informal learning environments serve as critical sites for psychological transformation. Drawing on theoretical frameworks such as self-efficacy theory, critical consciousness, and identity development, this conceptual article posits that education fosters empowerment through four key mechanisms: (1) the cultivation of cognitive agency and self-efficacy, (2) the development of critical consciousness to deconstruct patriarchal norms, (3) the provision of a counter-narrative space for identity renegotiation, and (4) the facilitation of psychological resilience and mental well-being. By analyzing these mechanisms, the article demonstrates that true empowerment is an internal process of recognizing one's own agency, challenging systemic inequities, and constructing a self-determined identity. The conclusion suggests that for education to be truly empowering, pedagogical practices must move beyond mere knowledge transfer to intentionally cultivate these psychological constructs, thereby fostering a profound and enduring transformation that enables women to become active agents in their own lives and communities.

Keywords: *Women's Empowerment, Educational Psychology, Self-Efficacy, Critical Consciousness, Identity Development, Psychological Resilience*



Introduction

For decades, the discourse on women's empowerment has justifiably focused on structural and material outcomes: increased literacy rates, higher workforce participation, and greater political representation. While these milestones are essential, they represent only the external architecture of empowerment. From a psychological perspective, empowerment is fundamentally an internal process—a metamorphosis of the self. It is the process by which individuals who have been marginalized gain the capacity to make conscious choices, transform those choices into actions, and exert control over their own lives (Kabeer, 1999). Education, in this light, is not merely a vehicle for delivering skills but a powerful psychological intervention. This article argues that the most profound role of education in women's empowerment lies in its capacity to reshape internal psychological landscapes. It achieves this by nurturing agency, fostering a critical awareness of systemic inequality, providing space for identity reconstruction, and building psychological resilience. By shifting the lens from what education gives women to what education enables them to become, we can better understand and design educational experiences that foster authentic and sustainable empowerment.

Methodology

This article is a conceptual analysis that synthesizes existing literature from the fields of educational psychology, feminist psychology, and developmental psychology. The approach involves a qualitative review and theoretical integration of key psychological concepts as they relate to educational interventions for women and girls. The methodology is structured around identifying and analyzing the core psychological mechanisms through which educational experiences translate into empowerment. The selection of literature was guided by a search for seminal and contemporary works on self-efficacy (Bandura), critical pedagogy (Freire), identity development (Erikson, Cross), and resilience (Masten). The aim is not to present novel empirical data, but to construct a coherent theoretical framework that explicates the internal, psychological pathways from education to empowerment, thereby offering a nuanced perspective that can inform future research and practice.

The Psychological Mechanisms of Empowerment

The journey from accessing education to experiencing empowerment is mediated by several key psychological processes.

1. Cultivating Cognitive Agency and Self-Efficacy

The foundational psychological mechanism is the development of self-efficacy, defined by Albert Bandura as an individual's belief in their capacity to execute behaviors necessary to produce specific performance attainments. In many contexts, women and girls are socialized into a state of learned helplessness, where their perceived lack of control over external events leads to passivity. Education directly counters this by presenting mastery experiences. When a girl learns to solve a complex problem, articulate a persuasive argument, or master a new skill, she gathers irrefutable evidence of her own competence. This is not merely about academic achievement; it is about the internalization of



a new self-concept: “I am capable.” This cognitive agency—the belief that one’s actions can effect change—is the psychological prerequisite for all forms of empowerment, from negotiating a safe relationship to starting a business.

2. Developing Critical Consciousness

As posited by Paulo Freire, true education is not the “banking” of information but a practice of freedom that enables individuals to “read” their social reality and identify systems of oppression. For women, this translates into the development of critical consciousness. Education, particularly when it incorporates feminist and critical pedagogies, provides the analytical tools to deconstruct patriarchal norms. It allows women to understand that their experiences of marginalization are not personal failings but are rooted in systemic and historical inequalities. This process of “conscientization” is psychologically liberating. It shifts the locus of blame from the self to the structure, transforming feelings of shame into a righteous critique and fueling the motivation for collective and individual action. It empowers women to see not just what is, but what could be.

3. Renegotiating Identity in a Counter-Space

Schools and educational programs can function as “counter-spaces”—safe environments where dominant cultural narratives about women’s roles and capabilities are suspended or actively challenged. This is crucial for identity development. According to Erik Erikson, adolescence and young adulthood are critical periods for identity formation. For girls navigating societies with rigid gender roles, education offers alternative identity scripts. In the classroom, she is a scientist, a leader, a thinker—identities that may be denied to her elsewhere. Exposure to female teachers, mentors, and curricula featuring strong female protagonists provides powerful models for possible selves. This process of identity renegotiation is deeply psychological; it involves unlearning internalized stereotypes and constructing a new, self-defined identity that encompasses competence, autonomy, and ambition.

4. Building Psychological Resilience and Mental Well-being

Finally, education contributes to empowerment by fostering psychological resilience. The educational environment can be a source of structure, supportive relationships, and a sense of future orientation, all of which are protective factors against adversity. For women facing poverty, violence, or systemic discrimination, education provides coping skills, both cognitive (e.g., problem-solving, perspective-taking) and emotional (e.g., developing a supportive peer network). This enhanced resilience is a form of empowerment in itself. It creates the emotional capacity to withstand setbacks, persist in the face of obstacles, and maintain a sense of hope and well-being. Furthermore, the self-knowledge and self-esteem gained through education are directly linked to better mental health outcomes, creating a stable internal foundation from which women can engage with the world.

Conclusion

To educate a woman is to do more than provide her with a certificate or a set of vocational skills.



From a psychological perspective, it is to invite her into a transformative process of self-discovery and liberation. The true power of education for women's empowerment lies in its ability to rewrite internal scripts—replacing self-doubt with self-efficacy, passivity with critical consciousness, and externally-imposed identities with self-determined ones. This internal revolution is the bedrock upon which all external achievements are built. Therefore, educators, policymakers, and development practitioners must move beyond a purely instrumental view of education. Pedagogies must be intentionally designed to foster psychological empowerment by creating spaces for critical dialogue, offering mastery experiences, providing strong female role models, and supporting students' holistic mental well-being. Only by nurturing the inner world of the learner can education fulfill its promise as a truly liberating force, enabling women not just to participate in society, but to transform it.

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Media, Campaign Strategies And Leadership Image : Key Factors Shaping Voter Choice In Indian Elections

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Abstract

Media, campaign strategies, and leadership image play a decisive role in shaping voter choice in Indian elections, reflecting the evolving nature of democratic participation in a highly diverse society. Over time, the expansion of media platforms has transformed political communication from a one way flow of information into a dynamic and interactive process. Traditional media such as television and newspapers continue to influence public opinion, particularly in rural and semi urban areas, while digital media has created new opportunities for targeted outreach and direct engagement with voters. This dual structure ensures that political messages penetrate across different social and geographic segments. Campaign strategies have become increasingly sophisticated, combining grassroots mobilization with data driven targeting. Political parties design narratives that align with voter aspirations, focusing on issues such as development, governance, welfare, and identity. The use of technology, including social media analytics and digital advertising, allows campaigns to tailor messages to specific groups, enhancing their relevance and impact. At the same time, traditional methods like rallies and door to door engagement remain important for building trust and personal connection.

Leadership image has emerged as a central factor in voter decision making. Voters often evaluate political choices through the lens of individual leaders, assessing qualities such as credibility, decisiveness, and relatability. The personalization of politics has intensified this trend, with campaigns increasingly centered on projecting strong and appealing leadership figures. Media representation further amplifies these images, reinforcing public perception. The interaction of these factors creates a complex environment where voter choice is influenced by both rational evaluation and emotional connection.

Keywords: Media influence, Campaign strategy, Leadership image, Voter behavior, Indian elections, Political communication.



Introduction

The history of elections in India began with the first general election held in 1951 to 1952, shortly after independence. Conducted under the supervision of the Election Commission of India, this election marked the establishment of one of the world's largest democratic processes. Despite challenges such as widespread illiteracy and limited infrastructure, the election successfully enabled millions of citizens to participate in choosing their representatives. In the early decades, the Indian National Congress dominated national politics, benefiting from its central role in the independence movement. However, the political landscape began to change in the late 1960s and 1970s, with the rise of regional parties and increasing competition. The period of the Emergency in India 1975–1977 had a significant impact on electoral politics, leading to greater awareness of democratic rights and accountability.

The 1980s and 1990s witnessed the decline of single party dominance and the emergence of coalition governments. Regional parties gained prominence by representing local interests and identities. Economic liberalization in the 1990s also influenced electoral issues, shifting focus toward development and economic policy. In the 21st century, Indian elections have become more competitive and technologically advanced. The introduction of electronic voting machines improved efficiency and transparency. Media and digital platforms have transformed campaigning, enabling wider outreach and engagement.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:

This study is to examine how media, campaign strategies, and leadership image influence voter choice in Indian elections.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

This study is purely based on secondary data sources such as articles, research papers, journals, websites, books and other sources.

1. The Expanding Influence of Traditional and Digital Media on Voter Perception

Media plays a central role in shaping how voters understand political events, leaders, and policies in India. Traditional platforms such as television, newspapers, and radio continue to reach large sections of the population, especially in rural and semi urban areas. At the same time, digital media has rapidly transformed political communication, particularly among younger and urban voters. Television news channels often act as the primary source of political information for many households. The framing of debates, selection of issues, and presentation of political narratives significantly influence how voters interpret events. For example, repeated coverage of certain topics such as national security or economic performance can create a sense of urgency or importance around those issues. Similarly, editorial positions taken by newspapers can subtly guide public opinion by emphasizing certain



viewpoints over others. Digital media, especially social media platforms, has introduced a more direct and personalized form of political engagement. Political parties and leaders now communicate directly with voters through platforms like WhatsApp, Instagram, and YouTube. This bypasses traditional gatekeepers and allows for targeted messaging. Voters are often exposed to curated content that aligns with their beliefs, which can reinforce existing opinions.

Another important dimension is the spread of information and misinformation. The speed at which content circulates online means that narratives can gain traction quickly, regardless of their accuracy. Political actors sometimes use this to their advantage by amplifying favorable messages or discrediting opponents. This creates a complex information environment where voters must navigate competing claims. Media also contributes to agenda setting. Issues that receive consistent coverage tend to become central to electoral debates. For instance, topics like inflation, unemployment, or welfare schemes gain prominence when widely discussed across media platforms. Voters then evaluate candidates based on their perceived ability to address these issues. Language diversity in India adds another layer to media influence. Regional media outlets play a crucial role in shaping local political narratives. They often highlight issues specific to a state or community, which may differ from national discourse. This ensures that voter perception is influenced not only by national level messaging but also by localized concerns.

2. Strategic Use of Campaign Messaging and Narrative Construction

Campaign strategies in Indian elections are carefully designed to appeal to diverse voter groups. One of the most important elements is the construction of a compelling narrative that resonates with voters' aspirations and concerns. Political parties invest significant resources in crafting messages that connect emotionally and logically with the electorate. A successful campaign often revolves around a central theme. This could be development, governance, nationalism, social justice, or welfare. The chosen theme is consistently reinforced across speeches, advertisements, and public interactions. Repetition helps in embedding the message in voters' minds, making it easier for them to associate a party or leader with specific values. Targeted communication is another critical aspect. India's electorate is highly diverse, with variations in caste, religion, region, income levels, and education. Campaigns are tailored to address the specific needs and expectations of different groups. For example, farmers may be targeted with promises related to agricultural support, while urban youth may be engaged with messages about employment and innovation.

Data analytics has become increasingly important in shaping campaign strategies. Political parties use voter data to identify trends, preferences, and potential swing groups. This allows them to design micro campaigns that address specific concerns at the constituency level. Personalized outreach, such as targeted social media ads or localized events, enhances the effectiveness of these efforts. Symbolism and imagery also play a powerful role in campaign messaging. Visual elements such as party symbols, colors, and slogans help create a distinct identity. These symbols are often linked to cultural or emotional associations, making them more relatable to voters. For instance, imagery related to national pride or cultural heritage can evoke strong emotional responses. Another key strategy is



the use of storytelling. Campaigns often present narratives that highlight achievements, struggles, or visions for the future. Personal stories of leaders or beneficiaries of government schemes can make abstract policies more tangible. This helps voters connect with the campaign on a personal level. Negative campaigning is also a common feature. Parties may attempt to highlight the shortcomings or failures of their opponents. While this can influence voter perception, it must be handled carefully to avoid backlash. Voters may respond negatively if they perceive the campaign as overly aggressive or lacking substance. Ground level campaigning remains essential despite the rise of digital strategies. Door to door outreach, rallies, and community meetings allow direct interaction with voters. This helps build trust and provides an opportunity to address concerns in real time.

3. Leadership Image and Personality as Determinants of Voter Trust

The image of political leaders plays a decisive role in shaping voter preferences in India. Voters often associate the credibility and effectiveness of a party with its leadership. A strong and positive leadership image can significantly enhance a party's electoral prospects. Leadership image is built through a combination of personal traits, public communication, and perceived performance. Qualities such as integrity, decisiveness, empathy, and competence are highly valued by voters. Leaders who are seen as relatable and approachable tend to gain greater public trust. Public appearances and communication style are crucial in shaping leadership image. Speeches, interviews, and social media interactions provide opportunities for leaders to present themselves to the electorate. Clear and confident communication helps in conveying authority and vision. At the same time, the ability to connect emotionally with audiences enhances relatability. Media portrayal plays a significant role in reinforcing or challenging leadership image. Positive coverage can highlight achievements and strengths, while critical reporting can expose weaknesses or controversies. Leaders often work closely with communication teams to manage their public image and respond to media narratives.

Charisma is another important factor. Charismatic leaders can inspire enthusiasm and loyalty among voters. Their ability to mobilize support often extends beyond policy considerations. Large rallies and public events are used to showcase this appeal and create a sense of collective energy. Leadership image is also influenced by past performance. Voters evaluate leaders based on their track record in governance or public service. Successful implementation of policies, effective crisis management, and visible development initiatives contribute to a positive perception. Conversely, perceived failures can undermine trust. Regional leadership plays a distinct role in Indian elections. State level leaders often have strong local influence and can shape voter behavior within their regions. Their understanding of local issues and ability to connect with communities make them key figures in electoral campaigns. Another dimension is the projection of leadership at different levels. National elections often focus on central leadership, while state elections highlight regional leaders. Parties strategically emphasize different faces depending on the electoral context. The personalization of politics has increased over time, with campaigns increasingly centered around individual leaders rather than collective party identity. This makes leadership image even more critical in influencing voter decisions.



4. Integration of Technology and Data Driven Campaigning

Technology has transformed the way election campaigns are conducted in India. The integration of data analytics, digital platforms, and communication tools has enabled more precise and efficient voter outreach. This shift has significantly influenced how voters receive and process political information. One of the key developments is the use of big data to understand voter behavior. Political parties collect and analyze data from various sources, including voter lists, surveys, and online interactions. This helps in identifying patterns and preferences, allowing campaigns to be tailored to specific audiences. Micro targeting has emerged as a powerful strategy. Instead of relying on broad messages, campaigns deliver customized content to different voter segments. For example, messages related to employment may be targeted at young voters, while welfare schemes may be highlighted for economically weaker sections. This increases the relevance and impact of campaign communication.

Social media platforms have become central to digital campaigning. They provide a space for direct interaction between leaders and voters. Features such as live videos, comments, and shares create opportunities for engagement and feedback. Viral content can quickly amplify a campaign message, reaching a wide audience at minimal cost. Mobile technology has further expanded the reach of campaigns. Messaging applications are used to share information, mobilize supporters, and coordinate activities. These platforms enable rapid dissemination of content, making them an effective tool for influencing voter perception. Digital advertising is another important component. Targeted ads allow campaigns to reach specific demographics based on factors such as age, location, and interests. This ensures that messages are delivered to the most relevant audiences, increasing their effectiveness. Technology also enhances campaign management. Tools for data analysis, communication, and logistics help in organizing large scale campaigns more efficiently. Real time monitoring allows teams to adjust strategies based on feedback and changing

However, the use of technology also raises concerns about privacy and misinformation. The collection and use of voter data must be handled responsibly to maintain trust. Similarly, the spread of false information through digital platforms can distort voter perception and undermine the integrity of the electoral process.

5. Emotional Appeal, Identity Politics, and Voter Mobilization

Emotional appeal and identity based politics are deeply embedded in the Indian electoral landscape. Voters often make decisions not only based on policy considerations but also on emotional connections and social identities. Campaigns that effectively tap into these dimensions can significantly influence voter behavior. Identity politics refers to the mobilization of voters based on factors such as caste, religion, language, and region. These identities are often linked to historical and social contexts, making them powerful drivers of political alignment. Political parties design strategies that resonate with specific communities, addressing their concerns and aspirations.

Emotional appeal is closely linked to identity. Campaigns often use themes such as pride, security, and belonging to connect with voters. For example, messages that emphasize national pride or cultural



heritage can evoke strong emotional responses. Similarly, narratives that highlight social justice or empowerment can resonate with marginalized groups. Symbolic actions and gestures play an important role in reinforcing emotional connections. Leaders may participate in cultural events, visit religious sites, or engage with local traditions. These actions signal respect and understanding, strengthening their appeal among specific communities. Mobilization efforts are designed to translate emotional and identity based support into actual votes. This involves organizing rallies, community meetings, and outreach programs. Grassroots workers play a crucial role in building relationships with voters and encouraging participation in the electoral process.

Coalition building is another important aspect. In a diverse society like India, winning elections often requires bringing together multiple groups with different interests. Campaigns aim to create a sense of shared purpose among these groups, balancing competing demands while maintaining unity. The role of rhetoric is significant in shaping emotional appeal. Speeches and slogans are crafted to inspire, motivate, and persuade voters. The use of simple and relatable language helps in making messages accessible to a wide audience. At the same time, emotional and identity based strategies must be managed carefully to avoid polarization. Excessive focus on divisive issues can lead to social tensions and may have long term consequences for democratic stability. Responsible campaigning requires balancing emotional appeal with inclusive messaging.

Voter turnout is often influenced by the effectiveness of mobilization efforts. Campaigns that successfully engage voters and create a sense of urgency are more likely to see higher participation. This directly impacts electoral outcomes. Emotional appeal and identity politics thus remain central to understanding voter choice in Indian elections. They shape how voters relate to political actors and influence their decisions at the ballot box.

Case Study: The Role of Media, Campaign Strategy, and Leadership Image in the 2014 Indian General Elections

The 2014 Indian General Election is widely regarded as a turning point in Indian politics, not only because of the scale of victory achieved by the Bharatiya Janata Party but also due to the strategic use of media, innovative campaign techniques, and the strong projection of leadership image through Narendra Modi. This election provides a clear example of how these three factors can converge to shape voter choice across a diverse and complex electorate. A central feature of this election was the transformation in media usage. Traditional media such as television and print continued to play a major role in disseminating campaign messages. News channels extensively covered rallies, speeches, and debates, making political content highly visible. However, what distinguished this election was the unprecedented use of digital media. Social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube became essential tools for reaching urban and young voters. The campaign leveraged these platforms to share speeches, infographics, and short videos that highlighted key messages. This created a constant stream of communication that kept the campaign visible and relevant.

The use of technology went beyond simple communication. The campaign adopted data driven



strategies to understand voter preferences and behavior. Information gathered from various sources was used to design targeted messaging for different regions and demographic groups. For example, urban voters were engaged with narratives around economic growth and job creation, while rural voters were addressed through themes related to development and governance. This level of customization allowed the campaign to connect with voters on issues that mattered most to them. Another significant innovation was the use of 3D hologram rallies and virtual outreach. These allowed Narendra Modi to address multiple locations simultaneously, expanding his reach far beyond what traditional rallies could achieve. Mobile technology and messaging platforms were also used to mobilize supporters and coordinate campaign activities. Volunteers played an active role in spreading messages within their communities, creating a network effect that amplified the campaign's reach.

Campaign strategy in this election was built around a clear and consistent narrative. The central theme was development and governance, often framed through slogans that emphasized progress and change. The campaign positioned itself as an alternative to the incumbent Indian National Congress, which was facing criticism over corruption allegations and economic slowdown. By focusing on governance and efficiency, the campaign tapped into voter dissatisfaction and aspirations for better leadership. Storytelling was used effectively to reinforce this narrative. Narendra Modi's personal journey from a modest background to a prominent political leader was highlighted as a symbol of determination and success. This narrative resonated with many voters, particularly those who identified with the idea of upward mobility. The campaign also showcased achievements from his tenure as Chief Minister of Gujarat, presenting them as evidence of administrative capability.

Leadership image played a decisive role in shaping voter perception. Narendra Modi was projected as a strong, decisive, and development oriented leader. His communication style, characterized by direct and confident messaging, helped build a connection with the electorate. Large scale rallies and public events were used to demonstrate his popularity and mobilize support. The personalization of the campaign meant that many voters associated the party's prospects directly with his leadership. Media coverage further amplified this leadership image. Continuous reporting on rallies, speeches, and campaign activities kept him at the center of public attention. At the same time, the campaign's active engagement with media ensured that its narrative remained prominent. This created a feedback loop where media visibility reinforced leadership perception, which in turn attracted more coverage.

The opposition, particularly the Indian National Congress, faced challenges in countering this strategy. Their campaign lacked a similarly strong central narrative and leadership projection. This contrast made the leadership factor even more significant in influencing voter choice. Voter mobilization was another critical element. The campaign invested heavily in grassroots organization, ensuring that supporters were actively engaged at the local level. Booth level management, door to door outreach, and community interactions helped translate support into actual votes. The integration of digital and physical campaigning created a comprehensive strategy that covered both online and offline spaces. Emotional appeal also played a role. Messages that emphasized national pride, development, and a vision for the future created a sense of optimism among voters. This emotional connection



complemented the rational appeal of policy promises, making the campaign more persuasive. The outcome of the 2014 Indian General Election demonstrated the effectiveness of this integrated approach. The Bharatiya Janata Party secured a majority on its own, a rare achievement in Indian politics. The result reflected not only political preferences but also the impact of media strategy, campaign design, and leadership projection on voter decision making.

Conclusion

Media, campaign strategies, and leadership image have become deeply interconnected forces in shaping voter choice in Indian elections. The expansion of digital platforms alongside traditional media has created a layered communication environment where political messages are continuously produced, circulated, and interpreted. This has enabled political actors to influence voter perception more effectively through targeted and sustained engagement. Studies highlight that political communication in India now operates across multiple channels, from community networks to social media, making it more complex and far reaching. Campaign strategies have evolved from broad based appeals to highly customized approaches driven by data analytics and voter profiling. The shift toward personalized communication has increased the relevance of campaign messages, allowing parties to address specific concerns of different demographic groups. Recent research shows that digital tools and analytics have transformed electioneering into a more precise and adaptive process, significantly influencing voter behavior. Leadership image continues to act as a central anchor in electoral decision making, with voters increasingly associating political outcomes with individual leaders rather than party structures alone. The personalization of politics, combined with media amplification, strengthens the emotional and psychological connection between leaders and voters.

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Psychological Realism And Female Selfhood In Bhyrappa's 'The Witness'

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Abstract:

The concept of self-realization occupies a central position in psychological and literary discourse, particularly in narratives that explore human desire, morality, and identity. S.L. Bhyrappa's 'The Witness' presents a complex socio-psychological landscape in which women's lives are shaped by internal conflicts between instinctual desires and social norms. This article examines the psychological dimensions of self-realization in female characters, drawing from psychoanalytic and feminist perspectives. The narrative reveals that self-realization is not merely an intellectual awakening but a painful process rooted in guilt, moral conflict, and social awareness. Characters such as Savitri, Janaki, Lakkoo, and Sarojakshi embody varying degrees of psychological struggle, oscillating between desire and conscience.

The novel situates women within a patriarchal structure where they are both agents and victims of moral transgression. While desire is portrayed as a natural force, its unregulated expression leads to psychological disintegration and social chaos. The analysis highlights how guilt functions as a catalyst for self-awareness, particularly in Savitri, whose journey reflects a transition from emotional impulsivity to ethical responsibility. In contrast, characters lacking self-realization remain trapped in cycles of desire and destruction.

By integrating psychoanalytic theories of Freud and Lacan with feminist critiques of gender roles, this study argues that Bhyrappa constructs self-realization as a moral and psychological necessity for restoring social harmony. Ultimately, the novel suggests that true liberation lies not in the abandonment of norms but in conscious self-regulation and ethical introspection, making self-realization a transformative force in both individual and societal contexts.



Introduction:

Self-realization is a foundational concept in psychology, often associated with the awareness of one's inner desires, conflicts, and moral responsibilities. In literary narratives, this process becomes more nuanced as characters navigate social expectations alongside psychological impulses. Bhyrappa's *The Witness* offers a fertile ground for such exploration, particularly through its portrayal of women whose lives are entangled in desire, guilt, and moral ambiguity.

The novel operates at the intersection of modernism and postmodern thought, exposing the inner workings of human consciousness rather than merely depicting external social realities. It suggests that moral failure is not imposed solely by society but originates within the individual psyche. This perspective aligns with psychoanalytic theories that locate conflict within the unconscious mind.

This article aims to examine how self-realization manifests in the psychological journeys of female characters and how it influences their moral and social identities.

1. Psychological Foundations of Self-Realization

Self-realization in *The Witness* is fundamentally rooted in the recognition of inner conflict between desire and moral consciousness. The novel suggests that human behavior is not merely shaped by external societal pressures but emerges from internal psychological forces. This perspective aligns closely with psychoanalytic theory, particularly Freud's model of the psyche, where instinctual drives (id) constantly struggle against moral restraints (superego), mediated by rational awareness (ego).

In the narrative, characters are not portrayed as inherently immoral due to society; instead, their moral failures originate from unregulated desires embedded within their personalities. The text emphasizes that desire is a natural and undeniable force, yet its uncontrolled expression leads to imbalance and disorder. This duality creates a psychological tension that becomes the foundation for self-realization.

Self-realization occurs when individuals become aware of their own moral lapses and the consequences of their actions. It is not a sudden transformation but a gradual process shaped by guilt, introspection, and experience. The novel reinforces the idea that awareness of one's weaknesses is essential for personal growth. Without such awareness, individuals remain trapped in cycles of desire and error.

Thus, self-realization is presented as a psychological awakening—a movement from ignorance to awareness—where individuals confront their inner contradictions and attempt to restore harmony between their impulses and moral values.

2. Women, Desire, and Psychological Conflict

The women in *The Witness* are central to the exploration of psychological conflict, particularly in relation to desire and morality. The narrative portrays desire not as inherently negative but as a powerful force that, when unchecked, leads to emotional and psychological instability. Many female characters are depicted as being caught between their bodily impulses and the expectations imposed



by social and cultural norms.

Characters like Janaki illustrate how psychological conflict emerges when desire overrides moral consciousness. Her attraction is not premeditated but develops gradually, revealing how unconscious impulses can influence conscious actions. However, once the moral implications of her actions become apparent, she experiences intense guilt. This guilt is not merely social shame but a deep psychological burden that she cannot reconcile, ultimately leading to self-destruction.

Similarly, Lakkoo's character reflects another dimension of psychological conflict. Her involvement is initially driven by emotional and physical attraction, but it later transforms into guilt and, eventually, revenge. This shift demonstrates how unresolved psychological tension can manifest in destructive ways.

From a broader perspective, these portrayals suggest that women are not simply victims of circumstance but active participants in their own psychological struggles. However, their vulnerability is heightened by limited social autonomy and the dominance of patriarchal structures. The conflict between desire and duty thus becomes both an internal psychological battle and an external social dilemma.

3. Savitri: The Journey Toward Self-Realization

Savitri's character represents the most complete and meaningful journey toward self-realization in the novel. Unlike other characters who remain trapped in cycles of desire and guilt, Savitri undergoes a gradual transformation shaped by experience, suffering, and introspection.

Initially, her decisions are driven by emotional attraction rather than rational judgment. Her choice reflects a lack of psychological maturity, as she prioritizes immediate desire over long-term consequences. However, the reality of her circumstances, particularly the moral failure of her partner—forces her to confront the consequences of her choices.

A crucial turning point in her psychological development is her realization of her indirect role in her father's downfall. This awareness introduces a deep sense of guilt, which becomes the catalyst for her transformation. Unlike other characters who either suppress or ignore guilt, Savitri engages with it, allowing it to guide her toward self-reflection.

Her journey illustrates that self-realization is not merely about recognizing mistakes but about actively seeking change. She moves from a state of emotional dependency to one of independence and responsibility. Her decision to lead a life of service indicates a shift from self-centred desire to a broader ethical consciousness.

Savitri thus embodies the possibility of redemption through self-awareness. Her transformation highlights that psychological growth is achievable when individuals confront their inner conflicts honestly and strive to align their actions with moral values.

4. Moral Consciousness and Social Order

The novel establishes a strong connection between individual moral consciousness and the



stability of social order. It argues that society is not destabilized solely by external forces but by the failure of individuals to regulate their own desires. When personal morality collapses, it creates a ripple effect that disrupts familial and social structures.

Characters who lack self-realization, particularly those driven entirely by instinct, contribute to a state of disorder that can be likened to a psychological “inferno.” Their actions are not isolated; they affect multiple lives, leading to widespread consequences. This demonstrates that personal choices have collective implications.

The concept of moral consciousness in the novel extends beyond adherence to social norms. It involves an internalized sense of responsibility and an awareness of the ethical implications of one’s actions. Without this internal regulation, external systems such as law or tradition become ineffective.

The symbolic framework of divine judgment reinforces this idea. It suggests that ultimate accountability lies within the individual psyche, where truth cannot be concealed. The notion of being a “witness” is particularly significant, as it implies self-observation and self-judgment.

In essence, the novel proposes that social harmony depends on individual self-awareness. A society composed of individuals who lack moral consciousness is inevitably prone to conflict and disorder. Therefore, self-realization is not only a personal necessity but also a social imperative.

5. Psychological Cycle of Desire and Realization

Desire → Action → Moral Conflict → Guilt → Self-Reflection → Self-Realization

↓

(If avoided)

↓

Repetition of Desire ’! Destruction

This cycle explains the divergence between characters who evolve (Savitri) and those who remain stagnant (Manjaiah).

6. Feminist Reinterpretation

While Bhyrappa critiques women’s moral failures, a deeper reading reveals systemic gender inequalities. Women’s lack of education, economic independence, and social autonomy contributes to their psychological vulnerability.

However, Savitri emerges as a “new woman,” redefining identity through self-awareness and social engagement. Her transformation suggests that self-realization can serve as a form of empowerment within restrictive cultural frameworks.

Conclusion:

The Witness presents self-realization as a complex psychological process shaped by desire, guilt, and moral consciousness. Through its female characters, the novel demonstrates that the failure



to achieve self-awareness leads to both personal and societal disintegration.

Savitri's journey illustrates that self-realization is not merely about recognizing one's flaws but actively seeking transformation. In contrast, characters who remain governed by instinctual desires are unable to escape cycles of destruction.

Ultimately, Bhyrappa proposes that true harmony—both internal and social—can only be achieved through conscious self-regulation. The novel thus bridges psychology and morality, offering a profound insight into the human condition.

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Colonialism vs Post colonialism : A Critical Study

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Abstract:

'Colonization' is generally mistaken as a political process, perhaps, because of the etymological associations with the word 'colony'. The word 'colony' in English, was borrowed from Latin and used in the sixteenth century to mean 'farm, settlement, landed estate, etc.' The word acquired the derivational form 'colonized' during the seventeenth century and with the European colonies all over the world, expanded into 'colonized', 'colonial', 'colonist', 'colonization'. Of late, it is used in other forms like 'postcolonial', 'neocolonial', decolonialising, anticolonialism etc.

Key Words: vortex, etymological, neocolonialism, polyvalency, multiverse.

Theorisation of literary studies has borrowed its terms and concepts largely from other disciplines- linguistics, psychoanalysis, philosophy, Marxism etc. In the process, literary criticism has been drawn into the vortex of theory. In the last thirty years literary criticism and theory have moved closer to each other.

Foucault's influence on Edward Said, in a way, paves way for one kind of Postcolonial criticism. The influence of Feminist criticism, Post structuralist approaches, and the focus on 'power dynamics' inaugurated what might in rigorous way be called Postcolonial criticism in the 1990s.

'Colonisation' is generally mistaken as a political process, perhaps, because of the etymological associations with the word 'colony'. The word 'colony' in English, was borrowed from Latin and used in the sixteenth century to mean 'farm, settlement, landed estate, etc.' The word acquired the derivational form 'colonised' during the seventeenth century and with the European colonies all over the world, expanded into 'colonised', 'colonial', 'colonist', 'colonisation'. Of late, it is used in other forms like



‘postcolonial’, ‘neocolonial’, decolonialising, anticolonialism etc.

All this does not mean that there was no colonization or colonists before the word was used in English or Latin. “Colonialism” is very much a part of the power-dynamics operating in any human situation. The dictionaries, even today, define ‘colonialism’ as a ‘practice’ by which a powerful country controls less powerful countries and uses their resources in order to further its own interests, wealth and power; but the word ‘colonialism’ in the last decade or so, has assumed several other senses, representing new notions that are dormant in the power structure. It is not just political power alone that constitutes power and is used for domination and exploitation. There are several versions of colonialism called neocolonialism, economic colonialism, cultural colonialism, linguistic colonialism etc. The word ‘post colonialism’ implies after-colonialism. But colonialism, hegemony, and domination never end and they are as old as human existence. Power politics and exploitation are innate human tendencies and to represent the different manifestations of the power dynamics, it is better to use the word ‘neocolonialism’ to talk about what is meant by ‘postcolonialism’. Language and literature have always been used by colonizers as a powerful tool in the process of colonization, be it political or cultural. It is very obvious that whatever knowledge, wisdom, science, technology, literary criticism and modernization that is projected as universal is actually Eurocentric. It again is essentially based on white, Eurocentric norms and practices. The critical questioning and rejection of this notion of universalism marks the beginning of postcolonial criticism.

Frantz Fanon in his book *The Wretched of the Earth* pointed out the need for reclaiming one’s own past and erasing the debunking of the past by the colonizers as part of the ‘cultural resistance’ in France’s African empire. Postcolonial theory and criticism must aim at ‘seeing’ the postcolonial era by shedding the ‘amnesia’ that set in during the colonial period. Edward Said’s *Orientalism* enlarged the scope of postcolonial approach by exposing the Eurocentric universalism that establishes Western superiority over the east, identified as the ‘other’. The orient, a colony, according to Said, features in the western mind as a sort of surrogate and underground self.

Hybridity and cultural polyvalency is characteristic of our contemporary life in general and everyone celebrates not only fluidity but also anarchy. This kind of outlook gives postcolonial criticism and theory a broader vision. Feminist criticism with its focus on patriarchal power structures, Marxist criticism with its socio-economic orientation, discourse oriented studies of Foucault, Bakhtin and others, deconstructive notions of the fluid and unstable nature of any form of identity-all contributed to the rapid growth of the colonial criticism and theory. Decolonising the mind, changing the mindset and moving towards a mind shift are some of the terms that have given a new turn to studies in the area of colonialism and imperialism. Thus, Postcolonialism is an emancipatory concept for the oppressed minds. The oppression could be political, economic, social, gender, race, class etc. It does not introduce a new world free from colonial ills; it rather suggests continuity and change.

Foregrounding differences and diversity, celebrating hybridity, plurality and ‘otherness’ as potential sources of vitality and change, and rejecting notions like standardization, conformity universalisation that are seen as sources of power, hegemony and colonialism-these notions are



gaining ground in critical thinking. The focus now is not on 'universalism' that projects only the Western/Eurocentric values enshrined in their literatures but on other cultures and their literatures and ethnic differences and diversity. This, in turn, will expose the hidden agenda of colonialism and imperialism and bring to the forefront the suppressed local culture and their traditions - be it written or oral. The 'otherness' of cultures as it is called shows the richness of a multiverse that has been treated as the Eurocentric universe. This kind of work has been taken up not only in the field of literature and literary criticism but also in other areas like medicine, administration, management etc. The search for alternative systems is on.

Peter Barry identifies three phases of postcolonial criticism. The first phase is the adopt phase in which the writers and critics follow the European form and norms to describe their experience. The second phase is the adapt phase in which they suitably modify the form and norms to their own specifications. During the third stage, called the adept phase, the colonial mind becomes independent, creative and really 'cross-cultural' expressing its experience.

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Welfare Schemes And Voting Behaviour : A Psychological Analysis

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Abstract:

Guarantee schemes and welfare programs have emerged as central instruments in contemporary electoral politics, influencing not only economic outcomes but also voter psychology and behaviour. This study examines how such schemes shape voting decisions through psychological mechanisms including reciprocity, cognitive bias, perceived economic security, and identity alignment. Moving beyond traditional rational-choice explanations, it argues that welfare policies act as psychological cues that influence perception, trust, and political loyalty. Drawing on interdisciplinary research, the article highlights that beneficiaries of welfare initiatives such as conditional cash transfers and employment guarantees—tend to exhibit higher levels of political participation and support for incumbent governments. These behavioural shifts are mediated by psychological processes such as gratitude, loss aversion, and heuristic reasoning. Additionally, the framing of welfare schemes as either entitlements or political incentives significantly alters voter interpretation and response.

The study further explores the dual impact of guarantee schemes, demonstrating their capacity to promote democratic inclusion while simultaneously fostering dependency and clientelism. While such policies can empower marginalized populations, they may also weaken rational evaluation and reinforce emotionally driven voting behaviour. The article concludes that understanding the psychological foundations of welfare-driven voting is essential for assessing democratic health. It emphasizes the importance of transparency, institutional accountability, and voter awareness to ensure that welfare policies strengthen, rather than distort, democratic decision-making.

Keywords: Welfare schemes; voter psychology; electoral behaviour; guarantee programs; political participation; clientelism; cognitive bias



Introduction

In modern democracies, guarantee schemes—including employment programs, food security initiatives, and direct cash transfers—have become influential tools in shaping electoral outcomes. While conventional economic theories suggest that voters reward governments for material benefits, emerging evidence indicates that such responses are deeply rooted in psychological processes.

Empirical studies consistently show that beneficiaries of welfare programs are more likely to participate in elections and support incumbent governments. However, these patterns cannot be fully explained through rational cost-benefit analysis alone. Instead, they reflect underlying psychological dynamics such as trust, obligation, and identity, which mediate the relationship between welfare provision and voting behaviour.

Theoretical Framework: Psychological Foundations

The influence of guarantee schemes on voting behaviour is best understood through a psychological framework that emphasizes how individuals perceive and interpret policy benefits. Rather than acting as purely rational agents, voters rely on bounded reasoning shaped by emotions, biases, and social influences. A central mechanism is reciprocity, wherein individuals respond positively to perceived benefits by developing a sense of obligation toward the provider. In electoral contexts, this often translates into support for governments that deliver welfare benefits, reinforcing political loyalty through emotional bonds such as gratitude and trust. Equally important is the role of cognitive biases and heuristics, which simplify complex political decisions. Voters frequently rely on recent experiences or visible benefits when forming judgments, leading to simplified reasoning that prioritizes immediate gains over broader policy evaluation. Motivated reasoning further strengthens this tendency by aligning interpretations with pre-existing beliefs. The concept of loss aversion also plays a significant role. Beneficiaries of welfare schemes are often more concerned about losing existing benefits than acquiring new ones, resulting in a preference for continuity in governance. This creates a status quo bias that can influence electoral stability.

Additionally, social identity processes shape voting behaviour when welfare schemes target specific groups. Such targeting reinforces collective identity and encourages group-based political alignment. Perceptions of fairness and legitimacy further mediate responses, as voters are more supportive of policies, they perceive as equitable and transparent.

Mechanisms Linking Guarantee Schemes to Voting Behaviour

The translation of welfare benefits into electoral outcomes occurs through multiple interconnected mechanisms. One key process is policy feedback, where interaction with welfare programs increases political awareness, participation, and engagement. Beneficiaries often become more integrated into the political system, leading to higher voter turnout.

The reciprocity mechanism reinforces this effect by generating feelings of obligation and loyalty toward governing authorities. When benefits are clearly attributed to a particular government or

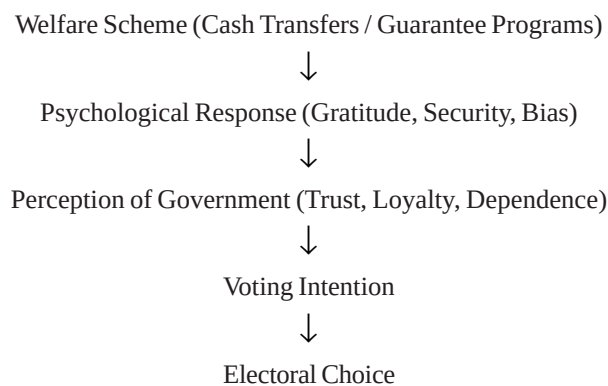


party, electoral support tends to increase.

Another important pathway is economic security, which reduces uncertainty and enhances trust in political institutions. This sense of stability strengthens voter confidence and encourages support for incumbents. At the same time, fear of losing benefits reinforces continuity in voting preferences. The informational mechanism highlights the importance of attribution and communication. Welfare programs influence voting behaviour more effectively when voters clearly associate them with specific political actors.

In some contexts, welfare schemes operate through clientelist linkages, where benefits are perceived as contingent on political support. While modern programs are often institutionalized, perceptions of selective distribution can still reinforce dependency relationships. Finally, mobilization effects play a crucial role. Welfare schemes can activate previously disengaged citizens by increasing the perceived value of political participation, transforming beneficiaries into active voters.

Illustration: Psychological Pathway of Welfare Voting



Empirical Evidence

Empirical research across diverse contexts demonstrates that welfare programs significantly influence electoral behaviour. Conditional cash transfer programs have been shown to increase voter turnout and support for incumbents, particularly in Latin American democracies. Studies in Brazil and Mexico confirm that welfare beneficiaries are more likely to align politically with governments that implement such policies.

At the same time, evidence suggests that the impact of welfare schemes varies depending on institutional design and implementation. While some programs reduce clientelism by promoting transparency, others may reinforce patron–client relationships. Across contexts, psychological factors such as perceived fairness and benefit attribution remain central in shaping voter responses.

Implications:

Guarantee schemes have important implications for democratic governance. On the positive side,



they enhance political participation, particularly among marginalized groups, by reducing economic barriers and fostering a sense of inclusion. They also strengthen the relationship between citizens and the state, contributing to institutional legitimacy and stability.

However, these benefits are accompanied by significant challenges. Welfare driven voting can encourage dependency and shift political decision-making toward short-term benefits rather than long-term policy considerations. Psychological biases such as loss aversion and heuristic reasoning may further distort electoral choices. Additionally, the expansion of welfare promises can lead to fiscal pressures and policy distortions, as political competition increasingly revolves around distributive incentives. Targeted schemes may also reinforce social divisions and unequal political influence.

Guarantee schemes occupy a critical position at the intersection of public policy and voter psychology, shaping electoral outcomes through both material and psychological channels. This study demonstrates that their influence extends beyond economic redistribution, operating through mechanisms such as reciprocity, cognitive bias, and identity formation.

While these schemes can strengthen democratic participation and inclusion, they also carry risks of dependency, clientelism, and reduced policy-based evaluation. Their overall impact depends on how they are designed, communicated, and perceived within specific political contexts. A balanced approach is therefore essential. Welfare policies must be implemented transparently and framed as rights rather than discretionary benefits, while efforts to enhance voter awareness and critical engagement remain crucial. By addressing both the economic and psychological dimensions of voting behaviour, democracies can ensure that welfare interventions contribute to informed participation and sustainable governance.

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The Intersection Of Psychology And Library Science

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Abstract:

The intersection of psychology and library science has emerged as a critical domain for understanding how individuals interact with information systems, particularly in an era defined by digital proliferation and cognitive overload. This paper examines the theoretical and practical convergence of these two disciplines, focusing on how psychological principles—especially cognitive, social, and behavioural frameworks—inform library practices and information system design. Drawing upon research in human information behaviour, cognitive processing, and user experience, the study highlights how users seek, interpret, and utilize information within both physical and digital library environments.

Cognitive psychology contributes significantly to understanding information retrieval processes, including memory constraints, attention mechanisms, and decision-making strategies. Simultaneously, social psychology provides insight into collaborative information practices, cultural influences, and user engagement in shared knowledge spaces. Library science integrates these insights to improve classification systems, digital interfaces, and information literacy programs.

It also explores the role of affective factors such as anxiety, motivation, and trust—in shaping user interactions with library systems. These elements are particularly relevant in academic and public library contexts, where users often navigate complex databases under time pressure. By synthesizing interdisciplinary research, the article argues that effective library services must be grounded in a nuanced understanding of human cognition and behaviour.

Ultimately, this intersection fosters the development of user-centered information environments that enhance accessibility, usability, and learning outcomes. The study concludes by emphasizing the need for continued interdisciplinary collaboration to address evolving challenges in information access and knowledge dissemination.

Keywords: Psychology; Library Science; Information Behaviour; Cognitive Psychology; Information Retrieval; User Experience; Digital Libraries; Information Literacy

**Introduction:**

Library science has traditionally focused on the organization, preservation, and dissemination of information. However, the shift toward user-centered systems has necessitated a deeper engagement with psychological theories that explain how individuals interact with information. The field of human information behaviour, situated at the intersection of psychology and library science, investigates how users seek, process, and apply information in various contexts (Savolainen, 2007).

Psychology provides the conceptual tools to understand these processes, while library science offers the applied framework through which these insights are operationalized. This interdisciplinary relationship has become increasingly significant with the rise of digital libraries and complex information ecosystems.

Theoretical Foundations of the Intersection:

The intersection of psychology and library science is grounded in a shared concern with how individuals perceive, process, and utilize information within structured environments. Cognitive psychology provides a foundational framework for understanding how users interact with library systems by examining processes such as attention, perception, memory, and problem-solving. Information seeking is not a simple or linear act; rather, it involves a series of cognitive operations shaped by users' prior knowledge, expectations, and mental representations. Research in information science demonstrates that individuals approach search tasks with pre-existing cognitive schemas that guide query formulation, interpretation of results, and iterative refinement of strategies (Ingwersen, 1996; Harter, 1992). These schemas influence not only what users search for but also how they evaluate relevance and credibility.

The complexity of these processes is amplified in digital environments, where hypertext structures and extensive information availability impose significant cognitive demands. Users must continuously filter, compare, and synthesize information, often under conditions of uncertainty. Within this context, the concept of human information behaviour serves as a crucial bridge between psychology and library science. It encompasses the full range of activities related to information needs, seeking, use, and evaluation, while also accounting for the cognitive and contextual factors that shape these activities. Scholars have emphasized that information behaviour is inherently interdisciplinary, integrating insights from psychology, sociology, and communication studies to explain how individuals engage with information across diverse settings (Spink & Cole, 2006).

Contextual perspectives further highlight that information seeking is embedded in everyday practices and influenced by situational, social, and environmental conditions (Courtright, 2006). These perspectives challenge purely system-centered models by emphasizing the active role of users as meaning-makers within information environments. Additionally, affective dimensions such as uncertainty, curiosity, and confidence are increasingly recognized as integral to theoretical models of information behaviour. Emotional states can either facilitate or hinder cognitive processing, shaping both the direction and outcome of information seeking. Consequently, the theoretical integration of



psychology and library science reflects a broader shift toward understanding information systems as interactive spaces where cognitive, emotional, and social processes converge.

Psychological Factors in Library Use:

Psychological factors play a central role in shaping how individuals interact with library resources, influencing both their effectiveness in locating information and their overall experience within information environments. Among these factors, affective states such as anxiety, confidence, and motivation are particularly significant. Library anxiety, a well-documented phenomenon, illustrates how emotional responses can act as barriers to information access, especially for individuals who are unfamiliar with library systems or academic research practices. Users often begin the search process with feelings of uncertainty, which may evolve into either confidence or frustration depending on their ability to navigate available resources. Empirical studies on affective and cognitive searching behaviour reveal that these emotional fluctuations are closely intertwined with cognitive processes, affecting decision-making and persistence (Nahl & Tenopir, 1996).

Motivation is another critical determinant of information behaviour. Individuals who are intrinsically motivated tend to engage more deeply with information, employing diverse search strategies and critically evaluating sources. In contrast, those with lower motivation may adopt minimal-effort approaches, relying on easily accessible but potentially less reliable information. Beyond affective influences, individual differences such as prior knowledge, cognitive styles, and epistemological beliefs significantly shape how users seek and use information. For example, individuals with well-developed knowledge structures are more likely to formulate precise queries and assess information critically, whereas novices may struggle with both search formulation and evaluation (Whitmire, 2003). These variations underscore the importance of designing library services that accommodate diverse user profiles.

Information literacy programs represent a key application of psychological principles within library science, aiming to enhance users' cognitive and metacognitive abilities. Such programs are informed by theories of learning and memory, which emphasize the importance of active engagement, meaningful connections, and repeated practice in knowledge acquisition. Cognitive models suggest that learners benefit from structured guidance that aligns with their existing mental frameworks while gradually introducing more complex concepts (Cook & Klipfel, 2015). By integrating these principles, libraries can support users in developing the skills necessary to navigate complex information landscapes effectively. Ultimately, recognizing the psychological dimensions of library use enables the creation of environments that not only provide access to information but also foster confidence, critical thinking, and lifelong learning.

Applications in Digital Libraries

The development of digital libraries has significantly expanded the scope of interaction between users and information systems, making psychological insights increasingly essential for effective design and implementation. User-centered design has emerged as a guiding principle in this context,



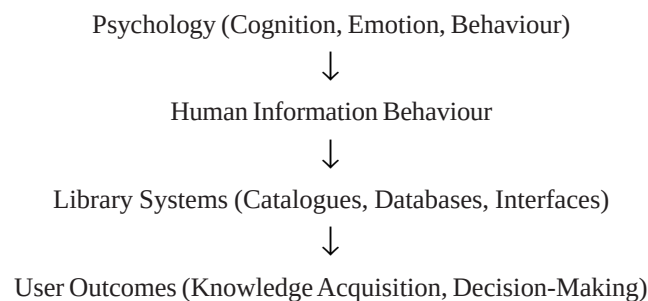
emphasizing the alignment of system features with users' cognitive processes, expectations, and behaviours. When digital interfaces are designed in accordance with users' mental models, they facilitate intuitive navigation and reduce cognitive load, thereby enhancing efficiency and satisfaction (Ferreira & Pithan, 2005). Conversely, poorly structured systems can lead to confusion, disorientation, and decreased effectiveness in information retrieval.

Information retrieval within digital libraries is now understood as an interactive and iterative process, rather than a one-time query-response interaction. Users continuously refine their searches based on feedback from the system and their evolving understanding of the information need. This dynamic process reflects cognitive theories of problem-solving, which emphasize hypothesis generation, testing, and revision. The integration of psychological principles into retrieval systems has led to the development of features such as relevance ranking, adaptive algorithms, and personalized recommendations, all of which aim to support users in managing complex information tasks.

In addition to cognitive considerations, digital libraries increasingly incorporate insights from social and behavioural psychology to enhance user engagement. Features such as collaborative tools, user-generated content, and social tagging systems reflect an understanding of information seeking as a socially embedded activity. Studies on user perceptions indicate that factors such as trust, perceived usefulness, and ease of use play a crucial role in determining whether individuals continue to engage with digital library systems (Jeong, 2011). As digital environments continue to evolve, the integration of psychological perspectives will remain essential for addressing challenges related to information overload, user diversity, and technological complexity. By combining cognitive, affective, and social insights, digital libraries can function not merely as repositories of information but as adaptive systems that support meaningful interaction, learning, and knowledge creation.

Illustration:

1. INTERDISCIPLINARY MODEL OF INFORMATION BEHAVIOUR





2. COGNITIVE PROCESS IN INFORMATION SEEKING:

Information Need → Search Strategy → Information Retrieval → Evaluation

Use



Feedback Loop (Learning & Adaptation)

Discussion:

The integration of psychology and library science reveals that information systems cannot be effectively designed without considering human cognitive and emotional processes. The shift from system-centered to user-centered paradigms reflects this realization.

Moreover, the increasing complexity of digital environments necessitates a deeper understanding of how users interact with information under conditions of overload and uncertainty. Interdisciplinary research continues to expand the boundaries of both fields, offering new insights into knowledge organization and dissemination.

Conclusion:

The intersection of psychology and library science represents a dynamic and evolving field that enhances our understanding of human interaction with information. By incorporating cognitive, social, and behavioural perspectives, library science can develop more effective and inclusive systems.

Future research should continue to explore this intersection, particularly in the context of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and personalized information systems. A sustained interdisciplinary approach will be essential for addressing the challenges of modern information environments.

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Psychological And Cultural Impact On Learning English As A Secondary Language

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Abstract:

English has emerged as a global language that plays a significant role in education, employment, and social mobility. In multilingual societies such as India, where regional languages dominate everyday communication, the acquisition of English as a second language presents both academic and psychological challenges. This article examines the cultural and psychological factors that influence English language learning among students, particularly those from rural backgrounds. The transition from vernacular-medium schooling to higher education environments where English serves as the primary medium of instruction often creates barriers related to comprehension, communication, and self-expression. Such difficulties are frequently intensified by socio-economic disparities, inadequate exposure to English, limited linguistic support, and differences in pedagogical practices. The study further explores how language proficiency is closely associated with self-esteem, identity formation, academic confidence, and social integration. Students who perceive themselves as linguistically disadvantaged may experience feelings of inferiority, anxiety, social withdrawal, and reduced motivation, which can adversely affect both educational achievement and mental well-being. The article also highlights the influence of family background, peer comparison, gender expectations, and institutional culture in shaping learners' attitudes toward English. Particular attention is given to the experiences of rural students who encounter multiple transitions while adapting to higher education settings. The discussion emphasizes the need for inclusive language education, learner-centered teaching strategies, psychological support services, and supportive learning environments. By addressing both linguistic and emotional dimensions of second-language acquisition, educational institutions can promote greater academic success, psychological resilience, and social participation among learners from diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds.

Keywords: English as a Second Language (ESL); Language Learning; Psychological Factors; Cultural Influence; Rural Students; Second Language Acquisition; Self-Esteem; Higher Education; Academic Achievement; Mental Well-Being.



Today, English has become a language of the globe. It is not restricted to a land of its own; it has traversed continental barriers and is influencing cultures worldwide. The process of colonization has assisted in establishing its foothold. As a result, many indigenous languages have been overshadowed in the wave of English. Cultural connotations have further supported English in establishing itself as a superior language.

The widespread usage of English and its acceptance in official communications have infused a sense of inferiority among speakers of other languages. Especially in a country like India, the multiplicity of indigenous languages has lost its prominence. After Macaulay's Minute on Indian Education introduced English as the medium of instruction and education, a significant number of people failed to meet the demands of the language. This failure, along with a sense of pride in native tongues, further alienated English from the people. The imposition, unfamiliarity, and prevailing misconceptions about the language have created an aversion so strong that the very idea of learning it appears daunting.

In the present times, although English has somewhat lost its earlier connotative dominance, students from rural areas still carry an aversion and persistent preconceptions about its difficulty. Language is a powerful tool; it is not only a means of expression but also a medium of influence. For individuals coming from economically and socially developing place or communities, language becomes the most effective means to distinguish themselves and ensure their voices are heard. India being a diverse and multilingual nation, allows most states give to prioritise their vernacular languages as the primary medium, while English is designated as a secondary language. Language plays a crucial role in education and learning; however, this fact has often been overlooked.

Low proficiency in English at primary and secondary school levels can be attributed to several factors, including inadequate teacher training, lack of a robust curriculum, and an uncondusive learning environment. Many of these students are first -generation learners; hence, they lack opportunities to interact in English, as vernacular languages dominate daily communication. Consequently, students graduating from such schools are often neither competent not effective in using English.

Students opting for higher studies in search of a better future enter a new phase of life. They encounter diverse beliefs, sentiments, cultures, and ideologies. This amalgamation of varied and often uncontrollable external influences, combined with the student's own preconceptions, creates a complex psychological landscape. As students navigates through new social interactions, adapt to unfamiliar ideas, and gradually reconstruct their sense of self, this process of self-discovery continues will into adulthood. In this journey, language becomes the most powerful tool at their disposal; it helps in shaping identity and facilitates their transition into new environments. However, in the absence of linguistic competence, students find it increasingly difficult to adapt to these changing contexts. While some students perceive this transition as an opportunity for personal growth, others become overwhelmed by the changes and fall into patterns of emotional maladjustment and even depression.

Students from rural backgrounds are particularly vulnerable to this phenomenon, as multiple underlying factors hinder both their professional growth and emotional stability. This study examines



several commonly observed factors, including the transition to English as the primary medium of communication, differences in pedagogical methods, family dynamics, issues related to appearance, exposure to new cultures, and various distractions.

With the transition to higher education, there is a significant shift in teaching methodologies, where most academic communication takes place in English. Students with limited proficiency often struggle to follow instructions and comprehend academic content. Their restricted fluency directly affects their learning outcomes. Furthermore, there is a sudden increase in the frequency of English usage, both oral and written, which makes it difficult for them to actively participate in discussions. The language is often neglected due to a perceived lack of relevance, as their primary mode of communication throughout life has been their native tongue. One of the most significant barriers to language acquisition is the learner's attitude; fear and aversion create psychological boundaries that restrict expression and limit social interaction.

The new academic environment is also highly heterogeneous, consisting of students with varied levels of prior knowledge and exposure. When confronted with peers who demonstrate greater linguistic and conceptual competence, students who struggle to grasp these concepts often develop a sense of inferiority. Such sudden academic and social displacements can have a profound psychological impact, leading to a loss of confidence and diminished motivation.

A student from a rural background encounters multiple layers of difference, including disparities in socio-economic conditions on the student's psyche cannot be overstated. Students often begin to compare their financial resources and social freedoms with those of their peers. This tendency toward comparison, which is socially ingrained as a measure of self-worth, can lead to dissatisfaction when not mediated by critical self-awareness. Consequently, students may begin to question their self-worth and develop the misconception that material acquisition can resolve their sense of inadequacy.

Moreover, students carry varying degrees of responsibility, shaped by both personal aspirations and familial expectations. These factors should serve as points of self-evaluation, as they help maintain focus on long-term goals. In this context, family dynamics play a crucial role and must be examined with sensitivity. For many students from rural backgrounds, the home environment may be marked by socio-economic instability, where emotional support is often overshadowed by immediate financial and social challenges. This lack of support can have a lasting impact, manifesting in forms such as anxiety, low self-esteem, and a significant deficiency in self-compassion.

These barriers to learning, compounded by emotional distress, give rise to numerous behavioral complexities; such patterns significantly influence the student's mindset and hinder overall development. These tendencies are often exhibited in academic settings in the form of disruptive behavior, defiance of authority, and chronic avoidance of work. As the academic work load accumulates, coupled with an unproductive attitude, the student becomes increasingly agitated due to an inability to express themselves effectively. This frustration gradually leads to a loss of interest in studies, fostering a sense of apathy toward life and, ultimately, a loss of hope. Although these symptoms are often noticed, they are seldom given adequate attention. Research indicates that mental health remains one of the most neglected areas of student well-being, and such conditions frequently mark the onset



of depression among students.

When examining the role of gender, it is observed that majority of female students tend to perform better than their male counterparts, a trend particularly noticeable among students from rural backgrounds. Many students underestimate the significance of English, perceiving it merely as a compulsory subject required for graduation rather than as a valuable skill. Male students often prioritize employment prospects post-graduation, with the primary objective being the completion of their degree. In contrast, female students approach academic performance differently. For them, achieving higher grades does not always translate into improved employment opportunities. Despite possessing inherent capabilities, they often lack a supportive environment to practice their skills and apply their knowledge. Limited exposure to external opportunities, coupled with socialization within a patriarchal framework, conditions them to exhibit compliance and deference to authority. This, in turn, restricts their confidence and limits their potential for self-expression and growth.

Most of these barriers can be addressed, to a significant extent, through individual effort supported by external guidance and institutional intervention. Since many of these challenges originate at the level of primary education, there is a pressing need to reform existing pedagogical practices. This includes the development of more interactive teaching methodologies and curricula that emphasize practical application over rote learning or superficial skill acquisition. Educational institutions must also assume responsibility for the psychological well-being of students by providing accessible counseling services through trained professionals. Furthermore, systematic measures should be implemented to identify students who require additional academic and emotional support, ensuring timely and effective intervention.

Conclusion

The process of learning English as a second language is shaped by a complex interaction of psychological, cultural, social, and educational factors. For many students, particularly those from rural and vernacular-medium backgrounds, the transition into English-oriented academic environments presents challenges that extend beyond language proficiency and affect confidence, self-esteem, identity, and academic performance. Limited exposure to English, socio-economic constraints, family circumstances, and differences in educational opportunities often create barriers that hinder effective communication and participation in learning. These difficulties may further contribute to feelings of anxiety, inferiority, and social isolation, ultimately affecting students' overall well-being and motivation. At the same time, the increasing importance of English in higher education and employment makes language competence an essential component of personal and professional development. Therefore, language learning should be viewed not merely as an academic requirement but as a process closely connected with psychological growth and social integration. Educational institutions have a vital responsibility to create supportive and inclusive learning environments through effective teaching methodologies, learner-centered curricula, language-support programmes, and accessible counselling services. Greater attention must also be given to the emotional needs of students who struggle with linguistic and cultural transitions. By addressing these challenges through coordinated educational



and psychological interventions, institutions can foster confidence, resilience, and communicative competence among learners, enabling them to participate more effectively in academic, social, and professional contexts while preserving their cultural identity and sense of self-worth.

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Investors' Perception Towards Cyber Threats And Digital Security In The Indian Stock Market - An Empirical Study

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Abstract:

The Indian stock market has seen a rise in retail participation due to digitalization and initiatives like Digital India. Though such a change is improving market access, it also makes retail investors more vulnerable to online scams such as phishing, OTP fraud and identity theft. The current inquiry focuses on the perceptions, the levels of awareness, trust, and preparedness of the investors on the topic of digital security, with a particular emphasis put on the retail members of investment community in Shivamogga, Karnataka. Findings show that a majority of them; particularly the younger and better-educated investors, recognize the threat to digitalization and are using protective measures like strong passwords and two-factor authentication. The results indicate that more digital literacy is needed and that at least region-specific awareness building programs are established in addition to heightened cybersecurity controls provided by the regulators and trading platforms so that India is not going to lose the level of security that its growing digital market is going to offer to everyone who is interested in investing.

Keywords: Investors' Perception, Digital Security, Cyber Threats, Indian Stock Market, Cybersecurity Awareness.

Introduction

The Indian stock market hold the middle ground of the national financial architecture by offering ways to bring about capital formation, growth of wealth and also the economic growth in India. It is the evolution of the informal community of brokers of the nineteenth century that has resulted into a well-regulated and high technological system governed by various institutions like the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) and the National Stock Exchange (NSE). Through these exchanges, it is able to trade in equities, derivatives and other forms of debt instruments hence invites both foreign and local investors to trade. The spread of digital infrastructure and programs such as the Digital India, have made the stock



market available to a larger number of people. Investing has become a globally available business where investors can use their mobiles to start a trade and track their investments in real-time using mobile apps online trading services and digital payments. This technological upgrade has levelled the playing field when it comes to investing, attracting a new generation of retail customers both in cities and rural environs.

The digitization process that is being taken place in the financial markets is giving rise to a new set of challenges. Movement of transactional and trade processes towards internet-based infrastructures has increased the amount of exposure to cyber threats. Examples of such vulnerabilities are phishing attacks, data losses, malware attacks, and identity thefts, among which they are very central issues in the capital market ecosystem. Players at any point of the chain (a single investor, a trading account, a trading platform, etc., all the way through to a stock exchange) remain vulnerable to hacking and thus exposing sensitive financial data and opening incidences of operations interruption.

It will be observed that in 2025, the digital participation in the stock market in India was considerably positive, with 194 million demat accounts in the retail stock market (Business Standard, 2025). This is also an attribute of increased financial inclusiveness, but it also creates greater exposure to cyber risk. Financial sector experienced more than 3, 4 lakh cybersecurity events in the previous fiscal year, with a strong spike in both phishing and ransomware activities (Fintegriti, 2024). The inability to secure data was also highlighted by a visible data leak at Angel One in the first months of 2025 when the market temporarily lost trust (Reuters, 2025).

Due to the increasing cyber-related risk, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has implemented a more demanding Cybersecurity and Cyber Resilience Framework in January 2025. The framework highlights competent security measures, enforcement of risk-management systems and increased investor education. At that, the central government increased its budget allocation on cybersecurity to 759 crore (Moneycontrol, 2025). The brokers and exchanges have in turn, strengthened their security, which involves the introduction of two-factor authentication (2FA), encryption, firewalls, and a set of regular cyber-audits. Despite these efforts, any cyber threats remain both increasing in size and sophistication, and the need to maintain consistent digital security in the financial environment within India that is quickly going through the digitalizing process.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A literature review summarizes existing research on a topic. Here, it highlights studies on how cyber-attacks affect stock markets, investor behavior, and firm responses.

Tosun (2020) analysed the impacts of cyber-attacks on U.S. stock markets by corporations. The analysis applied an event study and also difference in differences (DID) analysis to show that firm specific breaches trigger short-term drop-in stock returns, increased sell side gobbling, and diminished liquidity. Another finding involves showing that investor interest increases drastically post attacks hence affecting firm reputation and market conduct at large. The long-term performance indicators as such appear to be rather stable, but the changes in R&D budgets, dividends, and the compensation of CEOs display the long-lived effects of policies. The research thus shows that computer attacks are



reputational shocks able to change the perception in the market as well as corporate strategy.

Garg and Garg (2023) analysed the cybersecurity issues in the Indian securities market and considers the phishing, malware, and insider attacks as the main threats that undermine investor confidence. The study discuss Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) theory of cybersecurity and outline the essential risk factors that can threaten the stability of the market. The conclusion talks about the need of having stronger regulation, greater awareness on the part of the investor, and the use of the emerging technology, so as to safeguard the digital securities ecosystem.

Jiang et al. (2023) explored a firm-level measure of cyber risk as a predictor of cyber attacks and their effects on stock returns based on machine learning. Using it logistic ridge regression on company data and ten-K disclosures from 2006 to 2018, they have constructed the metric. The research found that in companies dealing with greater cyber risk occur more frequently problems and higher, on average, credit earning – evidence prevails of risk premium. It also demonstrated that cyberspace Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs) do well when high-risk companies lose, backing the notion that cyber-risk is a critical, priced factor in financial markets.

Veiga et al. (2023) explored recent systematic review of what is known currently about cybersecurity in financial organizations. The three related areas that the authors focus on include threat landscape, countermeasures at the firm level and the financial implications. Some of the main weaknesses include data breaches and service outages, which act to destroy stakeholder confidence, as well as the stability of the market. The review also notices an increase level of attention towards regulation and emerging technology state-of-art including artificial intelligence and blockchain. Lastly, the authors recommend further investigation of the ways investors and market players can react to the threat of cyber-attacks, referring to this dimension as a particularly insufficiently studied one.

Cele and Kwenda (2025) considered the critical review of 58 empirical studies that determine the level of cybersecurity risks on the adoption of digital banking in South Africa. The authors came up with the identification of major threats namely phishing, vishing, malware and identity theft that undermine customer confidence. The review identified 17 precise threats and suggested 13 adequate mitigation strategies involving training of users and implementation of secure software. According to the analysis, the hurdle to its wider use continues to be cybersecurity, despite the apparent benefits of digital banking.

RESEARCH GAP

Although the study has focused on the effects of cyber-attacks on stock prices and digital banking practices in the United States and South Africa, very little has been given to the view of Indian investors regarding security on digital security. Therefore, empirical studies so far focus on the institutional responses with little information on how individual investors perceive threats, gain trust, and develop behavior. In addition, there are no particular studies of this phenomenon in one of the areas of participation in the digital stock market, which is growing steadily in Shivamogga. This is the gap that this research paper aims at filling its title is given as, “**Investors Perception towards Cyber**



Threats and Digital Security in the Indian Stock Market - An Empirical Study”has been undertaken.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives guide the purpose of the study. This research aims to understand investor perception and response to digital security and cyber threats in the Indian stock market.

1. To examine individual investors’ perception, awareness, and trust regarding cyber threats and digital security in the Indian stock market.
2. To assess the preparedness and behavioural response of investors towards cybersecurity risks in digital stock trading.

HYPOTHESIS

A hypothesis is a tentative assumption made to draw conclusions and guide the direction of research. The following hypotheses have been formulated for the purpose of this study.

There is no significant association between investors’ awareness of cybersecurity risks and their preparedness for secure digital stock trading.

SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

This study examines the individual investors perceive digital security and the awareness they have towards it and subsequent response concerning the issue of cyber threats in the Indian equity market. Quantitative and descriptive methodology has been followed in which a structured questionnaire was used to collect primary data on 50 retail investors in Shivamogga. These data were enhanced through secondary sources that are books, journals, and the web sites. It used convenience sample and statistical measures of percentages, mean, standard deviation and Spearman rank correlation test to analyse the research hypotheses were done.

RESULT AND DISCUSION

This part summarizes the empirical results of the empirical study which have been developed in accordance with the collection of empirical statistics results. The findings are discussed against the research objectives and hypothesis thus throwing the light on the behaviour and the perception of the investor as regards to the digital protection and cyber threats in the Indian stock market.

Table No. 1 Demographical Profile

Population of the discussed 50 surveyed people depicts the dominated number of the young respondents; that is to say; the majority of the participants are males and are academically educated: 76 % are male and 62 % unmarried. Around 70 % are aged below 30, and 56 % were students, thus, defining the sample as technologically forward and digital in a sense. Educationally, 78 % have postgraduate academic status, which demonstrates high cognitive and practical potential to deal with digital finance. In terms of income, 64 % of respondents earn up to 25000 rupees per month, which is characteristic of young workforce or those in a non-working capacity. Summing these facts up, they can be compared to modern trends in digital investment uptake: the younger, educated population has an increased level of using online resources and is highly aware of digital security problems.



Demographical Factors	Variables	Frequency (N)	Percentage
Gender	Male	38	76%
	Female	12	24%
	Total	50	100%
Marital Status	Married	19	38%
	Unmarried	31	62%
	Total	50	100%
Age (Years)	Below 25	16	32%
	25-30	19	38%
	31-40	7	14%
	41-50	4	8%
	Above 50	4	8%
	Total	50	100%
Occupation	Student	28	56%
	Self Employed	5	10%
	Private Sector Employee	9	18%
	Government Employee	8	16%
	Total	50	100%
Education Level	High School or Below	2	4%
	Undergraduate	5	10%
	Postgraduate	39	78%
	Professional	4	8%
	Total	50	100%
Monthly Income (₹)	Less than 25000	32	64%
	25000-50000	8	16%
	50001-75000	2	4%
	75001-100000	0	0%
	Above 100000	8	16%
	Total	50	100%

Source: Field Survey

Table No.2 Perceived common Cyber Threats among Respondents

Cyber Threats	Frequency	Rank
Phishing – Fake messages to steal info.	42	1
OTP Fraud – Tricking you to give OTP.	32	2
Password Hacking – Stealing your password.	26	3
Identity Theft – Using your details for fraud.	24	4
Malware – Harmful software.	21	5
Spyware – Secretly tracks your activity.	20	6
Ransomware – Locks files, demands money.	14	7

Source: Field Survey



The current set of data suggests that phishing (42) is the most common type of cyber threat followed by OTP fraud (32) and password hacking (26). These results highlight the high danger of predatory behavior. It is important to mention that identity theft (24), malware (21), and spyware (20) are also prominent, although ransomware (14) is the least reported category of attacks still being regarded as rather severe. Together, the users face significant risk of scam aimed at stealing personal and log-in details.

Table. No. 3 Showing the Perception, Awareness, and Trust of the respondents towards Cyber Threats and Digital Security.(SD-1, D-2, N-3, A-4, SA-5)

Sl. No	Perception, Awareness, and Trust	1	2	3	4	5	Total	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	I am aware of the risks involved in online stock trading.	3	2	3	24	18	50	4.04	10.27
2	I believe cybersecurity is important in digital investing.	0	2	8	23	17	50	4.1	9.82
3	I follow cybersecurity news related to financial markets.	2	0	10	23	15	50	3.98	9.46
4	I understand basic online trading safety practices.	0	4	2	28	16	50	4.12	11.83
5	I trust the security measures of my trading platform.	4	0	6	29	11	50	3.86	11.34
6	I believe SEBI ensures digital safety in stock markets.	0	3	8	23	16	50	4.04	9.46

Source: Field Survey

The data indicates a strong awareness and positive attitude toward cybersecurity among digital investors. Most respondents agree or strongly agree that they understand online trading risks (mean = 4.04), value cybersecurity (mean = 4.1), and follow safety practices (mean = 4.12). They also stay updated on cybersecurity news (mean = 3.98), trust their trading platforms (mean = 3.86), and believe SEBI ensures digital safety (mean = 4.04). Overall, the findings reflect a high level of cybersecurity awareness in digital stock trading.

Table. No. 4 Showing the Preparedness and Behavioural Response of the respondents towards Cyber Threats and Digital Security.(SD-1, D-2, N-3, A-4, SA-5)

Sl. No	Perception, Awareness, and Trust	1	2	3	4	5	Total	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	I use strong, unique passwords for trading.	2	0	1	20	27	50	4.4	12.59
2	I enable two-factor authentication (2FA).	2	0	6	28	14	50	4.04	11.4
3	I avoid suspicious links and do not share OTPs.	1	2	11	12	24	50	4.12	9.3
4	I check my trading account for unusual activity.	2	2	8	20	18	50	4	8.6
5	I would stop using a platform with repeated breaches.	3	0	7	24	16	50	4	9.87

Source: Field Survey



The responses indicate that most participants practice good cybersecurity habits while trading online. A majority use strong, unique passwords (mean = 4.4), enable two-factor authentication (mean = 4.04), and avoid suspicious links or sharing OTPs (mean = 4.12). Many regularly check their accounts for unusual activity (mean = 4) and are willing to stop using platforms with repeated security breaches (mean = 4). Overall, the data reflects a high level of awareness and proactive behavior toward securing online trading accounts.

HYPOTHESIS TESTING

The Spearman rank correlation plot of the association between the perception of cyber threat among the investors and the preparedness to conduct safe online stock trading was used. Being a non-parametric, it perfectly fits ordinal data and measures the degree as well as direction of the properties between two ranked variables.

H : There is no significant association between investors' awareness of cybersecurity risks and their preparedness for secure digital stock trading.

Spearman rank correlation				
Particulars			AwarenessScore	PreparednessScore
Spearman's rho	AwarenessScore	Correlation Coefficient	1	0.459
		Sig. (2-tailed)		0.001
		N	50	50
	PreparednessScore	Correlation Coefficient	0.459	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001	
		N	50	50
Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				

Source: SPSS Output

Interpretation of Results

A Spearman rank correlation was conducted to assess the relationship between investors' awareness of cybersecurity threats and their readiness for secure digital stock trading, using data from 50 respondents. The analysis yielded a **correlation coefficient (r)** of **0.459**, indicating a moderate positive association. This suggests that increased awareness is linked to greater preparedness. The p-value was **0.001**, which is **below** the **0.05** significance level, confirming that the result is **statistically significant**.

Based on the findings, the null hypothesis (**H₀**) - which states that there is no significant association between investors' cybersecurity awareness and their preparedness for digital stock trading is **rejected**. The results provide evidence of a significant **positive association** between the two variables. This supports the study's objective that enhanced awareness of cybersecurity risks positively influences investor preparedness, thereby contributing to safer and more informed digital



investment practices.

Using data on 50 respondents, it was possible to conduct a Spearman rank correlation study that examined the connection between the awareness of the threat of cybersecurity among investors and their preparation towards making secure digital dealings in trading stocks. The resulting analysis gave a **correlation coefficient (p), 0.459**, which means that there was a moderate positive correlation. It is an indication that one needs to be aware of more to be prepared. The p-value is 0.001, less than 0.05 significance level which corresponds to the fact that the result is statistically significant.

With such results, the null hypothesis (H₀) - According to which there is no substantial relationship between cybersecurity awareness among investors and their being ready to trade digitally with stocks - is rejected. The results offer support of strong positive relations between the two variables. The relevance of the study goal, namely, that greater awareness of cybersecurity risks has a beneficial effect on investor preparedness, is thus confirmed, and can be contributed to safer and better-informed digital investment behavior.

SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

The level of cybersecurity literacy is one of the key factors determining the safe involvement in the market, and it must be improved. SEBI and trading platforms ought to develop and carry out long-term awareness programs that concur widespread dangers like phishing and OTP fraud. Strengthening user-based defensive mechanisms, such as two-factor authentication, live notifications, advanced fraud prevention systems, would protect the market players further. Schools and colleges would benefit by integrating the basic course of studies in digital-security to instil the skills and knowledge needed by new investors. It is also recommended that the localized awareness programs be introduced in the semi-urban settings like the one in Shivamogga to fill the regional gaps on the spectrum of digital literacy.

Overall, the empirical evidence indicates that awareness as well as preparedness regarding cybersecurity is strong among the investors particularly amongst the younger and well-educated generations. The positive association that is strong between these two constructs reveals that informed investors have safer trading behavior. Increasing and perfecting of education delivery and technological protection will solidify investor assurance and more secure investment in the Indian stock-market.

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Tradition, Modernity And Moral Vision In The Writings Of R.K. Narayan

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Abstract

R. K. Narayan is widely regarded as one of the foundational figures of Indian English fiction, distinguished by his portrayal of ordinary life within the fictional town of Malgudi. His writings reflect a society undergoing transition, shaped by the enduring presence of tradition and the disruptive forces of modernity. This paper examines how Narayan negotiates these cultural tensions and articulates a moral vision grounded in humanism, balance, and ethical introspection. Through close textual analysis of major novels including Swami and Friends, The Bachelor of Arts, The English Teacher, The Guide, and The Vendor of Sweets, the study argues that Narayan does not position tradition and modernity as antagonistic forces but as interconnected dimensions that shape moral consciousness. His moral vision emerges through narrative restraint, humour, irony, and compassion, emphasizing personal responsibility over ideological extremes. The paper situates Narayan's fiction within broader debates on cultural continuity, social change, and ethical humanism in Indian English literature.

Keywords: R. K. Narayan, tradition, modernity, moral vision, Malgudi, Indian English fiction, humanism

Introduction

Indian English fiction in the twentieth century emerged as a literary response to colonial experience, cultural transition, and the search for national identity. Writers such as Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao, and R. K. Narayan contributed distinct narrative approaches to representing Indian life in English. Among them, R. K. Narayan occupies a unique position due to his sustained focus on the everyday lives of ordinary individuals rather than overt political or ideological themes.

Narayan's fictional town of Malgudi serves as a symbolic microcosm of Indian society, where tradition and modernity coexist in complex and often contradictory ways. Through this imagined



space, Narayan examines how individuals respond to social change while remaining rooted in inherited cultural values. His fiction captures the moral dilemmas faced by individuals negotiating education, economic ambition, family obligation, and spiritual responsibility.

This paper argues that Narayan's significance lies in his balanced moral vision, which neither idealizes tradition nor celebrates modernity uncritically. Instead, he presents ethical life as a process of negotiation shaped by personal experience and moral awareness. By examining Narayan's representation of tradition, modernity, and moral consciousness, this study highlights the enduring relevance of his humanistic worldview.

Scholarly engagement with the writings of R. K. Narayan has been extensive, reflecting his central position in Indian English fiction. Critics have examined his work from multiple perspectives, including realism, cultural representation, narrative technique, humanism, and moral philosophy. This literature review surveys major critical approaches to Narayan's fiction, with particular attention to studies that address tradition, modernity, and moral vision. By situating the present study within existing scholarship, the review highlights both the continuity of critical discourse and the specific contribution of examining Narayan's ethical humanism as a mediating force between cultural continuity and change.

Early criticism of R. K. Narayan's fiction focused primarily on his realism and simplicity of style. K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar (1985) identifies Narayan as a chronicler of middle-class Indian life, emphasizing his ability to depict social reality without ideological exaggeration. Iyengar notes that Narayan's fictional town of Malgudi functions as a "representative Indian locale," allowing him to explore universal human concerns within a localized cultural setting. This foundational assessment established Narayan as a realist whose literary value lies in his faithful portrayal of everyday life.

William Walsh's *R. K. Narayan: A Critical Appreciation* (1982) further develops this view by emphasizing Narayan's moral imagination. Walsh argues that Narayan's realism is inseparable from his ethical concern, as his narratives consistently explore the consequences of human action. According to Walsh, Narayan's fiction reveals "moral awareness without moral aggression," a characteristic that distinguishes him from more didactic writers. This observation is particularly relevant to the present study, which examines moral vision as an emergent quality rather than an imposed doctrine.

Several critics have explored Narayan's engagement with Indian tradition and cultural continuity. C. D. Narasimhaiah (1991) emphasizes Narayan's rootedness in Indian ethos, arguing that his fiction derives its strength from its deep engagement with Hindu philosophy, social customs, and moral codes. Narasimhaiah suggests that Narayan's treatment of tradition is neither nostalgic nor reactionary; instead, it reflects a lived cultural experience that shapes character behavior and moral judgment.

Studies focusing on religious and philosophical dimensions have highlighted the influence of concepts such as dharma and karma in Narayan's work. Critics argue that these ideas inform the moral structure of his narratives without being overtly theological. For instance, R. S. Sharma (2003) notes that Narayan secularizes traditional philosophy by embedding it in everyday situations, allowing



moral lessons to arise organically through narrative progression.

However, some scholars caution against reading Narayan as a purely traditional writer. Meenakshi Mukherjee (2000) contends that Narayan's representation of tradition is marked by irony and distance. She argues that his fiction exposes the inadequacies of rigid traditionalism, particularly when it conflicts with individual freedom and social change. This critical position supports the view that tradition in Narayan's work is a dynamic and contested space rather than a fixed ideal.

Tradition as Cultural Continuity

Tradition in Narayan's fiction functions as a stabilizing cultural force that shapes social behavior and moral understanding. Religious rituals, family structures, and community norms form the background against which individual lives unfold. Temples, astrologers, priests, and festivals recur throughout Narayan's narratives, reinforcing the centrality of tradition in everyday life.

In *The English Teacher* (1945), traditional values inform familial relationships and moral responsibility, even as the protagonist engages with Western education. Similarly, in *The Vendor of Sweets* (1967), Jagan's adherence to Gandhian ideals reflects a moral framework rooted in traditional Indian philosophy. His belief in simplicity, discipline, and ethical living demonstrates how tradition can provide moral clarity and purpose.

However, Narayan does not present tradition as flawless or immutable. Traditional authority often struggles to accommodate individual freedom and changing aspirations. Conflicts between parents and children, particularly in matters of education and career, reveal the limitations of rigid adherence to inherited norms. Narayan thus portrays tradition as a dynamic force that must adapt to social change in order to remain meaningful.

Modernity and Cultural Disruption

Modernity enters Narayan's fictional world through English education, urbanization, economic mobility, and exposure to Western ideas. Schools, colleges, banks, and administrative institutions symbolize the transformation of Indian society under colonial and postcolonial influence. While modernity offers opportunities for self-advancement, it also introduces moral uncertainty and cultural dislocation.

In *Swami and Friends* (1935), Western-style education disrupts traditional modes of learning and authority, creating confusion and resistance among students. *The Bachelor of Arts* (1937) further explores the existential consequences of modern education. Chandran's academic success fails to provide emotional or moral fulfillment, highlighting the gap between intellectual training and ethical maturity.

Narayan remains critical of uncritical imitation of Western modernity. Mali in *The Vendor of Sweets* embodies this danger, as his fascination with technology and American culture alienates him from ethical responsibility and familial obligation. Through such characters, Narayan exposes the moral emptiness that can accompany progress devoid of cultural grounding.



Tradition and Modernity: A Dialectical Relationship

Rather than presenting tradition and modernity as opposing forces, Narayan depicts their interaction as a dialectical process. *Malgudi* itself reflects this coexistence, where ancient temples stand beside railway stations and modern institutions. This spatial symbolism underscores Narayan's belief in cultural continuity amid change.

The Guide (1958) provides one of the most compelling examples of this negotiation. Raju's transformation from a tourist guide to a spiritual leader illustrates the fusion of modern individuality with traditional faith. Although his sainthood originates in deception, it gradually evolves into genuine moral responsibility. Narayan suggests that moral growth can arise through lived experience rather than inherited virtue.

Similarly, *The Financial Expert* (1952) portrays the consequences of unchecked ambition in a modernizing economy. Margayya's rise through financial manipulation ultimately leads to moral and material collapse. Narayan critiques modern success that lacks ethical foundation, reinforcing the need for moral balance in social progress.

Moral Vision and Ethical Humanism

Narayan's moral vision is grounded in ethical humanism rather than doctrinal morality. His characters are ordinary individuals who experience moral failure, self-deception, and gradual self-awareness. Ethical insight emerges through personal realization rather than external authority or moral absolutism.

Indian philosophical concepts such as dharma and karma inform Narayan's moral framework, but they are presented in secular and experiential terms. Moral consequences unfold naturally within the narrative, reinforcing the connection between action and responsibility. In *The English Teacher*, Krishna's spiritual awakening following personal loss exemplifies inner transformation rather than ritual observance.

Compassion, humility, and acceptance are central to Narayan's ethical outlook. Even flawed characters are treated with sympathy and allowed the possibility of redemption. This moral tolerance distinguishes Narayan from writers who adopt a more confrontational or ideological stance toward social issues.

Humour and Irony as Ethical Strategies

Humour and irony play a crucial role in Narayan's narrative technique and moral expression. His gentle satire exposes social pretensions, bureaucratic inefficiency, and blind imitation without bitterness. By employing humour, Narayan critiques moral shortcomings while preserving empathy for human weakness.

Irony often highlights the disparity between intention and outcome, belief and behavior. This narrative strategy encourages moral reflection without imposing judgment. Through laughter and irony, Narayan reveals ethical truths in a manner that is both subtle and effective. Narayan's use of



humour reinforces his humanistic vision, suggesting that moral understanding arises through tolerance and self-awareness rather than condemnation.

Universality and Cultural Specificity

Although deeply rooted in Indian cultural contexts, Narayan's fiction achieves universal resonance. His focus on ordinary life, ethical struggle, and emotional authenticity transcends geographical and cultural boundaries. Malgudi becomes a metaphor for the human condition, where cultural specificity enhances rather than limits universality.

Narayan's humanism affirms individual dignity and moral choice. He suggests that ethical living is grounded in everyday responsibility rather than heroic action. This quiet moral philosophy ensures the continued relevance of his work in a global literary discourse.

Conclusion

R. K. Narayan's writings offer a nuanced and enduring exploration of tradition, modernity, and moral vision within a society in transition. Through the fictional world of Malgudi, he presents a balanced cultural narrative that neither romanticizes tradition nor celebrates modernity uncritically. Tradition provides ethical grounding, modernity introduces challenge and growth, and moral vision emerges from their reconciliation.

Narayan's lasting contribution lies in his compassionate humanism, narrative simplicity, and ethical depth. His fiction affirms that moral clarity is achieved not through ideological extremes but through balance, self-awareness, and acceptance of human limitation. In an era of rapid social change, Narayan's moral vision remains profoundly relevant.

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A Study On Psychological Factors Influencing Consumer Perception Towards Online Shopping

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Abstract:

Customer perception refers to the manner in which consumers evaluate and interpret products and services based on their experiences, expectations, and satisfaction levels. These perceptions are shaped by factors such as price, quality, convenience, trust, and overall service experience. Customer perception plays an important role in influencing purchasing decisions, brand loyalty, and long-term consumer relationships. Online shopping, also known as online retailing, is a form of electronic commerce that enables consumers to purchase goods and services directly through internet-based platforms. Customers can browse products, compare prices, place orders, and make digital payments using computers or smartphones. In recent years, online shopping has become highly popular in India because of rapid technological development, increasing internet penetration, and the widespread use of smartphones. Consumers prefer online shopping because it saves time, offers product variety, and provides easy access to discounts and promotional offers. However, concerns regarding payment security, delayed delivery, and product quality continue to influence consumer behaviour. The present study focuses on customer perception towards online shopping and analyses the benefits, challenges, and satisfaction levels associated with online purchasing behaviour.

Introduction:

Online shopping has emerged as one of the most significant developments in the modern business environment. It is a form of electronic commerce that enables consumers to purchase products and services directly from sellers through internet-based platforms. Customers can access online stores through websites or mobile applications and place orders from any location at any time. The growth of online shopping has transformed traditional purchasing patterns and created a new dimension in the retail sector.



The rapid development of internet technology and digital payment systems has increased the popularity of online shopping across the world. In India, online shopping has witnessed remarkable growth due to increased smartphone usage, improved internet connectivity, and changing consumer lifestyles. Companies such as Amazon, Flipkart, eBay, and Myntra have created competitive digital marketplaces by offering a wide range of products, attractive discounts, and efficient delivery services.

Consumer perception plays a vital role in determining the success of online shopping platforms. Factors such as trust, security, convenience, pricing, product quality, delivery services, and customer support significantly influence customer behaviour. Consumers prefer online shopping because it saves time, provides easy price comparison, and offers access to products that may not be available in local markets. At the same time, customers also face challenges such as delayed delivery, online fraud, and lack of physical inspection of products before purchase.

Understanding customer perception towards online shopping is important for marketers and online retailers because it helps them improve service quality, customer satisfaction, and loyalty. The present study attempts to examine customer perception towards online shopping and identify the major factors influencing online purchasing behaviour.

Review of Literature:

Tamilarasi and Praveen (2019) conducted a study on customer perception towards online shopping in Amazon during seasonal offers with special reference to Chennai city. The study analysed customer satisfaction levels based on gender and purchasing behaviour. The researchers found that female consumers in the age group of 20–28 years preferred online shopping because of attractive discounts, better services, and convenient purchasing options.

Saravanan S. (2021) examined customer behaviour towards online shopping and highlighted the importance of product quality, timely delivery, payment security, and privacy protection. The study concluded that customer satisfaction in online shopping largely depends on reliable service quality and secure payment methods.

Aakash (2021) analysed consumer behaviour towards online shopping and identified major barriers affecting online purchasing decisions. The study revealed that payment insecurity, high shipping costs, warranty issues, and limited internet access in rural areas negatively influence customer perception.

Mahadevi R. (2022) studied customer satisfaction towards online shopping and observed that convenience, product availability, and competitive pricing were the major reasons for customer preference. The study also highlighted that positive shopping experiences increase customer satisfaction and encourage repeated online purchases.

Research Gap

Several studies have examined consumer behaviour and satisfaction towards online shopping. However, most of the existing studies focus only on general consumer attitudes and purchasing



patterns. Limited research has been conducted on customer perception regarding trust, security, delivery efficiency, product reviews, and customer service in online shopping platforms. In addition, there is a need to understand how different factors influence customer satisfaction and loyalty in the current digital environment. Therefore, the present study attempts to analyse customer perception towards online shopping in a detailed and comprehensive manner.

Statement of the Problem:

Online shopping has become an important component of the modern economy and consumer lifestyle. Both educated and uneducated consumers are increasingly using online platforms through smartphones and internet services. Customer attitudes and preferences towards online purchasing are influenced by various factors such as convenience, trust, security, product quality, and service efficiency. Consumers expect reliable delivery services, safe payment systems, and accurate product information while shopping online.

Despite the growing popularity of online shopping, several challenges continue to affect customer confidence and satisfaction. Issues such as delayed delivery, payment fraud, poor product quality, and difficulties in return and refund processes create dissatisfaction among consumers. Therefore, understanding customer perception towards online shopping has become essential for improving service quality and enhancing customer loyalty. The present study aims to analyse customer perception towards online shopping and identify the factors influencing customer satisfaction.

Need of the Study:

Marketing primarily focuses on satisfying customer needs effectively through better products, services, pricing strategies, and delivery systems. Technological development and increasing internet usage have significantly changed the way consumers purchase goods and services. Modern consumers lead busy lifestyles and often prefer online shopping because it saves time and provides convenience.

Online shopping allows consumers to purchase products from their homes or workplaces without visiting physical stores. Customers can compare prices, read reviews, and select products according to their preferences. At the same time, consumers also face problems related to security, delivery, and product quality. Therefore, studying customer perception towards online shopping is important to understand consumer expectations, identify customer problems, and improve online shopping services.

Objectives of the Study:

The present study has been undertaken with the objective of understanding customer perception towards online shopping and analysing the factors influencing consumer behaviour in the digital marketplace. The study aims to identify the benefits available through online purchasing and examine the problems faced by consumers while shopping online. It also focuses on identifying the important features expected by online shoppers and understanding the reasons behind the increasing preference for online shopping platforms. In addition, the study attempts to analyse the level of customer satisfaction towards online shopping services and evaluate the factors responsible for customer



loyalty and repeated purchases.

Research Methodology:

The study is based on both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire containing both open-ended and close-ended questions. The questionnaire was distributed among online shoppers to collect information regarding their perception, preferences, satisfaction levels, and problems faced during online shopping.

Secondary data were collected from journals, books, magazines, websites, and previous research studies related to online shopping and consumer behaviour. The collected data were analysed to understand customer attitudes towards online shopping and identify the important factors influencing online purchasing behaviour. The study mainly focuses on convenience, pricing, delivery services, security, and product quality in online shopping platforms.

Scope of the Study:

The scope of the study covers various aspects of online shopping and customer perception. The study examines consumer behaviour, customer satisfaction, and the factors influencing online shopping preferences. It analyses why consumers prefer online shopping, the benefits they receive, and the problems they encounter during online purchasing.

The study also focuses on the impact of online shopping on traditional retailing and the changing trends in the e-commerce industry. In addition, the research highlights the importance of convenience, product variety, pricing strategies, delivery services, and trust in shaping customer perception towards online shopping platforms.

Conceptual Framework:

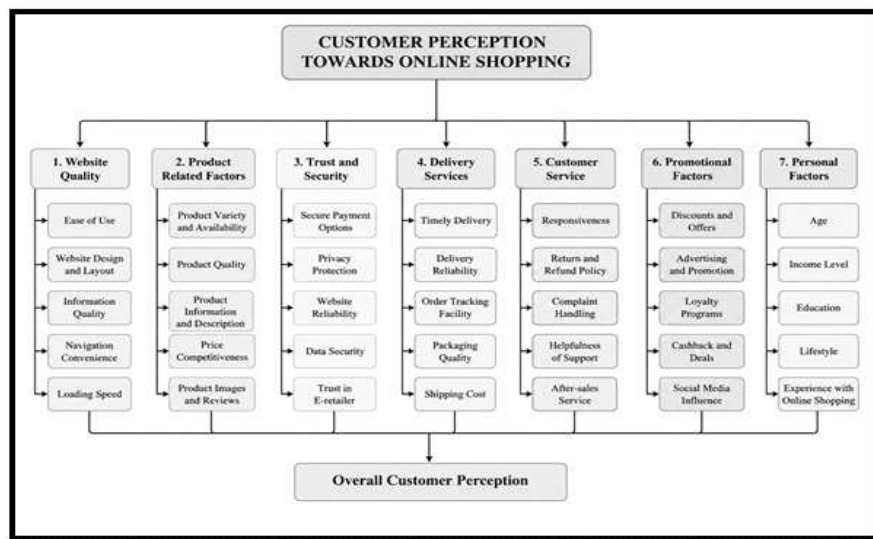
Customer perception towards online shopping is influenced by several cognitive, emotional, and situational factors. Consumers evaluate online shopping platforms based on convenience, trust, security, product quality, pricing, and delivery efficiency. Positive experiences with online shopping increase customer satisfaction and encourage repeated purchases.

Online retailers such as Amazon and Flipkart have created strong brand images through reliable services, efficient delivery systems, and customer-friendly policies. User-friendly interfaces, personalized recommendations, secure payment methods, and transparent return policies also influence customer perception positively. In addition, customer reviews and ratings play an important role in shaping consumer confidence and purchase decisions. Therefore, understanding customer perception towards online shopping is essential for improving customer satisfaction and long-term loyalty.

Nature of Online Shopping:

Online shopping has become an important part of modern consumer behaviour because it provides convenience, accessibility, and flexibility. Consumers can purchase products and services from any location at any time using computers or smartphones. Online shopping platforms provide a wide

range of products and allow customers to compare prices and features easily. The nature of online shopping is dynamic because it continuously evolves with technological advancements and changing customer expectations. Features such as digital payments, personalized recommendations, customer reviews, and quick delivery services have enhanced the online shopping experience. The availability of 24-hour shopping facilities and access to international products have further increased the popularity of online shopping among consumers.



The above diagram explains the major factors influencing customer perception towards online shopping. It highlights important dimensions such as website quality, product-related factors, trust and security, delivery services, customer service, promotional factors, and personal factors. These elements collectively influence customer satisfaction, purchasing decisions, and overall perception towards online shopping platforms.

Advantages of Online Shopping:

Online shopping provides several advantages to consumers. One of the major benefits is convenience, as customers can purchase products from their homes without visiting physical stores. Online shopping also saves time and energy because consumers can compare prices and select products quickly.

Another important advantage is the availability of a wide variety of products from different brands and sellers. Customers can access attractive discounts, promotional offers, and seasonal sales that may not be available in traditional retail stores. Online shopping platforms also provide customer reviews and ratings, which help consumers make informed purchasing decisions.



Disadvantages of Online Shopping:

Despite its advantages, online shopping also has certain limitations. One of the major concerns is the risk of fraud and payment insecurity. Customers may face problems such as hacking, phishing, and misuse of personal information during online transactions.

Another important disadvantage is delayed product delivery, which creates dissatisfaction among consumers. Customers are also unable to physically inspect products before purchasing them, which sometimes leads to disappointment regarding product quality. In addition, online shopping reduces personal interaction and the traditional shopping experience associated with visiting physical markets and stores.

Major Findings of the Study:

The study found that a majority of consumers prefer online shopping because of convenience, time-saving benefits, and product variety. Customers were satisfied with the availability of discounts and promotional offers provided by online shopping platforms. The study also revealed that younger consumers show greater interest in online shopping compared to older consumers.

However, concerns regarding payment security, delayed delivery, and product quality continue to affect customer confidence. The findings indicate that customer satisfaction depends largely on service quality, delivery efficiency, and reliable customer support. Positive shopping experiences encourage repeated purchases and increase customer loyalty towards online shopping platforms.

Suggestions:

Online retailers should strengthen payment security systems to improve customer trust and confidence in online transactions. Providing detailed product descriptions, authentic customer reviews, and transparent pricing policies can help consumers make better purchasing decisions.

Delivery services should be improved, especially in rural and remote areas, to enhance customer satisfaction. Online shopping platforms should also introduce customer-friendly return and refund policies to reduce consumer dissatisfaction. Government authorities should take strict action against cybercrime activities and ensure proper regulations for online business operations.

Conclusion:

The study concludes that online shopping has become an important part of modern consumer behaviour due to convenience, accessibility, and competitive pricing. Consumers generally have a positive perception towards online shopping because it provides a wide range of products, easy purchasing options, and attractive discounts.

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Emergence Of Modern American Drama – An Overview

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Abstract:

One of the most significant societal changes that arose was from the burgeoning rise and dynamics of movement in the population. America's population is said to have registered a growth of almost 150 percent in 30 years from 1830 to 1860. The reason for this surge is attributed to the influx of people from Europe, particularly from Germany and Ireland. With these immigrations came some disturbances as the incoming people were bringing their cultures with them. The natives reacted aggressively to the coming of these people as the natives saw this as a threat to their identity. Their social behavior and norms being so different from the native customs, was at once seen as fodder for the plays. The Irish especially with their idiosyncratic mannerisms soon became the stock characters in the plays and drew a hilarious response from the audience. Plays based on the Germans, who were nick-named 'Dutchmen' were not as popular as the ones that had Irish characters, possibly because their social norms were perceived as less eye-catching.

Key words: *Ephemeral, resonance, idiosyncratic, suffrage, temperance*

As a convenient starting point for a brief outline of American drama, the study would like to fix the mid-nineteenth century – a time period that most American literary and drama historians posit as the emergence of modern drama in the United States of America (Spiller et. al 1974:1000). Though the demand for theatrical entertainment is said to have increased in the northern part of America during the time of the Civil War (1861 – 1865), nothing new was produced. What were produced amounted only to mere variations on those that had been already established and existing traditions such as the comedy of eccentric character, domestic melodrama, and the sensational plays. More often than not it was an import from Europe, and even when a largely popular dramatist like H D Howells (1837 -1920) wrote, Cunliffe observes, "he brought no startling novelty to the stage" (1991:435). Great actors like Edwin Forrest, Edwin Booth, Lester Wallack and others continued to hold the audience's attention with their masterful enactments of plays, especially those by Shakespeare. And the new plays that emerged were seen as ephemeral, sensational, or sentimental by an audience that demanded



entertainment or escape.

The rapid changes creeping into the American society was mirrored in the drama that was produced at the time. Several far-reaching changes that were manifesting such as important social movements and problems associated with the society offered the dramatists the requisite raw material for them to forge plays out of. The dramatists and the theatre managers were alert to the potential. These also found a strong resonance with the people. Thus, from about the third decade of the nineteenth century to about the outbreak of the American Civil War in the mid-1860s, America in its search for nationhood responded enthusiastically to these changes.

One of the most significant societal changes that arose was from the burgeoning rise and dynamics of movement in the population. America's population is said to have registered a growth of almost 150 percent in 30 years from 1830 to 1860. The reason for this surge is attributed to the influx of people from Europe, particularly from Germany and Ireland. With these immigrations came some disturbances that the incoming people bringing their cultures with them. The natives reacted aggressively to the coming of these people as the natives saw this as a threat to their identity. Their social behaviour and norms being so different from the native customs, was at once seen as fodder for the plays. The Irish especially with their idiosyncratic mannerisms soon became the stock characters in the plays and drew a hilarious response from the audience. Plays based on the Germans, who were nick-named 'Dutchmen' were not as popular as the ones that has Irish characters, possibly because their social norms were perceived as less eye-catching.

The growth of American theatre can directly be related to the prevalence of issues in the society and these were the raw material out of which the plays were forged. In the middle of the nineteenth century women's demands for suffrage grew in intensity. Along with this, grew what has come to be known 'temperance movements' – responses to the habits related to the consumption of alcohol by the immigrants. This led to an increase in the number of plays called 'temperance plays' that were based on the temperance issues. The fact that the Irish were Roman Catholic also heightened the anxiety in the Americans.

It was under these circumstances that dramatists like James A Herne (1839 –1901), Bronson Howard (1842 – 1908), Clyde Fitch (1865 – 1909) and Vaughn Moody (1869 -1910) who are considered as the main progenitors of the modern American drama began surfacing on the theatre scene.

Certain changes that took place between 1860 and 1890 in the 'show business' is said to have had a great impact on drama writing in America. These largely pertained to the laxity in the enforcement of laws of copyright which did not extend protection to the international playwrights. The plays of the foreign writers were constantly pirated. This discouraged the off shore writers evincing any interest in the production of their plays in America. This led to the rise of a new profession of dramatic authorship which was found attractive by the young talented writers such as Bronson Howard who was one of the first. These playwrights began a period of transition that saw a decisive break from commercially oriented formulaic conventions of the American theatre.

Clyde Fitch's growth career as a dramatist in many ways illustrates the nature of the change that came over dramaturgy in America at the beginning of the twentieth century. He was an extremely



successful dramatist in commercial terms. He was held in great admiration by such diverse people as Dean Howells, Syndicate's Frohman as well as anti-syndicatists like the dramatist and producer David Belasco. Fitch's play *The Truth* (1907) described as a kind of comedy of manners that dealt with the lives of a well-to-do married couple that set up a clash between a scrupulously honest one with the unscrupulously dishonest other. This marks one of the earliest attempts at infusing modernity into American theatre as Fitch attempted to fuse the literary and the commercial in his plays.

Some of his extremely successful plays that tended towards the melodramatic were *The Girl with the Green Eyes* performed in 1902 and *The Woman in Case* that saw the light of the day three years later in 1905. These were incident-based plays that centered on vice, blackmail and murder but ending on a happy note which was demanded by the companies (Meserve 1994:164). Apart from these, he also penned in the realist mode comedies such as *The Truth* and *Captain Jinks of the Horse Marines* (1901). The play revolved around a comical, failed military protagonist who lays a bet that he will win over the much sought after singer. Ironically, he falls head over heels for her and consequently loses the wager almost losing the lady and becoming a laughing stock in the process. However, the play concludes on a happy note with the two coming together, singing. What is remarkable about the play is the blending of a romantic tale with distinct political innuendoes. The play was appropriated by the anti-imperialist faction that opposed the Spanish –American War. The play also was used by the satirist Ernest Crosby for his novel that was written in protest of the War.

Several plays written during Fitch's time were overtly melodramatic and explored the rising city culture. The themes were predictably woven around the enticements, allures and perils that surrounded the urban anxieties. These plays portrayed the changing value systems that the city culture was associated with in America at the turn of century.

Some of the most famous plays that sarcastically articulated this concern was Langdon Mitchell's *The New York Idea*, William Vaughan Moody's *The Great Divide* and Percy Mackaye's *Jeanne d'Arc* which were all first performed in 1906. These marked the onset of the proper modern American dramatic tradition. Wharton remarks are very useful in underlining the importance of such plays in the forging of a new dramatic practice that was emerging on the horizon of the American theatre scene:

Engaging with issues that dogged the rise of the great American cities, plays by Langdon, Moody and Mackaye sarcastically, albeit realistically, document the realigned societal geography and spatiality that the United States witnessed as rigid boundary lines were beginning to be drawn between not only the haves and have-nots, between the industrial and the labour classes but also the city and the country dwellers. (1984: 224)

In this context, it must be mentioned that it was only the contributions of the playwrights that brought about a revolution of sorts in the tenor of American drama. As important as the dramatists were to effect the break was the emergence of several amateur theatre groups that initiated what has come to be known as the Little Theatre movement. One of the significant groups was the Provincetown Players. For it was not until the performance in Provincetown of a one-act play titled *Bound East for Cardiff* by Eugene O'Neill's (1888-1953) in 1916 that marked the onset of a remarkable era in American theatre history. The short play was performed by small group that called itself "Provincetown Players".



The group basically consisted of a small band of artists and writers who in 1915 had come together with the sole objective of “amusing themselves” (Cunliffe 1991: 436).

O’Neill’s penchant for introducing a new mode of expression in American dramatic practices in the first decade of the twentieth century did not concern either surrealistic world of dreams or the world beyond the ‘natural’. He, in line with the dramatists of the time, skillfully attempted to side step what had by then become an abiding favorite of most of the playwrights then. He tried to steer clear of the realistic and pseudo-realistic trends that the dramatists were besotted with.

A brief examination of the one-act play – *Bound East for Cardiff* by Eugene O’Neill will substantiate the above observation. The setting of the play on the sea has lead to the play being classified under ‘sea play’ (Beard 2004:45). Though written in the year that the First World War broke out, *Bound East for Cardiff*, it was not staged till 1916 by the Provincetown Players in Cape Cod. The critical attention that this short play received established O’Neill’s career as a dramatist which till then had been largely uncertain. Much of play is set on the ship *Glencairn* and opens on a night that is rendered visibility-challenging on account of the thick fog. The sailors are seen involved with the normal off-duty activities such as sleeping or chatting or listening to music or quibbling with each other. However, this night is different because there is a man lying on his bed who is on the verge of death. The man’s name is Yank and it is revealed that he is ill following a fatal fall from the ship’s deck. The men on board get their first experience of being so close to death and are understandably panic-stricken. Driscoll, Yank’s best friend is visibly more shaken than the others. Yank’s greatest fear is not being dead but being dead when his friend Driscoll is not around and on duty. The very thought of dying alone when his friend is not nearby, listening to the snoring of the sleeping men is torturous to him. Driscoll, on his part, attempts to calm Yank down and keep his spirits high by reminding him of an earlier incident when the two of them survived after being adrift on a lifeboat for several days. All of a sudden, Yank starts complaining about the low visibility in the cabin and attributes it to the deficiency in his eyes (O’Neill 2001:29). With these words, Yank starts gasping for his breath and conveys to his friend Driscoll his vision of a comely young woman in dark attire. Yank breathes his last soon after and his moment of death coincides with a sailor conveying the news that the fog had cleared. The last scene shows Driscoll with bent knees praying near Yank’s bunker.

O’Neill carried on with his innovative approach to dramaturgy largely in terms of technique and structure. His main interest lay in exploring the interconnections of various dramatic elements such as character –relationship dynamics, their notions of identity and formation. To a great extent, O’Neill was deeply impacted by Strindberg, notably his *The Father*, *Welded* which appeared in the early 1920s. The play by Strindberg investigated the romantic relationship between a writer and a screen artiste. The complexity of their relationship that was marked by contradictory emotions such as a deep and intense affection and attraction for each other that is accompanied by mutual envy. O’Neill’s one of the most successful play, *Desire Under the Elms* written a year later in 1924 shows the extent of influence that Strindberg’s play has on him. Most critics opine that O’Neill was instrumental in effecting a lasting transformation in the American theatre scene that breathed modernism in American drama.



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AI-Driven Innovations In Digital Currency And Financial Inclusion : An Analytical Study In The Indian Context

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Abstract

This study explores the transformative role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in advancing digital currency and promoting financial inclusion within the Indian economic landscape. With the rapid evolution of fintech and the introduction of the Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) such as the e-Rupee by the Reserve Bank of India, AI technologies have emerged as critical enablers of secure, efficient, and accessible financial services. The paper examines how AI applications ranging from predictive analytics and fraud detection to intelligent customer service and credit scoring are enhancing the adoption and functionality of digital financial systems. It also assesses the impact of these innovations on underserved populations, including rural and unbanked communities, thereby contributing to inclusive economic growth. Drawing on current trends, policy frameworks, and case studies, this analytical study offers insights into the opportunities and challenges of integrating AI into India's digital financial infrastructure. The findings highlight the potential of AI to bridge financial gaps, foster trust, and accelerate the digital transformation of the Indian financial ecosystem.

Keywords : Digital Currencies, Cryptocurrencies, Blockchain, Bitcoin, Ethereum

Introduction

The digital transformation of the financial sector has gained significant momentum in recent years, particularly in developing economies like India. With the increasing penetration of smartphones, internet connectivity, and digital literacy, India is witnessing a paradigm shift in the way financial services are delivered and consumed. At the core of this shift is the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into digital financial systems, enabling smarter, faster, and more inclusive solutions. Simultaneously, the emergence of digital currencies especially the Reserve Bank of India's introduction of the Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC), or e-Rupee has marked a significant step toward a cashless, technology-driven economy.



AI-driven tools and platforms are increasingly being utilized to enhance the accessibility, affordability, and reliability of digital financial services. From automating risk assessments and fraud detection to personalizing customer experiences and expanding credit access through alternative data, AI is addressing longstanding barriers to financial inclusion. These innovations are particularly impactful in reaching underserved populations such as rural residents, low-income individuals, and those without formal banking history. However, the intersection of AI, digital currency, and financial inclusion also presents complex challenges. Issues related to data privacy, algorithmic bias, regulatory oversight, and technological disparity require careful consideration. In the Indian context—marked by vast demographic diversity and economic inequality—balancing innovation with inclusivity and ethical governance is critical.

This study aims to provide an analytical overview of AI's role in shaping digital currency adoption and promoting financial inclusion in India. It evaluates current initiatives, technological advancements, and policy frameworks while identifying gaps and proposing recommendations for sustainable and inclusive growth in the digital finance ecosystem. The purpose of a conceptual framework is to explain the pathway through which a phenomenon occurs, allowing researchers to hypothesize and test specific relationships between variables. For instance, in a study exploring the impact of employee motivation on job performance, the conceptual framework might propose that intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors influence job satisfaction, which in turn affects job performance. The conceptual framework not only guides the research methodology and data analysis but also provides a visual or logical structure for understanding how different elements of the study are interconnected. It is essential for theory-based, explanatory, or causal research.

Digital finance refers to financial services delivered through digital infrastructure such as mobile phones and the internet, significantly reducing the dependence on cash transactions and traditional banking branches. By enabling individuals and businesses to conduct seamless transactions across various platforms, digital finance fosters greater accessibility and convenience. In recent years, the emergence of innovative business models driven by rapid technological advancements and proactive government interventions has transformed the financial landscape. This transformation has empowered banks and financial institutions to extend their reach to previously excluded populations via third-party agents and network managers, such as the widely recognized M-PESA platform.

The proliferation of mobile service networks has not only expanded the reach of financial services but also enabled the collection of valuable data on consumer behaviour and preferences. These insights allow financial service providers to tailor their offerings more effectively, addressing the specific needs of diverse customer segments. In countries like India, where mobile network penetration is extensive and geographically widespread, digital financial services serve as critical “Infrastructure Rails” supporting the development of additional products and business models. At the heart of any thriving economy lies a robust financial services sector, which plays a pivotal role in enabling households and businesses to engage in everyday economic activities such as saving, investing, and protecting themselves against financial risks. However, many emerging economies, including India,



continue to grapple with challenges like poverty alleviation and equitable economic growth. In this context, enhancing financial inclusion through digital finance presents a powerful opportunity to drive sustainable development and economic empowerment.

Digital financial services and the broader digital economy are not recent developments; they have been evolving for over a decade. However, in recent years, this sector has experienced accelerated growth, largely due to favourable regulatory changes aimed at simplifying access for both consumers and service providers. These developments have significantly expanded the reach of digital financial services, particularly among underserved and previously excluded populations. While substantial progress has been made, much work remains to be done to fully integrate digital finance into the daily lives of the common populace. Continued efforts are needed to promote awareness, build trust, and further streamline regulatory frameworks. With increasing government interest, supportive policy initiatives, and the entry of innovative service providers, the future of digital finance in India.

The rise of next-generation payment structures such as mobile wallets, payments banks, BharatQR, and electronic authentication systems has created a diverse range of digital payment channels and improved service capabilities. India's payment industry is undergoing a significant transformation, driven by technological advancements and changing consumer preferences. Despite remarkable developments and government-led initiatives to accelerate digital adoption, the overall growth in digital payments remains moderate when viewed at a broader level. Nonetheless, the trajectory suggests that the coming years will witness a profound shift in how consumers, businesses, and government entities conduct financial transactions. As digital infrastructure continues to strengthen and trust in digital systems increases, India is well-positioned to become a global leader in digital finance in India.

India has made remarkable strides in digital payment innovation in recent years. While the concept of digital currency is not new, the country has long been utilizing secure and efficient digital payment methods such as Real-Time Gross Settlement (RTGS), National Electronic Funds Transfer (NEFT), and Immediate Payment Service (IMPS). These systems provide 24×7 accessibility and have significantly improved the convenience and efficiency of monetary transactions. More recently, the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) has revolutionized the digital payment landscape in India. UPI offers a real-time, interoperable, and user-friendly payment platform that has not only transformed the way Indians transact but has also become a global benchmark for scalable and inclusive payment systems. The overarching objective of these digital payment platforms is to provide a viable alternative to physical cash, making transactions faster, safer, and more transparent. In parallel with these developments, digital currencies particularly crypto currencies have emerged as a new frontier in financial innovation. Crypto currencies are a form of digital currency in which transactions are verified and records are maintained through decentralized systems that utilize cryptographic techniques such as, the foundational technology behind crypto currencies is block chain and a type of distributed ledger that ensures transaction transparency and access control among authorized users. There are now thousands of digital currencies in circulation, collectively referred to as crypto currencies. While their adoption is still evolving, they represent a significant shift in how value can be stored and transferred, with



profound implications for the future of finance.

Review of Literature:

DemirgüçKunt(2018), focused a study on digital payments as a gateway to broader financial inclusion. The authors convincingly argue that the adoption of digital payments—such as mobile money, e-wallets, and direct government transfers lowers transaction costs and reduces reliance on cash. This not only improves efficiency but also introduces previously unbanked populations to formal financial systems.. **Reserve Bank of India (2020)**, recognizes the growing role of digital payments in modernizing the financial system. According to the report, digital transactions enhance transparency, traceability, and efficiency, while significantly reducing dependence on cash-based transactions. These advantages are especially valuable in promoting a more accountable and formal economy, aligning with the government's broader digitalization and financial inclusion goals. However, the report does not shy away from highlighting the accompanying risks and challenges. **Priyadarshini and Kar (2021)**, explore the regional dynamics of digital currency adoption, emphasizing the increasingly prominent role of Asian countries. Their analysis highlights India's leadership in this domain, noting that the country ranks second globally in digital currency ownership and usage. This surge, as reported by Business Media, is attributed to India's broader digital transformation, rising public interest in decentralized financial tools, and an expanding tech-savvy population. **Raj Mohan (2025)**, examining digital currency ownership involves analysing the distribution and demographics of digital currency holders within the country. This segment aims to understand the depth of digital currency penetration in the economy, exploring factors that drive ownership rates and how they correlate with broader economic indicators. Ownership patterns of digital currencies within a population can signal the level of digital financial literacy, trust in digital assets, and the readiness of the economy to embrace digital transformation etc.

Objectives of the Study:

The following are the major objectives of the study:

1. To know the role of AI in Digital Currency and its role in Indian Financial System
2. To analyse the market capitalization trends of leading crypto currencies such as Bitcoin, Ethereum, and Ripple their investment volatility.

Hypothesis for the Study:

- **H0:** AI in Digital currency has no significant role in transforming the Indian financial system.
H1: AI in Digital currency plays a significant role in transforming the Indian financial system.
- **H0:** There is no significant difference between market capitalization trends of leading crypto currencies such as Bitcoin, Ethereum, and Ripple their investment volatility.
- **H2:** There is a significant difference between market capitalization trends of leading crypto currencies such as Bitcoin, Ethereum, and Ripple their investment volatility.



Research Methodology:

The present study is based on secondary sources of data. The required data has been collected from reliable and recognized databases such as the International Financial System, the CMIE (Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy) database, and official reports from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). Additional information was sourced from annual bulletins, research publications, books, peer-reviewed journals, periodicals, financial dailies, and relevant **study** reports and articles available on the selected topic. For the analysis of the collected data, **SPSS** Version 21.0 was employed. The study applied various statistical techniques, including descriptive statistics, such as average (mean), standard deviation etc.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

1. AI in digital currency has no significant role in transforming the Indian financial system:

The assertion that AI has no significant role in transforming the Indian financial system through digital currency overlooks the growing synergy between artificial intelligence and fintech innovations. In reality, AI is playing an increasingly vital role in enhancing the efficiency, security, and scalability of digital currency initiatives in India. With the launch of the **Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC)** by the Reserve Bank of India, AI technologies are being employed in key areas such as:

1. **Fraud Detection and Risk Management:** AI models detect unusual transaction patterns in real time, helping to reduce financial fraud and cyber threats—a critical requirement in digital currency environments.
2. **Customer Verification and KYC Automation :** AI-driven facial recognition and document verification tools streamline Know Your Customer (KYC) processes, ensuring faster onboarding and compliance.
3. **Financial Inclusion through Data Analytics :** AI algorithms analyze alternative data (like mobile usage, utility payments) to create credit profiles for the unbanked, enabling access to credit and other financial services.
4. **Chatbots and Virtual Assistants:** AI-powered bots provide real-time assistance in regional languages, helping bridge the digital literacy gap, especially in rural India.
5. **Policy Simulation and Predictive Modeling:** AI helps regulators and policymakers simulate the impacts of monetary policies or CBDC rollouts across different sectors and demographics. India's financial ecosystem is too large, diverse, and complex to manage without intelligent automation and predictive capabilities. AI is not only enhancing the operational framework of digital currency but also ensuring its inclusive adoption and safe integration into the existing financial system.

2. Fundamental Measure and Market Capitalisation of Crypto Currencies:



Table No.2 explains that market capitalization of Bitcoin, Ethereum, Ripple represents a fundamental measure of its financial stature within the digital currency landscape, encapsulating the total value of all Bitcoin, Ethereum, Ripple in circulation. The descriptive analysis of the market capitalization for Bitcoin, Ethereum, and Ripple each based on 50 observations offers valuable insights into the financial behaviour and volatility associated with these major crypto currencies. Bitcoin exhibits a relatively stable market capitalization profile. With a mean value of USD\$ 3, 29,872.58 and a median of USD\$ 2,97,215.00, the closeness of these central tendency measures suggests a moderate distribution with slight right skewness. The standard deviation of 1, 05,395.52 indicates moderate volatility, reflecting the regular fluctuations in Bitcoin's value within the market. The minimum (1,49,294.00) and maximum (6,11,930.00) further highlight a broad range, showing that while Bitcoin tends to be stable relative to other crypto currencies, it is still subject to significant market shifts, possibly due to global events or investor sentiment.

Table No.1 Market Capitalisation of crypto currencies

Descriptive Statistics of Market Capitalisation of Bitcoin USD\$	
Statistic	Value
Sample Size (N)	50
Mean	3,29,872.58
Standard Deviation (SD)	1,05,395.52
Minimum	1,49,294.00
25th Percentile (Q1)	2,62,509.00
Median (50th Percentile)	2,97,215.00
75th Percentile (Q3)	3,63,432.00
Maximum	6,11,930.00
Descriptive Statistics of Market Capitalisation of Ethereum	
Sample Size (N)	50
Mean	101
Standard Deviation (SD)	976.26
Minimum	1105.83
25th Percentile (Q1)	8
Median (50th Percentile)	173.69
75th Percentile (Q3)	390.63
Maximum	1635.54

Descriptive Statistics of Market Capitalisation of Ripple	
Sample Size (N)	50
Mean	9,03,861.90
Standard Deviation (SD)	5,27,121.50
Minimum	1,21,965.00
25th Percentile (Q1)	5,64,476.00
Median (50th Percentile)	8,86,196.00
75th Percentile (Q3)	11,29,444.00
Maximum	43,78,556.00

The statistics for Ethereum appear inconsistent or potentially erroneous, as the mean value is listed as 101, which is lower than the minimum value of 1105.83. This contradiction suggests a likely data entry or unit inconsistency. Despite this, the standard deviation (976.26) and quartile values (Q1 = 8, Q3 = 390.63) indicate high dispersion relative to the mean, which would typically reflect greater volatility. However, due to the apparent inconsistency in the dataset, further validation is necessary before drawing reliable interpretations. The maximum value (43,78,556.00) is nearly five times higher than the mean, suggesting that extreme outliers or rapid market surges have strongly influenced the data. The wide interquartile range (Q1 = 5,64,476.00; Q3 = 11,29,444.00) also supports the conclusion that Ripple's market capitalization varies significantly over time, possibly due to external shocks, legal developments, or speculative trading behavior. These interpretations underline the diverse financial characteristics of major crypto currencies and reinforce the importance of careful data validation and contextual financial analysis when studying digital asset markets etc.



Conclusion

The observed discrepancy in Ethereum's descriptive statistics may be attributed to data entry errors or misreported units. As a result, any interpretation or conclusions based on this data should be approached with caution. To ensure analytical accuracy and meaningful comparisons, it is essential to



validate and clarify Ethereum's dataset before drawing inferences about its market behavior. In contrast, Bit coin's market capitalization, while subject to fluctuations, remains within a reasonably narrow range. This relative stability enhances its appeal among institutional and long-term investors, who often prioritize lower volatility and more predictable investment behavior. Bit coin's market characteristics position it as a more stable digital asset in comparison to highly volatile alternatives such as Ripple. This analysis underscores Bit coin's growing significance in global currency markets, signaling how digital currencies are becoming increasingly intertwined with conventional financial systems. For policymakers and investors, these relationships are critical when evaluating economic risk, currency stability, and the strategic role of crypto currencies in modern global finance.

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Impact Of Rural Livelihood Programmes On Mental Health, Personal And Social Development Of Marginalised Women In Bihar

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Abstract

Women living in rural areas often face multiple forms of socioeconomic and gender-based marginalization that affect their overall well-being and development. Community-based livelihood programmes have emerged as important strategies for promoting women's empowerment and improving their quality of life. The present study examines the role of JEEViKA Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in enhancing the mental health as well as the personal and social development of marginalized rural women in East Champaran, located in Bihar. A mixed-methods research design was adopted, combining quantitative and descriptive approaches. The study sample consisted of 300 rural women aged 20–60 years, including 150 SHG members and 150 non-members selected from selected Gram Panchayats using purposive and systematic random sampling techniques. Mental health was measured using the Mental Health Inventory developed by A. K. Srivastava and Jagdish, while personal and social development was assessed through a structured questionnaire. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, independent samples t-tests, Pearson correlation analysis, and regression analysis. The findings reveal that women participating in SHGs demonstrate significantly higher levels of mental health and personal and social development compared to non-members. A moderate positive relationship was also observed between mental health and personal and social development. Furthermore, regression analysis indicated that personal and social development significantly predicts variations in mental health. The study highlights the importance of SHG-based livelihood initiatives in promoting holistic



empowerment among marginalized rural women. Strengthening such programmes and integrating mental health awareness within livelihood initiatives may contribute to sustainable rural development and improved well-being among women.

Keywords: JEEViKA, Self-Help Groups, Mental Health, Personal and Social Development.

Introduction

Persistent rural poverty and gender inequality continue to pose major challenges to inclusive and sustainable development in many developing countries, including India. Women in rural areas often face compounded disadvantages, such as limited access to education, employment opportunities, productive resources, and decision-making power. These disparities are particularly pronounced among women from socially and economically marginalized groups, resulting in restricted livelihood options, lower social status, and heightened vulnerability to psychological stress. In states like Bihar, where poverty and gender inequities remain significant, improving the socio-economic conditions and overall well-being of rural women has become a central concern for policymakers and development planners. Addressing these inequalities is crucial not only for individual empowerment but also for achieving broader development goals related to gender equality, social inclusion, and community resilience.

In response to these challenges, Self-Help Groups (SHGs) have emerged as a widely recognized strategy for promoting economic, social, and psychological empowerment among rural women. SHGs are small, voluntary collectives that provide opportunities for women to save regularly, access credit, acquire skills, and engage in collective decision-making, while simultaneously fostering social interaction and mutual support. Through participation in SHGs, women often gain increased confidence, leadership skills, and bargaining power within households and communities, alongside greater involvement in income-generating activities (Kabeer, 2005; Swain & Wallentin, 2009). In India, the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) has significantly expanded SHG-based initiatives, with JEEViKA in Bihar serving as a flagship programme that mobilizes marginalized women into SHGs and strengthens their economic, social, and personal capacities. Beyond economic gains, SHG participation has been associated with enhanced personal and social development, improved mental health, and greater social recognition, highlighting the multidimensional nature of empowerment. By comparing SHG members with non-members, this study seeks to examine the impact of JEEViKA on the mental, personal, and social development of rural women, thereby providing evidence for more inclusive and holistic rural development policies and interventions.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Women's empowerment is widely acknowledged as a vital element of sustainable development, particularly in developing countries where poverty and gender inequality remain pervasive. In rural India, women face structural barriers including restricted access to education, financial resources, and decision-making power, which limit their economic opportunities and social participation. Over recent



decades, Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and livelihood programmes have emerged as effective tools for addressing these challenges by promoting economic independence, social engagement, and psychological empowerment among marginalized women. SHGs are small voluntary associations of individuals from similar socioeconomic backgrounds that facilitate collective savings, mutual support, and access to credit. Participation in SHGs has been shown to enhance women's economic status, decision-making ability, and social involvement within households and communities (Narasimha et al., 2017). Beyond economic benefits, SHGs foster financial autonomy, leadership development, and greater visibility in family and community decision-making, while also challenging traditional gender hierarchies and promoting social and political empowerment (Jain & Nalla, 2024; Mittal et al., 2025). Government initiatives such as the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) and state programmes like JEEViKA have further strengthened the reach of SHGs, supporting women's collective bargaining power and expanding opportunities for economic and social participation.

Empirical studies demonstrate that SHGs contribute significantly to women's economic empowerment by providing access to credit and savings, which enables women to start small enterprises, participate in income-generating activities, and improve household financial security (Kabeer, 2005; Swain & Wallentin, 2009). These economic gains often translate into greater autonomy and decision-making authority within families. Beyond financial outcomes, SHG participation also promotes social development by building stronger social networks and support systems that facilitate knowledge sharing, collective problem-solving, and mutual assistance (Patel & Mistry, 2024). These networks encourage active engagement in community initiatives such as educational programmes, health campaigns, and local governance, enhancing women's social participation and recognition. Recent research highlights the importance of mental health as a crucial dimension of empowerment, showing that SHG involvement can improve psychological well-being by reducing social isolation and providing emotional support, thereby enhancing resilience, self-esteem, and social acknowledgment (Narasimha et al., 2017). Personal development through SHGs includes improved self-confidence, leadership skills, decision-making ability, and self-efficacy, while social development encompasses active community participation, stronger interpersonal relationships, and increased social recognition. Studies consistently indicate that women involved in SHGs demonstrate higher levels of personal growth and social engagement compared to non-members (Tripathi et al., 2025). Overall, SHGs function as multidimensional platforms integrating financial inclusion with social empowerment, capacity building, and collective action, although the scale of their impact depends on programme design, institutional support, and local socio-cultural conditions.

Research Gaps

Despite the growing body of literature on SHGs and women's empowerment, several gaps remain in existing research. Many studies primarily focus on economic empowerment, while fewer studies examine the interrelationship between mental health, personal development, and social development among rural women. Moreover, there is limited comparative research that examines differences between SHG members and non-members within specific regional contexts. In states such as Bihar, where rural



livelihood programmes have expanded rapidly, it is important to evaluate whether participation in SHGs leads to measurable improvements in women's psychological well-being and developmental outcomes. Therefore, the present study seeks to address this gap by examining the role of SHG participation in enhancing mental health, personal development, and social development among marginalized rural women in selected villages of Bihar.

AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

Aim of the Study: The primary aim of the present study is to examine the role of JEEViKA-affiliated Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in enhancing the mental health, personal development, and social development of marginalized rural women in East Champaran, located in the state of Bihar. The study seeks to understand whether participation in SHGs contributes to improvements in psychological well-being and overall development among rural women.

Objectives of the Study

1. To assess the level of mental health and personal and social development among marginalized rural women in selected villages.
2. To compare the mental health status and personal and social development of women who are members of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and those who are not affiliated with any SHG.
3. To analyze the relationship between mental health and personal and social development among marginalized rural women.
4. To examine the contributing role of participation in JEEViKA Self-Help Groups on the criterion variables, namely mental health and personal and social development among marginalized rural women.

Hypotheses of the Study

Based on the objectives of the study, the following hypotheses were formulated to examine the relationships and differences among the variables.

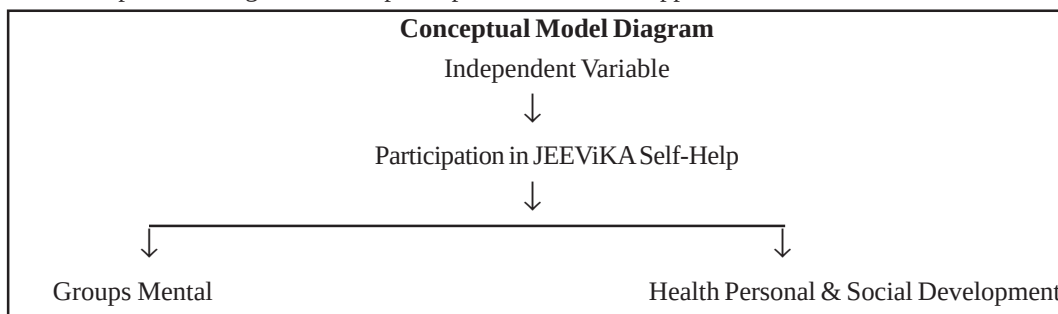
1. There would be a significant difference in mental health between SHG members and non-members.
2. There would be a significant difference in the level of personal and social development between SHG members and non-members.
3. There would be a significant positive relationship between mental health and personal and social development among marginalized rural women.
4. Personal and social development would contribute significantly to the mental health of participants.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK / RESEARCH MODEL

The conceptual framework of the study explains the relationship between participation in Self-Help Groups under the JEEViKA and the developmental outcomes among marginalized rural women in East Champaran, Bihar. In this framework, Independent Variable (IV) was participation in JEEViKA



Self-Help Groups, and Dependent Variables (DV) were mental health, personal development, and social development. Participation in SHGs is expected to influence women's psychological well-being and development through economic participation, collective support, and increased social interaction.



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study utilized a mixed-methods research design, integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches to examine the influence of JEEViKA Self-Help Groups (SHGs) on mental health, personal development, and social development among marginalized rural women in East Champaran, Bihar. Framed within a descriptive, correlational, and comparative structure, the design allowed for the analysis of relationships among key variables as well as comparisons between SHG members and non-members. SHG membership served as the categorical independent variable, and mental health, personal development, and social development were measured as continuous dependent variables.

Participants

The target population included women aged 20–60 residing in selected Gram Panchayats with a high concentration of SHGs. A total of 300 respondents were surveyed, comprising 150 SHG members and 150 non-members. Purposive sampling was used to identify relevant districts, blocks, Panchayats, and villages, while systematic random sampling selected individual participants to ensure representativeness.

TOOLS AND INSTRUMENTS

Mental Health Assessment:

The Mental Health Inventory (MHI) developed by Jagdish and A. K. Srivastava (1983) was used to assess psychological well-being. It consists of 56 items covering positive self-concept, personality coherence, autonomy, social orientation, and environmental mastery. Responses are recorded on a four-point Likert scale: Always = 4; Often = 3; Rarely = 2; Never = 1. The total score ranges from 56 to 224, with higher scores indicating better mental health.



Personal and Social Development Assessment:

A structured questionnaire of 23 variables was used to assess personal and social development. Each response was scored as: Yes = 1; and No = 0. The total score for each respondent was computed, with higher scores reflecting better personal and social development.

DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

Data were collected through face-to-face interviews using the structured questionnaires. Field visits were conducted to ensure that respondents understood the items, and clarifications were provided when necessary. Participation was voluntary, and ethical considerations including informed consent, confidentiality, and the right to withdraw were strictly maintained.

DATA ANALYSIS

Quantitative data were analyzed using a range of statistical techniques to examine the developmental outcomes of marginalized rural women. Descriptive statistics, such as means and standard deviations, summarized the sample characteristics and variable distributions. Independent samples *t*-tests compared mental health and personal and social development between SHG members and non-members, while Pearson's correlation assessed the relationship between mental health and personal and social development. Additionally, regression analysis evaluated the extent to which SHG participation predicts variations in these outcomes. Together, these methods provided a comprehensive assessment of group differences, inter-variable relationships, and the predictive influence of SHGs on women's overall well-being.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

To examine whether participation in JEEViKA Self-Help Groups (SHGs) is associated with differences in psychological well-being, an independent samples *t*-test was conducted comparing the mental health scores of SHG members and non-members. The results indicate that SHG members reported significantly higher mental health ($M = 146.4$, $SD = 2.73$) than non-members ($M = 139.5$, $SD = 2.26$), $t(298) = "23.76$, $p < .001$ (Table-1). The observed mean difference of approximately 6.9 points suggests that SHG participation is associated with substantially improved psychological well-being among marginalized rural women. This improvement may be attributed to multiple factors, including access to financial resources and economic opportunities that reduce financial stress, the formation of supportive social networks through regular group interactions, and enhanced self-confidence, decision-making ability, and social recognition within families and communities. These findings are consistent with prior research demonstrating the psychological and social benefits of collective livelihood initiatives: Brody et al. (2015) reported that SHG involvement strengthens social networks and economic stability, Swain and Wallentin (2009) found increased confidence and autonomy among participants, and Kabeer (2005) highlighted the role of microfinance and group-based initiatives in promoting self-efficacy and strategic life choices. Narasimha et al. (2017) further emphasized that SHGs enhance health awareness, social participation, and coping strategies. Collectively, these results



underscore the multidimensional impact of SHGs, highlighting the need for policymakers and development practitioners to expand SHG networks, provide capacity-building opportunities, and integrate mental health support into rural livelihood programmes to foster holistic empowerment among marginalized women.

Table 1: Status of mental health among marginalised rural women involved in rural livelihood programmes and those who are not involved in rural livelihood programmes (Independent t-test)

Involvement in Jeevika	N	Mean	SD	t Value	p value
Yes	150	146.4	2.73	-23.76	<.0001
No	150	139.5	2.26		
Total	300				

Note: A higher score indicates a greater level of mental health, whereas a lower score indicates a lower level of mental health.

To examine whether participation in JEEViKA Self-Help Groups (SHGs) is associated with differences in personal and social development among marginalized rural women, an independent samples *t*-test was conducted. The results indicate that SHG members reported significantly higher levels of personal and social development ($M = 15.24$, $SD = 5.44$) compared to non-members ($M = 8.76$, $SD = 7.00$), $t(298) = 8.94$, $p < .001$ (Table-2).

These findings suggest that participation in SHGs under the JEEViKA programme is strongly associated with enhanced personal growth, greater social engagement, and improved community participation among rural women. The observed differences may be attributed to several mechanisms: SHGs provide structured opportunities for collective learning, skill development, and leadership training, which strengthen women's confidence and decision-making abilities; they foster social networks and mutual support systems that enhance social capital and a sense of community belonging; and participation in income-generating activities through SHGs improves economic independence, which can positively influence women's social status within households and communities.

These results are consistent with previous studies demonstrating the broader developmental impacts of SHGs, including increased agency, leadership, household and community engagement, and empowerment outcomes (Kabeer, 2005; Swain & Wallentin, 2009; Brody et al., 2015; Narasimha et al., 2017).

Collectively, the findings underscore the critical role of SHG-based livelihood programmes in fostering multidimensional development among marginalized women and suggest that policymakers and practitioners should continue to strengthen these initiatives, integrating leadership training, community engagement, and awareness programmes to maximize personal and social development outcomes.



Table 2.: Personal and Social Development of Marginalized Rural Women by Involvement in Jeevika and those who are not involved in rural livelihood programmes (Independent t-test)

Involvement in Jeevika	N	Mean	SD	t Value	p value
Yes	150	15.24	5.44	-8.94	<.0001
No	150	8.76	7		
Total	300				

Note: A higher score indicates better personal and social development among marginalized rural women, while, a lower score indicates poorer personal and social development "

To examine the relationship between mental health and personal and social development among marginalized rural women, Pearson's product-moment correlation analysis was conducted using data from 300 respondents. The results revealed a moderate positive correlation between mental health and personal and social development ($r = .4208$, $p < .001$), indicating that higher levels of psychological well-being are associated with greater personal growth, confidence, and social participation (Table-3). This association can be explained by the fact that improved mental health enhances self-confidence, motivation, and interpersonal skills, which facilitate active engagement in community networks, decision-making processes, and livelihood activities. Participation in collective initiatives such as JEEViKA Self-Help Groups may further reinforce this relationship by providing emotional support, economic opportunities, and social interaction, thereby strengthening both psychological well-being and developmental outcomes. These findings are consistent with prior research demonstrating that women's involvement in SHGs and other community-based programmes enhances both mental health and empowerment, including confidence, social participation, and autonomy (Brody et al., 2015; Swain & Wallentin, 2009; Kabeer, 2005).

The results underscore the importance of integrating mental health support and awareness into rural livelihood programmes, as improvements in psychological well-being can foster greater personal and social development, reinforcing the multidimensional nature of women's empowerment in contexts such as Bihar.

Table-3: Relationship between mental health and personal and social development among marginalized rural women.

Prob > r under H0: Rho=0		
	Mental Health	Personal and Social Development
Mental Health	1	0.4208
		<.0001
Personal and Social Development	0.4208	1
	<.0001	



To examine whether participation in JEEViKA Self-Help Groups (SHGs) predicts variations in mental health through personal and social development, a General Linear Model (GLM) regression analysis was conducted. The model was statistically significant, $F(1, 298) = 64.12, p < .001$, indicating that personal and social development significantly predicts mental health among marginalized rural women, with an R^2 of .1771, suggesting that approximately 17.7% of the variance in mental health scores is explained by differences in personal and social development. The root means square error (RMSE = 3.878) and coefficient of variation (CV = 2.71%) indicate low variability and reliable estimation of the relationship (Table-4). The findings suggest that higher levels of personal development—such as self-confidence, decision-making ability, and leadership skills—along with enhanced social development, including community engagement, social networks, and recognition, contribute substantially to improved psychological well-being. Participation in JEEViKA SHGs likely facilitates these outcomes by providing platforms for collective learning, financial cooperation, and social interaction, fostering both practical skills and supportive relationships. These results align with prior research indicating that SHG-based empowerment initiatives enhance women's confidence, autonomy, leadership capacity, and social participation, which in turn improve mental health outcomes (Brody et al., 2015; Swain & Wallentin, 2009; Kabeer, 2005). The findings underscore the importance of integrating personal and social development components into rural livelihood programmes, suggesting that strengthening SHG activities, leadership training, mental health awareness, and community engagement can generate holistic benefits for marginalized women's economic, social, and psychological well-being.

Table 4: General Linear Model (GLM) Analysis of the Effect of Personal and Social Development on Mental Health among Marginalised Rural Women

Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F	R-Square	Coeff Var (%)	Root MSE	Dependent Variable Mean
Model	1	964.31	964.31	64.12	<0.0001	0.1771	2.71	3.878	142.91
Error	298	4481.44	15.04						
Corrected Total	299	5445.75							

Conclusion

The present study examined the role of JEEViKA Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in influencing mental health as well as personal and social development among marginalized rural women in East Champaran, Bihar, using a comparative and correlational framework with 300 respondents. The findings indicate that SHG members reported significantly higher levels of mental health compared with non-members, suggesting that participation in collective livelihood programmes enhances psychological well-being through access to economic resources, supportive peer networks, and opportunities for social interaction and emotional support. SHG members also demonstrated greater personal and social development, including higher confidence, participation in community activities, and engagement in decision-making processes, highlighting the role of such groups in fostering women's empowerment



and social capital. A moderate positive correlation between mental health and personal and social development indicates that improvements in psychological well-being are closely linked with enhanced personal capacities and social participation. Regression analysis further revealed that personal and social development significantly predicts variations in mental health, emphasizing the interconnected nature of empowerment, where economic, psychological, and social factors collectively shape developmental outcomes.

Overall, the study underscores that participation in JEEViKA SHGs serves as a multidimensional mechanism for holistic empowerment, enhancing not only financial independence but also mental health, personal growth, and social integration. The findings highlight the importance of strengthening SHG-based initiatives and integrating components such as mental health awareness, leadership development, and community engagement to promote resilience, inclusive participation, and improved quality of life among marginalized rural women, thereby contributing to broader goals of gender equality, community development, and sustainable rural transformation.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Despite providing valuable insights, the study has several limitations. It was conducted in selected Gram Panchayats of East Champaran, Bihar, which may limit generalizability to other regions with different socio-cultural contexts. The cross-sectional design captures outcomes at a single point in time, restricting causal inference, and reliance on self-reported measures may introduce response biases. The study focused mainly on SHG participation and examined only mental, personal, and social development, without considering other factors such as income, education, or political participation. Future research could use longitudinal and mixed-methods designs, expand geographic coverage, and explore mediating factors like social capital and decision-making power to better understand how SHGs influence holistic women's empowerment.

POLICY AND PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study underscore the crucial role of community-based livelihood programmes in promoting the mental health, personal growth, and social development of marginalized rural women, offering several actionable policy and planning implications. Strengthening SHG-based initiatives like JEEViKA through expanded outreach, adequate financial and institutional support, and robust monitoring can enhance women's access to financial inclusion, skill development, and collective empowerment. Integrating mental health awareness and counseling services, along with leadership, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy training, can further bolster psychological resilience and decision-making capacities. Encouraging women's participation in community institutions and local governance, fostering partnerships among government, NGOs, financial institutions, and local organizations, and implementing comprehensive monitoring frameworks that capture economic, psychosocial, and empowerment outcomes are essential for effective programme delivery. Finally, prioritizing inclusive development strategies that target socially and economically disadvantaged women can reduce gender disparities and promote equitable rural development. Collectively, these measures can strengthen the transformative potential of SHG-based livelihood programmes, ensuring holistic empowerment and improved well-being for rural women.



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A Study On Preferred Mode Of Customers For Digital Payments In Bengaluru City

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Abstract

There is an uninterrupted rise in digital payments transactions in India over the past few years which has been backed by advanced digital infrastructure and client's participation in performing banking transactions with a click of a mouse and fingertips. Digitization of payments made financial transactions accessible to customers 24/7 crossing borders. Demonetization and the Covid pandemic are the two prime causes for the increase in the usage of digital payment systems in India. The increase in Digital payments is driven by increased usage of the internet and mobile phones. Unified payments interface (UPI) made life and payments very easy by providing assistance for real-time payment. Now UPI is Regarded as the uppermost preference as a payment mode in India. The research has been undertaken to analyse the knowledge of banking customers about modes of digital payments and to have a clear picture of the most preferred mode of digital payments.

Key Words: Digital payments, online banking, Mobile banking, E-Banking.

Introduction

Since the beginning of time, trade, commonly referred to as the exchange of commodities and services, has used money as the medium of exchange. Since ancient times, trades involving the exchange of goods and services have been made easier by the availability of cash. The concept of modern trading has altered as a result of worldwide deals that are conducted without using paper or currency. Large payments are needed to be made immediately over great distances with minimal transaction costs in order to conduct modern trade. Evidently, the world's payment systems are being digitized to accommodate these needs. But money continues to be a vital component of the transaction. By eliminating the need to head to the bank to deposit or withdraw cash to conduct business or any



financial transactions, digital payments in this situation play a vital part in the settlement of transactions by means of cashless and paperless transactions.

A digital payment, commonly referred to as an electronic payment, is the exchange of value between payment accounts using a computer, mobile phone, point of sale, or other digital device. The definition of Digital Banking is banking done through a digital platform, eliminating all paperwork such as checks, pay-in slips, Demand Drafts, and so on. It means that all banking actions are available online. Digital Banking enables you to effortlessly access and do all typical banking operations 24 hours a day, seven days a week without having to physically visit a bank location. Digital transactions are transactions in which customer authorizes the transfer of money through electronics means, and the fund flow directly from one account to another. These accounts could be banks, or with other entities/ Service providers. These transfers could be done with cards (Debit/Credit), mobile wallets, mobile apps, net banking, electronic clearing service (ECS), electronic fund transfer (EFT), Immediate payment service (IMPS), or other similar means.

Growth of digital payments in India:

India's digital payment system is a bright success story in the making, driven by recent regulatory measures and technology advancements. The use of digital payments in the nation has risen significantly during the previous few years. The adoption of various technologies in India has grown drastically over the past decade, including smart phones, computers, iPads, tablets, and the internet. Smartphones and government programs like Digital India are functioning as triggers that are prompting the use of digital payment to develop exponentially as a result of the rise in internet users. India is making huge steps toward a digital payment system. The Union Budget (2021) set out INR 15 billion for measures to encourage digital payments. Between February 2020 and October 2020, the number of digital payments on the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) network climbed by around 58% (and surpassed 2 billion transactions in October 2020). The Indian digital payments market is expected to reach USD 1 trillion by 2023 (*The Times of India, FRI, JUL 14, 2023*).

The top three UPI applications by volume and value, according to the Economic Times, were PhonePe, Google Pay, and Paytm Payments Bank App. The top five remitter banks were State Bank of India, HDFC Bank, Bank of Baroda, Union Bank, and ICICI Bank, while the top five beneficiary banks were Paytm Payments Bank, YES Bank, State Bank of India, Axis Bank, and ICICI Bank. The total number of digital payment transactions completed throughout the previous five fiscal years and the current fiscal year is as follows:



Source: RBI

The graph above depicts a significant increase in the number of digital transactions in India from 2017-18 to 2022-23. During this time, the quantity of digital transactions has surged more than fivefold. Over the last five years, the amount of digital transactions has steadily increased. This demonstrates the massive uptake of digital payments, particularly following demonetization in 2016 and COVID in 2019. The World Bank says as of 2021, 76% of persons worldwide have a bank, other financial institution, or mobile money provider account, up from 68% in 2017 and 51% in 2011. Importantly, the increase in account ownership was evenly dispersed among a far larger number of nations. Previously, much of the growth in past Findex surveys over the last decade was centered in India and China, but this year's survey indicated that the proportion of account ownership climbed by double digits in 34 countries since 2017. Various simple and convenient modes of digital payments, such as Bharat Interface for Money-Unified Payments Interface (BHIM-UPI), Immediate Payment Service (IMPS), and National Electronic Toll Collection (NETC), have grown significantly in the last five years, transforming the digital payment ecosystem by increasing both person-to-person (P2P) and person-to-merchant (P2M) payments. BHIM UPI has emerged as citizen's favourite payment mechanism, with 803.6 crore digital payment transactions worth 12.98 lakh crore conducted in January 2023 (*Ministry of Electronics & IT*).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- To explore the different means of digital payments in India
- To determine the most preferred mode of digital payment among Bengaluru City residents.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

In the descriptive research study, the survey approach was used. Primary data was gathered from m-banking customers in Bengaluru, secondary information were acquired from research articles based on digital banking, various bank's websites, Information bulletins published by government, information available on the internet, and RBI annual reports and circulars published on its official website. In Bengaluru a sample size of 150 was chosen via random sampling. Chi-square analysis was performed on the gathered data.



LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

The findings and conclusions made are solely applicable to Bengaluru. Despite the fact that Bangalore is one of the country's most important cities and a commercial hub in south India, city samples cannot be regarded a comprehensive representation of the country's population. The purpose of the study, on the other hand, was to assess consumers' attitudes toward digital payments in connection to the notion of general banking. As a consequence, even if Bangalore city cannot replicate the country's other main financial centres, this may not be a barrier to achieving the stated aim. The results cannot be generalized; and the sample size was limited to 150.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Merchant cash-back incentives made by other UPI-based payment apps contributed to the continued expansion of digital payments. In India, both individuals and businesses choose UPI as a payment option (Abhshek Kumar & Rajesh Kumar, 2022). The study sought to investigate the impact of banking customers' age, education, and income on their use of digital payments. They discovered a favourable relationship between digital payment usage and age and education. Digital payments have improved the performance of India's banking industry (Suma Vally & Hema Divya, 2018), The study looked into the various modes of digital payments in India, as well as the impact of user trust, perception, and experience with online fraud on payment method selection. They discovered that demonetization in India in 2016 undoubtedly boosted digital payments. The use of online banking and mobile wallets increased dramatically as a result of demonetization. It was established that the role of demonic characters in the choosing of digital payments cannot be overlooked. The fear of online fraud is still preventing people from adopting digital payment systems (Shinki Kathyayani Pandey, 2022), the study sought to examine the impact of users' age, education level, and income position on digital banking adoption. According to the findings of the study, age plays a crucial effect in choosing digital payment systems. Users' usage of digital payment facilities was negatively associated with education and income levels (Jacob Kurian, 2022), The study's goal is to comprehend the development of the digital payments sector in India and to determine the favorable and unfavorable features of the Indian digital payment sector. It has been concluded that there are many digital payment options available in India, including debit/credit cards, internet banking, mobile banking, the AADHAR enabled payment system (AePS), the unified payment interface (UPI), mobile wallets, prepaid payment instruments (PPIs), NEFT, the iDEAL, and the iDEAL UPI is a cutting-edge real-time payment system that has aided the payment industry in its efforts to achieve a cashless society. Banking clients, bankers, and payment service providers have all contributed in the expansion of digital payment instruments (Dr.Chitranjan Singh, 2022), The study sought to identify variables influencing adolescent adoption of digital payment services as well as the most popular digital platform among youth. The study found that the independent factors "Convenience," "Awareness," and "Security" had a substantial influence on the dependent variable "Acceptance." The findings suggest that the more safe the youth feel about utilizing digital payment platforms, the more willing they are to adopt them



in their daily lives. It has also been shown that the respondents had utilized at least one or more digital payment mechanism and platform. PayTM is the most widely utilized platform (Harsimran Kaur, Richa Mehta, 2022).

RESEARCH GAP:

Based on prior research, it is clear that there is ongoing improvement in digital payment services, and use of digital payment services is expanding. The government is implementing a number of measures to increase the use of digital payment systems. Users' demographic characteristics such as age, income, gender, and education all have an influence on the adoption of digital payment systems in some manner. There is room for research on user knowledge and preferences with regard to digital payments in Bengaluru.

MODES OF DIGITAL PAYMENTS IN INDIA:

The Indian government has been promoting the development of a cashless economy as part of its Digital India agenda. In India, the government has now made digital payments available for this purpose. Digital payments are made through internet channels without a physical exchange of money. Due to the widespread acceptance of these payment methods, several forms of financial transactions have emerged. One should be knowledgeable with the many kinds of digital payment systems as a business owner so that you may take advantage of them when conducting business. Let's examine them in further depth. Being our nation's central bank, RBI oversees and regulates India's national payment networks. Since forever, RBI has been bound by these obligations. The RBI has consistently taken steps to offer safe and secure digital payment services using a wide range of paper-based, electronic, and other instruments.

A. PAPER BASED PAYMENTS:

The majority of all non-cash transactions in the nation use paper-based instruments (such as cheques, drafts, and similar items). Due to the RBI's persistent efforts to promote electronic payment products over cash and cheques, the proportion of these paper-based instruments has been progressively declining over time, and electronic mode is becoming more and more popular. Although the general goal is to use less paper, given India's unique socio-economic structure, it may take some time to fully switch to electronic transactions.

B. ELECTRONIC PAYMENTS:

The RBI has been concentrating on technologically-based solutions for the modernization of the infrastructure of the payment and settlement system, along with the launch of new payment products by taking advantage of the technical developments in the banking industry. Using electronic payment methods offer:



I. Internet Banking:

Internet banking, commonly referred to as net-banking or online banking, is a system run by banks that allows clients to access both financial and non-financial banking goods online. In the past, clients had to visit the banks for even a small service.. However, practically all services and goods can now be accessible online thanks to the introduction of internet banking. Financial transfers, demand draft requests, and elements of net banking are all aspects of banking. It is not only a safe way to do banking, but it is also convenient. You'll need a computer, tablet, phone, or other device, an Internet connection, and a bank card or debit card to use online banking. You must sign up for the bank's online banking service and create a password in order to access the service. After doing that, you may use the service to conduct your banking.

II. Electronic clearing service:

In order to address large-scale and recurrent payment obligations (such as salary, interest, dividend payments, etc.) of corporations and other organizations, the RBI created the ECS program in the 1990s. The ECS (Credit) Scheme, which is now accessible in all of the country's main cities, enables client accounts to be credited on the set value date. The RBI created the ECS (Debit) Scheme to give utility firms a quicker way to be collected from on a regular basis. By "mandating" bank branches to debit customers' accounts and transfer the funds to the corporations, this makes it easier for customers to make routine and recurring payments to utility providers. This greatly reduces the usage of paper tools while also enhancing customer satisfaction and process effectiveness.

III. National Automated Clearing House (NACH):

NACH is an electronic payment service that enables interbank, high-volume, electronic transactions of recurring and periodic nature (like the distribution of subsidies, dividends, interest, salaries, and pensions, etc.), as well as bulk transactions for the purpose of collecting payments (like those for telephone, electricity, water, loans, investments in mutual funds, insurance premiums, etc.). Banks, financial institutions, businesses, and the government utilize it primarily for the transfer and collection of funds. The National Automated Clearing House (NACH) service was introduced by National Payments Corporation of India in 2016 as a centralized system to facilitate automated clearing of inter-bank, high volume electronic transactions. The NACH system was created to standardize all electronic transactions' interoperability with regard to rules and compliances for all banking and transaction-related services.

IV. Real Time Gross Settlement System:

The real-time gross settlement (RTGS) system, introduced in 2004, settles inter-bank payments



as well as customary payments between banks without the need for a waiting period. A funds transfer system that enables the immediate transmission of cash and/or securities is known as “real-time gross settlement (RTGS)”. The real-time gross settlement (RTGS) system is a continuous procedure that settles payments on an individual order basis without netting debits and credits across a central bank’s accounts. Real-time gross settlement payments are final and irreversible once they have been made. The majority of the world’s countries’ central banks regulate and run the systems.

V. Immediate Payment Service (IMPS):

The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) established the Immediate Payment Service (IMPS) as a payment option. Since its 2010 introduction, the service has developed into a multi-channel, multi-dimensional remittance platform. The IMPS platform can now handle payments and transactions from person to person (P2P), person to account (PA), and person to merchant (P2M), and they may be started via a mobile device, the internet, or an ATM. Immediate Payment Service, often known as IMPS, is India’s interbank electronic payments transfer system. People may use their mobile phones or online banking to send and receive money instantaneously. With the use of IMPS, users may conduct real-time transactions easily and securely. With IMPS, people may quickly and effectively make payments, pay bills, send money to friends and family, and engage in a variety of financial operations.

VI. National Electronic Fund Transfer (NEFT):

A more secure method for enabling individual or corporate financial transfers was unveiled in November 2005. The NEFT system allows for batch settlements at hourly intervals and is accessible over a wider time range, making near real-time fund transfers possible. The RBI established fixed hours for NEFT transaction processing prior to December 2019.. Any NEFT transaction was only be handled Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 6:30 PM and on Saturday from 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM. However, NEFT transactions was available around-the-clock starting in 2020. The number of NEFT transactions is unrestricted. There is a fee associated with every NEFT transaction, which can be anywhere from Rs. 2.5 and Rs. 25 depending on the amount being transferred.

C. Other Payment Systems:**I. Prepaid Payment Instruments:**

Pre-paid instruments are forms of payment that enable the purchase of products and services using the value that has been stored on them. The value kept on these instruments is the amount that the owners have paid for them with cash, a debit from a bank account, or a credit card. Smart cards, magnetic stripe cards, online accounts, internet wallets, mobile accounts, mobile wallets, paper vouchers, and other forms of pre-paid payment instruments can be supplied. In the public interest, policy guidelines for the issuance and operation of pre-paid



instruments in India were released following the notice of the Payments and Settlement Systems Act, 2007, to control the issuing of pre-paid payment instruments in the nation. Online wallets, paper vouchers, prepaid smart cards, and other similar devices are common prepaid payment methods in India. These techniques are quite successful in making purchases easier. These are now a regular component of the modern consumer cycle due to their rising demand and usage. With its Digital India program, India has also undertaken other steps to make the nation fully digital. There are several simple and safe online payment methods available today. Smart cards, online wallets, stripe cards, paper coupons, and online accounts are a few examples of prepaid payment methods. Access to the pre-paid funds is the key objective of these products.. Therefore, one may buy the needed things without physically exchanging cash or a credit card.

- **Mobile wallets:**

Another kind of pre-paid payment method is mobile wallets, which are offered by banks or businesses. Digital currency may be carried about in a mobile wallet. Utilizing smartphones or tablets to make payments is an alternative to utilizing real plastic cards for transactions. To add funds to a digital wallet, an individual's account must be connected to it. Most banks provide e-wallets for customers. A number of for-profit companies, including as Paytm, Freecharge, Mobikwik, Oxigen, mRuppee, Airtel Money, Jio Money, SBI Buddy, itz Cash, etc., also provide e-wallets. To store credit, debit, ID, and gift cards digitally so that purchases may be made using a mobile smart device rather than a physical card, create a mobile wallet.

- **Banks Pre-Paid Cards:**

Banks Pre-paid Cards, often known as daily cards, are just a convenient plastic substitute for carrying cash. Reloadable pre-paid debit cards only permit their owners to make purchases up to the amount already placed into the account. Even more secure than standard debit cards are these cards. A fixed amount of money is loaded into the card, which may then be used.

II. Mobile Banking:

A bank or other financial institution's mobile banking service enables its clients to do various financial activities remotely using a mobile device, such a smartphone or tablet. The bank or financial institution provides the software, which is typically referred to as an app, for the purpose. Android, Windows, and iOS mobile platforms are supported by E Bank's own mobile banking app. Only banks that are regulated and monitored in India and have a physical presence there are authorized to offer mobile banking after obtaining the requisite authorisation from the RBI, according to the RBI's operational rules (October 2008).

III. Banking Cards:

Compared to other payment options, banking cards give users the most security, convenience,



and control. People have a great deal of freedom because to the numerous credit, debit, and prepaid cards that are readily accessible. Some examples of card payment systems are Visa, MasterCard, and RuPay cards. These cards give users the ability to make purchases from shops, the Internet, catalogs, and over the phone. They facilitate easy transactions by saving both customers and merchants time and money. These cards may be used to withdraw money from any ATM placed around the nation.

IV. Point of Sale (PoS):

An electronic payment can be made using a Point of Sale (PoS), which is a payment acceptance terminal. These Point of Sale terminals allow consumers to use credit/debit cards to pay for their purchases of products and services. A PoS (Point of Sale) machine is an electronic tool that allows customers to pay a business using debit, credit, or prepaid cards or by scanning a barcode after receiving products or services. If the transaction is successful, the merchant may provide a paper or electronic receipt.

V. Unstructured Supplementary Service Data (USSD):

Using a simple feature phone, (USSD) enables mobile banking transactions. To use USSD-based mobile banking, there is no requirement for a mobile internet data facility. It is intended to enable financial depth and inclusion of underbanked society in the mainstream banking services by providing banking services to every ordinary man across the nation. The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) introduced USSD in November 2012 and set up a standard USSD gateway with a single short code *99# to provide all banks with a USD channel for mobile banking. Customers should follow the directions in the interactive menu to access the deserving banking service. An interactive menu will be presented on mobile displays by dialling *99#. The MPIN (Mobile PIN) is required to use the USSD service so it is mandatory to obtain MMIDs (Mobile Money Identifiers) by registration of mobile numbers.

VI. Unified Payments Interface (UPI):

With the use of a single mobile application, UPI (Unified Payment Interface) is a method that enables users to integrate different bank accounts. The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) states that the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) is a system that integrates numerous bank accounts, smooth fund routing, and merchant payments into a single mobile application (of any participating bank). Additionally, it supports "Peer to Peer" collect requests that may be planned and paid for at the user's leisure. A user needs a virtual payment address (VPA) to conduct transactions while using UPI. It was created by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) and regulated by the RBI before its debut in August 2016.

VII. Bharat Interface for Money (BHIM):

A smartphone app called Bharat Interface for Money (BHIM) uses the Unified Payments



Interface (UPI) to facilitate simple and speedy financial transactions. The user may send and receive money instantly between banks using their mobile number, bank account and IFSC code, Aadhaar number, or Virtual Payment Address (VPA). The QR code payment option is available through BHIM. By clicking on Report issue in transactions, a user may view their transaction history and file a complaint for transactions that were denied. For a better user experience, BHIM is offered in 20 regional languages, including English, Hindi, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Oriya, Punjabi, Gujarati, Marwari, Haryanvi, Bhojpuri, Urdu, Konkani, Manipuri, Mizo, Khasi, Kannada, Bengali, and Assamese. By dialing *99#, users may now conduct transactions using their feature phones.

VIII. Aadhaar Enabled Payment System (AePS):

Aadhaar Enabled Payment System (AePS) is a bank led model which allows online interoperable financial inclusion transaction at Point of sale (MicroATM) through the Business correspondent of any bank using the Aadhaar authentication. AePS allows you to do six types of transactions, the inputs required for a customer to do a transaction Bank Name, Aadhaar Number, Fingerprint captured during enrolment.

IX. BHIM Aadhaar or Aadhaar Pay:

Aadhaar Pay, commonly known as BHIM Aadhaar, is a merchant solution for taking payments from bank accounts that have had their Aadhaar information seeded. Any smartphone owned by the merchant has the BHIM Aadhaar/Aadhaar Pay software loaded, and the smartphone is linked to a fingerprint or iris scanner. Users may do instantaneous interbank transactions with the use of Aadhaar biometric authentication. It significantly lowers the cost for the merchant to set up acceptance infrastructure. It also makes it simpler for clients to make payments because they don't need to carry a card, know a pin, or even have a phone.

X. Micro ATMs:

The Bank Mitras, District Central Cooperative Banks, Primary Agricultural Credit Societies, etc. employ micro ATMs to provide last-mile delivery of essential financial services. This gadget requires a tele-network to function. Customers can conduct simple financial transactions at micro-ATMs using just their Aadhaar number and their fingerprint as identification (a bank identification number is also required for inter-bank transactions). Micro ATMs will handle the following standard transaction types: deposits, withdrawals, fund transfers, and balance inquiries.

XI. BBPS (Bharat Bill Payment System):

The Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS) is a one-stop platform that offers customers recurring and bill payment services that are interoperable and simple to use across a variety of channels, including Internet Banking, Mobile Banking, Mobile Apps, UPI, etc. Users may pay their bills in a variety of categories, including those for telecom, DTH, electricity, gas, and water.



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

In order to determine how people prefer to make payments online or conduct banking operations, a survey was conducted among the residents of Bengaluru city. While collecting the data pertaining to the digital platforms used by Bengaluru residents, their age, gender, educational qualification and employment status was also collected.

The age of the respondents was ranging from 20 to 63 years. Among the respondents, 69.03 percent were male and 30.97 percent were female. Majority of the respondents were post-graduates (41.96 %), doctoral degree awardees (28.57 %) and graduates (24.11 %) and remaining respondents had passed in only matriculation and intermediate levels only. Among the total residents of Bengaluru who participated in this survey, 69.64 percent were employed in government or public or private sectors, 8.93 percent were involved in the Business, 3.57 percent were homemakers and remaining 17.86 percent had other employment status, which was not revealed in this study.

Table-1. Awareness and usage of various digital payment methods by the residents of Bengaluru city in Karnataka

Digital payment methods	Awareness (%)***	Usage (%)***
Paper based payments viz . Cheque, Drafts	98.13	50.48
Internet Banking	97.29	57.41
Electronic Clearing service (ECS)	60.42	37.13
National Automated Clearing House (NACH)	30.77	32.14
RTGS	86.8	45.65
Immediate Payment Service (IMPS)	81.13	56.98
National Electronic Fund Transfer (NEFT)	92.73	50.98
Mobile wallets	92.31	57.29
Banks Pre-Paid Cards	66.29	28.81
Mobile Banking	97.25	60.38
Banking Cards (Debit/Credit)	97.3	70.37
Point of Sale (Pos)	42.55	50
Unstructured Supplementary Service Data (USSD)	14.29	30.77
Unified Payments Interface (UPI)	95.5	69.81
Bharat Interface for Money (BHIM)	87.25	47.2
Aadhaar Enabled Payment System (AePS)	31.58	23.33
BHIM Aadhaar or Aadhaar Pay	45.92	35.56
BBPS (Bharat Bill Payment System)	44.21	30.95
Chi-square value	716.9	82.9
p value	< 0.0001	< 0.0001

All the respondents had the bank account(s) and 98.21 percent of them use the digital platforms to make payments in their day to day activities. The awareness and usage of various digital payment methods by the residents of Bengaluru city is listed in Table.1. It is evident from this data that, among



the residents of Bengaluru city, the highest awareness was observed for paper based digital payment method and least awareness was observed for Unstructured Supplementary Service Data (USSD) digital payment method. Interestingly, majority of the residents of Bengaluru city were aware of Internet Banking (97.29 %), Mobile Banking (97.25 %) and Banking Debit/Credit Cards (97.30 %) next to paper based payment method. Statistical analysis of the data pertaining to awareness of residents of Bengaluru revealed significant ($p < 0.0001$) difference among the various digital payment methods.

With respect to usage of different digital payment methods, use of Debit/Credit Cards (70.37 %) was the top most method used by the residents of Bengaluru city, followed by Unified Payments Interface (UPI) method (69.81 %) and Mobile Banking method (60.38 %). Among the different digital payment methods, Aadhaar Enabled Payment System (AePS, 23.33 %) and Banks Pre-Paid Cards (28.81 %) were the digital payment methods least used by the residents of Bengaluru city. Statistical analysis of the data pertaining to usage of different digital payment method by the residents of Bengaluru city revealed significant ($p < 0.0001$) difference among the various digital payment methods.

Conclusion

The study's respondents from Bengaluru city had the statistically significant ($p < 0.0001$) and highest awareness of paper-based digital payment methods, followed by banking debit/credit cards (97.30%), internet banking (97.29%), and mobile banking (97.25%), and they had the least awareness of USSD (Unstructured Supplementary Service Data) digital payment methods. Debit/Credit Cards (70.37%), UPI (69.81%), and Mobile Banking (60.38%) were the most frequently used digital payment methods among the respondents in this study from Bengaluru city, while Aadhaar Enabled Payment System (AePS, 23.33%) and Banks Pre-Paid Cards (28.81%) were the least popular options. Only Bengaluru city is affected by these results. The respondents of this study from Bengaluru city had the statistically significant ($p < 0.0001$) and highest awareness about paper based digital payment method followed by Banking Debit/Credit Cards (97.30 %), Internet Banking (97.29 %), Mobile Banking (97.25 %) and they had least awareness about Unstructured Supplementary Service Data (USSD) digital payment methods. Among the different digital payment methods, respondents of this study from Bengaluru city had used the Debit/Credit Cards (70.37 %) significantly ($p < 0.0001$) most frequently followed by UPI method (69.81 %) and Mobile Banking method (60.38 %), and the least used digital payment methods were Aadhaar Enabled Payment System (AePS, 23.33 %) and Banks Pre-Paid Cards (28.81 %). These findings are solely applicable to Bengaluru city. Hence, the results cannot be generalized; and the sample size was limited to 150. Therefore, these results must be validated on a larger sample prior to drawing any meaningful conclusion.

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From Passive Resistance To Moral Power: Gandhi's Satyagraha Across Continents And Minds

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Abstract:

Gandhian Satyagraha, often translated as “truth-force” or “soul-force,” represents one of the most influential nonviolent resistance philosophies in modern history. This article examines the evolution of Satyagraha through Gandhi's experiments in South Africa (1893–1914) and its transformation in India (1915–1947), with particular attention to its psychological dimensions. Drawing upon interdisciplinary scholarship from history, political science, and peace psychology, the study highlights how Gandhi's early experiences with racial discrimination in South Africa shaped the conceptual and practical foundations of Satyagraha. In India, these principles were refined and applied on a mass scale during major movements such as Non-Cooperation, Civil Disobedience, and Quit India.

The article further explores the psychological underpinnings of Satyagraha, emphasizing moral persuasion, emotional resilience, collective identity formation, and the transformative potential of suffering. Gandhi's strategy relied not merely on political mobilization but on influencing the conscience of both the oppressed and the oppressor. A comparative analysis reveals that while South Africa served as a laboratory for experimentation, India became the arena for large-scale application and ideological consolidation.

By integrating historical and psychological perspectives, this paper argues that Satyagraha is not only a political technique but also a profound psychological process rooted in empathy, self-discipline, and ethical conviction. The study contributes to contemporary discussions on nonviolent resistance, conflict resolution, and social justice by demonstrating the enduring relevance of Gandhian thought in addressing modern global challenges.

Keywords: Gandhi, Satyagraha, Nonviolence, South Africa, Indian Freedom Movement, Peace Psychology, Moral Resistance, Civil Disobedience



Introduction

Gandhian Satyagraha occupies a central place in the discourse of nonviolent resistance and ethical politics. Coined by Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi during his South African years, the concept transcends passive resistance by emphasizing active moral engagement and truth-seeking. Scholars widely acknowledge that Gandhi's experiences in South Africa were formative, providing the socio-political and psychological conditions necessary for the birth of Satyagraha.

Upon returning to India, Gandhi adapted and expanded these principles to mobilize millions against colonial rule. This transition marks a critical phase in the evolution of Satyagraha—from a localized struggle against racial injustice to a mass-based anti-colonial movement.

Importantly, Satyagraha is not merely a political strategy; it is deeply rooted in psychological processes. It involves self-discipline, emotional regulation, moral conviction, and the capacity to endure suffering without retaliation. As Mayton (2001) argues, Satyagraha represents a form of applied social psychology aimed at transforming both individual consciousness and collective behaviour. This article seeks to examine the historical trajectory and psychological foundations of Satyagraha through a comparative lens, focusing on Gandhi's experiments in South Africa and India.

Satyagraha in South Africa: The Experimental Phase:

The South African phase (1893–1914) represents the formative and experimental stage in the evolution of Gandhian Satyagraha. During this period, Gandhi confronted institutionalized racial discrimination directed at the Indian diaspora, which forced him to rethink conventional modes of political resistance. Rather than adopting violent rebellion or passive submission, Gandhi developed a novel method rooted in ethical conviction and psychological transformation. Scholars widely interpret this phase as a “laboratory of nonviolence,” where the theoretical and practical foundations of Satyagraha were first articulated and tested.

A pivotal moment in this experimental phase was the resistance against the Asiatic Registration Act of 1906, which required Indians to register, provide fingerprints, and carry identification passes at all times. Gandhi mobilized the Indian community to defy the law through nonviolent civil disobedience. This marked the first organized application of Satyagraha, where participants willingly accepted arrest and punishment rather than comply with unjust legislation. The movement demonstrated that disciplined non-cooperation could challenge state authority without resorting to violence.

From a psychological perspective, several key elements emerged during this period. First, moral conviction formed the core of Satyagraha. Gandhi believed that truth (satya) had an inherent power capable of transforming unjust systems by appealing to the conscience of the oppressor. This approach reframed resistance as a moral dialogue rather than a confrontation (Herman, 1969). Second, the principle of self-suffering became central. Satyagrahis accepted imprisonment, physical hardship, and social sacrifice as a means of exerting moral pressure. Such suffering was not passive endurance but a deliberate psychological strategy aimed at evoking empathy and ethical reflection among opponents.

Another crucial aspect was the development of collective identity among Indians in South Africa. Facing systemic discrimination, diverse linguistic, religious, and regional groups began to see



themselves as part of a unified community. This shared identity strengthened solidarity and facilitated coordinated action (Naidoo & Rajab, 2005). Gandhi's leadership played a significant role in fostering this unity, as he emphasized common moral values over internal divisions.

Furthermore, Gandhi's experiments extended beyond political action into personal and communal discipline. The establishment of settlements such as Phoenix and Tolstoy Farm served as spaces for ethical training, self-reliance, and communal living. These institutions functioned as microcosms of Satyagraha, where individuals practiced simplicity, self-control, and cooperation, thereby reinforcing the psychological foundations of nonviolent resistance.

Importantly, this phase also highlighted the emotional and symbolic dimensions of Satyagraha. Acts such as public burning of registration certificates were not merely political gestures but powerful symbols that reinforced collective resolve and moral legitimacy. Gandhi understood that emotional engagement—through shared suffering, sacrifice, and symbolic action—was essential for sustaining long-term resistance (Ferrari & Tang, n.d.).

Satyagraha in India: Expansion and Mass Mobilization:

The Indian phase of Gandhian Satyagraha (1915–1947) marks its transformation from a localized method of resistance into a powerful instrument of mass mobilization. After returning from South Africa, Gandhi encountered a vastly different socio-political landscape characterized by colonial exploitation, economic inequality, and cultural diversity. Unlike the relatively small Indian diaspora in South Africa, India presented the challenge of mobilizing millions across regions, languages, religions, and social hierarchies. Gandhi responded by adapting Satyagraha into a flexible and inclusive strategy capable of engaging the masses while retaining its ethical and psychological core.

The initial experiments in India—Champaran (1917), Kheda (1918), and Ahmedabad (1918)—served as transitional movements linking the South African experience with broader national struggles. In Champaran, Gandhi addressed the grievances of indigo farmers subjected to exploitative plantation systems, marking his first successful application of Satyagraha on Indian soil. Similarly, the Kheda Satyagraha mobilized peasants against unjust taxation during a period of crop failure. These movements demonstrated Gandhi's ability to translate abstract principles into concrete socio-economic struggles, thereby building trust among the rural population.

The true expansion of Satyagraha occurred with nationwide campaigns such as the Non-Cooperation Movement (1920–22) and the Civil Disobedience Movement (1930–34). Among these, the Salt March of 1930 stands out as a defining moment of mass mobilization. By choosing salt—a basic necessity—as the focal point of protest, Gandhi connected political resistance with everyday life. The march from Sabarmati to Dandi not only symbolized defiance against colonial authority but also galvanized widespread participation across India (Shani, 2015). This strategic use of symbolism illustrates Gandhi's deep understanding of psychological mobilization, where simple acts could evoke powerful emotional and collective responses.

A key feature of the Indian phase was mass participation across diverse social groups. Gandhi succeeded in involving peasants, workers, women, and marginalized communities, thereby transforming



the freedom struggle into a truly national movement. This inclusivity was reinforced through the use of religious idioms, local languages, and cultural symbols, which made Satyagraha accessible and relatable to ordinary people (Mantena, 2022). The movement thus fostered a strong sense of collective identity, transcending regional and social divisions.

Another significant development was the institutionalization of Satyagraha within the Indian National Congress. Under Gandhi's leadership, nonviolence became a guiding principle of political action, shaping organizational strategies and decision-making processes. Satyagraha was no longer an experimental method but a structured and disciplined approach to resistance, requiring adherence to ethical codes and self-restraint.

Equally important was Gandhi's emphasis on constructive programs, such as the promotion of Swadeshi (self-reliance), khadi (hand-spun cloth), basic education, and social reforms like the eradication of untouchability. These initiatives complemented political resistance by addressing the underlying socio-economic and cultural conditions of Indian society. They also reinforced the psychological dimension of Satyagraha by instilling a sense of dignity, responsibility, and moral purpose among participants.

From a psychological perspective, the Indian phase intensified several key dynamics. First, collective resilience became a defining characteristic of the movement. Large groups of people endured imprisonment, violence, and repression without resorting to retaliation, demonstrating remarkable emotional discipline (Tripathi, 2025). Second, Satyagraha fostered moral empowerment, enabling individuals to perceive themselves as active agents of change rather than passive subjects of colonial rule. Third, Gandhi's approach encouraged cognitive reframing, where suffering was interpreted not as weakness but as a source of moral strength and legitimacy.

Psychological Dimensions of Satyagraha:

The effectiveness of Gandhian Satyagraha cannot be fully understood without examining its deep psychological foundations. Far from being merely a political technique, Satyagraha operates as a sophisticated system of moral and social psychology that seeks to transform individuals, groups, and adversaries simultaneously. It integrates elements of moral reasoning, emotional regulation, identity formation, and behavioural discipline to create a nonviolent yet powerful form of resistance. Scholars across peace psychology, moral philosophy, and social psychology consistently emphasize that Satyagraha's strength lies in its ability to influence the human mind and conscience rather than relying on coercion.

Moral Psychology and the Primacy of Truth

At the core of Satyagraha is a moral framework grounded in satya (truth) and ahimsa (nonviolence). Gandhi conceptualized truth not merely as factual accuracy but as an ethical ideal guiding human conduct. This moral orientation aligns with theories of moral psychology that emphasize internalized values as drivers of behaviour. Satyagraha seeks to activate the moral conscience of both the oppressed and the oppressor, transforming conflict into a process of ethical engagement rather than domination.

Importantly, Gandhi's approach assumes that individuals possess an inherent capacity for moral



reflection. By confronting injustice through nonviolent means, Satyagraha creates a psychological tension often described as “cognitive dissonance” in the oppressor, potentially leading to moral reconsideration and change.

One of the most distinctive features of Satyagraha is the principle of self-suffering (Tapasya). Unlike passive endurance, self-suffering is an intentional and strategic act designed to generate moral pressure. Gandhi believed that willingly accepting suffering—through imprisonment, fasting, or physical hardship could awaken empathy and shame in the oppressor while reinforcing the moral commitment of the protester.

Modern psychological interpretations suggest that such acts function as costly signalling mechanisms, demonstrating sincerity and commitment. This enhances credibility and can shift public perception in favour of the Satyagrahi (Sonnleitner, 1985). Moreover, self-suffering fosters self-purification, enabling individuals to align their actions with their ethical beliefs, thereby strengthening psychological resilience.

Satyagraha is fundamentally rooted in empathy and compassion. Gandhi emphasized understanding the perspective of the opponent, even while resisting injustice. This aligns with contemporary theories of empathy, which highlight its role in reducing aggression and promoting prosocial behaviour.

By refusing to dehumanize the adversary, Satyagraha transforms the emotional dynamics of conflict. It replaces hatred with compassion and retaliation with dialogue. This emotional discipline is not spontaneous but cultivated through practices such as self-reflection, prayer, and community living. Scholars note that such emotional regulation is crucial for preventing escalation and sustaining nonviolent movements/

A successful Satyagrahi requires a high degree of self-control and psychological discipline. Gandhi insisted on strict adherence to nonviolence, even in the face of provocation. This involves regulating impulses such as anger, fear, and desire for revenge.

From a psychological standpoint, this reflects advanced self-regulation mechanisms, where individuals consciously override instinctive reactions to align with higher moral goals. Training in vows, simplicity, and restraint often practiced in ashrams helped cultivate this discipline. Such internal control not only ensured the integrity of the movement but also enhanced its moral authority.

Satyagraha operates not only at the individual level but also within the realm of collective psychology. By fostering a shared sense of purpose and identity, it transforms isolated individuals into a cohesive moral community.

Social identity theory helps explain how participants internalize the values of the movement, leading to coordinated and sustained action. Collective rituals, symbols, and shared suffering strengthen group cohesion and reinforce commitment. This collective identity also amplifies the psychological impact of Satyagraha, making it a powerful tool for mass mobilization.

Another crucial psychological dimension is cognitive reframing—the reinterpretation of suffering and adversity as meaningful and purposeful. In Satyagraha, suffering is not viewed as defeat but as a form of moral victory. This reframing reduces fear and enhances resilience, enabling individuals to



endure hardship without losing motivation.

Such meaning-making processes are central to psychological well-being, as they provide individuals with a sense of purpose and coherence in the face of adversity.

Satyagraha emphasizes dialogue over coercion, aiming to resolve conflicts through mutual understanding. Gandhi viewed conflict as an opportunity for transformation rather than confrontation.

Psychologically, this approach aligns with models of constructive conflict resolution, where open communication and empathy facilitate reconciliation. By engaging the opponent in dialogue, Satyagraha reduces hostility and creates conditions for sustainable peace.

Gandhian Satyagraha represents a unique synthesis of ethical philosophy, political strategy, and psychological insight. Its development from South Africa to India illustrates a dynamic process of experimentation, adaptation, and expansion. While the South African phase established the foundational principles of nonviolent resistance, the Indian phase demonstrated their practical viability on a large scale. Central to both contexts was the psychological dimension—self-discipline, moral persuasion, and emotional resilience.

In an era marked by conflict and polarization, Satyagraha continues to offer valuable lessons for peaceful resistance and social transformation. Its emphasis on truth, empathy, and nonviolence underscores the enduring relevance of Gandhi's vision in contemporary global society.

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Gender Identity And Essentialism : A Psychological Analysis Of A. Revathi's Autobiography

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Abstract

This article presents a psychological analysis of transgender experiences in the Indian socio-cultural context, focusing on identity formation, mental health, and resilience. Drawing on the autobiography of A. Revathi, it examines how personal narratives shape the understanding of gender identity. The study highlights themes of gender incongruence, social marginalization, and identity affirmation, with a focus on essentialism and the idea of innate femininity as a form of self-validation. Using frameworks such as the minority stress model, gender dysphoria, and resilience, it argues that essentialist narratives, while appearing binary, help build identity and psychological stability. By combining literary and psychological analysis, the article emphasizes the need for culturally sensitive and affirming approaches to transgender mental health in India.

Keywords: Transgender identity, transgender autobiography, gender incongruence, essentialism, innate femininity, gender dysphoria.

Introduction

Psychology has played an important role in understanding transgender identity. Earlier, transgender individuals were viewed as having a disorder, but with advances in research, they are now supported and affirmed. Contemporary approaches recognize transgender identities as legitimate and diverse expressions of human experience (American Psychiatric Association), and they are no longer treated as gender identity disorder. In India, transgender autobiographies have gained importance as both literary and psychological texts, focusing on identity formation, trauma, resilience, and self-affirmation. This article examines these narratives from a psychological perspective, exploring how identity is negotiated within oppressive structures and how individuals construct meaning through storytelling.

Transgender individuals challenge traditional gender norms, as their gender identity differs from the sex assigned at birth. They seek to live in alignment with their internal sense of self. Their



autobiographies form a distinct literary category focused on self-discovery, transition, and identity reconstruction. These narratives highlight gender dysphoria, and the effort to align the body with inner identity, along with the emotional, social, and legal challenges involved. They also emphasize intersectionality, showing how gender interacts with caste, class, and social status, while addressing exclusion and the need for recognition.

From a psychological perspective, these autobiographies are significant as they reveal processes of identity formation, coping with stigma, and building resilience. They bridge theory and lived experience, offering insights into gender dysphoria, minority stress, and self-affirmation, while promoting empathy and more inclusive approaches to mental health. Gender identity is a deeply internal experience that may not align with biological sex. While earlier psychological frameworks enforced rigid binaries, contemporary theories such as 'Gender Performativity' by Judith Butler highlight fluidity and diversity. The shift from "gender identity disorder" to "gender dysphoria" marks a key change, focusing on distress rather than identity itself (American Psychiatric Association). This shift supports removing the idea of pathology while still addressing psychological challenges. Gender dysphoria describes the distress caused by gender incongruence, often expressed in autobiographies through metaphors like being "trapped in the wrong body." Transgender identity formation is non-linear, involving stages of awareness, exploration, acceptance, and integration, processes that autobiographies powerfully document. The study looks at the autobiography of the transgender A. Reavathi 'The Truth About Me' (2010), a male-to-female (MTF) transgender person is someone who was assigned male at birth but identifies and lives as a woman.

Essentialism: Innate Femininity

Essentialism, as a philosophical and sociological perspective, claims that certain traits, such as gender, are inherent, universal, and unchanging. In transgender autobiographies, essentialist narratives frequently emerge as a central strategy of identity construction. Many Trans women describe their femininity as something deeply ingrained within them from early childhood. These accounts usually include memories of engaging in traditionally feminine behaviours, preferences for feminine clothing, and emotional identification with women. A recurring theme is the feeling of being "trapped in the wrong body," which serves as a powerful metaphor for gender incongruence. Authors express how their internal sense of femininity persisted despite external pressures to conform to male gender roles. These narratives also draw on medical and psychological frameworks to validate their experiences. References to biological or neurological explanations of gender identity are often used to reinforce the claim that their femininity is natural and inherent. Additionally, themes such as attraction to men, femininity since childhood and the desire for motherhood are presented as extensions of this essential femininity. From a psychological perspective, essentialist narratives serve important functions. They provide individuals with a sense of coherence and self-understanding, helping to resolve internal conflicts. However, essentialism is not without its limitations. While it supports certain experiences, it may also reinforce binary notions of gender, eventually marginalizing non-binary identities. Scholars such as Butler critique essentialism for overlooking the role of social construction in shaping gender.



Nevertheless, the persistence of essentialist narratives in transgender autobiographies suggests that they are not merely theoretical constructs but lived realities. These narratives highlight the need for psychological frameworks that can accommodate both innate and socially constructed aspects of identity.

Trapped in a Wrong Body

From a psychological perspective, the recurring expression of being “trapped in the wrong body” in transgender autobiographies reflects a profound experience of gender dysphoria, an internal conflict between one’s assigned biological sex and one’s deeply felt gender identity. For many transgender individuals, this dissonance is not merely a social discomfort but an enduring psychological reality that shapes their self-perception, emotional life, and behaviour. Autobiographical narratives of transgenders consistently reveal a persistent sense of non-belonging to the assigned body. In developmental psychology, identity formation is a crucial process, and when gender identity, which is one of its core components, does not align with the physical body, it creates a state of internal conflict. This leads to feelings of alienation, anxiety, distress, and a longing for congruence between the inner self and the outer form. Within an essentialist psychological framework, transgender individuals perceive their femininity as innate, natural, and deeply embedded in their psyche. This sense of “essential femininity” functions as a stabilizing inner truth, allowing them to make sense of their experiences despite external contradictions.

We find the same expressions Revathi's autobiography. Revathi mentions “... it felt natural for me to do so [behave like a girl]” (7), “I experienced a growing sense of irrepressible femaleness...” (14). “I felt that finally the female in me would be freed from her male body” (67), and “I consider myself a woman. But I possessed the form of a man” (262).

The desire to undergo Sex Reassignment Surgery (SRS) or Nirvana can also be understood psychologically as a pursuit of body-self congruence. This process is not merely physical but profoundly therapeutic, as it reduces long-standing psychological distress. The relief, peace, and sense of completeness felt after surgery show that inner conflict is resolved and psychological balance is restored. For instance, the sense of fulfillment expressed by them after surgery reflects what psychology would describe as identity integration, where the self is experienced as whole and authentic.

The metaphor of the “wrong body” thus represents more than a literal mismatch; it expresses a complex psychological experience involving identity conflict, emotional distress, and the search for authenticity. It reflects a body–mind dualism, where the body is experienced as alien or restrictive, while the mind or soul is perceived as the true center of identity. The desire to “correct” the body is therefore not a rejection of the self but an affirmation of it. Thus, in many instances, we have a simple body vs. soul dichotomy, where the body is said to be that of the man and the soul is said to be that of the woman. Hence, there arises a need to change the body to suit the soul, mind, or heart. The underlying assumption often is that this feeling of being a woman is natural and inborn.

Femininity since Childhood

From a psychological point of view, revisiting childhood in transgender autobiographies is not



just a storytelling method, but a way to rebuild identity, make sense of memories, and heal emotionally. Unlike traditional autobiographies that often idealize childhood, transgender narratives focus on experiences of confusion, anxiety, exclusion, and trauma. These early memories are important because they show the first moments of feeling different, which later shape a person's identity. In developmental psychology, childhood is a crucial period for the emergence of gender identity, especially between the ages of three and seven. For transgender individuals, this stage involves an early and persistent awareness that their internal sense of gender does not align with societal expectations imposed on their assigned sex. The recollection of childhood femininity in transgender autobiographies can thus be understood as evidence of early gender nonconformity and the formation of a stable inner identity that precedes social recognition.

The repeated return to childhood memories serves an important psychological function. It allows individuals to validate their present identity by tracing its continuity across time. By reconstructing moments when they felt naturally aligned with femininity, through clothing, play, behaviour, and emotional expression, transgender writers establish that their gender identity is not a sudden or artificial transformation but an enduring and intrinsic aspect of the self. This process aligns with the psychological concept of narrative identity, where individuals create a coherent life story to make sense of who they are.

Revathi's childhood is marked by both affirmation and stigma. While she experienced joy in engaging in feminine activities and identifying with girls, she was also subjected to teasing, bullying, and punishment. Such experiences can lead to minority stress, a form of chronic stress faced by marginalized individuals due to social stigma and discrimination. Interestingly, Revathi's response to teasing, feeling both hurt and faintly gratified, reveals a complex emotional dynamic. Revathi's earliest memories mentioned in the book are of when she was ten years old. She mentions that she used to like playing girls' games, wearing girls' dresses, doing the 'feminine' chores, like sweeping, drawing kolam every morning in the front yard, and helping in the kitchen. She says "As soon as I got home from school, I would wear my sister's long skirt and blouse, twist a long towel around my head, and let it trail down my back like a braid. I would then walk as if I were a shy bride, my eyes to the ground..." [4].

She describes

"I played with the girls. We played five stones, hopscotch, and hide and seek..... On some days, one of the girls would ask me, 'Why do you play with us? Boys like you are playing there, go join them. 'I don't wish to play with them', I'd reply. I was teased often at school, for behaving like a girl, for doing women's work, and on the streets too, was bullied often.....My heart would sink at these words, but I also felt faintly gratified and even happy that these boys actually conceded that I was somehow a woman.... In class, I would sit staring at the girls, taking note of the way their braids fell, the intricate knot of their colorful ribbons, the jasmine and kanakambaram they wore in their hair, and their skirts and blouses. I longed to be like them and suffered that I could not dress so." (6) .

In school, she was punished for not only being unmindful but also because she often spoke like



a girl. Often, she was caned by the PT teacher for not showing bravery as a boy and for not playing with the boys. (7). She explains that being a girl felt as natural to her as eating. Just as she wouldn't stop eating simply because someone told her to, she couldn't stop embracing her identity despite others insisting she shouldn't. (7). In seventh grade, Revathi portrayed the role of Chandramathi in the play Harishchandra for the school's annual day celebration. She was praised for both her appearance and performance, with many saying she looked and acted like a real woman. [9]

Thus childhood femininity is consistently portrayed as instinctive, spontaneous, and emotionally fulfilling, rather than learned or imposed. From a psychological standpoint, this supports the view that gender identity is deeply rooted in the individual's psyche and emerges early in life. The consistent preference for feminine roles, activities, and expressions reflects a stable internal identity that resists social conditioning. Moreover, revisiting childhood also functions as a form of therapeutic narration. By articulating past experiences of pain, confusion, and marginalization, transgender individuals engage in a process of emotional release and self-understanding. This aligns with psychological approaches such as narrative therapy, where storytelling becomes a means of reclaiming agency and reconstructing identity in empowering ways.

Attraction toward the Opposite Sex

From a psychological perspective, the attraction toward men expressed in transgender women's autobiographies reflects the complex interplay between gender identity, sexual orientation, and emotional validation. Rather than being a simple matter of desire, this attraction is deeply connected to the formation and affirmation of their feminine self-concept. It often serves as a crucial dimension through which transgender individuals understand, experience, and affirm their identity as women.

In many of these narratives, attraction to men begins during adolescence, a time when romantic and sexual feelings develop. For transgender individuals, this can be confusing because their assigned sex does not match their inner gender identity. This creates difficulty in understanding the difference between sexual orientation (who they are attracted to) and gender identity (who they are). Without proper social understanding or guidance, this confusion can lead to self-doubt and questioning.

Revathi also talks about her being attracted to the opposite sex:

"...I imagined I was in love with them. This confused me, I was a boy and yet I felt I could love other boys. Was this right or wrong?" (9).

Revathi lived in uncertainty and heavily sought somebody who would indeed understand what she felt. She questioned herself, "Why did I love men? Was I mad? Was I the only one who felt this way? Or were there others like me, elsewhere in the world? Would I find them, if indeed they were there?" (Revathi 14) Revathi fell in love with a man called Babu, who used to work in a cinema hall, and she accepted him as her husband, but he left her later. Revathi deeply loved her colleague in Sangama. They also got married. She says "I was his mother, companion, office assistant, lover, and good wife" [274].

Hence attraction to men functions as more than a sexual orientation; it becomes a psychological mechanism for affirming gender identity. Being desired by men, loving men, and imagining life with a



male partner all contribute to the construction of a coherent feminine self. At the same time, these experiences reveal the influence of heteronormative frameworks, where femininity is often validated through attraction to masculinity. Importantly, these accounts also highlight the initial confusion between being transgender and being homosexual. Psychologically, this confusion arises from the lack of awareness and representation, leading individuals to interpret their feelings through available but inadequate categories. Over time, through self-reflection and lived experience, they achieve a clearer understanding of their identity, recognizing that their attraction to men aligns with their identity as women.

Motherhood

From a psychological perspective, the desire for motherhood expressed in transgender autobiographies reflects a deep engagement with nurturance, care, attachment, and identity fulfillment, rather than a purely biological instinct. While society often equates womanhood with biological motherhood, these narratives demonstrate that maternal feelings are fundamentally psychological and relational, emerging from emotional factors along with anatomy. For transgender women, the desire for motherhood becomes a powerful means of affirming their feminine identity and achieving a sense of completeness within their self-concept.

Revathi's maternal affection toward her chela demonstrates how kinship structures within transgender communities can fulfill psychological needs for family and belonging. Even in the absence of traditional family systems, these chosen relationships provide opportunities for emotional connection, caregiving, and identity affirmation. Revathi experiences maternal affection towards her chela, Mya, acknowledging that, despite the brief duration of their acquaintance, she genuinely felt in her heart that Mya was her daughter (153). Motherhood emerges as a psychological and emotional reality, independent of biological constraints. The consistent expression of nurturing behaviour, emotional attachment, and the desire to care for others indicates that maternal identity is deeply embedded in their sense of self.

Thus the convergence of various aspects, such as femininity, attraction to men, domestic roles, and the longing for motherhood, contributes to the formation of a coherent psychological narrative often described as "a woman trapped in a male body." From a psychological standpoint, this narrative functions as a framework for identity coherence, allowing individuals to integrate diverse experiences into a unified understanding of themselves. It reinforces the belief that their womanhood is not superficial or performative but deeply felt, consistent, and enduring.

Conclusion

Contemporary research makes it clear that transgender identity cannot be understood through a single perspective. It emerges from a complex interaction of biological, psychological, and socio-cultural factors. Transgender autobiographies, the growing genre of work challenges earlier views that treated transgender identity as a disorder or deviation. Instead, it affirms gender diversity as a natural and valid aspect of human experience. Transgender identity is therefore neither purely innate nor entirely socially constructed; it is a dynamic and multifaceted reality shaped by both internal



dispositions and lived experiences.

The study on essentialism further highlights that, for many transgender individuals, gender is experienced as deeply internal, natural, and enduring. The autobiographical narratives of Indian male-to-female writers such as Living Smile Vidya, A. Revathi, Manobi Bandopadhyay, Laxmi Narayan Tripathi, Akkai, and Mabjamma Jogathi reveal that their sense of being female is not a choice or a temporary phase, but a core aspect of their identity. Despite social stigma, rejection, and hardship, this inner sense of self remains persistent and resistant to suppression.

From a psychological perspective, this reflects identity coherence, where one's internal experience of gender remains stable over time, even in the face of external pressures. These narratives show that femininity or masculinity is not something that can be adopted or discarded at will, but an intrinsic part of the self. The distress caused by enforced conformity further emphasizes the depth and authenticity of this internal reality. At the heart of these autobiographies lies a powerful assertion of selfhood. Writing becomes an act of resistance and self-affirmation, enabling transgender individuals to articulate their identities in a society that has often marginalized or misunderstood them. Their stories challenge rigid gender norms and invite a more nuanced understanding of gender as a deeply personal and lived experience.

Ultimately, transgender identity cannot be dismissed as illusion or choice. It is a genuine and deeply rooted human experience shaped by the interplay of inner identity and lived reality. By examining Indian transgender autobiographies, this study demonstrates how individuals construct meaningful identities while navigating adversity. It also shows that essentialist and social constructionist perspectives, rather than being oppositional, coexist within lived experiences. A more inclusive psychological approach must therefore acknowledge this complexity and ensure that transgender individuals are met with affirmation, dignity, and equitable access to mental health care.

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Occupational Stress And Attending To Experience In State Police And Railway Protection Force Personnel : A Cross-Sectional Comparative Study

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Abstract

Law enforcement work involves sustained operational and organizational demands, yet comparative evidence across Indian law enforcement formations remains limited. The present cross-sectional comparative study examined occupational stress and attending to experience among State Police and Railway Protection Force (RPF) personnel. The sample comprised 40 serving personnel, including 20 State Police personnel and 20 RPF personnel. Occupational stress was assessed with the Occupational Stress Index, and attending to experience was examined through Lambda and Zd from Exner's Comprehensive System for the Rorschach. Descriptive, group-comparative, and correlational analyses were conducted. Mean Lambda was 1.46 (SD = 1.22), mean Zd was 3.09 (SD = 3.77), 60.0% of participants showed high Lambda, and 55.0% showed overincorporative Zd. Police personnel reported significantly higher occupational stress than RPF personnel, whereas Lambda and Zd did not differ significantly between groups. Occupational stress also did not differ significantly across Lambda or Zd classification groups, and neither Lambda nor Zd was significantly associated with overall occupational stress. Overall, self-reported occupational strain differentiated the two groups more clearly than the selected performance-based indicators of attending to experience. Interpretation should remain cautious in light of the cross-sectional design, modest sample size, and absence of duty-specific exposure data.

Keywords: occupational stress, police, Railway Protection Force, Lambda, Zd

Law enforcement work is psychologically demanding because it involves sustained vigilance, uncertainty, public accountability, and organizational strain. International evidence has repeatedly linked police work to psychosocial risk, burnout, depressive symptoms, and broader health burden (Alves et al., 2023; Allison et al., 2020; Violanti et al., 2017). Indian studies similarly indicate that occupational stress is a significant concern in policing, with workload, role pressure, and organizational strain emerging as recurring issues (Parsekar et al., 2015; Singh & Kar, 2015). More recent Indian



evidence further suggests that both organizational and operational factors contribute to police stress (Mini et al., 2025).

Despite this literature, comparative evidence across Indian law enforcement formations remains limited. This gap matters because different law enforcement groups may operate under related public-safety mandates while differing in institutional role and operational context. In India, State Police forces are responsible for law and order, crime prevention, and investigation within territorial jurisdictions, whereas the Railway Protection Force (RPF) is tasked with protecting railway property, passenger areas, and passengers (Indian Railways, 2025; Ministry of Home Affairs, 2018). Comparing State Police and RPF personnel is therefore useful for examining whether self-reported occupational stress and selected psychological process indicators show convergent or divergent patterns across these groups.

Most research on police occupational stress has relied on self-report measures. Although such measures are essential for capturing consciously experienced burden, they do not directly address how individuals filter and organize experience under demanding conditions. In Exner's (2003) Comprehensive System, Lambda reflects relatively economical or simplified perceptual-cognitive engagement, whereas Zd indexes the extent to which available information is taken in relative to efficient processing demands. These variables do not directly measure occupational stress, and performance-based findings in occupational samples must be interpreted cautiously. At the same time, evidence supporting the validity of individual Rorschach variables suggests that such indices can be examined meaningfully when they are interpreted narrowly and contextually (Mihura et al., 2013).

Accordingly, the present study examined occupational stress and attending to experience in State Police and RPF personnel. Specifically, it asked whether the two groups differed in occupational stress and on the Rorschach variables Lambda and Zd, and whether Lambda and Zd were meaningfully associated with overall self-reported occupational stress.

Method

Study Design and Participants

A cross-sectional descriptive-comparative design was employed to examine attending-to-experience patterns and perceived occupational stress in two law enforcement groups: State Police personnel and Railway Protection Force (RPF) personnel. The final sample consisted of 40 serving personnel, including 20 State Police personnel and 20 RPF members recruited through purposive sampling from accessible units. Participants ranged in age from 21 to 58 years ($M = 38.75$, $SD = 10.74$). Only complete records were retained for analysis.

Measures

Socio-demographic and service information. A brief investigator-developed form was used to collect background and service-related information relevant to the study. Variables available for the exploratory analyses were age, salary, job length, dependents, and combative operations.



General Health Questionnaire-12. The Hindi General Health Questionnaire-12 (GHQ-12) was administered as a screening measure for probable psychological morbidity prior to inclusion in the analytic sample. Responses were scored using the bimodal method (0-0-1-1), and scores above 2 were treated as the exclusion threshold. The Hindi GHQ-12 has demonstrated acceptable psychometric properties in Indian occupational research (Kashyap & Singh, 2017). None of the screened participants exceeded the cutoff.

Occupational Stress Index. Occupational stress was assessed using the Occupational Stress Index (OSI; Srivastava & Singh, 1984), a 46-item self-report measure rated on a 5-point scale. The OSI total score served as the primary indicator of perceived occupational stress.

Rorschach Inkblot Test. The Rorschach Inkblot Test was administered and scored according to Exner's Comprehensive System (Exner, 2003). The primary variables of interest were Lambda and Zd. Lambda was examined as an index of relatively form-dominant and simplified perceptual processing, whereas Zd was examined as an index of the extent to which available stimulus information was incorporated and processed. Rorschach protocols were administered and scored by a trained examiner. No formal double-scoring procedure was implemented; therefore, study-specific inter-rater reliability coefficients were not available.

Procedure

After informed consent was obtained, participants completed the socio-demographic form, the Hindi GHQ-12, and the OSI. Following a brief rest interval, the Rorschach was administered individually in a separate quiet room at the duty location. All participants screened below the prespecified GHQ-12 cutoff and were retained in the final sample.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 27). Descriptive statistics were calculated for Lambda, Zd, OSI total score, and the selected covariates included in the exploratory analyses. Lambda and Zd were examined both as continuous and classification-based variables. Following the source analysis, Lambda was classified as non-high ($d'' .99$) versus high ($> .99$), and Zd was classified as non-overincorporative ($d'' 3$) versus overincorporative (> 3) (Exner, 2003). Mann-Whitney U tests were used for group comparisons on continuous variables, chi-square tests or Fisher's exact tests were used for comparisons of classification frequencies, and Spearman's rank-order correlations were used for exploratory associations. All tests were two-tailed, and exact p values were reported where available.

Ethical Considerations

The study received ethical approval from the Ethics Review Committee, Department of Psychology, Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapith, Varanasi (IEC approval ref. no. 328, dated February 17, 2025). All procedures were carried out in accordance with institutional ethical standards and the Declaration of Helsinki. Participation was voluntary, written informed consent was obtained prior to data collection, and confidentiality was maintained throughout the study.



Results

Descriptive statistics and classification frequencies are presented in Tables 1 and 2. In the total sample, mean Lambda was 1.46 (SD = 1.22, range = 0.20-6.50), mean Zd was 3.09 (SD = 3.77, range = -5.50 to 9.50), and mean OSI total was 133.80 (SD = 20.85, range = 94.00-176.00). High Lambda was observed in 24 participants (60.0%), and overincorporative Zd was observed in 22 participants (55.0%).

Table 1

Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Lambda	40	0.2	6.5	1.46	1.22
Zd	40	-5.5	9.5	3.09	3.77
OSI Total	40	94	176	133.8	20.85
Age	40	21	58	38.75	10.74
Salary	40	36000	85000	54804.03	14988.52
Job Length	40	3	37	16.2	9.4
Dependents	40	1	12	4.55	1.99

Note. OSI = Occupational Stress Index.

Table 2

Classification Frequencies for Lambda and Zd

Variable	Category	n	%
Lambda	Low (< 0.30)	1	2.5
	Balanced (0.30-0.99)	15	37.5
	High (> 0.99)	24	60
Zd	Underincorporative (< -3)	2	5
	Efficient (-3 to +3)	16	40
	Overincorporative (> 3)	22	55

Note. For inferential analyses, Lambda was dichotomized into non-high ($d'' .99$; $n = 16$) and high ($> .99$; $n = 24$), and Zd was dichotomized into non-overincorporative ($d'' 3$; $n = 18$) and overincorporative (> 3 ; $n = 22$).

As shown in Table 3, Mann-Whitney U tests indicated no significant difference between RPF and Police personnel on Lambda, $U = 170.00$, $Z = -0.812$, $p = .429$, or Zd, $U = 159.50$, $Z = -1.097$, $p = .277$. In contrast, OSI total differed significantly by occupational group, $U = 81.50$, $Z = -3.210$, $p = .001$, with Police personnel showing higher mean ranks than RPF personnel.

Table 3

Mann-Whitney U Comparisons of RPF and Police Personnel on Lambda, Zd, and OSI Total

Variable	RPF Mean Rank	Police Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	Z	Exact p
Lambda	19	22	170	-0.812	0.429
Zd	22.53	18.48	159.5	-1.097	0.277
OSI Total	14.58	26.43	81.5	-3.21	0.001



Note. RPF = Railway Protection Force; OSI = Occupational Stress Index. Values for RPF and Police are mean ranks. Exact p values are two-tailed.

Classification-based comparisons and OSI-by-classification analyses are summarized in Table 4. Lambda classification was identical across groups, with 8 RPF personnel and 8 Police personnel classified as non-high, and 12 in each group classified as high; the association was not significant, $\chi^2(1) = 0.000$, $p = 1.000$, Fisher's exact $p = 1.000$. For Zd classification, 14 RPF personnel and 8 Police personnel were classified as overincorporative, whereas 6 RPF personnel and 12 Police personnel were classified as non-overincorporative. This association did not reach statistical significance, $\chi^2(1) = 3.636$, $p = .057$, Fisher's exact $p = .111$. OSI total also did not differ significantly between the non-high and high Lambda groups, $U = 166.00$, $Z = -0.719$, $p = .486$, or between the non-overincorporative and overincorporative Zd groups, $U = 177.00$, $Z = -0.572$, $p = .581$.

Table 4**Classification-Based Analyses for Lambda, Zd, and Occupational Stress***Panel A. Occupational Group by Classification*

Variable	Category	RPF, n (%)	Police, n (%)	χ^2	Pearson p	Fisher exact p
Lambda	Non-high ($\leq .99$)	8 (40.0)	8 (40.0)	0	1	1
	High ($> .99$)	12 (60.0)	12 (60.0)	—	—	—
Zd	Non-overincorporative (≤ 3)	6 (30.0)	12 (60.0)	3.636	0.057	0.111
	Overincorporative (> 3)	14 (70.0)	8 (40.0)	—	—	—

Panel B. OSI Total Across Classification Groups

Classification Variable	Group	n	OSI Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	Z	Exact p
Lambda	Non-high ($\leq .99$)	16	18.88	166	-0.719	0.486
	High ($> .99$)	24	21.58	—	—	—
Zd	Non-overincorporative (≤ 3)	18	21.67	177	-0.572	0.581
	Overincorporative (> 3)	22	19.55	—	—	—

Note. RPF = Railway Protection Force; OSI = Occupational Stress Index. Values in Panel B are mean ranks. Pearson chi-square and Fisher exact results are shown separately in Panel A to distinguish the two tests.

Exploratory Spearman correlations are shown in Table 5. Lambda was not significantly associated with Zd, $\tilde{r} = .112$, $p = .493$, or with OSI total, $\tilde{r} = .199$, $p = .219$. Zd was likewise not significantly associated with OSI total, $\tilde{r} = .005$, $p = .975$. With respect to the selected covariates, OSI total was negatively associated with age, $\tilde{r} = -.435$, $p = .005$, salary, $\tilde{r} = -.397$, $p = .011$, and job length, $\tilde{r} = -.339$, $p = .032$, and positively associated with combative operations, $\tilde{r} = .452$, $p = .003$. None of the correlations involving Lambda or Zd with age, salary, job length, dependents, or combative operations reached statistical significance.



Table 5
Exploratory Spearman Correlations of Lambda, Zd, and Occupational Stress With Selected Covariates

Note. Values are Spearman's rho coefficients, with two-tailed p values shown in parentheses. N = 40. OSI = Occupational Stress Index.

Variable	Lambda, ρ (p)	Zd, ρ (p)	OSI Total, ρ (p)
Age	-.048 (.771)	-.015 (.925)	-.435 (.005)
Salary	.003 (.986)	.079 (.629)	-.397 (.011)
Job Length	.088 (.588)	.149 (.360)	-.339 (.032)
Dependents	-.186 (.250)	-.061 (.708)	.278 (.083)
Combative Operations	.161 (.320)	-.216 (.181)	.452 (.003)
Zd	.112 (.493)	—	.005 (.975)

Discussion

The present study examined occupational stress and attending to experience in State Police and Railway Protection Force personnel. The clearest finding was that Police personnel reported significantly higher occupational stress than RPF personnel, whereas the selected Rorschach variables Lambda and Zd did not significantly distinguish the groups. Thus, in this sample, self-reported occupational strain differentiated the two groups more clearly than the selected performance-based indicators of attending to experience. This pattern is broadly consistent with literature showing that police work is shaped by substantial psychosocial and organizational burden (Alves et al., 2023; Violanti et al., 2017).

At the descriptive level, high Lambda and overincorporative Zd were the most frequent classifications in the total sample. Within Exner's (2003) framework, Lambda and Zd refer to different aspects of how experience is processed, but neither variable should be treated here as a direct measure of occupational stress. The absence of clear group differences on these variables suggests that occupational group membership and global self-reported strain did not translate into straightforward differences on the selected performance-based indices. This restraint is consistent with recommendations to interpret individual Rorschach variables narrowly and contextually rather than as broad indicators detached from setting and method (Mihura et al., 2013).

The finding that Police personnel reported greater occupational stress than RPF personnel is noteworthy, but its interpretation must remain cautious. State Police and RPF personnel do not occupy identical institutional roles. State Police are embedded within law-and-order and crime-control responsibilities, whereas the RPF is specifically charged with protecting railway property, passenger



areas, and passengers (Indian Railways, 2025; Ministry of Home Affairs, 2018). At the same time, the present study did not include participant-level information on actual duty profiles, posting patterns, or operational-load exposure. Consequently, the results support a descriptive conclusion that the groups differed on self-reported occupational stress in this sample, but they do not establish the mechanism underlying that difference.

Another important finding was the lack of a clear linear relationship between Lambda, Zd, and overall occupational stress. The Occupational Stress Index measures consciously experienced and self-reported burden, whereas Lambda and Zd are performance-based indices derived from a different assessment logic (Exner, 2003). Within the present design, these two forms of assessment did not converge in a straightforward way. The null associations therefore should not be read as evidence that occupational stress and attending to experience are unrelated in principle; rather, they indicate that no simple correspondence emerged in this dataset.

The study has several limitations. The design was cross-sectional, the sample was modest and purposively selected, and no non-law enforcement comparison group was included. Duty-specific exposure data were not collected, which limits interpretation of the Police-RPF difference. In addition, the analyses focused on overall occupational stress rather than on specific OSI subdimensions. Despite these constraints, the study provides a cautious comparative account of occupational stress and attending to experience in two Indian law enforcement groups. Future research would benefit from larger samples, more detailed duty-related indicators, and designs that can better examine how self-report and performance-based measures relate under different occupational conditions.

In summary, occupational stress differentiated State Police and RPF personnel more clearly than Lambda or Zd. High Lambda and overincorporative Zd were common in the sample, but these variables neither significantly distinguished the occupational groups nor showed meaningful associations with overall occupational stress. The findings support a cautious, exploratory interpretation and underscore the need for larger, duty-sensitive comparative research in law enforcement settings.

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Shattered Illusions And Psychological Awakening In Ibsen's A Doll's House

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Abstract:

Henrik Ibsen's A Doll's House (1879) is widely acknowledged as a pioneering modern drama that exposes the psychological tensions embedded within domestic life and patriarchal structures. This paper examines the psychological issues experienced by the central characters, particularly Nora Helmer and Torvald Helmer, through a critical lens that integrates psychoanalytic, feminist, and socio-psychological perspectives. Nora's transformation from a seemingly naïve and submissive wife into an autonomous individual reflects a profound psychological awakening shaped by repression, identity crisis, and cognitive dissonance. Her internal conflict arises from the disparity between her constructed role as a "doll" and her emerging self-awareness as an independent human being.

Torvald Helmer, on the other hand, embodies psychological rigidity, narcissistic tendencies, and an obsession with social respectability, which ultimately contribute to the emotional breakdown of the marital relationship. The paper also explores secondary characters such as Krogstad and Mrs. Linde, whose experiences further illuminate themes of guilt, moral anxiety, and emotional resilience. Through textual analysis and comparative references to psychological theories, the study argues that Ibsen presents the household not merely as a social institution but as a psychological space where power, repression, and identity conflicts unfold.

Ultimately, the play reveals the destructive consequences of patriarchal dominance on individual psyche and highlights the necessity of self-realization. This study contributes to existing scholarship by synthesizing psychological interpretations with literary analysis, demonstrating how Ibsen's work anticipates modern concerns regarding identity, autonomy, and mental well-being.

Keywords: *Henrik Ibsen, A Doll's House, psychological conflict, identity crisis, patriarchy, Nora Helmer, realism, gender roles*



Introduction:

Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House* stands as a landmark in modern drama, primarily due to its exploration of individual freedom and psychological depth. While the play is often interpreted through feminist or social frameworks, its psychological dimension is equally significant. Ibsen's realistic portrayal of domestic life unveils the inner turmoil of characters constrained by societal expectations and rigid gender roles.

Scholars have emphasized that the play reflects "psychological and emotional tensions within family structures" (Hossain & Iseni, 2014), suggesting that the domestic sphere becomes a site of internal conflict rather than harmony. Nora Helmer's journey is particularly central, as it represents a transition from unconscious compliance to conscious self-awareness.

This paper aims to analyze the psychological issues embedded in the play by focusing on repression, identity fragmentation, marital dynamics, and emotional dependency. By applying psychoanalytic and socio-psychological perspectives, the study demonstrates how Ibsen constructs a dramatic narrative that reveals the complexities of human psychology within a constrained social framework.

Psychological Framework and Theoretical Background:

The psychological interpretation of *A Doll's House* can be supported through Freudian psychoanalysis, existential psychology, and interpersonal theory. Nora's behavior reflects repression and defense mechanisms, as she suppresses her anxieties to maintain domestic stability. According to Kurraz (2015), Nora's personality can be examined through interpersonal relations theory, where her identity is shaped by her interactions with dominant figures like Torvald.

Additionally, existential psychology helps explain Nora's eventual realization of selfhood. Her decision to leave her family signifies an assertion of individuality, aligning with existential notions of freedom and responsibility. Scholars have also noted the presence of "psychological mythology" within the play, where characters construct illusions to cope with reality (Lavender, 2008).

Nora Helmer: Identity Crisis and Psychological Awakening:

Nora Helmer is a complex character whose psychological journey forms the core of the play. Initially, she appears cheerful, submissive, and childlike, embodying the role of the "doll" within her household. However, this façade conceals deep psychological conflict.

Her secret act of forgery, committed to save her husband's life, becomes a source of anxiety and internal tension. This act symbolizes her suppressed desire for agency. As Setyawan et al. (2016) argue, Nora's personality reflects a duality between her external innocence and internal strength. The turning point occurs when Torvald reacts selfishly to the revelation of her secret. His response shatters Nora's illusions, leading to cognitive dissonance—a clash between her belief in marital love and the reality of her subjugation. Consequently, Nora undergoes a psychological rebirth, recognizing that she has been treated as an object rather than an individual (Al-Zubaidi, 2022).



Her final decision to leave represents not merely a social rebellion but a psychological necessity. It is an assertion of selfhood and a rejection of imposed identity.

Torvald Helmer: Narcissism and Psychological Control:

Torvald Helmer's character illustrates psychological rigidity and patriarchal conditioning. He perceives himself as the moral authority within the household, maintaining control through infantilization and condescension. His use of pet names for Nora reflects a psychological mechanism of dominance disguised as affection.

Scholars note that Torvald's behaviour demonstrates "patriarchal domination through language and control" (Saha, 2023). His obsession with reputation reveals a narcissistic personality structure, where external validation takes precedence over genuine emotional connection.

When confronted with Nora's secret, Torvald prioritizes his social standing over her sacrifice, exposing his emotional shallowness. This reaction underscores his inability to empathize, highlighting a psychological imbalance that contributes to the breakdown of the marriage.

Secondary character Krogstad represents the psychological burden of guilt and societal judgment. His desperation stems from the stigma associated with his past actions, illustrating how external condemnation can shape internal distress. Likewise, Mrs. Linde to represent emotional resilience and realism. Mrs. Linde serves as a contrast to Nora. Having experienced hardship, she embodies psychological maturity and realism. Her pragmatic outlook highlights the illusionary nature of Nora's earlier beliefs.

Symbolism and Psychological Space:

The "doll's house" itself functions as a metaphor for psychological confinement. It represents a controlled environment where individuality is suppressed. The setting reflects Nora's mental state ordered yet restrictive.

Objects such as the Christmas tree and the tarantella dance symbolize Nora's inner turmoil. The deterioration of the tree mirrors her psychological breakdown, while the dance represents her frantic attempt to delay the inevitable revelation.

Comparative Analysis: A comparison between Nora and other literary female protagonists, such as Kate Chopin's Edna Pontellier (*The Awakening*), reveals similar psychological struggles. Both characters experience identity crises and challenge societal norms. However, Nora's transformation is more decisive, as she actively rejects her imposed role, whereas Edna's journey ends tragically. This comparison reinforces the universality of psychological conflict in patriarchal societies and highlights Ibsen's progressive portrayal of female autonomy.

Conclusion:

Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House* offers a profound exploration of psychological issues within the framework of domestic life. Through the characters of Nora and Torvald, the play exposes the damaging effects of repression, dominance, and societal expectations on individual identity. Nora's transformation



illustrates the necessity of self-awareness and autonomy, while Torvald's rigidity underscores the limitations of patriarchal thinking.

The play remains relevant due to its insightful depiction of psychological conflict, making it a timeless study of human behaviour and social dynamics. Ultimately, Ibsen's work transcends its historical context, offering enduring insights into the complexities of identity, relationships, and mental well-being.

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Psychological Conditions In Administration : A Behavioral Approach To Organizational Effectiveness

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Abstract:

Psychological conditions constitute a critical foundation for understanding administrative behaviour and organizational effectiveness. This study examines how cognitive and emotional factors influence administrative processes, particularly in relation to decision making, leadership, and workplace interactions. Drawing on secondary sources, the paper analyses key psychological dimensions including stress, motivation, emotional intelligence, perception, and organizational climate. The findings indicate that stress significantly affects cognitive performance, often limiting analytical capacity and reducing the quality of administrative decisions. Motivation emerges as a central determinant of productivity, shaping both individual commitment and collective performance within organizations. Emotional intelligence is identified as an essential leadership capability that enhances interpersonal communication, supports conflict resolution, and promotes adaptive responses to complex situations. Existing research demonstrates that emotionally competent administrators contribute to healthier organizational environments and improved employee engagement Côté, 2014.

Perception is shown to influence how administrators interpret information and respond to organizational challenges, highlighting the role of subjective judgment in shaping outcomes. Additionally, organizational climate plays a vital role in determining employee satisfaction, trust, and participation, thereby affecting overall institutional performance. Studies further suggest that positive psychological environments encourage innovation and collaboration while reducing stress related outcomes Nikolaou and Tsaoasis, 2002. The study concludes that integrating psychological insights into administrative practice enhances leadership effectiveness and organizational sustainability. A comprehensive understanding of human behaviour enables administrators to manage complexity more effectively and create balanced, responsive, and productive systems in both public and private sectors.

Keywords: Stress, Motivation, Emotional Intelligence, Organizational Behaviour, Decision Making



Introduction

Psychology is the scientific study of human behaviour and mental processes. It explains how individuals think, feel, and act in different situations. Since its emergence as a scientific discipline in the late nineteenth century, psychology has contributed significantly to understanding human behaviour in social and organizational contexts.

Administration refers to the process of planning, organizing, directing, and controlling resources to achieve specific objectives. Early administrative theories focused mainly on efficiency and structure, as seen in the works of Henri Fayol and Frederick Taylor. However, contemporary administrative theory recognizes the importance of human behaviour and social dynamics in organizational functioning.

The integration of psychology and administration has led to the development of behavioural approaches that emphasize the importance of understanding human factors. Effective administration depends not only on technical knowledge but also on the ability to manage psychological conditions within organizations.

Objectives of the Study

The study is based on the following objectives:

- To examine the role of psychological conditions in administration
- To analyse the impact of stress and motivation on decision making
- To evaluate the significance of emotional intelligence in leadership
- To understand the influence of organizational climate and behaviour on administrative effectiveness

Research Methodology

The present study is based on secondary data. Information has been collected from research articles, academic journals, books, and credible online sources. The study adopts a qualitative and analytical approach to understand the relationship between psychological conditions and administrative performance.

Review of Literature and Theoretical Insights:

A large body of research highlights the importance of psychological factors in administration and organizational behaviour. Studies show that emotional intelligence significantly influences leadership effectiveness, employee motivation, and workplace behaviour. Research also indicates that stress negatively affects cognitive functioning and decision making, while motivation enhances productivity and engagement.

Scholars emphasize that emotional intelligence helps in managing stress and improving organizational outcomes. Furthermore, positive organizational behaviour theories suggest that psychological strengths such as resilience, optimism, and self-awareness contribute to better



administrative performance.

Psychological Dimensions of Administration

Administrative systems operate within a complex human environment where psychological factors significantly influence behaviour, performance, and institutional outcomes. Contemporary research emphasizes that administrative effectiveness depends not only on formal structures but also on cognitive processes, emotional regulation, and interpersonal dynamics. Psychological dimensions such as stress, motivation, emotional intelligence, perception, organizational climate, and power relations interact continuously, shaping both individual conduct and collective functioning within organizations.

Cognitive Stress and Administrative Judgment

Stress remains one of the most influential psychological variables in administrative contexts. Administrative responsibilities often involve high levels of accountability, uncertainty, and time pressure, which place considerable demands on mental resources. Empirical studies indicate that prolonged exposure to stress impairs executive functions, including attention control, memory retention, and analytical reasoning. As cognitive capacity becomes constrained, administrators may exhibit reduced accuracy in evaluating alternatives and forecasting outcomes. Another important aspect is the phenomenon of cognitive narrowing. Under pressure, individuals tend to focus on immediate concerns while overlooking broader implications. This restricted attention span can lead to incomplete assessments and suboptimal strategic choices. Furthermore, the accumulation of decisions throughout the day contributes to mental fatigue, resulting in diminished judgment quality during later stages of work. Research in organizational psychology highlights that structured work routines, prioritization, and recovery intervals can mitigate these effects and preserve cognitive efficiency.

Motivational Dynamics and Administrative Leadership

Motivation functions as a driving force that determines the intensity and persistence of administrative efforts. It operates through both internal aspirations and external incentives, influencing how administrators engage with their responsibilities and guide their teams. Intrinsic motivation, which arises from a sense of purpose and professional fulfilment, is closely associated with innovation and sustained commitment. In contrast, extrinsic factors such as rewards and recognition provide reinforcement but may not ensure long term engagement when used in isolation.

Leadership plays a critical role in shaping motivational patterns within organizations. Transformational approaches that encourage participation, autonomy, and personal development tend to foster higher levels of engagement. Conversely, rigid and control-oriented methods may limit initiative and reduce morale. Theoretical frameworks such as Maslow's hierarchy and Herzberg's model suggest that individuals seek both security and opportunities for growth. Administrators who align organizational goals with these psychological needs can create a more energized and productive workforce.

Emotional Intelligence and Interpersonal Effectiveness

Emotional intelligence represents a central competency in administrative practice, encompassing



the ability to recognize, interpret, and regulate emotions in oneself and others. Research demonstrates that administrators with high emotional intelligence are better equipped to manage workplace relationships, maintain composure in challenging situations, and facilitate constructive communication. This capability enhances both individual performance and team cohesion. Self-awareness enables administrators to understand their emotional triggers and behavioural tendencies, allowing for more deliberate responses. Self-regulation supports emotional stability, particularly in high pressure situations where impulsive reactions may lead to conflict. Empathy, another key component, allows leaders to appreciate diverse perspectives and respond sensitively to employee concerns. Studies show that emotionally intelligent leadership contributes to a positive organizational climate and reduces workplace stress by fostering trust and mutual respect Momeni, 2009.

Perception and Cognitive Interpretation in Administration

Perception plays a vital role in shaping administrative behaviour. Individuals interpret organizational events through personal experiences, beliefs, and expectations, leading to varied understandings of the same situation. This subjective interpretation influences decision making, communication, and interpersonal interactions. Biases and assumptions often affect perception, sometimes leading to misjudgement or conflict. For instance, selective perception may cause administrators to focus only on information that confirms existing beliefs, while ignoring contradictory evidence. Similarly, attribution errors can result in incorrect conclusions about employee behaviour. Addressing these cognitive distortions requires reflective thinking and open communication. Administrators who actively seek diverse viewpoints are more likely to make balanced and informed decisions.

Organizational Climate and Psychological Environment

The psychological environment of an organization significantly influences employee attitudes and administrative outcomes. Organizational climate reflects how individuals perceive policies, leadership behaviour, and interpersonal relationships within the workplace. A supportive climate encourages openness, collaboration, and innovation, whereas a restrictive environment may generate anxiety and disengagement. Studies indicate that leadership behaviour is a primary determinant of organizational climate. Administrators who demonstrate fairness, transparency, and respect contribute to a sense of psychological safety among employees. This environment enables individuals to express ideas freely and participate in decision making processes. In contrast, environments characterized by uncertainty or lack of recognition can lead to reduced motivation and lower productivity. Research further suggests that emotional intelligence and leadership style are strongly associated with the quality of organizational climate Maamari and Majdalani, 2017.

Conflict Processes and Power Relations

Conflict is an inherent aspect of administrative systems due to differences in interests, values, and perspectives. Psychological factors determine how conflicts emerge and how they are managed.



Emotional responses such as frustration or anxiety can intensify disagreements, while rational evaluation and effective communication can facilitate resolution.

Power dynamics add another layer of complexity to administrative interactions. Power may originate from formal authority, expertise, or social influence. The manner in which power is exercised influences organizational relationships and employee perceptions. Ethical use of authority fosters cooperation and trust, whereas coercive practices may lead to resistance and dissatisfaction. Effective conflict management requires a combination of negotiation skills, emotional control, and active listening. Collaborative approaches that seek mutually beneficial outcomes are generally more sustainable than avoidance or confrontation. Research in organizational behaviour emphasizes that emotionally intelligent administrators are more successful in handling conflict and maintaining organizational harmony Vigoda Gadot and Meisler, 2010.

Integration of Psychological Dimensions in Administrative Practice

These psychological dimensions do not operate independently but are interconnected in shaping administrative behaviour. Stress influences emotional regulation, which in turn affects decision making and interpersonal relations. Motivation interacts with organizational climate, while perception shapes responses to conflict and power structures.

Modern administrative systems increasingly adopt a holistic approach that integrates these psychological elements. Emphasis is placed on developing emotional competencies, promoting well being, and creating supportive work environments. Such approaches enhance not only individual effectiveness but also overall organizational resilience and adaptability.

Discussion

The findings of this study highlight the growing importance of psychological approaches in administration. Modern organizations are increasingly focusing on employee well-being, emotional health, and behavioural dynamics. Recent research emphasizes the role of emotional intelligence in reducing stress and improving organizational outcomes. Studies also indicate that motivation and positive organizational climate contribute significantly to productivity and employee satisfaction. In the Indian context, there is a need to develop culturally relevant psychological frameworks that reflect local social and organizational realities. Emerging challenges such as digital stress and changing work environments further increase the importance of psychological resilience in administration.

Conclusion

Psychological conditions are fundamental to effective administration. Factors such as stress, motivation, emotional intelligence, and perception influence decision making, leadership, and organizational behaviour.

A psychologically informed approach to administration enhances communication, improves leadership effectiveness, and promotes employee satisfaction. As organizations become more complex, the integration of psychological principles into administrative practices becomes essential for sustainable development and organizational success.



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The Politics Of Self And Identity : A Study Of Viramati In Difficult Daughters.

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Abstract

This paper examines the politics of self and identity in Manju Kapur's Difficult Daughters, focusing on the character of Viramati. It explores how identity is not fixed but constantly shaped by personal desires, social expectations, and historical contexts. Set against the backdrop of pre-independence India, the novel highlights the tension between tradition and modernity, especially in the lives of women.

Viramati's path represents the challenges faced by an educated Indian woman striving for freedom while being tied to familial responsibilities and social expectations. Her ambition for learning and personal identity creates a clash with her family, who perceive marriage as her main purpose. Her connection with a married professor adds complexity to her identity, locating her between emotional dependence and the pursuit of independence.

Ultimately, the paper argues that Viramati's story epitomises the broader condition of women who are labelled "difficult" when they challenge norms. Her journey highlights the complexity of selfhood and the continuous effort required to define one's place in society.

Keywords: *Emotional dependence, Identity, personal desire, social expectations.*

IDENTITY IN LITERATURE

Identity plays an important role in literature, serving as an insightful way to examine the human experience. The identities of characters, formed by their backgrounds, cultures, and individual experiences, offer a viewpoint for readers to understand, connect with, and empathise with different perspectives.

In this context, Manju Kapur stands out as a significant voice in Indian English literature. Her writing vivifies women who are now determined to speak out and break free from conventional limits. These women, frequently referred to as the "new woman," bear the burden of enduring social constraints



while seeking to create a space for themselves. Kapur's novels depict a reality where familial roles, particularly of mothers and daughters, are strictly regulated and where marriage frequently represents a woman's primary aim, offering minimal space for personal freedom.

In *Difficult Daughters*, this strain is particularly evident in Viramati's life. Her experience involves not only individual decisions but also manoeuvring through a society that constantly demands orthodoxy. Torn between her responsibilities to her family and her longing for independence, Viramati embodies the challenges faced by numerous educated Indian women striving to establish their identities beyond societal norms. Kapur illustrates this conflict with care, revealing that identity is not static but constantly influenced by situations, connections, and internal struggles.

Kapur's characters are engaging due to their ongoing struggle to reconcile their true selves with societal expectations. They exist amid conflicts between tradition and modernity, responsibility and longing, and it is from this struggle that their power arises. Viramati's narrative, specifically, illustrates how identity is frequently formed through connections. Her relationship with a married professor is not merely an act of rebellion but a crucial moment in her quest for identity. As she transitions through various roles such as daughter, lover, student, and woman, she gradually realises the price of her decisions. Her path is not straightforward or finished; rather, it embodies the chaotic, changing essence of identity itself. Against the backdrop of a shifting society, characterised by political and cultural changes, Viramati's existence reflects a broader transformation, where identity is perpetually negotiated, questioned, and reinterpreted.

VIRAMATI'S QUEST FOR IDENTITY IN *DIFFICULT DAUGHTERS*.

In the novel, the author depicts her main character, Viramati, as a woman entangled in the struggle between physical desire and a longing to engage in the political and intellectual movements of her time. The main character of the novel, Viramati, challenges convention. The title of the novel *Difficult Daughters* suggests that a woman, who seeks an identity, is labelled as the difficult daughter by both her family and society. *Difficult Daughters* showcases women striving to forge their own identities. Vikram Chandra states: "Difficult Daughters is intensely imagined, fluidly written, moving through our struggles with our parents, it flings us into their own momentous times, their youthful yearnings for love and independence and life. And so, it becomes an urgent and important story about their family, partition and love."

The novel delves into cultural hybridity, the tension with tradition, the effects of colonial heritage, the search for national identity, language interactions, and the impact of globalisation through Viramati's experiences. These components together create a profound story that not only mirrors the intricacies of personal identity but also connects with wider socio-cultural and historical transformations.

- i. A significant element is cultural hybridisation. Viramati, raised in a conventional Punjabi family, faces the conflict between colonial impacts and native traditions. The novel portrays the conflict as she navigates through the intricacies of an evolving culture, where Western ideas confront and merge with ancient customs. This cultural hybridity represents



the wider post-colonial challenge of harmonising various influences.

- ii. The novel explores the conflict with tradition. Viramati's path is characterised by her resistance against societal rules and expectations. Her quest for education and individuality challenges conventional gender norms, emphasising the struggle between personal goals and societal limitations. This struggle reflects the broader post-colonial narrative of individuals challenging entrenched norms to forge their unique identities.
- iii. A central feature of identity predicament in *Difficult Daughters* is the colonial legacy. The story unfolds against the setting of India's fight for independence, and characters wrestle with the lasting effects of colonial rule. Viramati's experiences echo the societal upheaval and the quest for identity in a nation undergoing a profound transformation.
- iv. In *Difficult Daughters*, the characters experience a journey of change. Viramati's path is characterised by personal development and self-discovery. The identity issue acts as a catalyst for her growth, representing the transformative power found in the challenge of establishing oneself amid societal norms and historical influences.

Ida tells the story of her mother, Viramati. The story opens with the death of the main character, Viramati. Ida shares the tale of her deceased mother. The author similarly portrays the essence of Viramati, and her desires after death reveals her perspective. She says: "When I die, she said to me, I want my body donated. My eyes, my heart, my kidneys, any organ that can be of use. That way someone will value me after I have gone." (*Difficult Daughters*, pg.1)

Ida, an ever-aloof daughter and a divorced girl, travels to Amritsar to rebuild her mother's memory. She attempts to recollect the memory of her mother. She states that her mother was a strong and assertive woman who battled against the harmful traditions of society. Her mother sought to find her identity within traditional Indian society. Viramati was raised in a conventional Indian household. She was occupied with the housework. She lost herself in the responsibilities of the family. Manju Kapur writes: "Ever since Viramati could remember, she had been looking after children. It wasn't only baby Parvati to whom she was indispensable, to her younger siblings she was second mother as well." (*Difficult Daughters*, pg.6)

The Novelist, through Viramati, reveals the truth about Indian women within the family. She is merely a puppet under the control of a man. Viramati's mother Kasturi always told her that a woman's ultimate destiny is marriage. As the eldest daughter of Kasturi, Viramati had to care for all her siblings and helped her mother in their upbringing. Throughout her mother's pregnancies, Viramati consistently occupied herself with organising the household matters and managing things as far as possible for her. Kapur describes her responsibilities in these words: "Ever since Viramati could remember she had been looking after children. It wasn't only baby Parvati to whom she was indispensable, to her younger siblings she was second mother as well. She was impatient and intolerant of fuss. If they didn't eat their meals, on her return home from school, she would hunt out the offending brother or sister and shove the cold food down their throats." (*Difficult Daughters*, pg.6)



It seems that Viramati was forced to assume responsibility at a very young age. Viramati, like many other Indian girls, is expected to accept arranged marriage. Viramati must adjust to her five sisters waiting for their marriage. Her family is quite conscious because she is the eldest one. Her mother is also of the same opinion. She would like to perform the marriage of her daughter as soon as possible. Kasturi, is also aware of the transformational attitude of Viramati. She realises the inevitable changes in her growing daughter. This tension becomes more evident after Viramati clears her FA exams and meets Inderjit, the canal engineer, prompting her mother to question, "What is the matter with her?" "She was never so keen before." "The girl is serious. It is natural," said her grandfather to her mother. (Difficult Daughters, pg.45) However, Viramati desired to pursue her studies instead of marriage and giving birth to children. Nonetheless, she dismisses it and chooses to pursue her education further. This audacious move by Viramati disturbs everyone in her family. They believe she has brought shame to the family and jeopardized her sister's prospects for marriage. Her mother conveys her annoyance through these words: "For how long can she go on like this? There is Indumati to think of. We can afford to wait for the boys after Indu, but what about her?" (Difficult Daughters, pg.45) After the denial of the marriage proposal, her condition gets critical. The author significantly conveys the problem of women's deficiency. She lacks the authority to make her own choice. The dominance of men poses an obstacle in her life. Internal turmoil stemming from her failure to make a suitable choice, feelings of having let her family down, and the yearning for a liberated existence compel her to try to end her life by drowning in a canal. Caught in a whirlpool of mental chaos, she opts for suicide as an appropriate end to her unresolved psychic conflict: "Now that she was actually going to merge her body with the canal, she felt her confusion clearing." (Difficult Daughters, pg.76).

When Suraj Prakash, Viramati's father, asks her the reason for attempting to suicide, Viramati replies in the following manner: "Study," mumbled Viramati like a mantra. She swallowed. "Study..." "And not marry. I don't want to marry" (Difficult Daughters, pg.87) Finally, they lock her in the godown and arrange for Indu, her younger sister, to marry Inderjit. In a way, she had an illicit relationship with Professor Harish, for she even bore the confinement. This relationship even leads her to commit suicide as she was not able to define her position either in her family and nor in the professor's. Here she is moving from a foreclosed identity, where everything was defined for her by her family to a moratorium where she was to search for her own identity. She says: "my fate is cast, and I am free now. I feel far more peaceful in the godown than I did in the days before I went to river. Then, the confusion in my mind was terrible. I could not think, and all I heard around me was talk of marriage. I was a rubber doll for others to move as they willed, then I did not want to live." (Difficult Daughters, pg.92) These were the words which defined her state of mind and her will to move freely and carve her own identity.

When Viramati becomes aware of Ganga's (Harish's wife) pregnancy, she feels totally deceived: "...in this moment of weakness it seemed I could not in all conscience ignore the claims of those around me" (Difficult Daughters, pg.97). Even though Harish made a mistake he tries to suppress it by saying soothing words to Viramati. He cleverly blames her that she is so innocent and inexperienced in that matter. He justifies himself that he is not responsible for that act and he adds that act is performed mechanically, not willingly. He uses the clever love trick that he would live only after he



hears from her. The justifications given by the professor regarding his relationship with Ganga and Viramati clearly echo the notions of androcentric culture: “Co-wives are part of our social traditions... I don’t live with her in any meaningful way” (Difficult Daughters, pg.112). However, Viramati reciprocates him that she is not yet mature enough to understand the action and assured him not to disturb her anymore. She boldly refuses to accept his notions and determines to free herself from the illusion of “useless love and a doubtful marriage” (Difficult Daughters, pg.122) and eventually, avoids his incessant interferences in her life. This shows the bold and firm nature of Viramati’s character. Viramati decides to go to Lahore for her further study. However, destiny continues chasing Viramati in the form of the professor, who wishes to keep her under his control forever without entering the institution of marriage. Harish doesn’t let his heart and tries to win Viramati’s love again. He succeeds in his continuous efforts. He even makes physical love with her when she is in Lahore. After a few months of this illegal love, Viramati finds that she is pregnant. When she tries to say this to Harish, he condemns her for this action. He says that he is not ready to waste her education. Saying all this advice is to avoid the talk of marriage. Then she goes to Amritsar and manages to get a gold bangle from her father, but only to sell it for her abortion. After this depressing incident, she decides not to entertain Harish, the professor, any more.

Conclusion

Thus, one can conclude that Viramati, being brought up in a progressive family, is educated and exposed to western ideas, defies the family and follows her heart. She struggles a lot to get her own identity. In her quest of identity, she loses it at every stage and struggles to make space for herself on her own. Her rebellious attitude takes back stages whenever it has to be strong to refute Harish’s sexual oppression. Manju Kapur shows constant effort to consolidate the position of women in Indian society. The beauty of her novels certainly lies in her unique presentation in which she seems to present conflicting situations in which women are in search of their own self-made identity and location. The rebel in Viramati might have actually exchanged one kind of slavery for another. But towards the end, she becomes free, free even from the oppressive love of her husband.

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Effect Of Mind Sound Resonance Technique (MSRT) On State And Global Self-Esteem In Children With Physical Disabilities : An Exploratory Study

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Abstract

Children with physical disabilities often experience psychosocial challenges, including reduced self-esteem and adaptive functioning. Evidence on yoga-based behavioral interventions for enhancing self-concept in this population remains limited. This study investigated the effects of Mind Sound Resonance Technique (MSRT), a yoga-based meditative practice incorporating mantra chanting and internal resonance, on self-esteem in physically disabled children. Forty-five participants aged 9–18 years were recruited from a special school, of whom 30 completed a one-month intervention (30 minutes/day, six days/week). Self-esteem was assessed using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) and State Self-Esteem Scale (SSES) before and after the intervention. Paired sample t-tests revealed a significant improvement in SSES scores ($p < 0.05$), indicating enhanced state self-esteem, while changes in RSES were not statistically significant, though trends suggested improvement. The findings indicate that MSRT may positively influence situational self-perception, emotional regulation, and confidence. These results support the potential role of yoga-based meditative interventions as accessible, non-pharmacological strategies for promoting psychological well-being among children with physical disabilities. Further controlled studies with larger samples are warranted.

Keywords: *Mind Sound Resonance Technique (MSRT), Yoga-based meditation, Self-esteem, State self-esteem, Physical disability, Children, Psychosocial intervention.*



Introduction

Children with physical disabilities may experience difficulties in mobility, participation, and social interaction, which can shape emotional adjustment and self-perception. Earlier work has cautioned that disability should not automatically be assumed to determine psychological development, yet self-concept and self-esteem remain important concerns in this population.^{1,2} A review of the literature on children with physical disabilities found mixed findings, but also highlighted that psychosocial factors such as stigma and social participation play an important role in self-esteem³. In adolescents with physical disability, perceived stigma has been shown to correlate negatively with self-esteem and positively with social phobia, suggesting that social environment and acceptance are closely linked to psychological well-being. Research on body image and disability further indicates that physical limitations may be associated with body image concerns and self-worth issues, although findings are not uniform across studies. Self-esteem is widely recognized as a key psychological resource in childhood and adolescence because it contributes to resilience, social adaptation, and mental health.

Yoga-based interventions have gained increasing attention as holistic, non-pharmacological approaches for enhancing physical, cognitive, and emotional well-being in children. Recent integrative reviews indicate that yoga interventions can significantly improve emotional regulation, cognitive functioning, and behavioral control among children and adolescents with diverse developmental and mental health conditions⁴. Additionally, randomized trials have demonstrated that yoga-based practices enhance mindfulness and self-esteem, which in turn mediate improvements in emotional and behavioral outcomes⁵. Yoga has also been conceptualized as an empowering tool for individuals with disabilities, promoting confidence, independence, and psychosocial well-being⁶.

Mind Sound Resonance Technique (MSRT) is a yoga-based relaxation practice that combines mantra chanting, internal resonance, and meditative awareness⁷. Recent studies indicate that MSRT may reduce anxiety and psychological distress and improve cognitive and emotional outcomes in healthy and clinical populations⁸. However, evidence on its use in physically disabled children remains limited. Therefore, the present study examined whether a brief MSRT intervention could improve self-esteem in physically disabled children.

Study Design and Setting

This study employed a single-group pre-post experimental design to evaluate the effects of Mind Sound Resonance Technique (MSRT) on self-esteem in children with physical disabilities. The study was conducted over a period of one month (June–July 2023) in a special school for children with disabilities in Gujarat, India.

Participants

A total of 45 children with non-progressive physical disabilities, aged 9–18 years (mean $\pm$ SD: 14 $\pm$ 2.5 years), were initially recruited. Participants were selected based on their ability to understand



and follow instructions. Children with severe illness, cognitive impairment preventing participation, or irregular attendance (<60% sessions) were excluded. After attrition, 30 participants completed the study and were included in the final analysis. The characteristics of the participants are given in Table1.

Table1: Characteristics of the Participants. Values are presented as mean and SD.

Participants	Intervention Group (n=30)
Age (Years)	14 ± 2.54
Gender	
Male (n=36)	14.30±2.47
Female (n=4)	12±2.30
Height (cm)	138.4±10.32
Weight (kg)	34.8±8.75
BMI mass index (kg/m ²)	18.2 ± 2.83 (mild thinness)

Ethical Considerations

The study protocol was approved by the Institutional Ethics Committee of the University and registered with the Clinical Trial Registry of India (CTRI/2018/01/011314). Written informed consent was obtained from parents or guardians prior to participation. Permission was also secured from the school administration. Parents were encouraged to remain present during sessions to facilitate participation and adherence.

Outcome Measures

Self-esteem was assessed using two standardized and widely validated psychometric instruments administered before and after the intervention: Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES): The RSES, developed by Morris Rosenberg (1965), is a 10-item self-report measure designed to assess global self-esteem. Each item is rated on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Five items are positively worded and five are negatively worded (reverse scored). Total scores range from 10 to 40, with higher scores indicating greater self-esteem. The RSES has demonstrated high internal consistency (Cronbach's α 0.85–0.92) and strong construct validity across diverse populations⁹.

State Self-Esteem Scale (SSES): The SSES developed by Todd F. Heatherton and Janet Polivy (1991), is a 20-item instrument designed to measure situational (state) self-esteem. It assesses three domains: performance, social, and appearance self-esteem. Items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from not at all to extremely. Several items are reverse scored. Higher scores indicate higher levels of state self-esteem. The SSES is sensitive to short-term psychological changes and has



demonstrated good reliability and validity in experimental and clinical settings¹⁰.

Both scales were administered in a structured format with assistance provided when necessary to ensure comprehension. Standard scoring procedures were followed as per the respective scale manuals.

Intervention

Participants underwent a standardized MSRT intervention for 30 minutes per session, six days per week, for one month. Sessions were conducted in the morning (9:30 AM) in a quiet environment.

MSRT is a guided yogic meditation practiced in a supine position with eyes closed, incorporating mantra chanting, internal sound resonance, and relaxation. The structured protocol is given in Table 2.

Table 2. Components and sequence of the MSRT yoga module administered to physically disabled children.

S. No.	Practice Component	Description of Practice	Duration / Rounds
1	Opening Prayer	<i>Maha Mrityunjaya</i> Mantra (guided chanting to initiate relaxation and focus)	1–2 minutes
2	A–U–M Chanting (Loud)	Chanting of “A”, “U”, “M”, and combined “AUM” with awareness of body resonance	3 rounds
3	A–U–M Chanting (Mental)	Internal (silent) repetition of “A”, “U”, “M”, and “AUM” with resonance awareness	3 rounds
4	<i>Maha Mrityunjaya</i> Mantra (Loud)	Vocal chanting with attention to vibratory sensations throughout the body	3 rounds
5	<i>Maha Mrityunjaya</i> Mantra (Mental)	Silent repetition with awareness of internal resonance (Anahata phase)	3 rounds
6	<i>Om</i> Chanting (Mental)	Silent chanting of “Om” focusing on internal sound vibration	9 rounds
7	<i>Ajapa-Japa</i> (Om to Silence)	Effortless mental repetition of “Om” gradually dissolving into silence	9 rounds
8	Deep Silence	Awareness of stillness and internal quietude	3–5 minutes
9	Resolve (<i>Sankalpa</i>)	Positive affirmation or intention setting	1 minute
10	Closing Prayer	Concluding chant to complete the session	1–2 minutes

The total duration of each session was approximately 30 minutes, practiced six days per week for one month under supervision.

Data analysis

Data were analyzed using SPSS version 21.0 (IBM Corp., USA). Descriptive statistics were expressed as mean $\pm$ standard deviation (SD). Normality of data distribution was assessed prior to analysis.

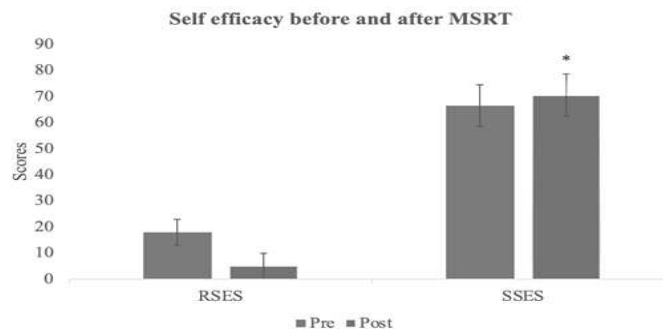
Pre–post differences in self-esteem scores were evaluated using the paired sample t-test. A two-tailed significance level of $p < 0.05$ was considered statistically significant. Reliability of the scales in

the study sample was assessed using Cronbach's alpha.

Results

A total of 45 children with physical disabilities were initially enrolled in the study. Of these, 30 participants (66.7%) completed the intervention and were included in the final analysis. The mean age of participants was 14 ± 2.54 years. The baseline demographic and anthropometric characteristics are presented in Table 1. Pre-post changes in self-esteem were assessed using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) and the State Self-Esteem Scale (SSES). A statistically significant improvement was observed in SSES scores following the one-month MSRT intervention. The paired sample t-test revealed a significant increase in post-intervention scores compared to baseline ($t = 2.30$, $df = 29$, $p < 0.05$). The 95% confidence interval for the mean difference ranged from "7.49 to "0.44, indicating a meaningful enhancement in state self-esteem. No statistically significant change was observed in RSES scores after the intervention ($t = 0.49$, $df = 29$, $p > 0.05$).

Figure 1. Graphical representation of mean values $\pm$ SD of the Rosenberg self-esteem Scale (RSES) and State self-esteem Scale (SSES) before and after MSRT practice.



However, descriptive analysis indicated a trend toward improvement in global self-esteem following MSRT practice. The graphical presentation of the results are given in Figure 1.

The internal consistency of the scales in the present sample was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. The SSES demonstrated moderate reliability ($\alpha = 0.51$), while the RSES showed acceptable reliability ($\alpha = 0.56$) in this population.

Overall, the results indicate that MSRT practice significantly improved state self-esteem, reflecting enhanced situational self-perception and emotional regulation. Although changes in global self-esteem were not statistically significant, the observed trend suggests potential benefits with longer or more intensive interventions.

Discussion

This study found that one month of MSRT significantly improved state self-esteem in children with physical disabilities, while global self-esteem showed a positive but non-significant trend. This



pattern suggests that MSRT may be more effective for short-term, situation-sensitive self-evaluation than for stable trait-like self-worth, which typically requires longer and more intensive intervention¹¹.

The findings are consistent with Self-Determination Theory, which proposes that well-being depends on satisfaction of autonomy, competence, and relatedness¹². For children with physical disabilities, daily practice of a structured yet internally guided technique such as MSRT may support autonomy through self-directed awareness, competence through mastery of chanting and attention regulation, and relatedness through shared group practice¹³. In this way, MSRT may indirectly enhance self-esteem by meeting basic psychological needs linked to healthy motivation and adjustment⁷.

From a neurovisceral integration perspective, MSRT may also improve emotional regulation by strengthening top-down control over autonomic and limbic activity^{13,14}. Mantra-based meditation and relaxation practices have been associated with parasympathetic predominance, improved autonomic balance, and limbic deactivation, which may reduce negative self-referential processing and promote emotional stability¹⁴. The observed rise in state self-esteem may therefore reflect improved momentary regulation of affect and cognition.

These results align with prior studies showing beneficial effects of yoga-based practices on self-esteem, emotional well-being, and adaptive functioning in school-aged children and in populations with disabilities⁴. However, most previous work has examined broader yoga modules rather than MSRT alone, so this study adds preliminary evidence for a focused, sound-based meditative intervention¹⁵.

Several limitations should be noted. The single-group pre-post design limits causal inference, the sample was small, and attrition reduced statistical power. The intervention period may have been too brief to affect global self-esteem, and the absence of physiological measures limited mechanistic interpretation. The modest internal consistency of the scales in this sample also suggests caution in interpretation.

Overall, MSRT appears to be a feasible, low-cost, and potentially useful supportive intervention for enhancing state self-esteem in children with physical disabilities. Larger randomized controlled trials with longer follow-up and multimodal outcomes are needed to confirm these preliminary findings.

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Nature, Woman And Community: An Ecofeminist Reading Of Mamang Dai's Select Fictions

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Abstract

*This paper examines Mamang Dai's fiction through an **ecofeminist framework**, focusing on the interrelated dynamics of **nature, woman, and community** in her literary narratives. Rooted in the indigenous cultural landscape of Northeast India, Dai's works foreground an ecological worldview that challenges patriarchal, colonial, and capitalist modes of domination. The study analyzes select texts such as *The Legends of Pensam* and *The Black Hill* to demonstrate how nature functions as a living, sacred presence rather than a passive backdrop, shaping human identity and moral values.*

The paper argues that women in Dai's fiction emerge as custodians of ecological knowledge and cultural memory, whose lives are deeply intertwined with natural rhythms and communal survival. Through myth, oral tradition, and memory, Dai constructs a collective identity that resists environmental exploitation and social marginalization. The disruption of ecological balance is shown to parallel the oppression of women and the fragmentation of indigenous community life.

By highlighting harmony, care, and interdependence, Mamang Dai's fiction articulates an ecofeminist consciousness that proposes an alternative, sustainable mode of coexistence between humans and the natural world. The paper concludes that Dai's narratives present ecofeminism not merely as a critical theory but as a lived indigenous practice embedded in everyday life and cultural tradition.

Key words - Ecofeminism, Nature and Ecology, Woman–Nature Relationship, Community and Collective Memory, Environmental Ethics, Patriarchal and Colonial Critique, Cultural Ecology



Introduction

Mamang Dai's fiction offers a powerful literary space where **nature, women, and community exist in an organic, inseparable relationship**. Rooted in the indigenous culture of Arunachal Pradesh, her narratives foreground an ecofeminist worldview that challenges patriarchal, colonial, and capitalist modes of domination. Ecofeminism, as a theoretical framework, explores the parallel exploitation of women and nature and emphasizes ethics of care, coexistence, and sustainability. Dai's fiction exemplifies ecofeminist consciousness by portraying women as custodians of ecological wisdom, nature as a living entity, and community as a collective bound by environmental harmony.

Rather than presenting nature as a passive background, Dai situates the natural world at the center of human experience. Her stories critique modern developmental forces that threaten indigenous lifestyles and ecological balance while celebrating feminine resilience, memory, and communal survival. This ecofeminist reading examines how Dai constructs a literary universe where **female identity, environmental ethics, and tribal community life are deeply interconnected**.

Ecofeminist

The term “**ecofeminist**” refers to a **writer, character, theme, or perspective** that reflects ecofeminist ideology. In literature, an ecofeminist approach emphasizes characters—especially women—who are closely connected to nature and resist exploitation through nurturing, ecological wisdom, or cultural memory.

Ecofeminism examines the interconnected domination of women, nature, and indigenous communities, arguing that patriarchal and colonial systems exploit all three simultaneously (Shiva, 1988; Warren, 1990). In the context of Northeast India, Mamang Dai's fiction offers a distinct indigenous ecofeminist voice, where land is not a resource but a living ancestral presence, intimately tied to women's identity and community survival.

Main Themes of ecofeminist

- Exposes how male-dominated power structures exploit land and marginalize women.
- Tribal and rural women preserve ecological wisdom through myths, rituals, and oral traditions.
- Nature is portrayed as nurturing, life-giving, and spiritually powerful.
- Portrays nature as a living, sacred entity
- Shows women as caretakers or protectors of the environment
- Critiques patriarchy, capitalism, colonialism, and industrialization
- Emphasizes balance, sustainability, and interdependence

Nature as a Living Presence

In Mamang Dai's fiction, nature is not an inert setting but a **sentient and sacred presence**. Mountains, rivers, forests, animals, and seasons possess agency and moral significance. This portrayal reflects indigenous cosmology, where land is revered as an ancestral and maternal force. In *The*



Legends of Pensam, the landscape is inseparable from the people's identity; the land holds memories, myths, and histories passed through generations.

Ecofeminist theory rejects the anthropocentric worldview that treats nature as a resource for exploitation. Dai's narratives align with this perspective by presenting nature as a partner in human survival rather than an object of control. Environmental imbalance in her fiction often signals social and moral decay. When forests are destroyed or rivers disrupted, community bonds weaken, and cultural values erode.

In novels such as *The Legends of Pensam* and *The Black Hill*, women are portrayed as custodians of ecological memory. Female characters embody continuity between past and present, human and non-human life. Dai resists the Western binary of nature/culture by presenting women as integral to ecological balance, rather than passive victims.

"The land speaks through memory, myth, and the bodies of women who inhabit it."

(Dai, 2006)

Nature in Dai's fiction nurtures, heals, and teaches. It provides food, shelter, and spiritual guidance, reinforcing ecofeminism's emphasis on interdependence. The reverence for natural cycles and seasonal rhythms reflects a worldview that resists industrial modernity and promotes ecological sustainability.

Women as Custodians of Ecological Wisdom

Women occupy a central position in Mamang Dai's ecofeminist vision. Female characters are portrayed as **nurturers, healers, storytellers, and preservers of tradition**, whose lives are deeply entwined with the natural environment. Their knowledge of herbs, farming, rituals, and oral narratives reflects an intimate relationship with the land.

Unlike mainstream feminist narratives that often focus on individual emancipation, Dai's portrayal of women emphasizes **relational identity**. Women derive strength from their connection to nature and community rather than from opposition or domination. This aligns with ecofeminist thought, which values cooperation, care, and emotional intelligence.

In *The Black Hill*, women's lives reflect endurance and resilience in the face of colonial intrusion and patriarchal authority. Though their resistance is subtle, it is deeply powerful. By sustaining cultural memory and ecological ethics, women ensure communal survival. Their bodies and lives often mirror the land—both are sites of exploitation and control, yet both possess regenerative power.

Dai's women do not merely symbolize nature; they actively engage with it. Their daily interactions with forests and rivers illustrate how feminine labor sustains ecological balance. This representation challenges patriarchal narratives that devalue women's work and indigenous knowledge.

Community and Collective Identity

Community is a crucial component of Mamang Dai's ecofeminist framework. Her fiction emphasizes **collective existence over individualism**, portraying tribal society as interconnected through kinship, shared rituals, and environmental dependence. Ecofeminism critiques Western individualistic models



that prioritize profit and control; Dai's narratives propose community as an ethical alternative.

In *The Legends of Pensam*, community life revolves around storytelling, rituals, and respect for nature. These practices foster social cohesion and ecological awareness. Women play a key role in maintaining these traditions, acting as mediators between generations and between the human and natural worlds.

Disruption of community often follows environmental degradation. Colonial administration, modern infrastructure, and economic exploitation fragment tribal life and alienate people from their land. Dai critiques these forces by showing how ecological destruction leads to cultural disintegration, particularly affecting women who depend on natural resources for survival.

Community in Dai's fiction functions as a site of resistance. By sustaining indigenous values and ecological ethics, the community challenges dominant systems of power. Ecofeminism here becomes a **lived practice**, embedded in everyday life rather than a theoretical abstraction.

Mamang Dai's fiction foregrounds community over individualism, aligning with ecofeminist critiques of capitalist exploitation. In *The Legends of Pensam*, communal life depends on rivers, forests, and oral traditions—spaces where women play central roles as storytellers, healers, and preservers of ecological ethics.

The displacement of indigenous communities through modernization mirrors the silencing of women's voices, reinforcing ecofeminist arguments that environmental destruction and gender oppression are mutually reinforcing (Plumwood, 1993).

Myth, Memory, and Oral Tradition

Myth and oral tradition play a vital role in reinforcing ecofeminist consciousness in Dai's fiction. Tribal myths link women to rivers, forests, and ancestral spirits, emphasizing the sacred bond between femininity and nature. These narratives preserve ecological wisdom and offer alternative ways of knowing that challenge patriarchal historiography.

Memory functions as an ecofeminist tool in Dai's writing. Women's storytelling preserves histories that are often excluded from official records. Through memory, the land becomes a repository of collective experience, trauma, and resilience. Ecofeminism values such embodied and emotional knowledge, recognizing it as essential for environmental ethics.

Dai's use of myth resists colonial narratives that portray indigenous cultures as primitive. Instead, she highlights their ecological sophistication and moral depth. Myth becomes a means of reclaiming cultural identity and asserting the value of indigenous ecofeminist worldviews.

Dai's narrative style—fragmented, lyrical, and oral—reflects ecofeminist resistance to linear, patriarchal historiography. Women emerge as bearers of ecological wisdom, transmitting sustainable values across generations.

“Stories are seeds. They grow when they are remembered.” (Dai, 2006)



Critique of Modernity and Colonialism

A significant aspect of ecofeminist reading in Mamang Dai's fiction is her critique of **colonial and modern development models**. Roads, administrative systems, and economic exploitation disrupt ecological balance and undermine tribal autonomy. Women and nature suffer most from these changes, reinforcing ecofeminist arguments about intersecting oppressions.

In *The Black Hill*, colonial authority seeks to map, control, and categorize land, reducing it to property rather than a living entity. This process mirrors the patriarchal control of women's bodies and lives. Dai exposes how colonial power structures silence indigenous voices and marginalize women's experiences.

Ecofeminism in Dai's fiction does not reject progress entirely but questions development that prioritizes profit over sustainability. Her narratives advocate an ethical relationship with nature rooted in respect, balance, and community responsibility.

Conclusion

An ecofeminist reading of Mamang Dai's fiction reveals a literary vision grounded in **harmony between nature, woman, and community**. Her narratives challenge patriarchal and colonial ideologies that exploit both women and the environment, offering instead an indigenous worldview based on care, interdependence, and ecological ethics.

Through her portrayal of women as custodians of nature and culture, Dai affirms the importance of feminine knowledge in sustaining life and community. Nature emerges as a living, sacred presence, inseparable from human identity. Community functions as a space of resistance, preserving ecological balance and cultural memory.

Ultimately, Mamang Dai's fiction embodies ecofeminism not merely as a theory but as a **way of life**, rooted in indigenous tradition and feminine resilience. Her work contributes significantly to Indian English literature by articulating a sustainable, inclusive vision of coexistence in an era of environmental crisis.

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Psychological Well-Being And Mental Health Challenges Among Indian Farmers

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Abstract:

Agriculture remains the backbone of the Indian economy, sustaining millions of households and contributing significantly to food security and rural livelihoods. Despite their indispensable role, Indian farmers frequently encounter severe psychological challenges arising from economic uncertainty, indebtedness, climate variability, declining land productivity, social isolation, and inadequate institutional support. These stressors have intensified emotional exhaustion, anxiety disorders, depression, and suicidal tendencies within farming communities across several states, including Maharashtra, Punjab, Karnataka, Telangana, and Andhra Pradesh. The present article examines the multidimensional aspects of mental health and well-being among Indian farmers by analyzing structural, social, environmental, and economic determinants affecting their lives. It also highlights how agrarian distress is not merely a financial issue but also a profound public health concern requiring urgent national attention. The discussion further explores the influence of unpredictable monsoons, crop failures, rising input costs, market volatility, and limited access to mental healthcare services on farmers' emotional resilience. Additionally, the paper evaluates governmental interventions, community-based support systems, digital counselling initiatives, and sustainable agricultural practices that may strengthen psychological stability among rural populations. Through illustrative examples and scholarly evidence, the article emphasizes the need for integrated policy frameworks combining agricultural reforms, healthcare accessibility, social security measures, and awareness campaigns. Strengthening farmer well-being is essential not only for rural development but also for ensuring national economic stability and food sustainability. A humane and inclusive approach toward agricultural communities can foster dignity, resilience, productivity, and social harmony within India's evolving rural landscape.

Keywords: *Indian farmers, mental health, agrarian distress, psychological well-being, rural healthcare, farmer suicide, agricultural stress, resilience, rural development, sustainable agriculture*



Introduction:

India has historically been recognized as an agrarian nation where farming represents both an occupation and a way of life. Nearly half of the country's population depends directly or indirectly on agriculture for survival. Farmers contribute immensely to national food production, economic growth, and rural employment. However, beneath this contribution lies a persistent crisis marked by emotional suffering, social insecurity, and psychological vulnerability.

The modernization of agriculture, combined with environmental instability and financial pressure, has transformed farming into a high-risk occupation. Small and marginal cultivators often operate under unpredictable conditions where crop productivity depends heavily on rainfall, market fluctuations, and access to institutional credit. Continuous exposure to uncertainty generates emotional strain that gradually affects mental wellness and family relationships.

Mental health among farmers has gained attention due to rising suicide rates in rural India. Reports from the National Crime Records Bureau consistently reveal alarming numbers of suicides among cultivators and agricultural labourers. While economic hardship remains a major contributor, psychological distress emerges from interconnected factors such as social expectations, indebtedness, isolation, pesticide exposure, and inadequate healthcare infrastructure.

The study is to know the mental health conditions of Indian farmers, the causes behind agrarian distress, and possible pathways for improving emotional and psychological well-being within rural communities.

Mental Health Challenges Faced by Indian Farmers:

- **Economic Insecurity and Debt Burden**

Financial instability remains one of the strongest contributors to psychological distress among farmers. Agricultural production requires substantial investment in seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, irrigation, machinery, and labour. Many cultivators borrow money from banks or private lenders to manage these expenses. Crop failure due to drought, floods, pest attacks, or market collapse often prevents repayment, resulting in mounting debt.

Persistent indebtedness creates feelings of helplessness, shame, and anxiety. Farmers experiencing financial losses frequently encounter social humiliation and pressure from creditors. Such circumstances may contribute to depression and suicidal ideation.

For example, in Maharashtra's Vidarbha region, recurring cotton crop failures and loan burdens have been linked with increased farmer suicides. Similar patterns have been observed in Telangana and Karnataka, where drought conditions intensified agrarian distress.

- **Climate Change and Environmental Stress**

Climate variability has intensified emotional instability among agricultural communities. Unpredictable rainfall, heatwaves, water scarcity, and soil degradation reduce agricultural productivity and threaten livelihood security. Farmers whose income depends entirely on



seasonal harvests become vulnerable to emotional exhaustion when environmental conditions deteriorate. Climate-induced uncertainty creates chronic stress because cultivators cannot accurately predict planting cycles or market returns. Repeated crop damage weakens confidence and increases frustration.

In regions affected by prolonged drought, families often migrate temporarily for labour work, disrupting social cohesion and emotional support systems. Such displacement may contribute to loneliness and psychological instability.

- **Social Isolation and Stigma**

Rural communities frequently associate emotional suffering with weakness or personal failure. Consequently, many farmers avoid discussing psychological difficulties due to fear of judgment. Limited awareness regarding mental disorders further prevents timely intervention. Unlike urban populations, farmers generally have fewer opportunities for counselling, psychiatric care, or emotional support services. Social isolation becomes more severe among elderly farmers and individuals living in remote villages. Traditional masculine expectations also discourage male cultivators from expressing vulnerability. Suppressed emotions may eventually manifest as substance abuse, aggression, insomnia, or self-harm.

- **Occupational Hazards and Physical Exhaustion**

Agricultural labour involves long working hours under physically demanding conditions. Exposure to pesticides, extreme temperatures, and repetitive physical strain contributes to fatigue and neurological complications. Research indicates that pesticide exposure may affect cognitive functioning and emotional regulation. Physical exhaustion combined with financial pressure can gradually diminish emotional resilience. Farmers often continue working despite illness due to economic necessity, which further worsens mental and physical health conditions.

- **Farmer Suicides: A National Concern**

Farmer suicides represent one of the most disturbing manifestations of agrarian distress in India. Although suicide cannot be attributed to a single factor, multiple social and economic pressures collectively influence emotional breakdown.

Several studies indicate that indebtedness, crop failure, declining profitability, family responsibilities, and lack of institutional assistance contribute significantly to suicidal behavior. Psychological conditions such as depression and hopelessness frequently remain undiagnosed due to limited mental healthcare accessibility in rural regions.

The issue is particularly severe among small and marginal farmers who possess limited landholdings and inadequate financial security. In many cases, affected families experience long-term emotional trauma, social marginalization, and economic collapse after the death of a family member. The phenomenon demonstrates that mental health should not be treated separately from agricultural policy. Sustainable farming systems require emotionally healthy



farming communities.

- **Impact on Families and Rural Communities**

Psychological distress among farmers affects not only individuals but also entire households and villages. Emotional instability can disrupt marital relationships, children's education, and community participation. Women in farming families often bear additional burdens after crop losses or suicides. Many widows face economic insecurity, social discrimination, and emotional trauma while managing household responsibilities independently.

Children growing up in distressed farming households may experience anxiety, educational discontinuity, and nutritional insecurity. Consequently, agrarian distress produces intergenerational consequences that extend beyond immediate economic concerns.

Community relationships may also weaken when financial competition and migration reduce collective solidarity within villages.

Government Initiatives and Institutional Responses:

The Indian government has introduced several schemes intended to reduce agrarian distress and strengthen rural welfare. These include crop insurance programs, minimum support price mechanisms, debt relief measures, and income support initiatives such as PM-KISAN.

The National Mental Health Programme has attempted to expand psychological healthcare services across districts, although implementation in rural regions remains uneven. Telemedicine and digital counselling platforms have recently emerged as alternative methods for delivering emotional support to remote communities.

Certain non-governmental organizations conduct awareness campaigns, suicide prevention workshops, and stress management programs for farmers. Community self-help groups and farmer cooperatives also play a meaningful role in promoting emotional solidarity and financial resilience. However, significant gaps remain in service accessibility, mental health literacy, and rural healthcare infrastructure.

Pathways Toward Better Farmer Well-Being

1. Strengthening Rural Mental Healthcare

Accessible counselling services should be integrated into primary healthcare centres in villages. Mobile mental health clinics and telepsychiatry can improve outreach in remote regions. Training community health workers to identify symptoms of depression and anxiety may enable early intervention. Awareness campaigns can reduce stigma surrounding emotional illness.

2. Promoting Sustainable Agriculture

Sustainable agricultural practices can reduce economic vulnerability and environmental stress.



Crop diversification, organic farming, efficient irrigation, and climate-resilient technologies may improve income stability and reduce uncertainty. Farmer producer organizations and cooperatives can strengthen bargaining power and enhance financial security.

3. Financial Protection and Social Security

Affordable credit systems, crop insurance, pension schemes, and market stabilization policies are essential for reducing financial anxiety. Timely compensation after natural disasters can prevent emotional breakdown among affected cultivators. Strengthening rural employment opportunities beyond agriculture may also reduce economic dependency on uncertain harvests.

4. Community-Based Emotional Support

Village-level support networks can foster collective resilience and emotional connection. Peer discussion groups, self-help associations, and social participation programs encourage open communication regarding emotional difficulties. Religious institutions, educational centres, and local governance bodies can contribute to awareness and counselling initiatives.

Conclusion:

The mental health and well-being of Indian farmers constitute a critical social, economic, and public health issue. Agricultural communities endure multiple pressures arising from financial instability, environmental uncertainty, social stigma, and inadequate institutional support. Persistent emotional strain has contributed to rising depression, anxiety, and suicide rates among cultivators across various states.

Addressing agrarian distress requires a multidimensional approach integrating healthcare, agricultural reform, financial protection, and social empowerment. Policies focused solely on productivity or economic output cannot resolve the deeper emotional challenges experienced by farming populations. Sustainable rural development must prioritize human dignity, psychological resilience, and community welfare alongside agricultural growth.

Improved mental healthcare accessibility, climate-resilient farming methods, social awareness campaigns, and stronger welfare systems can significantly enhance farmers' quality of life. Protecting the emotional well-being of farmers is essential because they remain central to India's food security, cultural heritage, and national progress.

A compassionate and inclusive framework that values both agricultural productivity and human wellness can create healthier rural communities and a more equitable future for India.

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