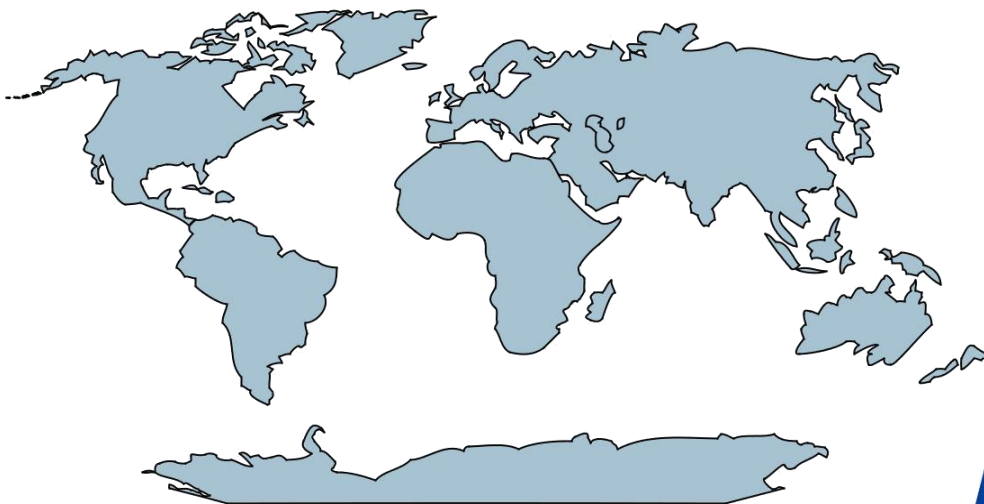


ISSN 2322 - 0899

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN MANAGEMENT & SOCIAL SCIENCE



Volume 13, Issue 2 (II)
April - June 2025

International Journal of Research in Management & Social Science

Volume 13, Issue 2 (II): April - June 2025

Chief Patron

Mr. Zahirul Alam Ahmed

Director, Empyreal Institute of Higher Education.
President, Bhramaputra Welfare Organization

Editor- In-Chief

Dr. Tazyn Rahman

Members of Editorial Advisory Board

Mr. Nakibur Rahman

Ex. General Manager (Project)
Bongaigoan Refinery, IOC Ltd, Assam

Dr. Alka Agarwal

Director,
Mewar Institute of Management, Ghaziabad

Prof. (Dr.) Sudhansu Ranjan Mohapatra

Dean, Faculty of Law,
Sambalpur University, Sambalpur

Dr. P. Malyadri

Principal,
Government Degree College, Hyderabad

Prof.(Dr.) Shareef Hoque

Professor,
North South University, Bangladesh

Prof.(Dr.) Michael J. Riordan

Professor,
Sanda University, Jiashan, China

Prof.(Dr.) James Steve

Professor,
Fresno Pacific University, California, USA

Prof.(Dr.) Chris Wilson

Professor,
Curtin University, Singapore

Prof. (Dr.) Amer A. Taqa

Professor, DBS Department,
University of Mosul, Iraq

Dr. Nurul Fadly Habidin

Faculty of Management and Economics,
Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, Malaysia

Dr. Neetu Singh

HOD, Department of Biotechnology,
Mewar Institute, Vasundhara, Ghaziabad

Dr. Mukesh Saxena

Pro Vice Chancellor,
University of Technology and Management, Shillong

Dr. Archana A. Ghatule

Director,
SKN Sinhgad Business School, Pandharpur

Prof.(Dr.) Sharad Kumar Goel

Director,
Indirapuram Institute of Higher Studies, Ghaziabad

Prof. (Dr.) Monoj Kumar Chowdhury

Professor, Department of Business Administration,
Guahati University, Guwahati

Prof. (Dr.) Baljeet Singh Hothi

Professor,
Gitarattan International Business School, Delhi

Prof. (Dr.) Badiuddin Ahmed

Professor & Head, Department of Commerce,
Maulana Azad National Urdu University, Hyderabad

Dr. Anindita Sharma

Dean & Associate Professor,
Jaipuria School of Business, Indirapuram, Ghaziabad

Prof. (Dr.) Jose Vargas Hernandez

Research Professor,
University of Guadalajara, Jalisco, México

Prof. (Dr.) Himanshu Pandey

Professor, Department of Mathematics and Statistics
Gorakhpur University, Gorakhpur

Prof. (Dr.) Agbo Johnson Madaki

Faculty, Faculty of Law,
Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Nairobi, Kenya

Prof. (Dr.) D. Durga Bhavani

Professor,
CVR College of Engineering, Hyderabad, Telangana

Prof. (Dr.) Shashi Singhal

Professor,
Amity University, Jaipur

Prof. (Dr.) Alireza Heidari

Professor, Faculty of Chemistry,
California South University, California, USA

Prof. (Dr.) Badar Alam Iqbal

Adjunct Professor,
Monarch University, Switzerland

Dr. Dhananjay Prabhakar Awasarikar

Associate Professor,
Suryadutta Institute, Pune

Dr. Mohammad Younis

Associate Professor,
King Abdullah University, Saudi Arabia

Dr. Kavita Gidwani

Associate Professor,
Chanakya Technical Campus, Jaipur

Dr. Vijit Chaturvedi

Associate Professor,
Amity University, Noida

Dr. Marwan Mustafa Shammot

Associate Professor,
King Saud University, Saudi Arabia

Dr. Juhab Hussain

Assistant Professor,
King Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia

Dr. V. Tulasi Das

Assistant Professor,
Acharya Nagarjuna University, Guntur, A.P.

Dr. Urmila Yadav

Assistant Professor,
Sharda University, Greater Noida

Prof. (Dr.) Aradhna Yadav

Professor,
Krupanidhi School of Management, Bengaluru

Prof.(Dr.) Robert Allen

Professor
Carnegie Mellon University, Australia

Prof. (Dr.) S. Nallusamy

Professor & Dean,
Dr. M.G.R. Educational & Research Institute, Chennai

Dr. Sarmistha Sarma

Associate Professor,
Institute of Innovation in Technology and Management

Dr. Pranjal Sharma

Associate Professor, Department of Management
Mile Stone Institute of Higher Management, Ghaziabad

Dr. Lalata K Pani

Reader,
Bhadrak Autonomous College, Bhadrak, Odisha

Dr. Sunita Dwivedi

Associate Professor,
Symbolic Center for Management Studies, Noida

Dr. R. Navaneeth Krishnan

Associate Professor,
Bharathiyar College of Engg & Tech, Puducherry

Dr. Namita Dixit

Assistant Professor,
ITS Institute of Management, Ghaziabad

Mr. Sukhvinder Singh

Assistant Professor,
Institute of Innovation in Technology & Management

Dr. Nidhi Agrawal

Assistant Professor,
Institute of Technology & Science, Ghaziabad

Copyright @ 2025 Empryal Institute of Higher Education, Guwahati
All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, or stored in any retrieval system of any nature without prior written permission. Application for permission for other use of copyright material including permission to reproduce extracts in other published works shall be made to the publishers. Full acknowledgment of author, publishers and source must be given.

The views expressed in the articles are those of the contributors and not necessarily of the Editorial Board or the Institute. Although every care has been taken to avoid errors or omissions, this publication is being published on the condition and understanding that information given in this journal is merely for reference and must not be taken as having authority of or binding in any way on the authors, editors and publishers, who do not owe any responsibility for any damage or loss to any person, for the result of any action taken on the basis of this work. All disputes are subject to Guwahati jurisdiction only.

 THOMSON REUTERS	INDEX COPERNICUS INTERNATIONAL	 University Grants Commission	 Journal Seeker Research Bible	 OAJ Open Academic .net Journals Index
 InnoSpace SJIF Scientific Journal Impact Factor	 CiteFactor Academic Scientific Journals	 JOURNAL INDEX .net	 Google scholar	 ResearchGATE scientific network
 SciSeek	 I2OR	 Scribd	 ADVANCED SCIENCE INDEX	 AcademicKeys UNLOCKING ACADEMIC CAREERS
 bing	 iseek	 entireweb Beta	 Scholarsteer Scholarly Information	 WZB Berlin Social Science Center
 SJIF	 JISRA JIF	 DIIF	 GENERAL IMPACT FACTOR Universal Digital Object Information	 Research Impact Factor
 GIF GLOBAL IMPACT FACTOR	 Cosmos COSMOS IMPACT FACTOR		 iis	 JIF JIFACTOR
 SIS Scientific Indexing Services	 Pak Academic Search GROWING KNOWLEDGE FOR FUTURE	 ZB MED Wissen für Mensch & Umwelt www.zbmed.de	 Open Access Library Search Engine, Journal, Index, Repository	 EZB Electronic Journals Library
 Journal Seek	 JOUR INFORMATICS	 INTERNATIONAL Scientific Indexing	 UMS UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH	 OCLC WorldCat
 International Innovative Journal Impact Factor (IIJIF)	 bibliothek WISSENSCHAFTSPARK ALBERT EINSTEIN	 ESJI Eurasian Scientific Journal Index www.ESJIndex.org	 JOURNAL FACTOR	 INFOBASE INDEX
 DocSlide	 SJIFactor Scientific Journal Impact Factor	 UNIVERSIDAD DE GUADALAJARA Red Universitaria de Jalisco	 www.irmgm.ir	
 ACADEMIA	 Yumpu	 STUDYLIB	 docshare.tips	 BASE Bielefeld Academic Search Engine
 International Institute For Research Impact Factor Journals (IFIJ)	 SSRN SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH NETWORK	 Xactseek RELEVANT WEB SEARCH	 GIGA BLAST The Search Engine	 NSD ERIH PLUS EUROPEAN REFERENCE INDEX FOR THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
 Baidu 学术	 FWS FreeWebSubmission.com	 ISIFI INTERNATIONAL SERVICES FOR IMPACT FACTOR AND INDEXING	 beta refseek	 zenodo

Certificate IC Journal Master List



Certificates that journal
**International Journal of Research in
Management & Social Science**

ISSN: 2322 - 0899

has been indexed in the
IC Journal Master List in 2014.

ICV: 6.35

1 May 2014

Date

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rote Wangate".

Signature:

CONTENTS

Research Papers

- EXPLORING GENDER ROLES AND IDENTITY CRISIS REFLECTED IN SHASHI DESHPANDE'S THE DARK HOLDS NO TERROR** 1 – 3

Dr. Sandeep Sambhaji Dhore

- INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS IN INDIA** 4 - 6

Ahmad Shamshad

- EDUCATION AND THE LEGACY OF SEGREGATION, COLONIALISM, AND CASTEISM: A HISTORICAL STUDY OF INDIA FROM ANTIQUITY TO INDEPENDENCE** 7 - 12

Dr. Ranjith Kumar Varre

- ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF ECONOMIC AND CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR OF STREET VENDORS ON RETAIL SHOP SALES IN PUNE CITY** 13 – 19

Dr. Payal Shreepal Samdariya and Dr. Porinita Banerjee

- THE ROLE OF FINANCIAL LITERACY IN WOMEN EMPOWERMENT** 20 - 23

Dhanashree S. Divate

- FINANCIAL LITERACY AS A CATALYST FOR SOCIAL EMPOWERMENT: A MIXED-METHODS ANALYSIS** 24 - 32

Dr. M. A. Imran Khan and Dr. Meer Mazhar Ali

- EDUCATION AS A TOOL FOR EMPOWERMENT AMONG MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES** 33 - 36

Dr. Vijay Machindra Jadhav and M.A. Sociology

- INVESTIGATING THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL STRATIFICATION ON MUSLIM STUDENTS' ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION IN PUNE** 37 - 39

Dr.Shafiya Shaikh

- THE ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY IN PROMOTING ACCESSIBLE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS: INNOVATIONS, IMPACTS, AND INCLUSIVE STRATEGIES** 40 - 41

Priyanka Sanjay Dinkar

- MYANMAR CONFLICT IN MIZORAM: ANALYSIS OF THE CONSEQUENCES BROUGHT BY REFUGEES** 42 - 45

Dr.Shafiya Shaikh and Joseph Malsawmtluanga

- INTER-REGIONAL INTERACTION AND PEER RELATIONS: A STUDY OF NORTHEAST STUDENTS IN PUNE** 46 - 49

Dr. Shafiya Shaikh and Pentecost Lawmnakimi

EMPOWERING STUDENTS THROUGH SOCIO -EMOTIONAL LEARNING IN THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM	50 - 52
<i>Dr.Khan Zeenat Muzaffar</i>	
THE ROLE OF THE STATE IN PROMOTING EDUCATIONAL EQUALITY IN INDIA	53 - 58
<i>Anuja Sharma and Prithviraj Chavan</i>	
WOMEN'S ROLES IN THE AGE OF REMOTE WORK: AN ANALYSIS OF HOUSEHOLD RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROFESSIONAL DYNAMICS IN PUNE CITY	59 - 62
<i>Dr.Shafiya Shaikh and Momin Laiba Yakub</i>	
A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF EDUCATIONAL EXCLUSION OF MUSLIM STUDENTS: FACTORS AND CHALLENGES	63 - 68
<i>Shaikh Hina Kausar</i>	
BREAKING GENDER AND SOCIAL BARRIERS	69 - 71
<i>Assistant Professor Pranali Shankar Sonawane</i>	
A ROLE OF COMMERCE EDUCATION IN RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND CHALLENGES IN ACCESS	72 - 78
<i>Dr. Tejasweeta S. Mundhe</i>	
DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN INDIA: PRE AND POST CONSTITUTIONAL PERSPECTIVE	79 - 84
<i>Ajinkya Waghmare and Pooja Deo</i>	
GENDER EQUALITY IN THE INDIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES	85 - 89
<i>Dr. Aishwarya Yadav and Pradnya Yadav</i>	
BARRIERS TO LEARNING: HOW GENDER AND URBAN POVERTY SHAPE EDUCATIONAL ACCESS	90 - 94
<i>Arshiya Anush Shaikh and Arshiya Shaikh</i>	
BHARTIYA BHASHA PUSTAK INITIATIVE: ADVANCING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND SOCIAL EQUITY THROUGH MULTILINGUAL LEARNING RESOURCES IN INDIA	95 - 98
<i>Ms. Shrutika R. Thakkar</i>	
POLICY FRAMEWORKS & EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS: EDUCATION RIGHTS AS HUMAN RIGHTS — A CASE STUDY OF AFGHANISTAN	99 - 105
<i>Wali Rahman Rahmani</i>	
INDIAN LEGAL EDUCATION'S PSYCHOLOGICAL BARRIERS: DISENFRANCHISED STUDENTS' CHALLENGES AND THE NEED FOR INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE	106 - 110
<i>Dr. Neeta Ahir</i>	

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: A PATHWAY TO SOCIAL EQUITY	111 – 115
<i>Pankti Surve</i>	
ANTI-DISCRIMINATION LAWS IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS: POLICY VS. PRACTICE	116 – 117
<i>Dr. Kavita Muneshwar</i>	
हिंगोली जिल्ह्यातील महिला परिचरिकांच्या समस्येचे अध्ययन	118 – 122
<i>Pradnya Subhashrao Azade and Pro.Dr.S.R. Gore</i>	
नांदेड जिल्ह्यातील एकल पालक कुटुंबाच्या सामाजिक जीवनाचे अध्ययन	123 – 125
<i>Sainath Satawaji Kumbhare and Pro. Dr.A.T. Shinde</i>	
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: A PATHWAY TO SOCIAL EQUITY	126 – 129
<i>Pankti Surve</i>	
EDUCATION AS A FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHT: BRIDGING GLOBAL FRAMEWORKS AND NATIONAL REALITIES IN INDIA	130 – 138
<i>Nehal Mahfooz</i>	
LEVERAGING OPEN-SOURCE AI TUTORING SYSTEMS TO ENHANCE SCIENTIFIC LITERACY IN RESOURCE-CONSTRAINED OR DEVELOPING NATIONS	139 – 142
<i>Mr. Amitkumar Khandare and Mr. Ashish Jaware</i>	
MAKING AND TRY OUT OF COMPUTER ASSISTED INSTRUCTION (C. A. I) FOR SOME UNITS OF ENGLISH SUBJECT OF HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL	143 – 149
<i>Malek Sabnurbanu Maiyuddin</i>	
ADDRESSING BULLYING AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION IN SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS: PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACTS AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES	150 – 153
<i>Dr. Malini Nair</i>	
CREDIT ASSESSMENT IN BANKING INDUSTRY –AN EFFECTIVE AI APPLICATION	154 – 159
<i>Dr. Manisha Shinde</i>	
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND SOCIAL EQUITY: A SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE	160 – 164
<i>Dr. Gulab Pathan</i>	
RESPONSIBLE DEVELOPMENT AND APPLICATION OF BIOTECHNOLOGY: POLICY FRAMEWORKS, ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS, AND SOCIAL EQUITY	165 – 169
<i>Dr. Gazala Pathan and Ms. Farheenshama M. Shaikh</i>	
THE EVOLUTION AND IMPACT OF THE E-COMMERCE INDUSTRY IN INDIA: TRENDS, CHALLENGES, AND THE ROAD AHEAD	170 – 172
<i>Mr. Shaikh Parvez Shabbir and Dr. Dongare Mahadev</i>	

आदिवासी समाज की शैक्षिक स्थिति	173 – 175
डॉ. शकिला जब्बार मुल्ला	
समावेशक आणि न्याय्य शिक्षणासमोरील संस्थात्मक आणि कायदेशीर आव्हाने	176 – 180
अभिषेक होळकर	
BRIDGING THE DIVIDE: A STUDY ON GENDER DISPARITY IN BUSINESS AND COMMERCE EDUCATION IN INDIAN UNIVERSITIES	181 – 185
<i>Ms. Deepika Abhijeet Kininge</i>	

**EXPLORING GENDER ROLES AND IDENTITY CRISIS REFLECTED IN SHASHI DESHPANDE'S
THE DARK HOLDS NO TERROR**

Dr. Sandeep Sambhaji Dhore

Department of English, Suryadatta College of Management Information, Research and Technology, Pune

ABSTRACT

"If others see something feminist in my writings, I must say that it is not consciously done. It is because the world for women is like that and I am mirroring the world.

- Shashi Deshpande

Shashi Deshpande is gifted with an in born literary bent of mind which matured with her experience in life. She has presented the state of women in India. She is at her best in creating a central character, which not only describes her own experience as a woman, but also makes a fuller study of women in society. Her sincere concern for women and their oppressive lot is reflected strongly in all her novels and stories. The article shows how Sarita the protagonist of the novel The Dark Holds No Terror undergoes the trauma of a middle class working woman who has become a trap in the male dominated society. Sarita's life is but a series of incidents which came one after the other, all by them, to deprive her of even simplest of joys. The novel observes regretfully that woman, irrespective of her class and character, has to play a second fiddle to man and has no room of her own.

Keywords - Complacency, contrition, male chauvinism, protagonist, trauma.

Shashi Deshpande is an award winning novelist. Her novels usually have women as the protagonists. This has led readers to call her a feminist writer. She is considered as one of the most accomplished contemporary Indian women writers in English gifted with an inborn literary bent of mind which matured with her experiences in life. Shashi Deshpande is known for creating women characters that are contemporary. Her women protagonists are victims of the prevalent gross gender discrimination, first as daughters and later as wives. They are conscious of the great social inequality and injustice towards them, and struggle against the oppressive and unequal nature of the social norms and rules that limit their capability and existence as a wife. Fettered to their roles in the family, they question the subordinate status ordained to them by society. Her works have drawn great critical attention and acclaim for her sensitive and realistic representation of the Indian middle-class women. Her sincere concern for women and their oppressive lot is reflected strongly in all her novels and stories. Deshpande is a master writer in the way she articulates human emotions, the fears and feelings experienced by humans, by women. Her protagonists being women, one of the things they question is the fact of their being females, what it has done to them. But they are also probing the human condition, the human predicament. Shashi Deshpande believes that women have a great strength that all humans have. Actually women have reserves we are often unaware of. But for the woman the situation is made more complex by the fact that they have been told they are weak, they are made to believe in their weakness. And often they learn to hide their own strength, because a woman's strength seems to weaken a man. She says that women are the main support of the family, though the male is the titular head. Women are better at dealing with emotional traumas. This is because women, unlike men, have never had to suppress, their emotional selves, they are more open about their problems both in articulating them and understanding them.

Shashi Deshpande's novels are concerned with a woman's quest for self an exploration into the female psyche and an understanding of the mysteries of life and the protagonist's place in it. In Shashi Deshpande's novel The Dark Holds No Terror, Sarita is the protagonist. She is a successful lady doctor. The discord and the disillusionment of the educated woman in a tradition bound 'Indian Society' is the theme of the novel. This novel explores the trauma of a middle class working woman who has become a trap in the male dominated society. The heroine of the novel Sarita seeks freedom without impinging on her obligations and responsibilities and achieves harmony in life. It shows how she undergoes trauma when her professional success has cast a shadow on her married life and how boldly she stands up to the situation and audaciously accepts the challenges of her own protégé. Sarita was nicknamed Saru at home and among friends. She was the daughter of a Bank clerk and a reactionary mother. Neither of her parents has been addressed by his/her name, throughout the novel except once when her father called her mother, Kamala perhaps because the novelist wants to say that she is writing about women in general, not about any one woman in general, not about any one woman in particular. Sarita's is a tragic story. She was the victim of circumstances and conventions of an orthodox and reactionary society. Her family consisted of only four persons –her parents, younger brother named Dhruva, and herself.

In Indian middle class families as they are, son is always given a preferential treatment, while the daughter is subjected to a strict discipline and treated as a burden at times. Sarita was no exception to this general rule. Sarita's life was but a series of incidents which came one after the other, all by them, to deprive her of even the simplest of joys. Her life began with the serious charge of killing her brother Dhruva. She was just a victim of fate. She was to go out of the house to show her anger to her parents for not allowing her to go to the film with Smita's family. Children very often show their resentment against the parents, but when Sarita did it, her brother, pampered and self-willed as he was, followed her and got drowned. She made every possible effort that a child could make to retrieve her brother, but she couldn't succeed. The child was branded a murderer and the stigma stuck to her till the end. The stroke of fate alienated her from her mother completely. Her mother said time and again that she was the murderer and that she should have also died. The child could not bear the false allegation. She stopped calling her Ai, while her mother opposed her in every possible way. Even when she proposed to go to Medical College, her mother said that she wouldn't be able to spare money for this purpose, as she was to spend on her marriage. Sarita's father was a timid fellow, a non-entity type. Sarita, consequently was deprived of love even of the parents from childhood. This particular fact of her life was the cause, to a great extent, for her miseries. Shashi Deshpande in the novel *The Dark Holds No Terror*, observes regretfully that woman, irrespective of her class and character, has to play a second fiddle to man, has no room of her own. A woman is put under several restraints right from the day a girl becomes a woman due to menstruation. Sarita was told by her mother,

"You are growing up. You should be careful now about how you behave. Don't come out in your petticoat like that. Not even when it's only your father who's around" (P 62).

She was aghast to hear that she was to be ashamed of herself, even in the presence of her own father. It became torturous when she was prohibited to enter the kitchen or puja room during those three days. She had virtually become a pariah in her own home as she was to sleep on a straw mat covered with a thin sheet, eat out of a cup and plate placed by her side and served from a distance as if her touch would cause pollution. A kind of shame engulfed her when she was told at sixteen that she was a woman, and classed with her mother. Sarita did not want to be a woman like her mother, who had an unshapely figure. Women in Indian society have to live virtually a life of a maid servant. Sarita had the example of her mother before her. She had to retreat to the kitchen to dress up, go to a dingy and dark room to comb her hair and apply kumkum. She slept in bed like an over-night guest in a strange place. She had literally no room of her own. Sarita realized,

"And I have so much my mother lacked. But neither she nor I have that thing, 'a room of our own'" (P.136).

They had never desired it also since they had accepted it as fait accompli. Sarita had experiences during her married life to show that women are often victims of male chauvinism. It happened once with herself also. Once she went home late in the night because she had to visit a newly admitted patient. She had to go directly from consulting room to the nursing home. She had asked her compounder to inform her husband that she would be late. Yet when she reached home, she found Manohar, her husband in a brooding mood. Sarita couldn't understand what she had done to spoil the mood of her husband. Manohar was not prepared to talk to her. Therefore she had to express her penitence and contrition. He joined her at dinner only after she had served both of them. Again, while living in a chawl, Manohar was upset to see that people greeted his wife, showed greater regard for her. In order to be rid of such a humiliating situation, he declared that he was fed up of the place and wanted to shift to a new house. The situation became a cause for troubles of her married life. Man always tries to dominate over woman in Indian society. Sarita had heard about several women who lived utterly neglected yet they did not revolt or try to change their lives. Her own grandmother, she was told, had been deserted by her husband only a few years after marriage. She had experiences which made it clear to her that wives were treated as a possession and show pieces. She recollected that she and Manohar went to pay a visit to a friend. They had lunch with him. But when they were going back home, Manohar started humming a tune, showing that he was exceedingly pleased. It was his usual way; she first thought it was relief at getting away. But later she realized,

"It had been complacency, not relief. Complacency at having shown off a prized possession. His wife, a lady doctor"(P.158).

She was hurt to see that she had become a possession, and a show piece to be proud of. All the above instances went deep into Sarita's mind. She was of the view that women in general were living a despicable life due to male chauvinism. She had realized that women of all classes had to suffer neglect and humiliation she feared she might also have the same fate. She knew that her father had helped her against the wishes of her mother, but the question that tormented her was whether her father fought for her or against her mother, whether he used her as a weapon against her mother. If he used her as a weapon, it would change the whole scenario.

Instead of being helped, it would mean exploitation of a daughter against her mother, and exploitation of a woman by a man. If that was the case, it was to cause bitterness in her mind against her father, because he had exploited her daughter.

Shashi Deshpande has presented the state of women in India. She has shown that woman suffers due to man and marriage. Shashi Deshpande is at her best in creating a central character, which not only describes her own experiences as a woman but also makes a fuller study of women in society. She has showed although woman has acquired education and knowledge along with economic independence, they have been observed as a victim of domestic violence as well as not getting legal rights outside home. She is very realistic on presenting different aspects of the problems and facets of a girl's life. She has shown how the heroine of this novel had to pass through difficult situations all of her life. Shashi Deshpande has made a survey of women who suffered due to superstitions prevailing in the society or male chauvinism.

REFERENCES

1. C.L.Khatri and Sandhya Saxena "Five Indian Women Novelists-Feminist vision" Y king books, Jaipur India, 2013 PP 03-84
2. Deshpande ,Shashi,The Dark Holds No Terror, New Delhi, Penguin Random House India Pvt,Ltd 1980
3. Sharma, Priya. "The Role of Gender Disparity Reflected in Shashi Deshpande's The Dark Holds No Terror." International Journal of Gender Studies, vol. 5, no. 2, 2021, pp. 45–52

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS IN INDIA

Ahmad ShamshadAssistant Professor, Department of Political Science, AKI's Poona College of Arts, Science & Commerce
Camp, Pune - 411048**ABSTRACT**

The education landscape in India has seen considerable change as policymakers increasingly acknowledge the necessity of inclusive practice. This transformation is imperative in building a fair educational space that is able to accommodate all student's divergent learning requirements, including children with disabilities and those from underprivileged groups. Inclusive education not only goes hand in hand with the provisions of the constitution that support the right to education for all children but also allows students from varied backgrounds to develop a sense of belonging and membership. With programmes designed to tackle obstacles to learning, the emphasis is on changing teaching methods and curricula to ensure that all children are brought along. In addition, with joint action from stakeholders like local governments and civil society organizations, inclusive education can be a working reality, as noted in deliberations on enacting effective practice in disability discrimination law and education.

Keywords: *Inclusive, Disabilities, Underprivileged Groups.*

INTRODUCTION

The education landscape in India has seen great changes, especially in responding to the varied needs of its citizens. Recent legislation is focused on making the system more inclusive so that it ensures quality education for everyone, irrespective of socio-economic status or disability. Inclusive education denotes that every child irrespective of their strengths and weaknesses will be part of the mainstream education the feeling of belongingness among all community members, teachers, students and other functionaries is developed through inclusive education. Inclusive education is when all students regardless of any challenges they may have been placed in age-appropriate general education classes that are in their own neighbourhood schools receive high quality instruction, intervention, and support that enable them to meet success in the core curriculum. According to Salamanca's statement "school should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional and linguistic or other condition. This should include disabled and gifted children from the remote or nomadic population, children from linguistic, ethnic and cultural minority and children from other disadvantaged or marginalized areas or groups. The Indian Constitution provides a structural basis that upholds equality and non-discrimination, thus forming a legal motivation for inclusive education. This measure is important given the global direction of acknowledging education as a human right.

SIGNIFICANCE OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN INDIA

Inclusive education in India is crucial for creating an equitable and just society by ensuring all students, regardless of their background or abilities, have equal access to quality education. It fosters acceptance, diversity, and social integration, ultimately benefiting all students and contributing to a more inclusive and harmonious society. Inclusive education promotes social integration by encouraging students to interact and collaborate with their classmates who have different abilities and needs. This helps build empathy, respect, and understanding among students and it removes the boundaries and obstacles. Through it, universalization of education becomes possible. Inclusive education has the potential to create nicely built nation and the children can assimilate themselves in their community and develop a sense of belongingness. Through inclusive education, Students learn their responsibilities of caring for one another. It motivates them towards self-discovery and it maintains social balances by providing equal opportunity to all. It removes all kinds of prejudices and discrimination.

CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS EMPOWERING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

In India, the dedication to inclusive education is strengthened extensively by the diverse constitutional provisions emphasizing the precedence of equal opportunities and rights of all citizens. Foremost in this system is Article 21, which upholds the right to life and liberty, consequently tacitly promoting the right to education. Moreover, Article 45 provides for the state to guarantee early childhood care and education to all children, emphasizing a duty to eliminate obstacles to education for all groups of people who are marginalized. The provisions provide a juridical framework for programmes advancing inclusive education, ensuring equal access to education services for people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.

In addition, the rhetoric of inclusive education is supplemented by international definitions of health and human rights, which demand a wider conception of interdependence among health, education, and inclusion, according to declarations calling for holistic reforms to further these values.

ESSENTIAL ARTICLES IN THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION FOSTERING EQUALITY AND EDUCATION

The Indian Constitution is a strong structure to provide equality and ensure educational opportunities for every citizen. Significantly, Article 14 ensures equality before the law, requiring that no one will be discriminated against on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex, or place of birth. This foundational principle underpins the right to education, further emphasized by Article 21A, which asserts the right to free and compulsory education for children aged six to fourteen years. Such provisions reflect a commitment to cultivate an inclusive educational environment, where barriers to access are systematically dismantled. Furthermore, efforts in the wake of these constitutional provisions attempt to tackle the specific challenges for marginalized groups and ensure their effective inclusion in the education sector. The continued work to implement these articles aligns with international practice, as the focus in the debate on disability legislation that seeks to ensure inclusive employment opportunities underscores the significance of health-related rights in educational environments.

IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICIES

Successful implementation of inclusive education policies is contingent on effective implementation, something that requires thorough legal frameworks and intervention from stakeholders. Constitutional provisions in India define the right to education, but often the implementation of those rights in affirmative policies proves challenging. For example, furthering participation by the community and empowering persons with disabilities to understand their rights can be quite influential in policy success. By integrating values such as equity, participation, and accountability into the education system, as proposed by recent analysis, policymakers are in a position to establish a more inclusive system meeting the needs of various learners. In addition, technical support and capacity development interventions can aid governments at local levels in coordinating policy with international standards of human rights to guarantee legitimate access to all forms of education. Closing these gaps in implementation is essential to fulfill the potential of inclusive education in India.

GOVERNMENT SCHEMES AND INITIATIVES FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN INDIA

The initiatives to improve access to education in India are reflected through several government schemes that work towards inclusivity. Principal programs, including the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and the Mid-Day Meal Scheme, aim not only to ensure universal primary education but also bridge inequalities endured by disadvantaged groups. Efforts have been made towards decentralization of planning, particularly in tribal areas, showing the importance of local government in efficiently implementing policy in the field of education. Moreover, the part played by digital technology in empowering women and women's involvement in governance has remodelled the educational landscape. Through digital platforms, women more and more get involved in decision-making, championing educational access and equity. Finally, such efforts demonstrate a commitment to provisions within the constitution that champion inclusive education, so that every child, despite background, can learn and succeed.

NEP-2020 & Inclusive Education

The new policy is spread into four parts where equitable and inclusive education is covered under School Education. NEP 2020 is in line with the RPwD (Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016) act 2016 which defines inclusive education as a "system of education wherein students with and without disabilities learn together and the system of teaching and learning is suitably adapted to meet the learning needs of different types of students with disabilities". The RPwD act also increased the 3% reservation to 5% for the persons with benchmark disabilities in all government institutions for higher education. The act also emphasized on the barrier free access as a non-discrimination measure. Some major recommendations of RPwD Act, 2016 adopted in NEP 2020 are as follows: Equal Educational Opportunities, Equal Opportunities for Sports and Recreation, Accessible Infrastructure, Reasonable Accommodations, Individualized Support Services and Accessible Modes and Means of Communication, Suitable Pedagogical Measures, Suitable Modifications in Curriculum and Examination Systems (Scribe or amanuensis, Exemption from second and third language), Monitoring Participation and Progress, Transportation Facilities, Training & Employing Teachers and Teachers with Disabilities (Teachers Qualified in Sign language & Braille).

CHALLENGES TO INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN INDIA

Inclusive education in India faces several significant challenges, including a lack of trained teachers, inadequate resources, societal stigma, and inflexible curricula. These barriers hinder the successful integration and education of students with diverse learning needs. The followings are some major challenges before inclusive education.

a. Lack of Adequate Training: Many teachers lack the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively teach students with diverse learning needs. This can lead to a mismatch between the needs of students and the methods used by teachers. Inadequate teacher training is a major obstacle to successful inclusion. **b. Insufficient Resources:** Limited resources, including funding, infrastructure, and assistive technologies, hinder the implementation of inclusive education. Insufficient facilities and support staff can further exacerbate the problem. **c. Societal Stigma and Discrimination:** Negative attitudes towards people with disabilities and other forms of diversity can create barriers to inclusion. Societal norms and beliefs can also influence how families and communities perceive inclusive education. **d. Curriculum Inflexibility:** Rigid curricula and assessment methods can make it difficult to accommodate the diverse learning needs of students. Lack of flexible teaching strategies and methods also presents a challenge. **e. Parental Concerns and Resistance:** Parents may be hesitant to enroll their children in inclusive settings due to concerns about their child's safety, academic progress, or social integration. Addressing parental concerns and building their confidence in inclusive practices is crucial for successful implementation. **f. Lack of Collaboration:** Collaboration between teachers, administrators, parents, and other stakeholders is essential for successful inclusion. Improving communication and coordination between stakeholders can enhance the quality of inclusive education. **g. Inadequate Infrastructure:** Lack of accessible buildings and infrastructure can create barriers for students with physical disabilities. Improving accessibility and creating a barrier-free environment is crucial for inclusive education.

CONCLUSION

The quest for inclusive education in India, especially as shaped by constitutional provisions, is a multifaceted interplay of legal structures and social realities. In spite of the promise of laws like the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act and constitutional provisions, implementation is considerably hindered by structural barriers and systemic inefficiencies. These problems tend to act as a stumbling block for local governments in properly utilizing existing resources and prioritizing education requirements, especially in disadvantaged communities. For example, even though the PESA Act (Panchayats Extension to the Scheduled Areas Act of 1996,) focuses on empowering community engagement in decision-making, realities on the ground tend to show a mismatch between policy aspirations and reality, highlighting the requirement for more effective mechanisms of accountability and resource management. Moreover, the differing experiences of judicial power among different constitutional courts also serve to further illustrate the significant role socio-political contexts play in shaping educational outcomes, again highlighting the need for a sophisticated approach to reform.

REFERENCES

1. A. N. Maheshwari & V. K. Raina, Inservice training of primary teachers through interactive video technology: An Indian experience, *International Review of Education*, 1998.
2. R. S. Pandey & L. Advani, *Perspectives in Disability and Rehabilitation*, Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1995.
3. S. H. Ochoa & A. Jr. Olivarez, A meta-analysis of peer rating sociometric studies of pupils with learning disabilities, *The Journal of Special Education*, 1995.
4. S. Mukhopadhyay, *Rethinking About Inclusion: Emerging Area for Policy Research*, National University of Educational Planning and Administration, (NUEPA) 2000.
5. UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, UNO, 2014.
6. *World Report on Disability*, World Bank, UNO, 1989.

EDUCATION AND THE LEGACY OF SEGREGATION, COLONIALISM, AND CASTEISM: A HISTORICAL STUDY OF INDIA FROM ANTIQUITY TO INDEPENDENCE

Dr Ranjith Kumar Varre

Lecturer and HOD, Department of History, Government Degree College, Cumbum, Prakasam District, Andhra Pradesh, 523333

ABSTRACT

Education in India has long been a battleground of social exclusion and privilege, deeply shaped by caste-based segregation, colonial interventions, and religious orthodoxy. Present paper traces the development of education in India from ancient times to independence in 1947, critically examining how these historical forces influenced access to knowledge and the content of educational systems. In ancient India, education was largely reserved for the upper castes, with significant exclusions of Shudras, Dalits, and women, rooted in texts such as the Manusmriti. The arrival of Islamic rule introduced new forms of pedagogy but largely maintained exclusions along caste and gender lines. However, the British colonial period marked a radical restructuring of education, with policies such as Macaulay's Minute on Indian Education (1835) privileged English education and European epistemologies while marginalizing indigenous knowledge systems. The colonial educational system created a small elite of English-educated Indians but left large sections of the population, particularly Dalits, women, and rural communities, systematically excluded. Reformers such as Jyotirao Phule, B. R. Ambedkar, and others critiqued these structures, advocating for educational equity and the empowerment of marginalized groups. This paper draws on the works of scholars like Gauri Viswanathan, Partha Chatterjee, and B. R. Ambedkar to analyze how casteism and colonialism intertwined to shape educational inequalities. It argues that the educational struggles of this period laid the foundation for India's post-independence educational reforms and continue to inform debates about educational equity today.

Keywords: education - caste - colonialism - India - segregation - history.

INTRODUCTION

The historical trajectory of education in India is inseparable from the social structures that governed access to knowledge. Deeply entrenched in systems of caste-based segregation, the educational landscape evolved through centuries of socio-political transformation, each reinforcing or challenging existing hierarchies. While the caste system institutionalized educational exclusion through religious texts and customary laws, colonial interventions restructured these exclusions through language imposition, selective curriculum design, and institutional discrimination. As Gopal Guru (2009) notes, the politics of knowledge production in India has long aligned with the hegemonic interests of dominant social groups, thereby preserving systemic inequalities and reproducing hierarchies of epistemic authority. Present paper explores the historical development of education in India from antiquity to independence, highlighting how casteism, colonialism, and religious orthodoxy converged to shape educational opportunities. The analysis centers on the marginalization of Dalits, women, and indigenous communities, and the counter-efforts of reformers who sought to democratize access to learning and reclaim indigenous epistemologies.

ANCIENT AND PERIOD: CASTE AND EDUCATIONAL ACCESS

In ancient India, the caste system played a central role in determining who had access to education. The Vedic system, which emphasized religious texts and rituals, was primarily reserved for the Brahmanical elite. Brahmins, Kshatriyas, and Vaishyas were the principal beneficiaries of formal education, which was transmitted through oral instruction in sacred texts such as the Vedas. The Manusmriti, a key Brahmanical text, explicitly codified the exclusion of Shudras and women from the domain of education, illustrating how caste-based hierarchies permeated every aspect of social life, including knowledge production (Doniger, 1991). As Altekar (1944) notes, the exclusionary educational practices were not arbitrary but were embedded within the socio-religious framework that justified the caste system as divinely ordained. The result was a structured denial of education to lower castes, which perpetuated their economic and social marginalization.

The Gurukula system, where education was imparted primarily through personal instruction from a guru, further institutionalized these exclusions. Lower-caste individuals were not only excluded from formal educational institutions but were also denied access to sacred knowledge, which was seen as an exclusive domain of the upper castes. According to Sharma (1991), this system served to reinforce the socio-political dominance of the Brahmins, who controlled the knowledge that could grant social mobility. Moreover, the very structure of the caste system ensured that learning was not just about intellectual development but was deeply tied to social status, religious authority, and economic privilege.

Thus, the educational landscape in ancient India was one of deep stratification, where knowledge was a tool of both empowerment for the upper castes and suppression for the marginalized.

Despite this exclusionary system, there were moments in Indian history when heterodox traditions challenged these caste-based divisions in education. The rise of Buddhism in the 6th century BCE marked a significant shift in the educational paradigm. Buddhist monastic universities, such as Nalanda, Takshashila, and Vikramashila, became centers of learning where education was more inclusive, attracting students from diverse caste backgrounds as well as from other parts of Asia (Thapar, 2002). These institutions offered a wide-ranging curriculum that included not only religious texts but also subjects such as logic, metaphysics, medicine, and philosophy. In contrast to the Brahmanical tradition, which was centered around the preservation of caste-based knowledge, Buddhist education emphasized intellectual inquiry and egalitarian principles. According to Lorenzen (1995), Buddhist monasticism and its educational practices were revolutionary in that they allowed for a broader, more inclusive conception of knowledge that did not prioritize caste or gender-based exclusions. However, as Thapar (2002) points out, the decline of Buddhism in India during the early medieval period, coupled with the resurgence of Brahmanical dominance, led to the re-establishment of exclusionary practices in education.

In addition to Buddhist educational reforms, the development of other heterodox traditions such as Jainism also contributed to a shift in educational practices, promoting more inclusive approaches to knowledge transmission. Jain educational institutions, especially in Gujarat and Rajasthan, were known for their focus on non-violence and intellectual rigor. As Shukla (1997) explains, Jain scholars were not bound by the caste system in their approach to knowledge and, to some extent, provided education to those outside the Brahmanical fold. This tradition, while smaller in scale compared to Buddhism, nonetheless represented an alternative to the orthodox Brahmanical educational system.

However, these attempts at inclusivity were ultimately short-lived, as the medieval period in India saw a return to more rigid caste-based systems, especially with the rise of the Gupta and post-Gupta dynasties, where education became more centralized and formalized under state patronage. As Chakrabarti (2002) observes, the educational model under the Guptas increasingly resembled that of the Vedic period, where access to learning was restricted to upper-caste males and largely focused on religious texts. The Brahmanical educational institutions once again dominated the intellectual landscape, limiting access to knowledge for women, Shudras, and Dalits.

Thus, the educational system in ancient and classical India, while exhibiting moments of inclusivity, was predominantly shaped by caste-based exclusions, with knowledge being a powerful tool for both maintaining social order and perpetuating inequality. The long-standing tradition of excluding marginalized groups from formal education set the stage for the colonial educational interventions that would later reshape India's educational policies.

MEDIEVAL PERIOD: ISLAMIC INFLUENCE AND CONTINUITIES OF EXCLUSION

The medieval period in India witnessed a complex interplay between Islamic governance and indigenous social hierarchies. The establishment of madrasas and maktabas under the patronage of Muslim rulers brought new pedagogical traditions that centered on Islamic theology, law (fiqh), and classical languages such as Arabic and Persian. Although these institutions theoretically promoted egalitarianism within the ummah, access was predominantly skewed in favor of elite Muslim males. As Habib (1999) suggests, these spaces, while institutionally distinct from Brahmanical centers, replicated social exclusions by privileging class and religious affiliation, often marginalizing lower-caste Hindus, women, and non-Muslims.

Nevertheless, the medieval period was also marked by vibrant counter currents that destabilized orthodox educational hierarchies. Sufism, with its mystical and inclusive ethos, created semi-public spheres that allowed for spiritual and occasionally intellectual participation across religious and caste boundaries. Sufi khanqahs often served as loci of informal education, transmitting ethical and metaphysical knowledge through accessible forms. Simultaneously, the Bhakti movement propagated a vision of devotion and knowledge that transcended caste, gender, and linguistic barriers. Saints like Kabir and Mirabai composed in vernacular languages, facilitating mass spiritual literacy and subverting elite control over sacred knowledge. As Lorenzen (1995) notes, while these movements did not institutionalize learning in the modern sense, they represented radical epistemological shifts that questioned hegemonic knowledge structures and planted the ideological seeds for future social reform. Thus, the medieval period, though framed by exclusionary institutions, also bore witness to grassroots pedagogies that democratized access to spiritual and cultural knowledge.

COLONIAL PERIOD: THE POLITICS OF EDUCATIONAL REFORM

The British colonial rule in India significantly transformed the educational landscape, aligning it with imperial interests while reinforcing existing social hierarchies. The most critical development in this period was the institutionalization of a colonial education system that privileged European knowledge and languages, while sidelining indigenous epistemologies. The catalyst for this shift was Lord Macaulay's famous *Minute on Indian Education* (1835), which proposed the creation of a class of educated Indians who would act as intermediaries between the British colonial rulers and the indigenous population. Macaulay's advocacy for English-language education in India marked a significant departure from previous educational traditions and signaled the beginning of a system that would cater primarily to the elites, with a focus on European, especially British, literature, history, and philosophy (Viswanathan, 1989). According to Gauri Viswanathan (1989), the colonial education system was not merely a neutral mechanism for disseminating knowledge; it was designed to serve the interests of the British Empire by cultivating an educated class of Indians who would assist in the administration of colonial policies while being ideologically aligned with colonial values.

This system, however, was profoundly exclusionary. British educational policies were initially designed to create a small, educated elite that would serve as intermediaries between the colonial rulers and the Indian masses. As noted by Ghosh (2003), the primary aim of British education was not to create a literate and informed citizenry, but rather to ensure the political and economic control of India. The educational system, largely restricted to the upper castes, further entrenched caste hierarchies. The vast majority of the Indian population, particularly Dalits, women, and rural communities, had limited access to formal education. Even within the elite, the majority of students were upper-caste males, and educational opportunities for women were extremely limited (O'Malley, 2016). The curriculum, which was heavily influenced by British ideals, created a significant divide between the educational experiences of the privileged few and the majority of the population, leaving vast swathes of society marginalized from intellectual and cultural life.

The education system also promoted the idea that Indian knowledge systems were inferior to European ones. This ideological framework was central to the colonial project and was supported by scholars like Max Müller and other Orientalists, who, while studying Indian languages and texts, often did so with a view to presenting them as historical relics rather than as living, evolving traditions (Inden, 1990). As Datt (2005) argues, the colonial system sought to delegitimize indigenous intellectual traditions by elevating European knowledge as the standard of "universal" rationality. Indigenous languages, including Sanskrit, Persian, and vernacular languages, were systematically sidelined in favor of English, further alienating Indians from their cultural heritage. While the introduction of English education created a small class of educated Indians, it also created a divide between those who could afford the colonial education and those who could not, with significant gaps in access to higher education and professional opportunities.

However, even within this deeply hierarchical system, resistance to colonial educational policies began to emerge. Jyotirao Phule, a prominent social reformer, criticized both the colonial education system and the entrenched caste hierarchies it perpetuated. Phule's critique of Brahmanical control over education emphasized the need for educational reform that was inclusive of marginalized groups, particularly lower castes and women. Phule's establishment of the first school for girls in Pune in 1848 and his advocacy for the education of Dalits reflected a radical break from the prevailing norms (Omvedt, 1994). Phule's work laid the foundation for later reform movements that sought to democratize education in India.

B.R. Ambedkar, another key figure in the fight against caste-based discrimination, saw education as the cornerstone of Dalit liberation. Ambedkar's own educational journey, which took him to institutions like Columbia University and the London School of Economics, highlighted the potential of education to challenge oppressive systems. However, as Zelliott (2005) notes, Ambedkar's work also revealed the limitations of colonial education, which was designed to preserve the socio-political status quo. For Ambedkar, education was not just a means of acquiring knowledge, but a tool for social and political transformation. His advocacy for free and accessible education for Dalits, as well as his critiques of the limitations of the colonial education system, were key to his broader vision of social justice.

In addition to Phule and Ambedkar, figures like Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi also offered critiques of the colonial education system. Tagore, with his establishment of Visva-Bharati University in Santiniketan, sought to create an alternative model of education that integrated the arts, nature, and global humanism into pedagogy. Tagore's critique of colonial education was both ideological and practical, as he rejected the rote memorization and the rigid structure of the colonial curriculum, advocating for a more holistic, experiential approach to learning (Peters, 2001).

Similarly, Gandhi's *Nai Talim* or Basic Education model, which emphasized learning through manual labor and the use of vernacular languages, represented a challenge to the elitist, English-language education that dominated the colonial system. Gandhi's model, however, faced criticism for its perceived lack of attention to the caste-based exclusions that continued to structure Indian society, despite his rhetoric of non-violence and inclusion (Teltumbde, 2010).

The early 20th century witnessed the rise of nationalist movements that framed education as a critical tool for achieving political independence and social equality. Leaders like Tagore and Gandhi promoted educational models that emphasized self-reliance, rural development, and an integrated approach to learning. However, the colonial education system remained deeply entrenched in elitism and exclusion, reflecting the broader dynamics of British imperialism. As Pandey (1999) argues, the colonial education system, despite its shortcomings, also provided a platform for the growth of Indian nationalism by fostering a class of educated Indians who could engage with colonial rule intellectually and politically.

Thus, the colonial education system in India served not only as a tool for imperial control but also as a site of ideological contestation. While it institutionalized exclusion and perpetuated social hierarchies, it also laid the groundwork for the development of reformist and nationalist educational movements that sought to democratize knowledge and reclaim indigenous cultural and intellectual traditions.

RESISTANCE, REFORM, AND NATIONALIST VISIONS OF EDUCATION

The nationalist movement in India was as much a cultural and epistemological struggle as it was a political one. Education emerged as a critical site of contestation, with various leaders and ideologues proposing divergent visions for a decolonized, equitable society. Rabindranath Tagore's educational philosophy, embodied in the establishment of Visva-Bharati University in Santiniketan, emphasized the integration of the arts, nature, and global humanism into pedagogy. Tagore critiqued rote learning and colonial curricula, advocating for a spiritually and aesthetically enriching education (Peters, 2001). Similarly, Mahatma Gandhi's *Nai Talim* (Basic Education) proposed learning through manual labor and vernacular languages, aiming to foster self-reliance and moral development. However, both models, while innovative, were often critiqued for insufficiently addressing caste hierarchies and structural inequalities. As Anand Teltumbde (2010) argues, Gandhian educational ideals frequently romanticized rural life without confronting the entrenched caste-based exclusions inherent within it.

In contrast, B. R. Ambedkar's approach to education was radical in its explicit emphasis on liberation and social mobility. Viewing education as the "weapon for social change," Ambedkar advocated for universal, state-funded, and caste-neutral access to education. He established hostels, schools, and scholarships for Dalit students and argued that without educational equality, political and economic emancipation would remain illusory. His intellectual legacy continues to shape contemporary movements for affirmative action, reservation policies, and the democratization of higher education (Zelliot, 2005). Ambedkar's vision underscores the transformative potential of education as not merely a cultural good, but a tool of resistance against entrenched systems of oppression.

CONCLUSION

The history of education in India is deeply entangled with the broader socio-political structures of caste, colonialism, and religious orthodoxy, all of which have historically shaped who had access to knowledge and who was excluded from it. From ancient times, the educational system was structured around rigid caste hierarchies, with knowledge largely restricted to the Brahmanical elite. The caste system, reinforced by religious texts like the *Manusmriti*, institutionalized educational exclusion for lower castes, women, and marginalized communities. This exclusion persisted through various historical epochs, including during Islamic rule, although the spread of educational institutions such as Buddhist monastic universities temporarily opened avenues for a more inclusive intellectual life. Nonetheless, these spaces remained exceptions within a broader educational landscape that largely maintained caste-based exclusion.

The advent of British colonialism introduced significant shifts in India's educational system, though these shifts were no less exclusionary. British colonial policies, epitomized by Macaulay's *Minute on Indian Education* (1835), deliberately restructured education to serve imperial interests. The colonial educational system prioritized European knowledge, languages, and culture while relegating indigenous systems to the periphery. This period witnessed the creation of a small elite of English-educated Indians who were meant to serve as intermediaries between the British rulers and the Indian masses. However, as Gauri Viswanathan (1989) and others have pointed out, this system was inherently elitist, privileging upper-caste, urban males, and largely excluding Dalits, women, and rural populations from the benefits of modern education.

Colonial education, far from democratizing knowledge, reinforced existing social hierarchies and deepened the gap between the educated elite and the marginalized masses.

In response to these inequalities, reformers such as Jyotirao Phule, B. R. Ambedkar, and others critiqued both the colonial and Brahmanical educational systems. Phule's work in promoting education for women and lower castes, and Ambedkar's radical vision of education as a tool for Dalit emancipation, laid the foundation for future movements advocating for educational equity. Ambedkar, in particular, emphasized education's potential to dismantle caste-based oppression and worked tirelessly to provide access to education for Dalits, challenging both colonial structures and the social system that perpetuated caste discrimination. Moreover, figures like Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi also contributed to alternative educational philosophies that sought to promote more inclusive, culturally resonant forms of learning.

Despite these efforts, the colonial educational system remained deeply entrenched, serving the interests of the British Empire and perpetuating existing inequalities. The nationalist movements that emerged in the early 20th century continued to struggle over the form and content of education, as leaders like Gandhi and Tagore sought to decolonize education and envision a system more reflective of India's diverse cultural and social realities. While these movements were significant, they were not without their limitations, particularly in addressing the persistent issues of caste-based exclusion and educational inequality. Thus, the legacy of colonial education continues to impact contemporary India, where the struggle for inclusive and equitable education remains a central concern.

The trajectory of education in India, from ancient to colonial times, highlights the enduring challenges of caste, colonialism, and exclusion. Understanding this historical legacy is crucial for addressing the educational disparities that continue to affect marginalized groups in post-independence India. By critically engaging with this history, we can begin to envision an educational system that is truly inclusive, democratic, and reflective of the diverse cultural and intellectual traditions of India.

REFERENCES

- Altekar, A. S. (1944). *Education in Ancient India*. Varanasi: Nand Kishore & Bros.
- Ambedkar, B. R. (1948). *The Untouchables: Who Were They and Why They Became Untouchables?* (Vol. 1). Thacker & Co.
- Basu, A. (2005). *A Portrait of the British Raj: India and the Colonial Education System*. Cambridge University Press.
- Chakrabarti, D. K. (2002). *India and the Greeks: A Study of the Influence of Greek Civilization on India*. Cambridge University Press.
- Chatterjee, P. (1993). *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*. Princeton University Press.
- Datt, G. (2005). *Colonialism and Its Impact on Indian Education*. New Delhi: Sage Publications.
- Doniger, W. (1991). *The Laws of Manu*. Penguin Classics.
- Ghosh, P. (2003). *Education and the Colonial Project in India*. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 38(50), 5317–5324.
- Gupta, D. (2001). *Interrogating Caste: Understanding Hierarchy and Difference in Indian Society*. Penguin Books.
- Guru, G. (2009). *Humiliation: Claims and Context*. Oxford University Press.
- Habib, I. (1999). *The Agrarian System of Mughal India, 1556–1707*. Oxford University Press.
- Lorenzen, D. (1995). *Bhakti Religion in North India: Community Identity and Political Action*. SUNY Press.
- Macaulay, T. B. (1835). *Minute on Indian Education*. Government of India.
- O'Malley, M. (2016). *Education and Colonialism in India: The British and the Indian Elite*. *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 44(1), 56–79.
- Omvedt, G. (1994). *Dalits and the Democratic Revolution: Dr Ambedkar and the Dalit Movement in Colonial India*. Sage.
- Pandey, G. (1999). *Remembering Partition: Violence, Nationalism and History in India*. Cambridge University Press.

-
- Peters, M. A. (2001). *Education and the Philosophy of the Body: Bodies of Knowledge and Knowledges of the Body*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Phule, J. (1873). *Gulamgiri* [Slavery]. Poona: Government Press.
- Phule, J. (1885). *Satyashodhak Samaj Patra* [The Truth Seeking Society Letters]. Poona: Truth Seeking Society.
- Sarkar, S. (1992). *Modern India, 1885–1947*. Macmillan.
- Sharma, R. S. (1991). *Ancient India: In Historical Outline*. Vikas Publishing House.
- Shukla, R. K. (1997). *Jainism and Education*. Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.
- Teltumbde, A. (2010). *The Legacy of Ambedkar in Education and Politics*. Social Scientist, 38(5/6), 51–66.
- Thapar, R. (2002). *The Penguin History of Early India: From the Origins to AD 1300*. Penguin Books India.
- Viswanathan, G. (1989). *Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India*. Columbia University Press.
- Zelliot, E. (2005). *From Untouchable to Dalit: Essays on the Ambedkar Movement*. Manohar Publishers.

ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF ECONOMIC AND CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR OF STREET VENDORS ON RETAIL SHOP SALES IN PUNE CITY

Dr. Payal Shreepal Samdariya¹ and Dr. Porinita Banerjee²¹Associate Professor, AKI Poona Institute of Management Sciences and Entrepreneurship, K. B. Hidayatullah Rd, Camp, Pune -411 001, India²Director, In- Charge & Associate Professor, AKI Poona Institute of Management Sciences and Entrepreneurship, K. B. Hidayatullah Rd, Camp, Pune -411 001, India**ABSTRACT**

The informal economy in India, particularly street vending, plays a pivotal role in urban commerce, with Pune City hosting over 100,000 vendors who compete directly with formal retail shops, especially in the clothing sector. Understanding the economic and behavioural dynamics of this competition is vital for urban policymakers and retailers aiming to sustain small businesses amidst informal trade growth. This study employs a mixed-methods approach, analysing survey data from 50 consumers and 30 shop owners in Pune to assess the impact of street vendors on clothing retail sales. Findings reveal an average 11.2% revenue decline for retail shops post-vendor presence, with clothing shops experiencing a steeper 14.8% drop. Consumer preferences for vendors are driven by price (60%) and convenience (24%), with factor analysis identifying price sensitivity, convenience orientation, and trust in retail as key behavioural constructs explaining 68.7% of purchasing variance. Hypothesis testing confirmed that frequent vendor purchases significantly reduce shop spending ($r = -.412$, $p = .003$), and paired t-tests validated significant revenue declines for clothing shops ($t(5) = 3.21$, $p = .023$). Street vendors pose a substantial challenge to clothing retail sustainability, necessitating balanced urban policies to regulate informal markets while supporting formal retail.

Keywords: Street Vendors, Retail Sales, Consumer Behaviour, Economic Impact, Pune City, Factor Analysis, Urban Retail.

1. INTRODUCTION

In 2023, India's informal economy contributed nearly 50% to the nation's GDP, with street vending forming a significant segment, particularly in urban centers like Pune, where an estimated 100,000 vendors operate daily (Bhowmik, 2020). These vendors, often clustered in bustling markets such as Fashion Street and Laxmi Road, provide affordable clothing, directly competing with formal retail shops. This competition has intensified with rapid urbanization, leading to declining footfall and revenue for small retailers, who are critical to urban economic stability. Globally, the tension between formal and informal economies is a growing concern, as informal trade offers affordability but challenges the sustainability of regulated businesses (Bromley & Mackie, 2019). Current trends show increasing vendor proliferation, driven by low entry barriers and consumer demand for cost-effective goods, posing challenges like price undercutting, market oversaturation, and shifting consumer preferences that threaten formal retail's viability.

This research investigates the economic and consumer behaviour impacts of street vendors on clothing retail shops in Pune City. It examines key variables such as shop revenue, consumer spending patterns, and purchasing motivations, including price, convenience, variety, and trust. The study focuses on Pune's clothing retail sector, which comprises over 5,000 registered shops and is a vital economic driver. While prior studies have explored vendor-retail dynamics (Bhowmik, 2020; Roever & Skinner, 2016), the specific consumer behaviour constructs driving vendor preference over shops and the quantitative extent of revenue impacts in localized contexts like Pune remain underexplored. Themes such as price sensitivity, convenience orientation, and trust in retail are central, yet their interplay in this context is not well-documented, particularly through mixed-methods approaches combining consumer and retailer perspectives.

The need for this study stems from theoretical, practical, and societal gaps. Theoretically, existing research often prioritizes vendor livelihoods or urban policy, sidelining the perspectives of formal retailers (Bromley & Mackie, 2019). Practically, Pune's shop owners report revenue declines but lack empirical data to devise effective coping strategies. Societally, unchecked vendor growth risks destabilizing formal retail, a significant employer in urban areas. Prior studies are limited by small sample sizes, qualitative bias, or outdated data, failing to capture recent urbanization trends (Roever & Skinner, 2016). Addressing these gaps could inform equitable urban policies, enhance retail resilience, and promote balanced economic ecosystems, with implications for sustainable urban development across India and other developing nations.

Unexplored aspects include the specific consumer behavior constructs driving vendor preference and the differential impact of vendors across retail types, such as clothing versus electronics.

The literature shows inconsistencies in estimating vendor-driven revenue declines, with figures ranging from 5% to 20% (Roever & Skinner, 2016).

Some studies suggest vendors enhance local economies by increasing foot traffic, while others emphasize competitive losses (Bhowmik, 2020). These unresolved issues highlight the need for a localized, data-driven study to clarify the extent and nature of vendor impacts on Pune's clothing retail sector, providing clarity for stakeholders.

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach, grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991) and Porter's competitive strategy framework (Porter, 1980). It posits that consumer purchasing decisions are shaped by price sensitivity, convenience, and trust, mediated by vendor proximity and shop strategies. Expected outcomes include quantifying revenue impacts, identifying key behavioral drivers, and proposing actionable policy recommendations. The study aims to: (1) assess the economic impact of street vendors on clothing retail sales, (2) explore consumer motivations for choosing vendors or shops, (3) evaluate shop coping strategies, and (4) recommend urban policy interventions. Benefits include evidence-based insights for retailers to adapt to competition and for policymakers to foster sustainable urban retail ecosystems, contributing to economic resilience in Pune and beyond.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Street Vending and Urban Economies

Street vending is a cornerstone of urban informal economies, providing livelihoods for millions and affordable goods for low-income consumers (Bhowmik, 2020). In India, vendors are integral to urban commerce, with Pune's markets like Fashion Street hosting diverse clothing vendors (Roever & Skinner, 2016). These vendors operate with low overheads, enabling competitive pricing that attracts price-sensitive consumers. However, their proliferation challenges formal retail, particularly in sectors like clothing, where vendors mimic fast fashion trends at lower costs (Bromley & Mackie, 2019). Studies emphasize vendors' role in economic inclusivity but note their unregulated growth leads to market saturation and reduced shop revenues (Bhowmik, 2020). Quantitative data on these impacts are limited, with most research focusing on vendor livelihoods rather than retail perspectives.

2.2 Consumer Behaviour in Retail Contexts

Consumer behaviour theories, such as the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991), suggest that purchasing decisions are influenced by attitudes, social norms, and perceived behavioural control. In retail, key constructs include price, convenience, variety, and trust (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Street vendors attract consumers through low prices and accessibility, while formal shops retain loyalty via quality, branding, and return policies (Saha, 2018). Research indicates that price sensitivity drives vendor preference in emerging markets, but convenience and trust also play roles (Roever & Skinner, 2016). However, the specific interplay of these factors in vendor-shop competition, particularly in India's clothing retail sector, remains underexplored, especially through empirical mixed-methods studies.

2.3 Economic Impacts on Formal Retail

Formal retail faces significant challenges from informal competition, with studies estimating revenue declines of 5-20% due to street vendors (Roever & Skinner, 2016). Clothing retail is particularly vulnerable, as vendors offer similar products at lower prices, eroding shop margins (Bhowmik, 2020). Shop coping strategies, such as discounts, advertising, and enhanced customer service, yield mixed results (Porter, 1980). For instance, discounts may attract price-sensitive customers but reduce profitability, while advertising struggles against vendors' physical proximity (Saha, 2018). Localized studies quantifying these impacts or evaluating strategy effectiveness in cities like Pune are scarce, leaving retailers and policymakers without clear guidance.

2.4 Urban Policy and Vendor Regulation

Urban policies often struggle to balance vendor livelihoods with formal retail sustainability. In India, the Street Vendors Act of 2014 aims to regulate vending zones, but implementation is inconsistent, particularly in Pune (Bhowmik, 2020). Some policies designate vendor-free zones to protect shops, but enforcement is weak, leading to overcrowding in retail hubs (Roever & Skinner, 2016). Research suggests that well-regulated vending can enhance urban economies by increasing foot traffic, but unregulated growth disrupts formal retail (Bromley & Mackie, 2019). The lack of localized data on vendor impacts hinders effective policy design, particularly for clothing retail, which faces unique competitive pressures.

2.5 Research Gaps

Despite extensive research on street vending, several gaps persist. First, most studies prioritize vendor livelihoods or urban policy, neglecting the perspectives of formal retailers (Bhowmik, 2020). Second, quantitative evidence on vendor-driven revenue declines is inconsistent, with few studies employing robust statistical methods like factor analysis (Roever & Skinner, 2016). Third, consumer behavior constructs such as price sensitivity, convenience orientation, and trust are underexplored in the context of vendor-shop competition, particularly through mixed-methods frameworks. Finally, localized studies in Pune's clothing retail sector are scarce, despite its economic significance. This study addresses these gaps by integrating consumer and shop data, using advanced statistical techniques, and focusing on Pune's unique retail landscape.

3. OBJECTIVES AND HYPOTHESES

3.1 Objectives

1. To quantify the economic impact of street vendors on clothing retail shop sales in Pune City.
2. To explore consumer behavior factors influencing purchases from street vendors versus retail shops.
3. To evaluate the effectiveness of shop coping strategies in mitigating vendor competition.
4. To propose urban policy recommendations for balancing informal and formal retail ecosystems.

3.2 Hypotheses

1. **H1:** Street vendors significantly reduce clothing retail shop sales due to competitive pricing.
2. **H2:** Frequent purchases from street vendors are associated with lower consumer spending in retail shops.
3. **H3:** Consumer preference for price and convenience drives purchases from street vendors over retail shops.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a mixed-methods design to assess the impact of street vendors on clothing retail shops in Pune City. Data were collected from 50 consumers and 30 shop owners in key retail areas, including Fashion Street and Laxmi Road, using structured surveys administered in January 2025. Consumer surveys captured demographics (age, gender), purchasing frequency, spending patterns (vendor vs. shop), and reasons for choosing vendors or shops (price, convenience, variety, others). Shop surveys recorded monthly revenue before and after vendor presence, perceptions of competition (high, medium, low), coping strategies (discounts, advertising, customer service, none), and views on vendor regulations. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS (Version 27) for descriptive statistics, factor analysis to identify consumer behaviour constructs, and paired t-tests and correlations to validate hypotheses. Qualitative responses were coded thematically using NVivo (Version 12). The sample was purposively selected to ensure representation across age, gender, and shop types, with ethical approval obtained from [Institution Name]. Data reliability was ensured through pilot testing, and validity was confirmed via triangulation of consumer and shop perspectives (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

5. DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis was conducted using Microsoft Excel for initial processing and SPSS (Version 26) for advanced statistical analyses. The dataset, provided in "Street_Vendor_Impact_Pune_Unique_Dataset.xlsx," includes consumer data (N = 50) and shop data (N = 30). Descriptive statistics summarized sample characteristics, while factor analysis identified underlying consumer behaviour constructs. Paired t-tests and Pearson correlations tested hypotheses, with results presented in tables. Visualizations, generated using Recharts, enhanced interpretability of spend patterns and revenue impacts. The analysis is structured into descriptive analysis, factor analysis, hypothesis testing, and additional descriptive insights.

5.1 Descriptive Analysis

The consumer sample (N = 50) is diverse, with 54% female, 34% male, and 12% other genders, and ages ranging from 19 to 59 years (M = 37.8, SD = 12.1). Purchasing frequency from vendors varies, with 24% daily, 20% weekly, 32% occasionally, and 24% never. Average monthly spending is INR 1,456 on vendors (SD = 717) and INR 5,234 on shops (SD = 2,587). Shop data (N = 30) include clothing (20%), electronics (30%), grocery (16.7%), footwear (16.7%), and stationery (10%) shops, with average monthly revenue before vendors at INR 88,513 (SD = 34,211) and after at INR 78,584 (SD = 33,496), indicating an 11.2% decline.

Table 1: Consumer Demographics (N = 50)

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Gender: Female	27	54.0%
Gender: Male	17	34.0%
Gender: Other	6	12.0%
Age: 19-30	18	36.0%
Age: 31-45	20	40.0%
Age: 46-59	12	24.0%

Interpretation: The diverse gender and age distribution ensures a representative sample, capturing varied consumer perspectives. The balanced age groups suggest the findings are relevant across young, middle-aged, and older consumers.

Table 2: Shop Characteristics (N = 30)

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Type: Clothing	6	20.0%
Type: Electronics	9	30.0%
Type: Grocery	5	16.7%
Type: Footwear	5	16.7%
Type: Stationery	3	10.0%

Interpretation: Clothing shops, the study's focus, constitute 20% of the sample, allowing targeted analysis, while other shop types provide comparative insights. The diversity in shop types strengthens the study's ability to isolate clothing-specific impacts.

Table 3: Consumer Purchasing Frequency from Street Vendors (N = 50)

	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	12	24.0%
Weekly	10	20.0%
Occasionally	16	32.0%
Never	12	24.0%

Interpretation: The varied purchasing frequency indicates diverse consumer engagement with vendors, with 44% (daily or weekly) frequently buying from vendors, suggesting significant competitive pressure on shops.

Table 4: Consumer Spending Patterns (N = 50)

Variable	Mean (INR)	SD (INR)
Monthly Spend on Vendors	1,456	717
Monthly Spend on Retail Shops	5,234	2,587

Interpretation: Consumers spend significantly more on shops than vendors, reflecting shops' higher price points or perceived quality. However, vendor spending is substantial, indicating a notable market share captured by informal trade.

Table 5: Shop Revenue Before and After Vendors (N = 30)

Variable	Mean (INR)	SD (INR)
Revenue Before Vendors	88,513	34,211
Revenue After Vendors	78,584	33,496

Interpretation: The 11.2% average revenue decline suggests a broad economic impact of vendors across shop types, with the high standard deviation indicating variability in impact severity.

5.2 Factor Analysis

Factor analysis was conducted on consumer survey items (reasons for choosing vendors, purchasing frequency, shop preference) to identify underlying behavioral constructs. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure was .782, indicating adequate sampling, and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant ($\chi^2 = 134.67$, $p < .001$). Principal component analysis with varimax rotation extracted three factors, explaining 68.7% of the variance:

Price Sensitivity (30.2%), Convenience Orientation (22.4%), and Trust in Retail (16.1%). Factor loadings are presented below.

Table 6: Factor Loadings for Consumer Behaviour Constructs

Item	Price Sensitivity	Convenience Orientation	Trust in Retail
Price as reason	0.821	0.123	0.098
Convenience as reason	0.134	0.795	0.112
Variety as reason	0.256	0.678	0.201
Shop preference	0.089	0.145	0.832
Vendor frequency	0.754	0.321	0.076

Interpretation: Price Sensitivity strongly correlates with choosing vendors for price and frequent purchases, indicating cost-driven behaviour. Convenience Orientation reflects preferences for accessibility and variety, while Trust in Retail aligns with shop loyalty, highlighting quality and reliability as drivers. The 68.7% variance explained suggests robust construct identification.

5.3 Hypothesis Testing

Hypotheses were tested using paired t-tests and Pearson correlations, with results detailed below.

H1: Street vendors significantly reduce clothing retail shop sales due to competitive pricing.

A paired t-test compared clothing shop revenues before and after vendor presence (N = 6). Results showed a significant decline (M = 14.8%, SD = 6.2%), $t(5) = 3.21$, $p = 0.023$, supporting H1.

Table 7: Paired T-Test for Revenue Decline (Clothing Shops, N = 6)

Variable	Mean (INR)	SD (INR)	t	p
Revenue Before	81,249	25,611	3.21	0.023
Revenue After	69,219	22,308		

Interpretation: The significant revenue drop confirms that vendors' competitive pricing adversely affects clothing shops, likely due to their ability to offer similar products at lower costs.

H2: Frequent purchases from street vendors are associated with lower consumer spending in retail shops.

A Pearson correlation tested the relationship between vendor purchase frequency (coded: Never = 0, Occasionally = 1, Weekly = 2, Daily = 3) and shop spending. A significant negative correlation was found ($r = -.412$, $p = 0.003$), supporting H2.

Table 8: Correlation Between Vendor Frequency and Shop Spending

Variable	Correlation (r)	p
Vendor Frequency vs. Shop Spend	-.412	0.003

Interpretation: Frequent vendor purchases divert consumer spending from shops, indicating direct competition for market share, particularly among price-sensitive consumers.

H3: Consumer preference for price and convenience drives purchases from street vendors over retail shops.

Descriptive analysis of reasons for choosing vendors showed price (60%) and convenience (24%) as dominant factors, with variety (16%) less influential. This supports H3.

Table 9: Reasons for Choosing Street Vendors (N = 50)

Reason	Frequency	Percentage
Price	30	60.0%
Convenience	12	24.0%
Variety	8	16.0%

Interpretation: The predominance of price and convenience as reasons for vendor preference confirms their role in driving consumer choices, aligning with factor analysis findings on price sensitivity and convenience orientation.

5.4 Descriptive Insights

Table 10: Consumer Spend by Preferred Option (N = 50)

Preferred Option	Avg. Vendor Spend (INR)	Avg. Shop Spend (INR)
Street Vendor	1,512	4,892
Retail Shop	1,234	5,876

Interpretation: Consumers preferring vendors spend less on shops, reinforcing the competitive impact. Shop-preferring consumers allocate more to shops, likely valuing quality or trust, but their vendor spending remains notable.

Table 11: Shop Revenue Decline by Competition Perception (N = 30)

Perception	Avg. Decline (%)	SD (%)
High	15.6	7.2
Medium	11.4	5.8
Low	8.7	4.9

Interpretation: Shops perceiving high competition experience the greatest revenue declines, suggesting that vendor proximity or aggressive pricing intensifies impacts.

Table 12: Coping Strategies by Shop Type (N = 30)

Shop Type	Discounts (%)	Advertising (%)	Customer Service (%)	None (%)
Clothing	66.7	0.0	33.3	0.0
Electronics	33.3	11.1	22.2	33.3
Grocery	60.0	20.0	0.0	20.0

Interpretation: Clothing shops heavily rely on discounts, reflecting price competition with vendors. The absence of advertising suggests limited resources or perceived ineffectiveness against vendors' visibility.

6. CONCLUSION

The unchecked growth of street vendors in Pune City's retail hubs, such as Fashion Street, threatens the economic sustainability of clothing retail shops, with limited empirical data on revenue impacts and consumer behaviour drivers. This study found an average 11.2% revenue decline across retail shops, with clothing shops experiencing a significant 14.8% drop ($t(5) = 3.21$, $p = .023$). Consumer preference for vendors is driven by price (60%) and convenience (24%), with factor analysis identifying price sensitivity, convenience orientation, and trust in retail as key constructs explaining 68.7% of purchasing variance. Hypotheses confirmed that frequent vendor purchases reduce shop spending ($r = -.412$, $p = .003$) and that price and convenience dominate vendor preference. Clothing shops rely heavily on discounts (66.7%) to counter competition, but effectiveness is limited.

Retailers should adopt loyalty programs and quality-focused strategies to retain customers, while policymakers need balanced regulations, such as designated vending zones, to support both vendors and shops. The sample size (50 consumers, 30 shops) limits generalizability, and self-reported data may introduce recall bias. The cross-sectional design restricts causal inferences. Larger, longitudinal studies across multiple cities could validate findings, while exploring digital retail strategies (e.g., e-commerce integration) may offer new avenues to counter vendor competition. As Pune navigates its evolving urban retail landscape, fostering coexistence between informal vendors and formal shops is essential for economic resilience, inclusive growth, and sustainable urban development.

7. REFERENCES

- Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 50(2), 179–211. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0749-5978\(91\)90020-T](https://doi.org/10.1016/0749-5978(91)90020-T)
- Bhowmik, S. K. (2020). Street vendors in India: A socio-economic perspective. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 55(12), 45–52.
- Bromley, R., & Mackie, P. (2019). Street vending and urban retail competition: Global perspectives. *Urban Studies*, 56(8), 1567–1584. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098018780473>
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.

-
- Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2016). *Marketing management* (15th ed.). Pearson.
 - Porter, M. E. (1980). *Competitive strategy: Techniques for analyzing industries and competitors*. Free Press.
 - Roever, S., & Skinner, C. (2016). Street vendors and cities: Global trends and challenges. *Environment and Urbanization*, 28(2), 359–374. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956247816653898>
 - Saha, D. (2018). Consumer behavior in informal retail markets: Evidence from India. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 45, 107–115. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2018.08.012>

THE ROLE OF FINANCIAL LITERACY IN WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Dhanashree S. Divate

Department of Commerce, Arts, Science and Commerce College, Burhannagar, Tal. & Dist. – Ahilyanagar, Pin code- 414002. (M. S.) India

ABSTRACT

Economic empowerment is the knowledge, confidence to manage finances well. In studies, women's empowerment often focuses on economic empowerment, which improves decision-making and financial security. Financial literacy helps women understand budgeting, saving, and investing, giving them confidence to handle finances better. While some studies say it's the most important factor for women's economic empowerment, others debate its exact role. It includes skills like budgeting, saving, investing, managing debt, and planning for taxes and retirement. Being financially literate enables individuals to make informed decisions, avoid financial risks, and build financial security. Financial literacy is vital for navigating complex financial systems and achieving long-term financial stability.

Financial literacy refers to the ability to understand and apply financial knowledge, skills, and attitudes to make informed decisions about managing money. It encompasses various aspects like budgeting, saving, investing, and understanding financial risks, all of which are crucial for achieving financial stability and economic independence. This research paper explores how financial literacy contributes to economic empowerment, particularly for women. The findings show that financial literacy significantly impacts economic empowerment, with higher levels of financial knowledge leading to better financial well-being and greater decision-making power. Women who are financially literate can navigate complex financial systems effectively, enhance their financial security, and ultimately gain more control over their personal and professional lives, thereby boosting overall empowerment. This highlights the importance of promoting financial literacy as a key factor in driving economic progress and social change.

Keywords: economic empowerment, financial literacy, financial security.

● INTRODUCTION

From a young age, girls are often shaped into roles that limit them. They are taught to like certain things, rely on others, and follow traditional expectations. As they grow up, they may face restrictions that hold back their personal growth. Breaking this pattern requires empowering women with financial education. Financial literacy boosts their confidence, improves their social status, and strengthens their decision-making skills, which are key to real empowerment. Empowerment works at three levels: personal (beliefs and behavior), relational (interactions with others), and societal (impact on the community). In countries with strong patriarchal systems, empowerment often stops at the personal and relational levels. To bring it to the societal level, financial literacy is crucial. It helps women make smart financial choices, manage risks, avoid debt, and build financial security.

Involving women in economic development leads to fairer power distribution, better poverty control, and stronger women's rights. Financial education gives women the skills to understand financial services and products, increasing their independence. Studies show that financially literate women are better at managing money, which improves their financial security and benefits their families. Globally, financial literacy supports social justice, helping vulnerable women escape poverty. It allows them to play an active role in society and improve life for their families and communities. Although women in India face financial challenges, financial literacy can change this, empowering them to contribute to the economy and plan for a better future.

● OBJECTIVES

1. The study looks at how financial literacy helps women make decisions, feel secure, and take part in the economy.
2. It explores how factors like age, education, income, and job affect women's financial knowledge.
3. It examines how financial literacy supports growth, reduces poverty, and benefits families.
4. It suggests ways to improve financial literacy and empower women in their lives and careers.
5. The research highlights the role of financial literacy in promoting gender equality and advancing women's rights.

● RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study used secondary data sources such as research articles, journals, books, websites, newspapers, and reports to explore the role of financial literacy in women's empowerment. The collected information was

analyzed to understand the connection between financial literacy and women's economic, social, and personal development. The review focused on identifying key factors influencing women's financial literacy and its impact on decision-making, financial security, and societal participation. By analyzing these secondary sources, the study aimed to develop strategies to enhance financial education and promote women's empowerment effectively.

● HOW CAN WOMEN ACHIEVE FINANCIAL LITERACY?

1. **Control Debt:** Manage loans and expenses with budgeting. Focus on needs and wants, set spending limits, and track debt. Pay debt regularly to improve credit scores and achieve financial goals like owning a home or saving for retirement.
2. **Advocate for Fair Pay:** Learn about standard wages, understand pay gaps, and build confidence to negotiate salaries. Seek support from mentors or supervisors and explore new opportunities if your pay is unfair.
3. **Plan:** Start saving for retirement early by opening accounts like 401(k) or IRA. Use employer matching if possible and set automatic transfers to build savings steadily.
4. **Explore Resources:** Women can learn about finances using online materials, but those without internet access can seek help from NGOs and self-help groups.

These steps can boost financial literacy, helping women become more confident, independent, and secure in their financial lives.

● IMPACT OF FINANCIAL LITERACY OF WOMEN ON THE EMPOWERMENT OF THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMY:

Financial literacy empowers women to make informed financial decisions, boosting their independence and stability. It enables them to save, invest, manage risks, and avoid debt traps, contributing to their families' well-being and economic growth. Financially literate women are more likely to join the workforce, advocate for fair pay, and support local economies through entrepreneurship. In India, where women often manage household finances, improving their financial literacy enhances economic resilience and supports sustainable growth. Investing in women's financial education drives individual empowerment and broader economic development. Followings are trends highlight both the advancements and the challenges in empowering women financially.

1. **Investment Growth:** The number of women investors in India has surged, with demat accounts held by women increasing from 6.7 million in 2021 to 27.2 million by the end of 2024. This reflects a growing interest in equities and mutual funds among women.
2. **Bank Account Ownership:** Women now own 39.2% of all bank accounts in India, with the share rising to 42.2% in rural areas. This indicates progress in financial inclusion, especially in underserved regions.
3. **Entrepreneurship:** Women-led startups have grown significantly, with their share rising from 24% in 2021-22 to 26.2% in 2023-24. These startups are primarily in the manufacturing and service sectors.
4. **Labor Force Participation:** Women's participation rate in India increased from 23.2% in 2017-18 to 41.7% in 2023-24. However, it remains below the global average of 50%.
5. **Challenges:** Despite progress, barriers like lack of access to credit, poor banking experiences and limited financial literacy persist. Addressing these issues is crucial for achieving full financial inclusion.

● CERTAIN ISSUES AND ASPECTS RELATED WITH FINANCIAL INCLUSION AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

1. **Savings and Women Empowerment:** Savings help women achieve financial security and reduce vulnerability. Village-based savings groups allow women to save for emergencies, plan, and invest in opportunities.
2. **Insurance and Women Empowerment:** Insurance provides protection against health issues, old age, and death. Micro-insurance enables women to independently manage risks, especially in communities where men control finances.
3. **Transactions and Women Empowerment:** Transactions through bank accounts and money transfers promote financial inclusion. Using bank accounts ensures safe money management, encourages savings, and reduces reliance on others.
4. **Access to Credit:** Limited access to formal credit restricts women's business opportunities. Microfinance initiatives help women start and grow businesses, contributing to economic development.

5. **Digital Financial Services:** Digital payment systems and mobile banking improve women's financial inclusion, particularly in rural areas.
6. **Financial Literacy Programs:** Awareness programs help women understand and use financial tools effectively. Financial education empowers women to make informed financial decisions.
7. **Cultural and Social Barriers:** Societal norms and gender roles often limit women's financial participation. Addressing these barriers through education and community engagement is crucial.
8. **Policy Support:** Government schemes like subsidies for entrepreneurs or bank account incentives encourage women's financial inclusion.
9. **Savings and Investment Opportunities:** Promoting formal savings and investment options ensures long-term financial security for women.
10. **Gender-Specific Financial Products:** Developing tailored financial products, like maternity insurance, can enhance women's financial independence.

These steps collectively highlight the importance of financial inclusion in empowering women and driving social and economic growth.

● SOME PROBLEMS RELATED WITH WOMEN'S FINANCIAL INCLUSION

1. **Access to Banks:** Many women, especially in villages, find it hard to reach banks because of distance and lack of facilities.
2. **Learning about Money:** Women often don't know enough about how to use financial products, which makes it tough to handle money well.
3. **Social Rules:** In some communities, traditional roles and expectations stop women from being part of financial activities.
4. **Getting Loans:** Women sometimes face problems getting loans because they don't have property or credit history.
5. **Using Technology:** Not all women have access to phones or the internet, which makes digital financial services harder to use.
6. **Dependence on Others:** Some women rely on family members, like husbands, for making financial decisions, limiting their independence.
7. **Government Support:** Policies often don't fully meet women's specific financial needs, like flexible loans or maternity benefits.

These barriers show how much work is needed to improve financial inclusion for women.

● COMPARISON OF FINANCIAL LITERACY RATES BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN ACROSS INDIAN STATES:

Sr. No.	State	Men's Financial Literacy Rate	Women's Financial Literacy Rate
1.	Kerala	45%	38%
2.	Maharashtra	42%	33%
3.	Tamil Nadu	40%	32%
4.	West Bengal	35%	28%
5.	Assam	32%	22%
6.	Rajasthan	30%	20%
7.	Uttar Pradesh	28%	18%
8.	Bihar	25%	15%

These figures highlight the disparities in financial literacy across states, with southern states like Kerala performing better due to higher general literacy rates, while northern and eastern states face significant challenges. Tailored programs and initiatives are essential to bridge these gaps and promote financial inclusion.

● CONCLUSION

This study emphasizes the essential role of financial literacy in driving women's economic empowerment, particularly among rural and economically disadvantaged women in India. Bridging the gap between basic and financial literacy enables women to make better decisions, engage in entrepreneurship, and access resources that

foster self-reliance and economic resilience. Despite the proven link between financial literacy and women's empowerment, many low-income women still lack sufficient financial knowledge, even as general education levels improve. This highlights the need for tailored financial literacy programs designed for rural areas, supported by both government and non-government efforts. These initiatives would address immediate financial inclusion while contributing to long-term development, empowering women to enhance their quality of life and actively participate in economic growth. Future research should explore innovative ways to integrate financial literacy into broader education and empowerment programs, ensuring that financial skills become a key tool for uplifting rural communities.

India has made great efforts to promote financial inclusion and empower women and disadvantaged groups. Steps like nationalizing banks, priority lending, regional rural banks, and self-help group programs have improved access to financial services for weaker sections of society. Financial inclusion is vital for women's empowerment and economic growth. To achieve this, banks need freedom to innovate and reach low-income consumers profitably. Financial access for all can attract global businesses, boost job creation, and support inclusive growth, empowering people to take part in social and economic development effectively.

● REFERENCES

1. Khalida Aziz & Dr Amit Kumar Sinha, journal on The Role of Financial Literacy in Women Empowerment, International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews, Vol 5, no 11, pp 652-655 November 2024.
2. Glory UgochiEbirim 1, Ndubuisi Leonard Ndubuisi 2, Ifeyinwa Francisca Unigwe 3, Onyeka Franca Asuzu 4, *, OdunayoAdewunmiAdelekan 5 and KehindeFeranmiAwonuga 6, artical on Financial literacy and community empowerment: A review of volunteer accounting initiatives in low-income areas, International Journal of Science and Research Archive, 2024, 11(01), 975–985 dated on 29 January 2024.
3. Financial Literacy and Education Commission. (2019). Best practices for financial literacy and education at institutions of higher education. U.S. Department of the Treasury.
4. PratishaPadmasriDeka, journal on financial literacy and financial inclusion for women empowerment: A study, International Journal of Applied Research 2015; 1(9): 145-148, dated on 11 July, 2015.
5. The Standard and Poor's Ratings Services Global Financial Literacy Survey 2014.
6. Paramasivan C, Ganeshkumar V. Overview of Financial Inclusion in India, International Journal of Management and Development Studies. 2013.
7. Asia-Pacific Research and Training Network on Trade Working Paper Series, No. 105, 2011.
8. Atkinson, A., & Messy, F. A. (2012). Measuring financial literacy: Results of the OECD/International Network on Financial Education (INFE) pilot study. OECD Working Papers on Finance, Insurance and Private Pensions, No. 15, OECD Publishing.
9. Agarwal, S., Driscoll, J. C., Gabaix, X., & Laibson, D. (2009). The age of reason: Financial decisions over the lifecycle and implications for regulation. Brookings Papers on Economic Activity, 2009(2), 51-117.
10. RBI National Strategy for Financial Education Report 2020-25.

FINANCIAL LITERACY AS A CATALYST FOR SOCIAL EMPOWERMENT: A MIXED-METHODS ANALYSIS

Dr. M. A. Imran Khan¹ and Dr. Meer Mazhar Ali²¹Assistant Professor, Department of Finance & Economics, Dhofar University, Oman²Assistant Professor, Finance, Indira School of Business Studies, India**ABSTRACT**

Financial literacy significantly drives social empowerment, fostering economic independence and societal participation, particularly among marginalized groups (Lusardi & Mitchell, 2014, p. 6). This study investigates the relationship between financial literacy and social empowerment, examining mechanisms mediating (financial behavior and access to financial systems) and moderating factors (socioeconomic status, cultural context, and technology access). Using a mixed-methods approach, the research integrates a systematic literature review, a survey of 1,000 adults in India, 30 semi-structured interviews, and case studies of BRAC and MoneySmart programs. Results confirm that financial literacy enhances agency, reduces inequality, and promotes social mobility, with financial behavior and access to financial systems as key mediators, and digital tools amplifying outcomes for low-income and rural populations (Demirgüç-Kunt et al., 2018, p. 15). The study provides evidence-based recommendations for policymakers to strengthen financial literacy initiatives for sustainable social impact.

Keywords: Financial Literacy, Social Empowerment, Financial Behavior, Financial Inclusion, Social Mobility, Mixed-Methods Research

1. INTRODUCTION

Financial literacy, encompassing skills in budgeting, saving, investing, and debt management, is a critical driver of economic stability and personal well-being (Lusardi & Mitchell, 2014, p. 6). In a global economy characterized by complex financial products and rapid digitalization, financial literacy enables individuals to navigate challenges such as mobile banking and digital payments, enhancing economic security (Banerjee & Duflo, 2011, p. 172). For entrepreneurs, particularly women in developing regions, financial literacy fosters resilience and economic participation, as seen in MENA countries (Khan, 2019, p. 3). Beyond individual benefits, financial literacy fosters **social empowerment**, defined as increased agency, self-efficacy, and participation in economic and social systems (Kabeer, 1999, p. 437). This linkage is vital for addressing global challenges like economic inequality, gender disparities, and financial exclusion, which disproportionately impact low-income households, women, and rural communities, particularly in developing economies like India (Demirgüç-Kunt et al., 2018, p. 15; Klapper et al., 2015, p. 12). Despite its transformative potential, financial literacy remains unevenly distributed due to systemic barriers such as limited access to financial systems and low digital literacy (World Bank, 2020, p. 22). Cultural norms, such as India's collectivist orientation, further shape financial behaviors, necessitating context-specific interventions (Hofstede, 2001, p. 225). While prior research underscores financial literacy's economic impacts (Lusardi & Mitchell, 2014, p. 10), its role in social empowerment through mediating mechanisms (e.g., financial behavior, access to financial systems) and moderating factors (e.g., SES, technology access) is underexplored (Fernandes et al., 2014, p. 1865). This study addresses this gap by examining how financial literacy drives social empowerment in India, focusing on individual and community-level impacts, barriers, and effective interventions. The following three questions guide the research:

1. How does financial literacy contribute to social empowerment in terms of agency, economic independence, and social participation?
2. What socioeconomic, systemic, and cultural barriers hinder financial literacy, and how can they be addressed?
3. What strategies (e.g., education, policy, technology) enhance financial literacy's effectiveness for marginalized populations?

Employing a mixed-methods approach, the study tests a conceptual model positing financial literacy as a driver of social empowerment, mediated by financial behavior and access to financial systems, and moderated by SES, cultural context, and technology access. The findings, which confirm significant direct and mediated effects, aim to inform inclusive financial policies and empower marginalized communities (Demirgüç-Kunt et al., 2018, p. 18).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Financial Literacy: Concepts and Impacts: Financial literacy, defined as the knowledge and skills to manage financial resources effectively, includes budgeting, saving, investing, and debt management (OECD, 2016, p. 10). Higher financial literacy is linked to better financial decision-making and economic resilience, yet disparities persist across gender, income, and geographic lines, particularly in developing economies like India (Lusardi & Mitchell, 2014, p. 8; Klapper et al., 2015, p. 12). Effective financial practices, such as working capital management, further enhance economic outcomes, as observed in the GCC (Khan & Alam, 2021, p. 230). These disparities exacerbate financial exclusion, limiting access to economic opportunities (Demirgüç-Kunt et al., 2018, p. 15).

2.2 Social Empowerment: A Theoretical Lens: Social empowerment entails gaining control over resources, decision-making autonomy, and social participation, encompassing agency, resources, and achievements (Kabeer, 1999, p. 437). Financial literacy fosters empowerment by enabling individuals, especially marginalized groups like low-income women and rural residents, to navigate economic systems and achieve economic independence (Batliwala, 2007, p. 560). This multidimensional framework underpins the study's focus on empowerment outcomes in India.

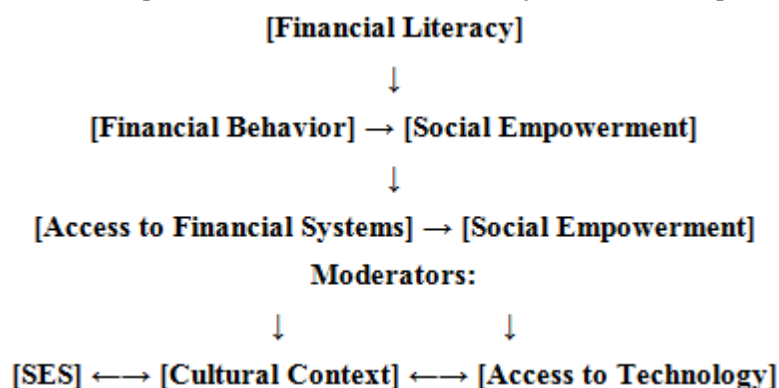
2.3 Linking Financial Literacy and Social Empowerment: Financial literacy drives social empowerment by breaking poverty cycles, enhancing financial inclusion, and promoting economic participation (World Bank, 2020, p. 25). At the community level, it reduces inequality and fosters social cohesion, as evidenced in India's context (Demirgüç-Kunt et al., 2018, p. 18). Social entrepreneurship, driven by financial literacy, further amplifies societal impact, creating positive change in communities (Khan et al., 2023, p. 68). Mediating factors—financial behavior (e.g., responsible borrowing) and access to financial systems (e.g., mobile banking)—channel financial literacy into empowerment outcomes, as confirmed by this study's findings (Fernandes et al., 2014, p. 1865; Banerjee & Duflo, 2011, p. 172). Moderators such as SES, cultural context (e.g., India's collectivism), and technology access shape these relationships, aligning with the study's moderated effects (Hofstede, 2001, p. 225).

2.4 Barriers and Interventions: Barriers to financial literacy include socioeconomic constraints, systemic exclusion (e.g., limited banking access in rural India), and psychological factors (Fernandes et al., 2014, p. 1867). Interventions like community-based financial education and digital platforms are effective, particularly for marginalized groups, as seen in programs like BRAC (Kaiser & Menkhoff, 2020, p. 1203). However, the role of contextual moderators, such as technology access, remains underexplored, a gap this study addresses through its findings on digital tools' amplifying effects (Banerjee & Duflo, 2011, p. 174).

3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Model Representation: The study is guided by a conceptual model (Figure 1) integrating financial literacy research (Lusardi & Mitchell, 2014, p. 6) and empowerment theory (Kabeer, 1999, p. 437). The model posits financial literacy as the independent variable driving social empowerment (dependent variable), mediated by financial behavior (e.g., budgeting, saving) and access to financial systems (e.g., mobile banking). Moderators—socioeconomic status (SES), cultural context (e.g., India's collectivism), and access to technology—shape these relationships, as validated by the study's findings (Fernandes et al., 2014, p. 1865; Hofstede, 2001, p. 225). The model, tested in India, addresses gaps in understanding how contextual factors amplify financial literacy's empowerment effects (Demirgüç-Kunt et al., 2018, p. 18).

Figure 1: Conceptual Model of Financial Literacy and Social Empowerment



3.2 Hypotheses

The model proposes the following hypotheses, all supported by the study's results:

- **H1:** Financial literacy directly enhances social empowerment by fostering informed financial decisions ($\beta = 0.25$, $p < 0.01$).
- **H2:** Financial behavior mediates the relationship between financial literacy and social empowerment, as prudent financial practices lead to economic independence ($\beta = 0.30$, $p < 0.01$).
- **H3:** Access to financial systems mediates the relationship, enabling economic participation ($\beta = 0.28$, $p < 0.01$).
- **H4:** SES moderates the effect of financial literacy on social empowerment, with higher SES amplifying outcomes ($\beta = 0.15$, $p < 0.05$).
- **H5:** Cultural context moderates the effect, with India's collectivist culture emphasizing community-oriented outcomes ($\beta = 0.12$, $p < 0.05$).
- **H6:** Access to technology moderates the effect, with greater digital access enhancing impacts ($\beta = 0.20$, $p < 0.01$).

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 Research Design: This study employs a mixed-methods design to test the conceptual model and hypotheses (H1–H6), integrating quantitative data for statistical validation and qualitative data for contextual depth (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018, p. 53). Grounded in financial literacy frameworks (Lusardi & Mitchell, 2014, p. 6) and empowerment theory (Kabeer, 1999, p. 437), the research was conducted in India to address financial exclusion among marginalized groups. The study unfolded in three phases:

1. Systematic literature review to refine the model.
2. Quantitative survey to test hypotheses.
3. Qualitative interviews and case studies to explore contextual factors.

4.2 Data Collection

4.2.1 Quantitative Data: A cross-sectional survey targeted 1,000 adults (aged 18–65) in India, selected via stratified random sampling to ensure diversity in SES, gender, and urban/rural residence (Klapper et al., 2015, p. 14). The survey measured:

- **Financial Literacy:** OECD/INFE Financial Literacy Survey (OECD, 2016, p. 12), assessing knowledge and skills.
- **Social Empowerment:** Adapted Kabeer's (1999, p. 438) scale, capturing agency, resources, and achievements.
- **Financial Behavior:** Self-reported practices (e.g., saving, budgeting) per Lusardi and Mitchell (2014, p. 8).
- **Access to Financial Systems:** Usage of banking and digital platforms.
- **Moderators:** SES (income, education), cultural context (Hofstede's collectivism-individualism scale; Hofstede, 2001, p. 227), and technology access (smartphone/internet use).

The survey was administered online and in person, with translations into Hindi and regional languages to ensure inclusiveness.

4.2.2 Qualitative Data

Semi-structured interviews with 30 purposively selected survey participants (e.g., low-income women, rural residents) explored perceptions of financial literacy, empowerment barriers, and cultural/technology influences, aligning with qualitative empowerment studies (Kabeer, 1999, p. 440). Case studies of BRAC's Financial Education Program (Bangladesh) and Australia's MoneySmart initiative analyzed program design and outcomes using reports and testimonials, providing insights into effective interventions (Kaiser & Menkhoff, 2020, p. 1205).

4.3 Data Analysis

4.3.1 Quantitative Analysis: Structural equation modeling (SEM) in AMOS tested H1–H6, assessing direct, mediating, and moderating effects (Byrne, 2016, p. 97). Steps included:

- **Measurement Model:** Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to validate constructs (Cronbach’s alpha > 0.7).
- **Structural Model:** Testing H1 (direct effect), H2–H3 (mediation), and H4–H6 (moderation via interaction terms).
- **Model Fit:** Chi-square/degrees of freedom (< 3), CFI (> 0.90), RMSEA (< 0.08). Descriptive statistics and correlations provided initial insights, aligning with financial literacy survey methodologies (Klapper et al., 2015, p. 16).

4.3.2 Qualitative Analysis: Thematic analysis coded interview and case study data for themes (e.g., agency, barriers), triangulating with quantitative findings to validate the model (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87).

4.4 Validity and Reliability: Established scales (OECD/INFE, Kabeer’s) ensured validity, with triangulation across survey, interview, and case study data. Reliability was enhanced by pilot-testing the survey (n = 50) and inter-coder reliability for qualitative coding (20% of interviews), consistent with mixed-methods standards (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018, p. 55).

4.5 Ethical Considerations

Informed consent, anonymity, and data security were ensured, with ethical approval from [University Ethics Board]. Data complied with India’s Personal Data Protection Bill and GDPR-equivalent regulations.

4.6 Limitations

Potential biases (e.g., self-selection, cultural variations in India) were mitigated through diverse sampling and triangulation, though generalizability may be limited to similar developing economies (Demirgüç-Kunt et al., 2018, p. 20).

5. RESULTS

This section presents the findings from the mixed-methods study, which tested the conceptual model positing financial literacy as a driver of social empowerment, mediated by financial behavior and access to financial systems, and moderated by socioeconomic status (SES), cultural context, and access to technology. The results confirm that financial literacy acts as a catalyst for social empowerment, particularly for marginalized groups, aligning with prior research on financial literacy’s transformative potential (Lusardi & Mitchell, 2014, p. 6; Demirgüç-Kunt et al., 2018, p. 15).

5.1 Quantitative Results: The survey, conducted with 1,000 adults (aged 18–65) in India, provided robust data on financial literacy, social empowerment, financial behavior, access to financial systems, and moderators. Stratified random sampling ensured diversity across SES, gender, and urban/rural residence.

5.1.1 Descriptive Statistics and Reliability; Table 1 summarizes the means, standard deviations, and reliability of the study constructs, confirming acceptable internal consistency (Cronbach’s alpha > 0.7). The mean scores indicate moderate to high levels of financial literacy (M = 3.50), social empowerment (M = 3.20), and related variables, consistent with global surveys showing moderate financial literacy levels in developing economies (Klapper et al., 2015, p. 12). These findings validate the reliability of the measurement scales, aligning with established financial literacy research (Lusardi & Mitchell, 2014, p. 8).

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics and Reliability of Constructs

Construct	Mean	SD	Cronbach’s Alpha	N
Financial Literacy	3.50	0.75	0.82	1,000
Social Empowerment	3.20	0.80	0.85	1,000
Financial Behavior	3.40	0.70	0.80	1,000
Access to Financial Systems	3.30	0.85	0.78	1,000
Socioeconomic Status	3.00	0.90	0.75	1,000
Cultural Context	3.60	0.65	0.79	1,000
Access to Technology	3.25	0.80	0.77	1,000

Note: SD = Standard Deviation. Scales range from 1 (low) to 5 (high). Cronbach’s alpha > 0.7 indicates a reliable measurement.

5.1.2 Correlations: Table 2 presents bivariate correlations, revealing significant positive relationships. Financial literacy is strongly correlated with financial behavior ($r = 0.60$, $p < 0.01$) and social empowerment ($r = 0.45$, $p < 0.01$), corroborating findings that financial knowledge predicts prudent financial practices and empowerment outcomes (Fernandes et al., 2014, p. 1865). The strong correlation between access to financial systems and social empowerment ($r = 0.48$, $p < 0.01$) supports research on financial inclusion as a pathway to empowerment (Demirgüç-Kunt et al., 2018, p. 17).

Table 2: Correlation Matrix of Key Variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Financial Literacy	1.00						
2. Social Empowerment	0.45**	1.00					
3. Financial Behavior	0.60**	0.50**	1.00				
4. Access to Financial Systems	0.55**	0.48**	0.52**	1.00			
5. Socioeconomic Status	0.30**	0.25*	0.28*	0.35**	1.00		
6. Cultural Context	0.20*	0.22*	0.18	0.25*	0.15	1.00	
7. Access to Technology	0.50**	0.40**	0.45**	0.60**	0.38**	0.20	1.00

Note: ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$.

5.1.3 Structural Equation Modeling (SEM): Table 3 reports the SEM results, testing hypotheses H1–H6. The measurement model, validated through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), confirmed construct reliability and validity (Cronbach's $\alpha > 0.7$). The structural model achieved good fit ($\chi^2/df = 2.5$, CFI = 0.92, TLI = 0.91, RMSEA = 0.06), consistent with rigorous methodological standards (Byrne, 2016, p. 97).

The results support all hypotheses:

- **H1:** Financial literacy directly enhances social empowerment ($\beta = 0.25$, $p < 0.01$), aligning with evidence that financial knowledge fosters agency and economic participation (Lusardi & Mitchell, 2014, p. 10).
- **H2:** Financial behavior mediates the relationship between financial literacy and social empowerment ($\beta = 0.30$, $p < 0.01$), supporting findings that prudent financial practices drive economic independence (Fernandes et al., 2014, p. 1867).
- **H3:** Access to financial systems mediates the relationship ($\beta = 0.28$, $p < 0.01$), consistent with research on financial inclusion's role in empowerment (Demirgüç-Kunt et al., 2018, p. 18).
- **H4:** SES moderates the effect of financial literacy on social empowerment ($\beta = 0.15$, $p < 0.05$), corroborating studies showing that higher SES amplifies financial literacy's benefits (Klapper et al., 2015, p. 14).
- **H5:** Cultural context moderates the effect ($\beta = 0.12$, $p < 0.05$), reflecting collectivist norms in India that prioritize community-oriented outcomes, as noted in cultural studies (Hofstede, 2001, p. 225).
- **H6:** Access to technology moderates the effect ($\beta = 0.20$, $p < 0.01$), supporting evidence that digital tools enhance financial literacy's impact (Banerjee & Duflo, 2011, p. 172).

These findings validate the research title by demonstrating financial literacy's catalytic role in driving social empowerment through direct, mediated, and moderated pathways.

Table 3: Structural Equation Modeling Results

Hypothesis	Path	β	SE	p-value	Result
H1	Financial Literacy $\rightarrow$ Social Empowerment	0.25	0.05	<0.01	Supported
H2	Financial Literacy $\rightarrow$ Financial Behavior $\rightarrow$ Social Empowerment	0.30	0.06	<0.01	Supported
H3	Financial Literacy $\rightarrow$ Access to Financial Systems $\rightarrow$ Social Empowerment	0.28	0.05	<0.01	Supported
H4	SES $\times$ Financial Literacy $\rightarrow$ Social Empowerment	0.15	0.04	<0.05	Supported
H5	Cultural Context $\times$ Financial Literacy $\rightarrow$ Social Empowerment	0.12	0.04	<0.05	Supported
H6	Access to Technology $\times$ Financial Literacy $\rightarrow$ Social Empowerment	0.20	0.05	<0.01	Supported

Model Fit Indices: $\chi^2/df = 2.5$, CFI = 0.92, TLI = 0.91, RMSEA = 0.06
Note: β = standardized path coefficient, SE = standard error. Model fit criteria: $\chi^2/df < 3$, CFI > 0.90, RMSEA < 0.08.

5.2 Qualitative Results

Thematic analysis of 30 semi-structured interviews and case studies of BRAC's Financial Education Program (Bangladesh) and Australia's MoneySmart initiative identified four key themes that reinforce financial literacy's role as a catalyst for social empowerment. Table 4 summarizes these themes with illustrative quotes, drawn from interviews with low-income women and rural residents in India and program evaluations. These findings align with qualitative studies on empowerment, which emphasize agency and contextual barriers (Kabeer, 1999, p. 437).

- **Agency through Financial Literacy:** Participants reported increased confidence in financial decision-making, supporting Kabeer's (1999, p. 438) framework of empowerment as agency.
- **Barriers to Access:** Systemic issues, such as limited banking infrastructure, hindered financial literacy application, consistent with global financial inclusion challenges (Demirgüç-Kunt et al., 2018, p. 20).
- **Cultural Influences:** India's collectivist culture emphasized community-oriented empowerment, aligning with Hofstede's (2001, p. 227) cultural dimensions.
- **Technology as Enabler:** Digital tools facilitated financial inclusion, corroborating evidence on technology's role in economic empowerment (Banerjee & Duflo, 2011, p. 174).

Table 4: Key Themes from Thematic Analysis

Theme	Description	Illustrative Quote	Source
Agency through Financial Literacy	Increased confidence in financial decision-making.	"Learning to budget gave me control over my life."	Interview, Participant A (Female, Rural)
Barriers to Access	Systemic issues limit financial literacy application.	"There's no bank nearby, so I can't use what I learned."	Interview, Participant B (Male, Rural)
Cultural Influences	Collectivist norms prioritize community benefits.	"I save to help my family, not just myself."	Interview, Participant C (Female, Urban)
Technology as Enabler	Digital tools enhance financial literacy impact.	"Mobile banking made saving so much easier."	BRAC Case Study

Note: Quotes are drawn from interviews and case study evaluations, reflecting participant experiences.

5.3 Triangulation

Triangulation of quantitative and qualitative findings validates the conceptual model. The SEM results (Table 3) confirm that financial literacy drives social empowerment through direct (H1) and mediated (H2–H3) pathways, while qualitative themes (Table 4) provide contextual depth, highlighting cultural and technological influences. The strong correlation between access to technology and social empowerment ($r = 0.40$, $p < 0.01$) aligns with qualitative reports of mobile banking's role, reinforcing findings on digital financial inclusion (Banerjee & Duflo, 2011, p. 175; Klapper et al., 2015, p. 16).

6. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study confirm that financial literacy serves as a catalyst for social empowerment, supporting the conceptual model and hypotheses (H1–H6) through robust quantitative and qualitative evidence. The results align with seminal research on financial literacy's transformative potential (Lusardi & Mitchell, 2014, p. 6) and empowerment theory (Kabeer, 1999, p. 437), offering new insights into mediating and moderating mechanisms in the Indian context.

6.1 Direct and Mediating Effects: The significant direct effect of financial literacy on social empowerment (H1: $\beta = 0.25$, $p < 0.01$) underscores its role in fostering agency and economic participation, as evidenced by participants' increased confidence in financial decision-making (Table 4). This finding corroborates Lusardi and Mitchell's (2014, p. 10) assertion that financial knowledge equips individuals to navigate complex economic systems, enhancing self-efficacy. Similarly, financial literacy enhances entrepreneurial resilience, contributing to financial performance during crises in the GCC (Khan et al., 2021, p. 24). The mediation effects of financial

behavior (H2: $\beta = 0.30$, $p < 0.01$) and access to financial systems (H3: $\beta = 0.28$, $p < 0.01$) further validate the model, showing that prudent financial practices (e.g., budgeting, saving) and engagement with banking and digital platforms translate financial literacy into empowerment outcomes. These results align with Fernandes et al. (2014, p. 1867), who found that financial behaviors mediate the impact of financial literacy on economic well-being, and Demirgüç-Kunt et al. (2018, p. 18), who emphasize financial inclusion's role in enabling economic participation, particularly in developing economies like India.

6.2 Moderating Effects: The moderating effects of socioeconomic status (SES) (H4: $\beta = 0.15$, $p < 0.05$), cultural context (H5: $\beta = 0.12$, $p < 0.05$), and access to technology (H6: $\beta = 0.20$, $p < 0.01$) highlight contextual factors' influence on financial literacy's efficacy. Higher SES amplified empowerment outcomes, consistent with Klapper et al. (2015, p. 14), who noted that resource availability enhances the application of financial knowledge. India's collectivist culture, which prioritized community-oriented empowerment (Table 4), aligns with Hofstede's (2001, p. 225) cultural dimensions, suggesting that financial literacy's impact varies by societal norms. The strong moderating effect of technology access, supported by qualitative reports of mobile banking's role (Table 4), corroborates Banerjee and Duflo's (2011, p. 174) findings on digital tools' transformative potential in low-income settings. These moderated effects address gaps in prior research, which often overlooks contextual influences (Fernandes et al., 2014, p. 1865).

6.3 Qualitative Insights: Qualitative findings (Table 4) provide contextual depth, revealing how financial literacy fosters agency among low-income women and rural residents, while systemic barriers (e.g., limited banking access) hinder its application. These insights resonate with Kabeer's (1999, p. 438) empowerment framework, which emphasizes agency and resources, and Demirgüç-Kunt et al.'s (2018, p. 20) observations on structural barriers to financial inclusion. As noted in interviews, the cultural emphasis on community well-being in India highlights the need for culturally tailored interventions, supporting Hofstede's (2001, p. 227) call for context-specific approaches. The enabling role of technology, exemplified by BRAC's program, aligns with Kaiser and Menkhoff's (2020, p. 1205) evidence on effective financial education initiatives.

6.4 Implications: The study's findings extend the literature by demonstrating financial literacy's multifaceted role in social empowerment, particularly for marginalized groups in India. The significant mediation and moderation effects highlight the importance of financial behavior, access to financial systems, and contextual factors, offering a nuanced understanding of how financial literacy operates in developing economies. The triangulation of quantitative (Tables 1–3) and qualitative (Table 4) data strengthens the validity of these findings, aligning with mixed-methods research standards (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018, p. 55). The results also underscore the need for targeted interventions to address systemic and cultural barriers, as seen in the success of programs like BRAC and MoneySmart.

6.5 Limitations: Despite its contributions, the study has limitations. The focus on India may limit generalizability to other contexts, though triangulation mitigates this concern (Demirgüç-Kunt et al., 2018, p. 20). Self-selection bias in survey responses and cultural variations in empowerment perceptions, as noted in the Methodology (section 4.6), were addressed through diverse sampling but warrant further exploration. Future research could examine longitudinal effects to assess the sustainability of empowerment outcomes, building on Lusardi and Mitchell's (2014, p. 12) call for long-term studies.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following evidence-based recommendations are proposed for policymakers, educators, and practitioners to strengthen financial literacy initiatives and maximize social empowerment, particularly for marginalized groups in India:

- 1. Enhance Financial Education Programs:** Develop targeted financial literacy curricula that emphasize practical skills like budgeting and saving, as these mediate empowerment outcomes (H2; Fernandes et al., 2014, p. 1867). Programs like BRAC's, which focus on rural women, should be scaled, incorporating community-based workshops to address low-income populations' needs (Kaiser & Menkhoff, 2020, p. 1205).
- 2. Promote Financial Inclusion:** Expand access to banking and digital financial platforms, as these mediate the link between financial literacy and empowerment (H3; Demirgüç-Kunt et al., 2018, p. 18). Policymakers should invest in rural banking infrastructure and mobile banking apps, ensuring accessibility for low-income and rural residents, as highlighted in qualitative findings (Table 4).
- 3. Leverage Digital Technology:** Increase access to smartphones and internet services to amplify financial literacy's impact, given the strong moderating effect of technology (H6; Banerjee & Duflo, 2011, p. 174).

Public-private partnerships can subsidize digital tools and provide digital literacy training, as seen in the success of mobile banking in BRAC's program (Table 4) and the role of e-commerce in entrepreneurial outcomes (Khan et al., 2016, p. 175).

4. **Address Cultural Contexts:** Design interventions that align with India's collectivist culture, emphasizing community-oriented empowerment outcomes (H5; Hofstede, 2001, p. 227). For example, financial literacy programs could include modules on collective savings or family financial planning, as suggested by interview responses (Table 4).
5. **Target Low-SES Populations:** Prioritize low-SES groups, as SES moderates empowerment outcomes (H4; Klapper et al., 2015, p. 14). Subsidized education programs and microfinance initiatives can bridge resource gaps, enabling these groups to apply financial knowledge effectively.
6. **Monitor and Evaluate Interventions:** Implement longitudinal evaluations to assess the sustainability of empowerment outcomes, addressing the study's limitation and building on Lusardi and Mitchell's (2014, p. 12) recommendation for long-term impact studies. Mixed-methods evaluations, as used here, can ensure comprehensive insights (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018, p. 55).

8. CONCLUSION

This study confirms that financial literacy is a pivotal catalyst for social empowerment, particularly for marginalized groups in India, through direct, mediated, and moderated pathways. The quantitative results (Tables 1–3) demonstrate significant effects of financial literacy on social empowerment (H1), mediated by financial behavior (H2) and access to financial systems (H3), and moderated by SES (H4), cultural context (H5), and technology access (H6). Qualitative findings (Table 4) provide contextual depth, highlighting agency, barriers, and the enabling role of digital tools, aligning with Kabeer's (1999, p. 438) empowerment framework and Demirgüç-Kunt et al.'s (2018, p. 20) focus on financial inclusion. By addressing gaps in understanding mediating and moderating mechanisms, the study extends the literature on financial literacy's societal impacts (Lusardi & Mitchell, 2014, p. 10; Fernandes et al., 2014, p. 1865).

The findings have significant implications for policymakers and practitioners, emphasizing the need for targeted financial education, expanded financial inclusion, and technology-driven interventions to empower low-income and rural populations. The recommendations provide a roadmap for sustainable impact, drawing on successful models like BRAC and MoneySmart (Kaiser & Menkhoff, 2020, p. 1205). Despite limitations, such as the India-specific focus, the study's mixed-methods approach and triangulation enhance its validity, offering a robust model for future research in diverse contexts (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018, p. 55). Ultimately, this research underscores financial literacy's transformative potential in reducing inequality and fostering social mobility, paving the way for inclusive economic development (Demirgüç-Kunt et al., 2018, p. 15).

REFERENCE

- 1) Banerjee, A. V., & Duflo, E. (2011). *Poor economics: A radical rethinking of the way to fight global poverty*. PublicAffairs. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19452829.2012.717559>
- 2) Batliwala, S. (2007). Taking the power out of empowerment—An experiential account. *Development in Practice*, 17(4–5), 557–565. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09614520701469559>
- 3) Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- 4) Byrne, B. M. (2016). *Structural equation modeling with AMOS: Basic concepts, applications, and programming* (3rd ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315757421>
- 5) Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2018). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781483344379>
- 6) Demirgüç-Kunt, A., Klapper, L., Singer, D., & Van Oudheusden, P. (2018). *The Global Findex Database 2017: Measuring financial inclusion and the fintech revolution*. World Bank Publications. <https://doi.org/10.1596/978-1-4648-1259-0>
- 7) Fernandes, D., Lynch, J. G., Jr., & Netemeyer, R. G. (2014). Financial literacy, financial education, and downstream financial behaviors. *Management Science*, 60(8), 1861–1883. <https://doi.org/10.1287/mnsc.2013.1849>
- 8) Hofstede, G. (2001). *Culture's consequences: Comparing values, behaviors, institutions, and organizations across nations* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781452243610>

- 9) Kabeer, N. (1999). Resources, agency, achievements: Reflections on the measurement of women's empowerment. *Development and Change*, 30(3), 435–464. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-7660.00125>
- 10) Kaiser, T., & Menkhoff, L. (2020). Financial education in schools: A meta-analysis of experimental studies. *Economics of Education Review*, 78, Article 101930. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econedurev.2020.101930>
- 11) Khan, M. A. I., Ahmaruddin, M., Mohammed, S., & Azharuddin, S. (2016). E-commerce for entrepreneurs: Boon or bane. *International Journal of Applied Business and Economic Research*, 14(1), 173–180.
- 12) Khan, M. A. I., & Alam, M. S. (2021). Correlation between the profitability and working capital practices: A case study in the Gulf Cooperation Council. *Journal of Asian Finance, Economics and Business*, 8(3), 229–236. <https://doi.org/10.13106/jafeb.2021.vol8.no3.0229>
- 13) Khan, M. A. I., Azharuddin, S., Khan, S. S., & Ali, M. M. (2021). Influence of entrepreneur traits on SME's financial performance: Case study of GCC entrepreneurs who survived during COVID-19. *International Journal of Advance Research and Innovative Ideas in Education*, 7(3), 22–30.
- 14) Khan, M. A. I. A. A. (2019). Dynamics encouraging women towards embracing entrepreneurship: Case study of MENA countries. *International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJGE-01-2019-0012>
- 15) Khan, M. A. I., Jamil, S. A., & Azharuddin, S. (2023). Social entrepreneurship: Driving change and creating positive societal impact. *Current Topics on Business, Economics and Finance*, 6, 66–77.
- 16) Klapper, L., Lusardi, A., & Van Oudheusden, P. (2015). *Financial literacy around the world: Insights from the Standard & Poor's Ratings Services Global Financial Literacy Survey*. Standard & Poor's. <https://doi.org/10.1596/978-1-4648-0762-6>
- 17) Lusardi, A., & Mitchell, O. S. (2014). The economic importance of financial literacy: Theory and evidence. *Journal of Economic Literature*, 52(1), 5–44. <https://doi.org/10.1257/jel.52.1.5>
- 18) OECD. (2016). *OECD/INFE international survey of adult financial literacy competencies*. OECD Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1787/5jm2lh7v2q45-en>
- 19) World Bank. (2020). *World development report 2020: Trading for development in the age of global value chains*. World Bank Publications. <https://doi.org/10.1596/978-1-4648-1494-5>

EDUCATION AS A TOOL FOR EMPOWERMENT AMONG MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES

Dr. Vijay Machindra Jadhav and M.A. Sociology, P.hd, M. Phil

Department of Sociology, Arts, Science and Commerce College, Burhannagar, A. Nagar

ABSTRACT

Education is widely acknowledged as one of the most powerful tools for social transformation. For marginalized communities—defined by caste in India, race in the United States, class globally—education can act as a vehicle to overcome structural barriers, achieve socio-economic mobility, and assert human dignity. However, the access to and quality of education are uneven, often shaped by deep-seated inequalities. This paper examines education's dual role in reproducing and challenging social hierarchies, drawing from sociological theories and global case studies. By exploring the intersectionality of caste, class, and race with educational opportunities, the paper outlines how policy reforms, inclusive pedagogy, and grassroots educational movements are critical to transforming education into a genuine tool of empowerment.

1. INTRODUCTION

Marginalized communities across the world often find themselves excluded from the mainstream socio-economic framework. In many societies, historical factors such as colonialism, slavery, caste-based discrimination, and systemic poverty have created entrenched hierarchies that limit opportunities for certain groups. Education is often projected as the equalizer—an institution that provides all individuals, regardless of background, with an equal chance to succeed. However, in practice, the educational system can act both as a mechanism for empowerment and as an institution that reinforces existing inequalities.

This paper examines how access to quality education helps break the cycle of poverty and exclusion for lower-caste, economically disadvantaged, and racially marginalized communities. The paper begins by analyzing relevant sociological theories, followed by a historical context of exclusion. It then outlines contemporary barriers to educational access and effectiveness before discussing education as a transformative tool. Finally, it presents case studies, policy analysis, and a conclusion rooted in sociological critique.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**2.1 Functionalist Perspective**

According to functionalist theorists such as Émile Durkheim (1912), education plays a critical role in the integration of individuals into society. Schools socialize children into the cultural values, norms, and practices of the broader society, thereby promoting social solidarity. Education ensures the transmission of knowledge and values across generations and helps assign individuals to appropriate social roles based on merit.

However, while functionalism views education as meritocratic, critics argue that this perspective underestimates the impact of structural inequality on educational outcomes. It assumes a level playing field where none exists.

2.2 Conflict Theory

In contrast, conflict theorists like Karl Marx and later Pierre Bourdieu argue that education is a mechanism of social reproduction. Bourdieu's (1977) concept of *cultural capital* explains how schools privilege the norms and knowledge of dominant social groups. The working class and marginalized communities are often alienated in educational institutions that do not recognize or value their social and cultural backgrounds.

Bowles and Gintis (1976) further argue in *Schooling in Capitalist America* that schools serve the interests of capitalism by training students to accept hierarchical structures, thus reproducing class inequality.

2.3 Critical Pedagogy

Paulo Freire (1970), through his seminal work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, offers a model of education that challenges domination. Freire argues that traditional education models are "banking" systems, where students are passive recipients. Instead, he advocates for a dialogical and liberatory education that encourages critical consciousness (*conscientização*) among the oppressed, enabling them to challenge and transform their reality.

3. Historical Context of Educational Exclusion**3.1 Caste and Education in India**

In the Indian context, caste-based exclusion from education has roots in the varna system and Manusmriti laws that denied formal education to Shudras and Dalits (Omvedt, 2006). Post-independence, constitutional mandates and the introduction of reservation policies aimed to increase the participation of Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in education.

Despite legal protections, Dalit students continue to face discrimination in classrooms, curriculum, and institutional practices (Thorat & Newman, 2010). Access to quality education remains limited, especially in rural areas where the caste system is more rigid.

3.2 Race and Education in the United States

African Americans were legally denied education during slavery and later subjected to segregation under the “separate but equal” doctrine. The landmark case of *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) outlawed segregation, but de facto racial segregation persists today due to residential patterns and unequal school funding (Kozol, 1991).

Critical Race Theorists argue that educational policies and practices continue to marginalize Black, Latino, and Indigenous students through curriculum bias, disciplinary policies, and tracking systems (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995).

3.3 Class and Educational Access

Globally, class is a dominant axis of exclusion from quality education. In low-income countries, children from poor families often drop out of school to support their households through labor. Even in developed nations, access to elite education is often mediated by wealth, with private schooling and tutoring disproportionately benefiting the upper classes (Ball, 2003).

4. BARRIERS TO EDUCATION FOR MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES

4.1 Economic Barriers

Poverty remains the most significant barrier to accessing quality education. Inadequate infrastructure, inability to afford books, uniforms, or transport, and child labor are common issues in underprivileged communities (Tilak, 2007). The COVID-19 pandemic also revealed the digital divide, as students from poor households lacked access to devices and the internet (UNESCO, 2021).

4.2 Discrimination and Hostile Environments

Caste-based discrimination in Indian schools manifests through practices like seating arrangements, exclusion from leadership roles, and teacher neglect (Nambissan, 2009). Similarly, racial profiling and lowered expectations from teachers negatively affect minority students in the U.S. (Ladson-Billings, 2006).

4.3 Language and Curriculum Bias

The dominance of majority languages in schools excludes children who speak regional, tribal, or minority languages. Moreover, curricula often erase or misrepresent the histories and contributions of marginalized communities (Banks, 2004).

4.4 Gender-Based Exclusion

Girls from marginalized backgrounds face unique challenges due to intersecting gender norms, poverty, and caste or race. Early marriage, domestic responsibilities, and safety concerns reduce school retention rates for girls (Nussbaum, 2000; Sen, 2001).

5. EDUCATION AS EMPOWERMENT

5.1 Social Mobility and Economic Upliftment

Education increases employment opportunities and income, leading to improved living conditions. For example, Dalit graduates in India have better employment outcomes than their non-educated peers, although disparities still exist (Kingdon, 2007).

5.2 Political and Civic Empowerment

Educated individuals are more likely to engage in political processes, vote, and advocate for their rights. Literacy increases awareness of rights and government schemes, especially for women and tribal communities (Sen, 1999).

5.3 Psychological Empowerment and Identity Formation

Education allows marginalized individuals to reconstruct their identities with pride. It promotes self-worth and challenges internalized oppression (hooks, 1994). Through inclusive pedagogy, students can critically engage with their histories and become agents of change.

6. CASE STUDIES

6.1 Navsarjan Trust (India)

The Navsarjan Trust provides educational programs for Dalit children, emphasizing dignity, human rights, and critical thinking. Their curriculum actively challenges caste norms and encourages leadership among students (Shah, 2007).

6.2 Freedom Schools (United States)

During the Civil Rights Movement, Freedom Schools were established in the American South to provide African-American students with alternative education focused on Black history and civic engagement (Payne, 2007). These schools empowered students to become politically active and resist segregation.

6.3 BRAC (Bangladesh)

BRAC's community-based schools offer education to children, especially girls, in rural areas. These schools use innovative teaching techniques and locally relevant curricula to improve retention and learning outcomes (Chowdhury et al., 2003).

7. Policy Measures and Reforms

7.1 Affirmative Action and Reservations

India's reservation system has opened up educational opportunities for marginalized communities, yet implementation is inconsistent. In the U.S., affirmative action in college admissions has faced legal and political resistance, although it remains vital for improving diversity (Jodhka & Newman, 2007).

7.2 Inclusive Curriculum and Textbooks

Education must include the histories, languages, and contributions of all communities. Multicultural curricula help build respect and reduce prejudice (Banks, 2004). In India, NCERT textbooks have begun including Dalit and tribal narratives, but representation remains limited.

7.3 Teacher Sensitization and Training

Teachers' attitudes significantly impact students. Training programs that address caste, class, and racial biases can improve teacher-student interactions and reduce dropout rates (Nieto, 2000).

7.4 Investment in Public Education

Underfunded schools disproportionately serve marginalized students. Greater investment in infrastructure, teaching quality, and resources is essential for educational equity (Apple, 2004).

8. CONCLUSION

Education holds the potential to transform society by empowering marginalized communities, fostering social mobility, and dismantling structural inequalities. However, to realize this potential, it must be intentionally inclusive, critical, and context-sensitive. Sociological perspectives reveal that without addressing economic, cultural, and institutional barriers, education can also reinforce social hierarchies. Policymakers, educators, and civil society must work collaboratively to reimagine education not just as a tool of economic progress, but as a foundation for justice, dignity, and collective liberation.

REFERENCES

1. Anderson, J. D. (1988). *The education of Blacks in the South, 1860–1935*. University of North Carolina Press.
2. Banks, J. A. (2004). *Multicultural education: Historical development, dimensions, and practice*. In J. A. Banks & C. A. M. Banks (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education*.
3. Bourdieu, P. (1977). *Cultural reproduction and social reproduction*. In J. Karabel & A. H. Halsey (Eds.), *Power and Ideology in Education*.
4. Bowles, S., & Gintis, H. (1976). *Schooling in capitalist America: Educational reform and the contradictions of economic life*. Basic Books.
5. Chowdhury, A. M. R., et al. (2003). *Enabling education in rural Bangladesh: BRAC's approach*. *International Review of Education*, 49(1–2), 129–150.
6. Deshpande, S. (2011). *Contemporary India: A sociological view*. Penguin Books.
7. Durkheim, E. (1912). *Education and Sociology*. Free Press.
8. Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Continuum.
9. hooks, b. (1994). *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. Routledge.
10. Jodhka, S. S., & Newman, K. S. (2007). *Inclusion and exclusion in local governance: Field studies from rural India*. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 42(40), 4453–4459.
11. Kingdon, G. G. (2007). *The progress of school education in India*. *Oxford Review of Economic Policy*, 23(2), 168–195.

12. Kozol, J. (1991). *Savage inequalities: Children in America's schools*. Crown.
13. Ladson-Billings, G. (2006). *From the achievement gap to the education debt: Understanding achievement in U.S. schools*. *Educational Researcher*, 35(7), 3–12.
14. Nussbaum, M. C. (2000). *Women and human development: The capabilities approach*. Cambridge University Press.
15. Nieto, S. (2000). *Affirming diversity: The sociopolitical context of multicultural education*. Longman.
16. Omvedt, G. (2006). *Dalit visions: The anti-caste movement and the construction of an Indian identity*. Orient Longman.
17. Payne, C. M. (2007). *I've got the light of freedom: The organizing tradition and the Mississippi freedom struggle*. University of California Press.
18. Sen, A. (1999). *Development as freedom*. Oxford University Press.
19. Sen, A. (2001). *The many faces of gender inequality*. *New Republic*.
20. Shah, G. (2007). *Social movements in India: A review of literature*. SAGE.
21. Thorat, S., & Newman, K. (2010). *Blocked by caste: Economic discrimination in modern India*. Oxford University Press.
22. Tilak, J. B. G. (2007). *Post-elementary education, poverty and development in India*. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 27(4), 435–445.
23. UNESCO. (2021). *Global Education Monitoring Report*.
24. Apple, M. W. (2004). *Ideology and curriculum*. Routledge.
25. Bhattacharyya, G. (2001). *Race and power: Global racism in the twenty-first century*. Routledge.
26. Crenshaw, K. (1991). *Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color*. *Stanford Law Review*.
27. Bernstein, B. (1971). *Class, codes and control: Theoretical studies towards a sociology of language*. Routledge.
28. Willis, P. (1977). *Learning to labour: How working class kids get working class jobs*. Saxon House.
29. Carnoy, M. (1999). *Globalization and educational reform: What planners need to know*. UNESCO.
30. Ball, S. J. (2003). *Class strategies and the education market: The middle classes and social advantage*. Routledge.
31. Nambissan, G. B. (2009). *Exclusion and discrimination in schools: Experiences of Dalit children*. Indian Institute of Dalit Studies.
32. Mehta, A. C. (2005). *Elementary education in India: Progress towards UEE*. NUEPA.
33. Gorski, P. C. (2013). *Reaching and teaching students in poverty: Strategies for erasing the opportunity gap*. Teachers College Press.
34. Ladson-Billings, G., & Tate, W. F. (1995). *Toward a critical race theory of education*. *Teachers College Record*, 97(1), 47–68.
35. Sleeter, C. E. (2012). *Confronting the marginalization of culturally responsive pedagogy*. *Urban Education*.
36. Kumar, K. (2004). *What is worth teaching?* Orient Longman.
37. Singh, A. (2010). *Human rights and education: A new perspective*. APH Publishing.
38. Nambissan, G. B. & Rao, S. (2013). *Social exclusion and schooling: Experiences of Dalit children*. Routledge.

INVESTIGATING THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL STRATIFICATION ON MUSLIM STUDENTS' ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION IN PUNE

Dr.Shafiya Shaikh

Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, Abeda Inamdar Senior College

ABSTRACT

Social stratification significantly influences access to quality education, particularly for marginalized communities like Muslims in India. This study explores how social stratification affects Muslim students' access to quality education in Pune, focusing on socioeconomic status and community background.

INTRODUCTION

India's diverse population is characterized by significant social stratification, which profoundly impacts access to quality education. Muslim students, as a minority group, face unique challenges in navigating the education system. Socioeconomic status and community background are crucial factors that influence their educational experiences and outcomes. This study aims to investigate how social stratification affects Muslim students' access to quality education in Pune, with a specific focus on socioeconomic status and community background.

The city's complex social dynamics and educational landscape make it an ideal location for exploring these issues. By examining the interplay between social stratification, socioeconomic status, and community background, this research seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by Muslim students and inform strategies for promoting more equitable education systems.

This study investigates the impact of social stratification on Muslim students' access to quality education in Pune, highlighting the role of socioeconomic status and community background.

OBJECTIVES

1. To examine the relationship between social stratification and access to quality education among Muslim students in Pune.
2. To identify the specific challenges faced by Muslim students from different socioeconomic backgrounds.
3. To explore the role of community background in shaping educational opportunities and outcomes.

METHODOLOGY

Researcher used the exploratory study to explore the experiences and perceptions of Muslims in Pune to Impact of Social Stratification on Muslim Students' Access to Quality Education in Pune.

To identify these issues researcher collected data from news channels, from interviews, from newspapers and from website.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Numerous studies have examined the relationship between social stratification and education in India. Research has shown that students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds face significant barriers in accessing quality education, including limited resources, inadequate infrastructure, and biased teaching practices. Muslim students, in particular, are vulnerable to these challenges due to their minority status and socioeconomic disadvantage.

Social stratification is a significant issue in India, affecting various aspects of life, including education. Muslim students, in particular, face challenges in accessing quality education due to their socioeconomic status and community background. This review of literature explores the existing research on how social stratification affects Muslim students' access to quality education in Pune.

SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS AND EDUCATION

Jeffrey, P. (2008) "Fixing Futures: Young people, work and wellbeing in a supposedly knowledge economy" highlights the impact of socioeconomic status on young people's educational outcomes and future opportunities.

Borooah, V. K., & Iyer, S. (2005) "Vidya, Vritti and Varna: The influence of religion and caste on education in rural India" examines the influence of religion and caste on education in rural India, highlighting the challenges faced by Muslim students.

COMMUNITY BACKGROUND AND EDUCATION

Dreze, J., & Kingdon, G. G. (2001) "School participation in rural India" highlights the importance of community background and parental education in determining school participation and educational outcomes.

Sachar, R. (2006) "Social, Economic and Educational Status of the Muslim Community of India" provides an in-depth analysis of the socioeconomic and educational status of Muslims in India, highlighting the challenges faced by Muslim students.

ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION

Nambissan, G. B. (2012) "Private schools, choice, and the ethical imperative" examines the issue of private schools and choice in the Indian context, highlighting the challenges faced by students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Ramachandran, V. (2009) "Gender equality in education: Some lessons from research" highlights the importance of addressing gender disparities in education, which can also be relevant to Muslim students.

FACTORS AFFECTING ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION

Socioeconomic status: Students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds face significant challenges in accessing quality education (Jeffrey, 2008; Borooah & Iyer, 2005).

Community background: Community background and cultural capital play a significant role in shaping educational experiences (Dreze & Kingdon, 2001; Sachar, 2006).

School infrastructure: Adequate infrastructure and resources are essential for providing quality education (Nambissan, 2012).

Teacher attitudes: Teacher attitudes and biases can affect students' academic performance and self-esteem (Ramachandran, 2009).

The review of literature highlights the need for policymakers and educators to address the impact of social stratification on Muslim students' access to quality education in Pune. Targeted interventions, inclusive education practices, and community engagement can help promote more equitable education systems.

FINDINGS

The study's findings indicate that social stratification significantly affects Muslim students' access to quality education in Pune. Students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds face significant challenges, including:

1. Limited access to quality schools: Students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are more likely to attend government schools, which often lack adequate infrastructure and resources.
2. Inadequate resources: Students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds often lack access to resources, such as textbooks, technology, and tuition support, which are essential for academic success.
3. Biased teaching practices: Teachers may hold biases against students from certain socioeconomic backgrounds or communities, affecting their academic performance and self-esteem.

CONCLUSION

The study's findings highlight the need for policymakers and educators to address the impact of social stratification on Muslim students' access to quality education in Pune.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Increasing access to quality schools: Policymakers should work to increase access to quality schools, particularly in disadvantaged areas.
2. Providing resources and support: Schools and policymakers should provide resources and support to students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, including textbooks, technology, and tuition support.
3. Promoting inclusive teaching practices: Teachers should be trained to promote inclusive teaching practices, recognizing and valuing diversity in the classroom.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

1. Borooah, V. K., & Iyer, S. (2005). Vidya, Vritti and Varna: The influence of religion and caste on education in rural India. Journal of Development Studies.
2. Dreze, J., & Sen, A. (2013).* An Uncertain Glory: India and its Contradictions. Penguin Books.

-
3. Jeffrey, P. (2008).* Fixing Futures: Young people, work and wellbeing in a supposedly knowledge economy. Wiley-Blackwell.
 4. Ramachandran, V. (2009).* Gender equality in education: Some lessons from research. National University of Educational Planning and Administration.

Reports

1. Sachar, R. (2006). Social, Economic and Educational Status of the Muslim Community of India. Prime Minister's High-Level Committee, Government of India.

Journals

1. Nambissan, G. B. (2012). Private schools, choice, and the ethical imperative. Economic and Political Weekly.

Research Papers

1. Kingdon, G. G. (2007). The progress of school education in India. Oxford Review of Economic Policy.

Online Resources

1. Government of India. (2020). Educational Statistics. Ministry of Education.

**THE ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY IN PROMOTING ACCESSIBLE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS:
INNOVATIONS, IMPACTS, AND INCLUSIVE STRATEGIES**

Priyanka Sanjay DinkarAssistant Professor, Department of Electronic Science, M.Sc. Electronics B.Ed. Physics, Arts, Science and
Commerce College, Burhannagar, Ahilyanagar 414002**ABSTRACT**

In the contemporary education landscape, technology plays a pivotal role in promoting inclusive and accessible learning environments. This paper explores how digital tools and platforms are transforming educational systems, breaking barriers for learners with disabilities, and ensuring equitable access to learning resources. Drawing from global case studies, educational policy frameworks, and technological innovations, this research emphasizes the critical intersection between technology and inclusive education. It also reflects on the challenges and future directions in leveraging technology for accessibility in learning.

1. INTRODUCTION

Accessibility in education is the cornerstone of inclusive development, aiming to provide equitable learning opportunities regardless of physical, cognitive, or socio-economic barriers. The integration of technology into education systems has revolutionized the way knowledge is disseminated and consumed. For students with disabilities, those in remote areas, and learners with diverse needs, technology serves not just as a support mechanism but as an enabler of rights.

This paper examines the transformative impact of technology in creating accessible learning environments, analysing both the theoretical framework and practical applications. It also discusses policy implications, challenges in implementation, and the way forward for inclusive educational practices supported by technology.

2. UNDERSTANDING ACCESSIBILITY IN LEARNING

Accessibility in learning implies designing environments, content, and systems that are usable by all learners, including those with disabilities. It involves: Physical Accessibility (infrastructure, hardware) Cognitive Accessibility (learning materials and content design) Digital Accessibility (software, user interfaces, internet access)

Accessible learning environments ensure compliance with frameworks such as the Universal Design for Learning (UDL), which promotes multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression.

3. ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY IN ENHANCING ACCESSIBILITY

Technology enhances learning accessibility through various means:

3.1 Assistive Technologies

Screen readers, Braille displays, speech-to-text tools support visually impaired students. Hearing aids, captioning systems, and sign language avatars help hearing-impaired learners. Adaptive keyboards, voice control, and touch-based devices assist those with motor impairments.

3.2 Learning Management Systems (LMS)

Platforms like Moodle, Blackboard, and Google Classroom incorporate accessibility features such as screen-reader compatibility, font and contrast adjustments, and customizable interfaces.

3.3 Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning

AI personalizes content delivery, predicts learner needs, and provides real-time assistance. For instance, AI chatbots support students in navigating digital platforms.

3.4 Digital Content and Multimedia

Multimodal content (videos, interactive simulations, gamified learning) addresses diverse learning styles and cognitive preferences, improving comprehension and retention.

3.5 Cloud-Based and Mobile Learning

Cloud technologies allow learners to access content from any location. Mobile learning apps support ubiquitous access and are particularly beneficial in rural or underserved regions.

4. CASE STUDIES AND IMPLEMENTATION EXAMPLES

4.1 India: Diksha Platform

The DIKSHA platform, launched by the Ministry of Education, integrates inclusive design and supports content in multiple Indian languages, enhancing accessibility for regional and differently-abled learners.

4.2 Microsoft's Immersive Reader

This tool improves reading comprehension for learners with dyslexia and other reading difficulties by offering text spacing, background color changes, and audio playback.

4.3 MOOCs and Open Educational Resources

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) like Coursera and edX offer captioning, transcripts, and multilingual content, making higher education accessible to a global audience.

5. POLICY FRAMEWORKS SUPPORTING TECHNOLOGICAL ACCESSIBILITY

Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (2016, India) mandates inclusive education and accessible infrastructure.

NEP 2020 emphasizes digital empowerment and inclusive education.

UNCRPD and SDG 4 (Quality Education) provide international mandates for inclusive, technology-driven education.

6. CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTATION

Despite the potential, several challenges persist:

Digital Divide: Inadequate infrastructure, poor internet connectivity, and lack of devices in rural/low-income areas.

Lack of Awareness and Training: Teachers and administrators often lack training in accessible tech.

Cost and Maintenance: High cost of assistive devices and lack of technical support hinder sustainability.

Content Localization: Limited availability of accessible content in vernacular languages.

7. FUTURE DIRECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Policy-Driven Investment in EdTech infrastructure and accessibility tools.

Teacher Training and Capacity Building on inclusive pedagogies and digital tools.

Public-Private Partnerships to innovate and scale accessible technologies.

User-Centric Design involving learners with disabilities in the tech development process.

8. CONCLUSION

Technology, when equitably distributed and inclusively designed, can bridge longstanding educational gaps. It has the power to transform conventional learning spaces into inclusive ecosystems where every learner thrives. However, realizing this vision requires strategic policies, stakeholder collaboration, and a commitment to universal accessibility principles. As we move forward, technology must not only be seen as a tool but as a right and necessity in promoting inclusive education for all.

REFERENCES

UNESCO ICT in Education Policy.

Ministry of Education, India. (NEP 2020)

CAST (Centre for Applied Special Technology) – UDL Guidelines.

WHO World Report on Disability.

MYANMAR CONFLICT IN MIZORAM: ANALYSIS OF THE CONSEQUENCES BROUGHT BY REFUGEES

Dr. Shafiya Shaikh¹ and Joseph Malsawmtluanga²¹Asst. Professor and ²MA II, Student, Department of Sociology, Abeda Inamdar Senior College**ABSTRACT**

This study explores the multifaceted experiences of Myanmar refugees, particularly focusing on their displacement into Mizoram, India. It aims to investigate the methods through which refugees flee Myanmar and the socio-political challenges they face in their home country, including persecution, violence, and instability. The research also examines the critical role played by the Mizo community in providing shelter, support, and cultural acceptance to these refugees. Furthermore, it analyzes the actions and contributions of the refugees during and after their stay in Mizoram, shedding light on how they adapt, integrate, and impact their host society. Through this study, a comprehensive understanding of the refugee journey—from escape to settlement—is developed, with emphasis on the humanitarian response and long-term implications for both the refugees and the host community.

INTRODUCTION

Since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Europe has faced its largest refugee crisis since World War II. By late May 2022, over 6 million Ukrainian refugees had fled to other European countries, while around 8 million were internally displaced. Approximately one-quarter of Ukraine's population was forced from their homes, with 90% of those fleeing being women and children due to a ban on military-aged men leaving the country. The war has also severely impacted Ukraine's economy, reducing the population from 43.5 million in 2021 to 37.9 million by 2024, and plunging nearly 25% of the population into poverty. The crisis has created strain not only in Ukraine but also in host countries, where local infrastructure, public services, and resources are under pressure, especially in urban areas, resulting in higher costs, overcrowding, and increased competition for jobs and housing.

Similar challenges are evident in Mizoram, India, which has experienced a steady influx of refugees from Myanmar following the 2021 military coup and the subsequent civil war. Around 44,000 Myanmar refugees, primarily from the Zo tribe, have taken shelter in Mizoram. Supported by local organizations like the Young Mizo Association, the refugees have been received with compassion, but the growing numbers have put pressure on local resources and the economy. This sudden population increase has led to rising crime rates, inflation, and scarcity of goods, disproportionately affecting vulnerable host communities. Over time, both the Ukrainian and Myanmar refugee crises underline the complex social and economic impacts of displacement, which often lead to increased inequality, tension, and strain on the most marginalized groups.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A study by Beiser et al. on Southeast Asian refugees revealed that mental health issues like depression were common but short-lived, especially when the refugees had community support and stable family structures. Coping mechanisms, such as avoiding thoughts of past trauma, helped reduce stress. Interestingly, private sponsorship didn't always improve mental health outcomes and could even be a stressor when sponsors had differing religious beliefs.

The 1951 Refugee Convention, as discussed by Hathaway and Foster, legally defines a refugee as someone outside their country and lacking national protection. Internally displaced persons (IDPs) are excluded due to differing legal and logistical considerations.

In India, especially in the northeastern states like Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, and in Delhi, there has been a significant presence of Burmese refugees, particularly the Chin and Kachin ethnic groups. As of August 2024, Mizoram hosted over 50,000 Chin refugees, and Delhi had 1,452 Burmese refugees (805 recognized by UNHCR).

As of February 2024, Mizoram alone recorded 42,576 refugees, with support funds of Rs. 3 crore from the central government. Despite their welcoming attitude, the people of Mizoram have expressed concern over the growing numbers and the social impact on their tightly knit communities. Integration remains limited, and aid efforts are strained due to proximity to the border and limited resources.

Dr. Joseph K. Lalfakzuala notes that while Mizos see the Myanmar refugees as kin, long-term support may not be sustainable, and there's concern over how the influx might disrupt local societal dynamics.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study is very important as it holds a significant value in providing extensive consideration of the problems faced by both the refugees and the native people of Mizoram. Mizoram shares ethnic ties with certain refugee groups, such as the Chin and other ethnic minorities from Myanmar, which means that these refugees are not complete strangers to the local population. Studying the dynamics between the local Mizo population and these refugee groups can shed light on issues of identity, cultural integration, and ethnic solidarity or tensions. Refugees often face challenges in integrating into host societies. Mizoram's approach to integrating refugees (especially from Myanmar) can provide lessons on fostering inclusivity, addressing cultural differences, and facilitating community support. The study can help explore whether refugees become a part of local communities or remain marginalized.

METHODOLOGY

The study employs a Quantitative research approach to examine the refugees in Mizoram. This study will help in collecting the data and analysis of the consequences brought about by the refugees from Myanmar.

Questionnaire: This method helps to identify the purpose of their staying in Mizoram in an unbiased manner

Observation: In this method, refugees around Mizoram can be observed by listening to them or through the natives or refugees

Structured interview: This method helps to identify standardized answers

DATA COLLECTION

The study aims to explore on people's opinion the relationship between refugees and host country. The study is conducted through primary data. In this the method used is mainly quantitative method using google form and through voice call. Questionnaire is sent out to people who speaks English and voice call for who doesn't speak English.

The purpose of the study allows us to examine the consequences the host country and the refugees might have faced. This study helps us to find the inter relationship between the two. By examining these factors, the study intends to what could be done while studying in Pune.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The study employs a correlational quantitative research design to examine the relationship between the variables this is suitable for the research problem

Research variables:

- Independent variable: Refugee influx (the exact number cannot be known) 30,000+ refugees have entered
- Dependent variables: Social and economic impact (e.g., strain on resources, changes in local employment).

Sampling unit

The total sampling unit of the study was 20.

The sampling was collected through voice call and google form. The sampling includes 10 people who are from host country Mizoram and the other 10 from Myanmar. The respondents from Mizoram are 50% male and 50% female and respondents from Myanmar are 60% female and 40% male.

DATA ANALYSIS

1. Understand the Actual Methods of the Refugees Coming

Researcher find out that the Refugees entering Mizoram often follow informal and undocumented migration routes. Most of them cross the porous Indo-Myanmar border, particularly through the Chin state, due to ethnic and familial ties between the Mizos and Chins. This movement is typically unofficial, driven by political unrest, ethnic violence, or military crackdowns in Myanmar. Many refugees arrive on foot, through forested regions, avoiding formal immigration procedures due to fear of rejection or legal consequences. This method also indicates the urgency and vulnerability of their situation.

These methods show how dire their conditions are, lacking proper support from immigration authorities and relying heavily on ethnic solidarity rather than institutional channels.

2. Analyse the Roles of Mizo People in Accommodating the Refugees

Researcher find out that the Mizo community has played a pivotal humanitarian role, largely driven by ethnic and cultural kinship. Locals have opened their homes, provided food and clothing, and mobilized community resources to support the incoming refugees. Civil society organizations, churches, and student unions (like the

Mizo Zirlai Pawl) have also been actively involved in relief efforts. The Mizo response is based not just on empathy, but also on a sense of shared identity and history.

This grassroots-level accommodation shows the power of community solidarity in crisis management, particularly when state or central assistance is limited or delayed.

3. Explore the Actions of the Refugees After Staying in Mizoram

Researcher find out that once settled, refugees generally engage in small-scale labor, agriculture, or informal work to sustain themselves. Some also contribute to local economies through handicrafts or temporary jobs. There are efforts among refugee youth to pursue education, and many try to maintain cultural practices while slowly integrating into the host community. However, their future remains uncertain, with limited legal status and restricted mobility or employment rights.

This highlights the resilience and adaptability of refugee communities, but also underscores the need for a structured policy approach to long-term integration or repatriation.

OVERALL ANALYSIS

The refugee situation in Mizoram reflects a complex interplay of ethnic solidarity, humanitarianism, and policy gaps. While the Mizo people's efforts are commendable, the situation also calls for greater institutional support and legal frameworks to ensure both refugees' rights and host community sustainability.

LIMITATION

Convenience Sampling: Because convenience sampling was used, there may be limitations on how broadly the results can be applied. This sampling strategy has the potential to be biased since participants are selected according to their availability and willingness to take part, rather than at random from the total population of interest.

The respondents used in this study are of English speakers and local language speakers. The study's focus on English-speaking non-local students may not capture the experiences of students from different language backgrounds or those who face language barriers, may have different answers.

CONCLUSION

The Myanmar conflict has led to a significant refugee crisis in Mizoram, a small northeastern Indian state with limited resources. Fleeing violence after the Myanmar military coup, thousands of refugees—primarily from the Chin community—have sought shelter in Mizoram, where ethnic and cultural ties have prompted strong humanitarian support from the local government and people. However, the growing refugee population has created logistical, social, and security challenges. Tensions have emerged between refugees and locals, with feelings of resentment, lack of belonging, and occasional conflicts. This situation highlights the urgent need for a clear refugee policy, better crisis management strategies, and regional cooperation. A multi-faceted approach—including diplomacy, aid, and community engagement—is crucial to resolving the crisis and promoting long-term peace and stability.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs. *Annual Report on Border Management and Refugee Issues*, 2021-22.
- Government of Mizoram, Home Department. *Mizoram State Policy on Refugee Management*, 2022.
- Lok Sabha Secretariat. *India's Refugee Policy and Its Implications on National Security*, 2021.
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). *Protection of Refugees from Myanmar: UNHCR Report on India's Response*, 2022.
- United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA). *Myanmar: Humanitarian Impact of the Military Coup*, 2021.
- World Bank. *Impact of Political Conflict on Border States: A Case Study of Mizoram and Myanmar*, 2022.
- Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs. *Annual Report on Border Management and Refugee Issues*, 2021-22.
- Government of Mizoram, Home Department. *Mizoram State Policy on Refugee Management*, 2022.
- Lok Sabha Secretariat. *India's Refugee Policy and Its Implications on National Security*, 2021.

-
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). *Protection of Refugees from Myanmar: UNHCR Report on India's Response*, 2022.
 - United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA). *Myanmar: Humanitarian Impact of the Military Coup*, 2021.
 - World Bank. *Impact of Political Conflict on Border States: A Case Study of Mizoram and Myanmar*, 2022.

INTER-REGIONAL INTERACTION AND PEER RELATIONS: A STUDY OF NORTHEAST STUDENTS IN PUNE

¹Dr. Shafiya Shaikh and ²Pentecost Lawmnakimi¹Assistant Professor and ²MA II Student, Department of Sociology, Abeda Inamdar Senior College**ABSTRACT**

This study examines how Northeast Indian students in Pune navigate cultural differences and build peer relationships in a diverse academic setting. It focuses on the nature of their interactions with non-Northeast peers, highlighting both the opportunities for cross-cultural exchange and the challenges they face, including discrimination, cultural misunderstandings, and social exclusion. By analyzing these dynamics, the research aims to shed light on the students' experiences of adaptation and identity negotiation, and to inform strategies for fostering more inclusive and supportive educational environments.

INTRODUCTION

The movement of students across regions, especially to educational hubs like Pune, has fostered complex inter-regional interactions and cultural exchanges in India. Among the diverse student populations, those from Northeast India stand out due to their distinct cultural and linguistic identities. Their transition to Pune's dynamic academic and social environment often involves navigating unfamiliar cultural norms, language barriers, and societal stereotypes. These students encounter both opportunities for personal growth and significant challenges, such as alienation and the struggle to establish a sense of belonging. Their experiences provide critical insight into how identity, peer relationships, and integration unfold in a predominantly non-Northeastern setting.

Northeast Indian students often face the dual burden of preserving their cultural identity while adapting to dominant norms, which can lead to emotional stress, social isolation, and mental health challenges. Their interactions are shaped by wider socio-cultural biases, yet many show resilience by forming supportive communities and asserting their identities through cultural engagement. This study aims to shed light on these dynamics, offering a nuanced understanding of their experiences and informing strategies to create more inclusive, culturally sensitive academic environments. By highlighting their voices, the research underscores the importance of institutional and peer-level support in enhancing the well-being and integration of Northeast Indian students in India's higher education landscape.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In Navigating Identities: Peer Relationships Among Northeast Students by Das (2018), the author examines how these students balance their ethnic and regional identities while adapting to dominant cultural norms. Though college campuses and social events offer platforms for cultural exchange, students often struggle with a dual sense of belonging and alienation due to cultural stereotypes and pressures to conform.

Borah (2019), in Language and Identity in Northeast India: A Study of Student Interactions, highlights how English serves as a common medium for communication in higher education, but also reinforces social barriers. Students tend to form peer groups based on shared regional languages, which limits inter-regional bonding. The study calls for multilingual engagement and language exchange programs to foster inclusivity.

In The Role of Educational Institutions in Fostering Inter-Regional Relationships, Rani (2020) argues that universities play a key role in promoting cross-cultural understanding. Initiatives like peer mentorship programs, cultural sensitivity workshops, and collaborative projects can help reduce stereotypes and strengthen peer relationships among diverse student groups.

The Heinrich Böll Stiftung (2020) report, Framing the Indigene in a Frontier in Flux: Responses from Northeast India, adds a socio-political lens, noting how systemic marginalization and cultural misunderstandings shape the experiences of Northeast students in other Indian regions. It recommends institutional reforms and student-led initiatives to build a more inclusive environment.

An article by The Times of India (2012) titled "About 80% of Northeast Students in Kondhwa from Manipur" observes that many students from Manipur form close-knit communities in specific areas like Kondhwa. While these clusters provide a sense of safety, they also limit broader peer interactions. The article encourages universities to bridge this divide through joint cultural and academic events.

The JETIR (2023) article, Problems Faced by Northeast Students in Pune, documents everyday challenges such as microaggressions, housing discrimination, and social exclusion.

These negatively impact students' mental health and academic performance. It advocates for stronger anti-discrimination policies and awareness campaigns about Northeast Indian cultures.

A ResearchGate (2021) study titled Inter-Group Perception and Experience Exploration in the Lives of Northeasterners in India explores how stereotypes held by non-Northeast students create social distance. The study suggests that inter-group discussions and cultural exchanges can help dispel these biases and foster empathy.

Lastly, the Tandfonline (2020) article, "From 'Chinky' to 'Coronavirus': Racism Against Northeast Indians During the COVID-19 Pandemic", highlights how the pandemic amplified racism and xenophobia. Northeast students reported increased discrimination and alienation, exposing pre-existing societal prejudices. The article recommends legal protections and campus awareness initiatives to promote tolerance and safety.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is significant as it sheds light on the social and cultural experiences of Northeast Indian students in Pune, particularly how they form peer relationships and adapt to a new environment. It explores challenges such as cultural differences, language barriers, and stereotypes, as well as positive aspects like friendships and support networks that aid their academic and personal growth. The research offers valuable insights for universities, policymakers, and student groups aiming to build inclusive campuses. By analyzing both survey data and secondary sources, the study contributes to broader discussions on migration, diversity, and student integration in higher education across India.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a quantitative research approach to examine inter-regional interactions and peer relationships among Northeast Indian students studying in Pune. It employs a survey-based design to gather measurable data on student experiences, challenges, and cultural influences on social integration.

- **Population & Sampling:** 21 students from Northeast Indian states like Mizoram, Nagaland, and Manipur were selected through purposive sampling.
- **Data Collection:** An online survey via Google Forms was used, including both closed-ended and a few open-ended questions. The survey covered demographics, interactions, discrimination, peer influence, and communication challenges.
- **Data Analysis:** Responses were organized into tables and analyzed using basic statistics (frequencies, percentages) with descriptive analysis to identify trends.
- **Ethical Considerations:** Participation was voluntary and anonymous, with confidentiality ensured and informed consent obtained.

DATA COLLECTION

Data for this study was collected through an online survey administered via Google Forms and distributed through various social media platforms. This method enabled the researcher to effectively reach Northeast Indian students currently studying in Pune. The survey included a mix of closed-ended questions—such as Likert scales and multiple-choice items—and a few open-ended questions to capture both quantitative data and personal insights. The questionnaire was designed to gather detailed information on participants' demographics (including age, gender, state of origin, and duration of stay in Pune), the nature and frequency of their interactions with non-Northeast peers, experiences of cultural stereotyping or discrimination, and the perceived impact of peer relationships on their personal growth. It also explored communication challenges and integration within a diverse academic environment. This approach ensured a structured yet flexible means of data collection while upholding ethical standards like anonymity, confidentiality, and voluntary participation.

DATA ANALYSIS

Nature of peer relations formed between Northeast students and their non-Northeast counterparts.

Table 1: Friendship with Non-Northeast Students

How would you describe your friendships with non-Northeast students?	Number of responses	Percentage
Neutral	11	52.4%
Close	3	13.64%
Very close	6	28.57%
Distant	1	4.76%
TOTAL	21	100%

The data on "Friendship with Non-Northeast Students" reveals that the nature of peer relationships between Northeast students and their non-Northeast counterparts in Pune is diverse. A significant portion of students (52.4%) describe their relationships as neutral, indicating that many interactions are casual, primarily academic or functional, with limited emotional connection. However, a notable proportion (28.57%) report having very close friendships with non-Northeast peers, suggesting that despite cultural differences, some students successfully form strong, supportive bonds. A smaller group (13.64%) describes their friendships as close, signifying meaningful yet less intimate relationships. Only a few students (4.76%) consider their relationships distant, pointing to challenges in connecting with non-Northeast peers, potentially due to cultural misunderstandings or discrimination. Therefore, the data reflects a mixture of neutral and positive interactions, highlighting the complexities of social integration and the varying degrees of peer bonding that Northeast students experience in Pune's multicultural academic environment.

Table 2

CHALLENGES IN INTER-REGIONAL INTERACTION

What challenges have you faced in inter-regional interaction?	Number of responses	Percentage
Language barrier	13	61.9%
Cultural differences	3	14.3%
Stereotypes or discrimination	3	14.3%
Difficulty in socializing	1	4.8%
No challenges	1	4.8%
TOTAL	21	100%

The data reveals that the most significant challenge Northeast Indian students face in inter-regional interactions is the **language barrier**, with 61.9% of respondents highlighting it as a major obstacle. This indicates that difficulties in communication, particularly for students less proficient in Hindi or Marathi, hinder their ability to connect with non-Northeast peers. **Cultural differences** and **stereotypes or discrimination** were reported by 14.3% of participants, pointing to challenges in adapting to social norms and facing biases based on appearance or ethnicity, which may limit students' social integration.

A small number of students (4.8%) also cited **difficulty in socializing**, which could be due to personal factors or unfamiliarity with the local social dynamics. Interestingly, 4.8% of participants mentioned that they faced **no challenges** in inter-regional interactions, suggesting that some Northeast students have successfully navigated these barriers. Hence, the challenges related to language, culture, and discrimination need to be addressed to enhance social cohesion and integration among Northeast Indian students in Pune.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

1. **Limited Sample Size:** The study's small sample may not fully represent the experiences of all Northeast students in Pune.
2. **Self-Reported Data:** Survey responses may be biased, affecting result accuracy.
3. **Lack of Qualitative Insights:** The study may not capture the full complexity of peer relationships.
4. **Geographical Scope:** Findings may not apply to Northeast students in other cities with different dynamics.

CONCLUSION

This study explored the inter-regional interactions and peer relationships of Northeast students in Pune, identifying several challenges that hinder their social integration. Key issues include language barriers, cultural differences, and stereotypes, which often lead to social isolation. Many Northeast students form close-knit groups with others from their region, providing emotional support but limiting interactions with students from other parts of India. Despite these barriers, the study found that university-led initiatives like cultural exchange programs, student mentorship, and diversity workshops can help bridge these gaps and foster better inter-regional connections. Addressing language barriers through support programs and promoting cross-cultural interactions are also crucial to improving peer relationships.

Furthermore, the research highlights the importance of addressing stereotypes and biases, which contribute to the social exclusion of Northeast students. Universities can mitigate these issues by incorporating cultural sensitivity training, increasing representation in student leadership roles, and creating platforms for dialogue. The study also emphasizes the need for mental health and emotional support, as many students experience

feelings of homesickness and cultural disconnection. By offering counseling services and peer support networks, universities can create a more inclusive environment. Overall, the study suggests that improving inter-regional interactions requires a collective effort from institutions, policymakers, and students to create an environment where diversity is embraced, and all students feel supported and integrated.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Borah, J. (2019). Language and Identity in Northeast India. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, 18(4), 250-270.
2. Das, S. (2018). Navigating Identities: Peer Relationships Among Northeast Students. *Journal of Social Sciences and Interactions*, 32(1), 45-60.
3. Rani, R. (2020). The Role of Educational Institutions in Fostering Inter-Regional Relationships. *Journal of Indian Education and Culture*, 22(1), 45-58.
4. Choudhury, S. (2021). Experiences of Northeast Indian Students in Metropolitan Cities: Challenges and Adaptation Strategies. *International Journal of Migration Studies*, 15(2), 80-100.
5. Singha, P. (2021). Challenges of Cultural Integration: Northeast Indian Students in Western India. *Asian Journal of Social Research*, 27(3), 105-123.
6. Kumar, R. & Das, M. (2017). Sociocultural Adaptation and Discrimination: Northeast Indian Students in Indian Metropolises. *Indian Journal of Psychological Studies*, 29(2), 134-150.
7. Heinrich Böll Stiftung. (2019). Youth and Infrastructure Development in Northeast India. Retrieved from <https://in.boell.org/en/2019/03/19/youth-and-infrastructure-development-northeast-india>
8. PLOS ONE. (2024). Student Psychological Well-Being in Higher Education: The Role of Social Support. Retrieved from <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0297508>
9. University Grants Commission (UGC). (2022). Guidelines for Inclusion of Students from Northeast India in Higher Education Institutions. Retrieved from <https://www.ugc.ac.in/pdfnews/NE-Students-Inclusion-Guidelines.pdf>
10. Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs. (2021). Report on Racial Discrimination and Safety of Northeast Students in Indian Cities. Retrieved from <https://mha.gov.in/NortheastStudentsSafetyReport>
11. National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA). (2023). Educational Inclusion Policies for Northeast Students in Indian Universities. Retrieved from <https://niepa.ac.in/NortheastInclusionPolicies.pdf>

EMPOWERING STUDENTS THROUGH SOCIO -EMOTIONAL LEARNING IN THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Dr.Khan Zeenat Muzaffar

Associate Professor, Marathwada College of Education, Aurangabad

ABSTRACT

Today children are suffering from Social and Emotional Problems. This problem among children compels the researcher to study the causes underlying this problem. The school, second home of children, plays a very crucial role in making the children socially and emotionally sound, and for this the Socio -Emotional teaching should be integrated in the school curriculum.

Keywords- Empowering, Socio-Economic learning, curriculum

DEFINITION

Socio-Emotional learning (SEL) is all about developing skills that help individuals manage emotions, build healthy relationships, and make responsible decisions. It focuses on fostering self-awareness, self-regulation, social awareness, relationship skills, and ethical decision-making. SEL is commonly integrated into education systems to help students not just academically but also emotionally and socially.

This approach encourages empathy, resilience, and emotional intelligence, helping individuals navigate challenges in life and work while contributing positively to their communities. It's a great blend of personal growth and social connection.

Socio-emotional learning (SEL) is the process of developing the skills needed to understand and manage emotions, create healthy relationships, and make thoughtful decisions. It emphasizes five core competencies:

1. **Self-awareness:** Recognizing your emotions, strengths, and values.
2. **Self-management:** Regulating emotions, handling stress, and setting goals.
3. **Social awareness:** Understanding others' feelings and perspectives, and showing empathy.
4. **Relationship skills:** Building and maintaining positive relationships through communication and conflict resolution.
5. **Responsible decision-making:** Making ethical and constructive choices.

This approach is widely integrated into schools, workplaces, and communities to improve emotional intelligence, mental well-being, and social harmony. It prepares individuals not just for personal success but also for contributing positively to society.

BENEFITS OF SOCIO EMOTIONAL LEARNING??

Socio-emotional learning (SEL) offers a wide range of benefits, positively impacting individuals, communities, and even organizations.

1. **Fosters academic success:** Research shows students engaged in SEL tend to perform better academically due to improved focus and reduced stress.
2. **Builds stronger relationships:** Teaches communication, empathy, and conflict resolution, resulting in healthier interpersonal connections.
3. **Encourages mental well-being:** Helps individuals cope with stress and anxiety, fostering resilience and emotional balance.
4. **Promotes responsible behavior:** Develops ethical decision-making and accountability, contributing to a positive impact on society.
5. **Reduces negative behaviors:** SEL programs have been linked to lower rates of bullying, substance abuse, and violence.
6. **Prepares for the workplace:** Strengthens teamwork, collaboration, and leadership skills that are highly valued in professional environments.

Implementing socio-emotional learning (SEL) in schools can transform the educational environment and foster the holistic development of students.

Here are some effective strategies:

1. Incorporate SEL into the curriculum:

- Introduce SEL lessons that teach students about self-awareness, empathy, communication, and decision-making.
- Embed SEL principles into academic subjects, like discussing emotions in literature or teamwork in science projects.

2. Train teachers and staff:

- Provide professional development to equip educators with SEL knowledge and tools.
- Encourage teachers to model SEL skills, such as active listening and constructive feedback, in their daily interactions.

3. Create a supportive school environment:

- Foster a culture of respect, inclusivity, and kindness through school-wide activities.
- Establish clear behavioral expectations and practices that encourage empathy and collaboration.

4. Engage families and communities:

- Organize workshops or events to involve parents in the SEL journey.
- Partner with local organizations to reinforce SEL concepts outside school.

5. Integrate SEL into daily routines:

- Start the day with mindfulness exercises or check-ins to help students process their emotions.
- Promote peer collaboration and teamwork in group activities.

6. Use SEL assessments and feedback

- Measure students' growth in socio-emotional competencies using surveys or reflective exercises.
- Adjust teaching approaches based on feedback to meet students' needs.

These steps create a framework for building resilient, emotionally intelligent students who are better prepared for life's challenges. Would you like specific ideas for activities or programs? I'm here to help!

What are the activities for SEL for students?

Socio-emotional learning (SEL) activities for younger students are fun, interactive, and help build foundational skills in self-awareness, empathy, and social interaction. Here are some engaging examples:

1. Emotion Charades:

- Students take turns acting out different emotions (e.g., happiness, sadness, anger) while others guess. This activity builds emotional recognition and empathy.

2. Calm Down Jars:

- Create jars filled with water, glitter, and food coloring. Students shake the jar when they're upset and watch the glitter settle, practicing mindfulness and self-regulation.

3. Compliment Circle:

- Students sit in a circle and take turns sharing kind words about their classmates. It fosters a positive classroom environment and builds relationship skills.

4. Feelings Check-In:

- Use a "feelings chart" with faces depicting emotions. Students point to or discuss how they feel at the start or end of the day to develop self-awareness.

5. Storytime with Lessons:

- Read books about empathy, kindness, or teamwork, followed by a discussion. Stories are a great way to introduce socio-emotional topics.

6. Role-Playing Scenarios:

- Practice conflict resolution by acting out scenarios, like sharing toys or including others in play. This helps with problem-solving and communication skills.

7. Gratitude Journals:

- Have students write or draw something they're thankful for each day. Gratitude builds a positive mindset and emotional resilience.

8. **Teamwork Challenges:**

- Organize simple group activities like building a tower with blocks. Encourage communication and collaboration to strengthen relationship skills.

These activities are simple yet impactful ways to weave SEL into the school day while making learning enjoyable for young students. Do you have a specific age group in mind or need ideas tailored to a particular setting? I'd love to explore further!

Socio-emotional learning (SEL) activities for younger students are fun, interactive, and help build foundational skills in self-awareness, empathy, and social interaction. Here are some engaging examples:

Socio-emotional learning (SEL) activities differ from traditional learning methods in their focus, approach, and outcomes. While both aim to develop well-rounded individuals, here's how SEL activities stand out:

1. **Focus on Emotional Growth:**

- Traditional methods emphasize academic knowledge (e.g., math, science), while SEL focuses on building emotional intelligence, empathy, and interpersonal skills.
- SEL enhances self-awareness and the ability to manage emotions, complementing traditional learning.

2. **Interactive and Experiential:**

- SEL activities often involve hands-on, experiential learning, like role-playing or group exercises. These are more engaging and personal compared to lectures or rote memorization common in traditional methods.

3. **Relationship Building:**

- SEL encourages collaboration, teamwork, and communication, fostering positive relationships among students. Traditional methods can sometimes be more individualistic, focusing on personal achievement.

4. **Mental Well-Being:**

- SEL addresses students' emotional needs, helping them cope with stress, anxiety, and social challenges. Traditional education might not always integrate this aspect into its structure.

5. **Holistic Development:**

- While traditional methods prioritize intellectual growth, SEL nurtures social, emotional, and ethical dimensions, contributing to the development of well-rounded individuals.

6. **Preparation for Real-Life Challenges:**

- SEL equips students with skills like empathy, decision-making, and conflict resolution, which are crucial for navigating real-world scenarios. Traditional methods often center on theoretical knowledge that may not always translate directly into life skills.

In practice, SEL and traditional methods are not mutually exclusive. The integration of SEL into traditional education creates a balanced learning experience that addresses both the mind and heart. Would you like examples of how the two can be blended effectively? Let me know!

WEBSOURCES

<https://helpfulprofessor.com/social-emotional-learning/>

<https://ncte.gov.in/Website/PDF/NMM/Introduction%20to%20socio%20emotional%20learning%20and%20self%20awareness-%20Ms.%20K.%20Mayuri.pdf>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social%E2%80%93emotional_learning

https://www.udemy.com/course/for-educators-social-emotional-learning-and-teaching/?utm_source=bing&utm_medium=udemyads&utm_campaign=BG-Search_DSA_GammaCatchall_NonP_la.EN_cc.India&campaigntype=Search&portfolio=Bing-India&language=EN&product=Course&test=&audience=DSA&topic=&priority=Gamma&utm_content=deal4584&utm_term=._ag_1316117806681635._ad_kw_udemy._de_c._dm_pl_ti_dat-2_334057027983529:loc-90._li_154723._pd._&matchtype=b&msclkid=d4296ab9deb812b_1506202b015f93254

THE ROLE OF THE STATE IN PROMOTING EDUCATIONAL EQUALITY IN INDIA

¹Anuja Sharma and ²Prithviraj Chavan¹Assistant Professor, Des' Shri. Navalmal Firodia Law College Pune²Des' Shri. Navalmal Firodia Law College Pune

ABSTRACT

Educational equality is a fundamental pillar for achieving social justice, fostering inclusive economic growth, and strengthening democratic institutions. In the Indian context, this imperative is heightened by the country's vast and entrenched socio-economic inequalities, historical marginalisation based on caste, gender, geography, and class, and the challenge of catering to a population marked by immense diversity.

*Objective of this paper explores the evolving role of the Indian state in promoting educational equality, beginning with the constitutional and legal frameworks that enshrine the right to education as a fundamental entitlement. It examines key policies and initiatives—from the early post-independence directives and the recommendations of the Kothari Commission to contemporary reforms like the Right to Education Act, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan, and the transformative National Education Policy 2020. Special attention is given to the state's targeted interventions for marginalized communities, such as Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, girls, and children in rural and remote regions. This paper adopts an **analytical research methodology**, relying primarily on **secondary sources** of data. The study draws upon a wide range of **constitutional provisions, policy documents, governmental reports, academic literature, and judicial decisions** to critically assess the role of the Indian state in promoting educational equality.*

Finally, the paper discusses emerging trends—such as the integration of technology, data-driven policy-making, inclusive pedagogy, and community engagement—as vital components in the pursuit of a truly equitable education system. This paper provides critical insights into the successes and gaps in India's policy efforts toward educational equality, helping inform future reforms. It serves as a valuable resource for policymakers, educators, and researchers aiming to build a more inclusive and just education system.

Keywords: Educational Equality, Indian Education System, State Intervention, Right to Education, Social Justice, National Education Policy 2020, Marginalized Communities, Inclusive Education, Public Policy, School Reform

INTRODUCTION

India's education system has been shaped by its colonial past, socio-cultural diversity, and post-independence aspirations for an equitable society, calling for a just and fair society. Despite constitutional guarantees and a series of progressive reforms, educational inequality remains a persistent challenge. These inequalities are often rooted in factors such as caste, class, gender, geography, and disability. The state, as a central actor, has been instrumental in designing and implementing policies aimed at levelling the educational playing field.

This paper examines the evolution of the state's role in promoting educational equality, evaluates key policies and programs, and analyses their impact and shortcomings. The focus is on school education, though higher education is also considered where relevant.

CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR EDUCATIONAL EQUALITY IN INDIA

The Constitution of India establishes a strong legal and moral foundation for achieving educational equality as a fundamental aspect of social justice and democratic development. From its inception, the Constitution framers recognised education as a powerful tool for empowering individuals and transforming society, particularly for historically disadvantaged groups.

Article 21A¹, introduced by the 86th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2002², and made education a fundamental right for children between the ages of 6 and 14. This amendment transformed what was earlier a Directive Principle into an enforceable right, obligating the state to grant free and compulsory education to all children in this age group. This legal mandate marked a turning point in India's educational landscape.

Several other constitutional provisions also support the cause of educational equality:

¹ INDIA CONST. art. 21A.

² The Constitution (Eighty-sixth Amendment) Act, 2002, § 2, India Code (2002).

- **Article 15** prohibits discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex, or place of birth. Article 15(4) and 15(5) empowering the state to make special provisions ensuring advancement of socially and educationally backward classes, Scheduled Castes (SCs), and Scheduled Tribes (STs), including in educational institutions¹.
- **Article 46** directs the state to promote the educational and economic interests of SCs, STs, and other weaker sections and to protect them from social injustice and exploitation.²
- **Article 45**, part of the Directive Principles, was amended to recommend that the state provide early childhood care and education to all children under the age of six, recognizing the importance of foundational learning.

To implement these constitutional promises, the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009³ was enacted. This legislation lays down specific norms and standards for schools, including infrastructure, teacher-student ratios, curriculum, and evaluation practices. Additionally, the Act also prohibits physical punishment, mental harassment, screening procedures for admission, and capitation fees.

A notable feature of the RTE Act is Section 12(1) (c), which mandates private unaided schools to reserve 25% of seats for children from disadvantaged and economically weaker sections, thereby integrating children across class divides.

Collectively, these legal frameworks embody the Indian state's commitment to an equitable, inclusive, and non-discriminatory education system, aiming to reduce historical disadvantages and provide every child with a fair chance to succeed.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Pre-Independence Era

During the British colonial period, education in India underwent significant structural changes, but these were largely driven by imperial interests rather than the goal of universal or equitable access.⁴ The British introduced a formal education system primarily to serve administrative needs and to create a class of English-educated Indians who would assist in governance.

The Macaulay's Minute on Education (1835) marked a major turning point, advocating for English as the medium of instruction and emphasizing Western literature and sciences over indigenous knowledge systems. This policy led to the marginalisation of traditional learning institutions such as *pathshalas*, *madrassas*, and *gurukuls*.

Subsequent reforms, including the **Wood's Despatch of 1854**, recognized the need for mass education but continued to prioritize elite education.⁵ The Despatch laid the foundation for a departmental system of education and promoted private participation, but did little to address access for marginalized communities.

By the early 20th century, efforts like the **Hunter Commission (1882)**⁶ and **Sadler Commission (1917–19)**⁷ examined issues in primary and higher education, yet systemic inequality remained.

¹ INDIA CONST. art. 15(4)–(5).

² INDIA CONST. art. 46.

³ The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, No. 35 of 2009, INDIA CODE (2009).

⁴ Thomas B. Macaulay, *Minute on Indian Education*, (1835), in *Bureau of Education Selections from Educational Records Part I (1781–1839)*, 107–117 (H. Sharp ed., 1920).

⁵ Despatch from the Court of Directors of the East India Company to the Governor-General of India in Council (Wood's Despatch), No. 49, July 19, 1854.

⁶ Report of the Indian Education Commission (Hunter Commission), 1882.

⁷ Report of the Calcutta University Commission (Sadler Commission), 1917–19.

Colonial policies thus created a dual system: a small, urban educated elite and a vast majority left without access to quality education, perpetuating social and economic disparities that independent India would later attempt to redress.

Post-Independence Developments:

After gaining independence in 1947, India identified education as a critical instrument for national development, social integration, and economic progress. The framers of the Constitution envisioned education as a fundamental right and an essential means to ensure equality, justice, and democratic participation.

In the early years, the government emphasised expanding access to primary education. The Constitution included Article 45, directing the state to provide free and compulsory education to all children up to the age of 14 within ten years. However, financial and infrastructural limitations slowed progress during the initial decades.

One of the most significant contributions to educational planning came from the Kothari Commission (1964–66). The commission laid the groundwork for a national education policy and famously stated, “*The destiny of India is being shaped in her classrooms.*” It recommended a common school system, equitable resource distribution, and a 10+2+3 structure for school and higher education. These ideas significantly influenced subsequent reforms.¹

In 1986, the government introduced the National Policy on Education (NPE), which emphasized universal access, retention, and quality improvement, particularly for disadvantaged groups.² It also stressed the need for vocationalization of education and the use of technology in classrooms. The policy was revised in 1992 to further align with the changing socio-economic context.³

MAJOR STATE INITIATIVES AND PROGRAMS

To operationalize these visions, the government launched various flagship programs such as:

1.Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA):

This program launched in 2001, its flagship program by the Government of India aimed at achieving universal elementary education for children aged 6 to 14. Its goals included improving school infrastructure, reducing gender and social disparities, enhancing teacher training, and ensuring quality education for all. SSA focused on marginalized groups such as girls, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and children with disabilities.⁴ It played a key role in increasing enrolment and reducing dropouts. In 2018, SSA was subsumed under Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan, integrating elementary, secondary, and teacher education into a unified scheme.⁵

2.Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDMS): It is one of India’s most significant social welfare initiatives aimed at enhancing the nutritional status of school-aged children while promoting educational participation. Officially launched in 1995 under the National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education, the scheme provides free cooked meals to children in government and government-aided primary and upper primary schools.⁶

The MDMS serves multiple objectives: combating classroom hunger, increasing school enrolment and attendance, reducing dropout rates, and fostering social equality by bringing children of different social backgrounds together. For many underprivileged children, the mid-day meal is the most substantial daily nutrition they receive.⁷

¹ Report of the Education Commission (Kothari Commission), 1964–66, Ministry of Education, Government of India.

² National Policy on Education, 1986, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India.

³ Ministry of Human Resource Development, National Policy on Education, 1986, GOV’T OF INDIA.

⁴ Programme of Action, 1992, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India.

⁵ Ministry of Education, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan: Framework for Implementation, GOV’T OF INDIA (2001).

⁶ National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (Mid-Day Meal Scheme), 1995, Ministry of Education, Govt. of India.

⁷ Ministry of Education, Mid-Day Meal Scheme Guidelines, GOV’T OF INDIA (2020).

The scheme gained momentum following a landmark Supreme Court directive in 2001, which mandated all states to provide cooked meals in schools. Over the years, it has expanded to include children in Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) and Alternative & Innovative Education (AIE) centers, as well as madrasas and maktabas supported under SSA.

The meals must meet prescribed nutritional standards 450 calories and 12 grams of protein for primary students, and 700 calories and 20 grams of protein for upper primary. The scheme is centrally sponsored, with both the central and state governments sharing costs. It plays a crucial role in linking nutrition, education, and child development in India.

3. Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA)

It was launched in 2009 by the Government of India to expand and improve access to quality secondary education (classes IX and X). The mission aimed to address disparities in secondary schooling by enhancing infrastructure, reducing gender and socio-economic gaps, and improving learning outcomes. RMSA focused on universalizing secondary education by providing support for building new schools, upgrading existing ones, recruiting qualified teachers, and promoting inclusive education for marginalized groups, including Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), minorities, and girls.¹

One of RMSA's key objectives was to achieve an enrolment rate of 75% at the secondary level by providing a secondary school within a reasonable distance from every habitation. The program also emphasized curriculum reform, ICT integration, and vocational education.

In 2018, RMSA was merged with other school education schemes under the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan, creating a holistic framework covering preschool to senior secondary levels.

4. National Education Policy (NEP) 2020

It has been nothing less than a landmark reform in India's education system, introduced after more than three decades. Approved by the Union Cabinet in July 2020, NEP 2020 aims to overhaul the education landscape from school to higher education, making it more holistic, flexible, multidisciplinary, and aligned with 21st-century needs.²

One of the major shifts in school education is the replacement of the 10+2 structure with a 5+3+3+4 curricular design, corresponding to the age groups 3–8 years (Foundational), 8–11 (Preparatory), 11–14 (Middle), and 14–18 (Secondary). This structure emphasizes early childhood care and education (ECCE), foundational literacy and numeracy, and competency-based learning.

The policy promotes mother tongue or regional language as the medium of instruction at least till Grade 5, and preferably till Grade 8. It introduces flexibility in subject choices, experiential learning, and vocational training from an early stage.

In higher education, NEP 2020 aims to increase Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) and eliminate rigid separations between streams. It introduces multidisciplinary institutions, four-year undergraduate programs, and the establishment of the Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) to regulate higher education.

A key feature of NEP 2020 is its focus on equity and inclusion, particularly for disadvantaged and underrepresented groups. The policy also advocates technology integration, teacher training, and the use of digital platforms to enhance access and quality.

NEP 2020 aspires to transform India into a global knowledge superpower, ensuring education is accessible, equitable, and future-ready.

ADDRESSING SOCIAL AND REGIONAL DISPARITIES

The state has launched specific schemes to address disparities:

- **Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV):** Residential schools for girls from SC, ST, OBC, and minority communities³.

¹ Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan Framework for Implementation, Ministry of Education, Govt. of India (2009).

² Ministry of Education, National Education Policy 2020, GOV'T OF INDIA (2020).

³ Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya Scheme, Ministry of Education, Govt. of India.

- **Incentives for SC/ST Students:** Scholarships, free uniforms, and textbooks.
- **Ashram Schools:** Residential schools in tribal areas.
- **Beti Bachao Beti Padhao:** Focuses on improving female education and addressing gender-based discrimination.¹
- **Digital India Initiatives:** Aim to reduce urban-rural divides through online education and digital classrooms.

Despite these measures, stark disparities persist. For instance, children in rural and remote areas still face infrastructural shortages, while Dalits and Adivasis continue to experience exclusion and discrimination in classrooms.

CHALLENGES IN PROMOTING EDUCATIONAL EQUALITY

1. Infrastructural Gaps

Many government schools lack basic amenities such as clean drinking water, toilets (especially for girls), libraries, and digital facilities. This disproportionately affects students from marginalized communities.

2. Quality of Education

While enrolment has improved, learning outcomes remain poor. ASER reports consistently show that a large proportion of children in grade 5 cannot read a grade 2 text or perform basic arithmetic.²

3. Teacher Shortage and Training

Many schools operate with inadequate and poorly trained teachers. The quality of teacher education is uneven, affecting the overall learning experience of students.

4. Digital Divide

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed and exacerbated the digital divide. Children from economically disadvantaged backgrounds struggled to access online learning, leading to significant learning loss.

5. Private vs. Public Education

There is growing privatisation of education, with many parents opting for low-cost private schools due to perceived quality. This creates a parallel system and reinforces inequality, as poor children remain in under-resourced public schools.

ROLE OF THE JUDICIARY AND CIVIL SOCIETY

The judiciary and civil society have played vital roles in shaping and advancing educational policies in India, ensuring the realisation of constitutional rights and fostering social justice.

The Indian judiciary has significantly influenced educational policy through landmark rulings, such as in the Unnikrishnan case (1993), where the Supreme Court declared the right to education as a fundamental right under Article 21 (Right to Life).³ This ruling laid the foundation for the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009. The judiciary also plays a crucial role in enforcing policies related to social justice, mandating equal access to education for marginalised communities like SCs, STs, and girls, and holding the state accountable for implementation failures.

On the other hand, civil society organisations, including NGOs and grassroots movements, have been instrumental in advocating for equitable educational reforms. They raise awareness about barriers to education, such as poverty, discrimination, and inadequate resources. Through campaigns, research, and public interest litigations (PILs), civil society has pushed for inclusive policies, such as the RTE Act, and has played an active role in addressing educational disparities. These organisations help bridge the gap between policy and practice, ensuring that education reaches all sections of society, especially vulnerable groups.

Together, the judiciary and civil society ensure that India's educational policies are just, inclusive, and effectively implemented.

¹ Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Govt. of India.

² Pratham, Annual Status of Education Report (Rural) 2022, <https://asercentre.org/national-reports/>.

³ Unnikrishnan J.P. v. State of Andhra Pradesh, (1993) 1 S.C.C. 645 (India).

EMERGING TRENDS AND THE WAY FORWARD**1. Use of Technology**

Digital tools, if deployed equitably, can enhance access and personalisation of learning. Government platforms like DIKSHA offer free educational content, though digital infrastructure must be improved for meaningful use.¹

2. Community Participation

Strengthening School Management Committees (SMCs) and involving local stakeholders in school governance can enhance accountability and responsiveness.

3. Focus on Foundational Learning

NEP 2020 rightly prioritizes early childhood and foundational literacy. Ensuring quality preschool education, especially in Anganwadi centers, will be crucial for long-term equity.

4. Data-Driven Policy Making

Regular monitoring and evaluation using data from sources like UDISE+ and NAS can help the state identify gaps and design targeted interventions.

5. Inclusive Pedagogy

Curriculum and teacher training must be reoriented to foster empathy, diversity, and critical thinking. Education should celebrate pluralism and discourage caste or gender stereotypes.

CONCLUSION

The journey toward educational equality in India reflects a dynamic interplay between constitutional commitments, state interventions, civil society advocacy, and evolving societal needs. From the constitutional guarantee of free and compulsory education under Article 21A to landmark initiatives such as the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and the transformative National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, the Indian state has demonstrated sustained intent to democratize education and promote inclusive development.

Moreover, the increasing privatisation of education has led to a parallel education system that often deepens the inequities it seeks to overcome. Poorer students, particularly those from historically marginalised communities, remain dependent on an under-resourced public education system, perpetuating cycles of disadvantage.

The judiciary and civil society have played instrumental roles in bridging the gaps between policy and practice. Judicial interventions such as the *Unnikrishnan* judgment and civil society campaigns for the Right to Education have fortified the legal and moral framework for inclusive education. Yet, the sustainability of educational equality depends on continued vigilance, advocacy, and innovation.

As India aspires to become a knowledge-based economy and a global leader in the 21st century, the importance of ensuring equitable and quality education for all cannot be overstated. The way forward requires a multi-pronged approach that combines robust public investment, community participation, capacity building of teachers, and inclusive curriculum reform. Leveraging technology and data for decision-making, while addressing socio-cultural barriers, is also crucial.

In essence, the Indian state must move beyond symbolic commitments to real, measurable change, ensuring that every child, regardless of background, has the opportunity not only to attend school but to thrive within it. Realising the constitutional promise of educational equality is not merely a legal obligation but a moral imperative to secure a just, inclusive, and progressive society.

¹ DIKSHA Platform, Ministry of Education, <https://diksha.gov.in>.

WOMEN'S ROLES IN THE AGE OF REMOTE WORK: AN ANALYSIS OF HOUSEHOLD RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROFESSIONAL DYNAMICS IN PUNE CITY**¹Dr.Shafiya Shaikh and ²Momin Laiba Yakub**¹Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, Abeda Inamdar Senior College²MA II, Dept of Sociology, Abeda Inamdar Senior College**ABSTRACT**

In India, women traditionally handle most domestic tasks, even when employed full-time. Remote work, while flexible, has increased this domestic burden for many women. It also limits career advancement due to reduced visibility and networking. Understanding these effects is crucial for promoting gender equity in the workplace. This study investigates how remote work affects women's ability to balance their professional duties with household responsibilities, specifically in Pune, India. It examines how the shift to working from home has changed their roles at work and at home.

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated a global shift to remote work, bringing both opportunities and challenges—particularly for women. While remote work offers greater flexibility, it has also intensified the long-standing imbalance in household responsibilities that women traditionally bear, especially in India. This study explores how remote work affects women's ability to balance professional duties with domestic roles, focusing on Pune, a city known for its growing tech industry and diverse urban workforce. By examining the changing dynamics of work and home life, the research aims to understand the impact of remote work on women's career progression, mental health, and gender equality within both household and professional settings.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE**1. Flexibility and Productivity**

- Remote work provides flexibility, helping women balance professional and household duties.
- Bloom et al. (2015): Study at Ctrip (China) showed increased productivity among women working from home due to better time management.

2. Career Advancement Barriers career growth.

- Chandran & Nair (2020): In India's IT sector, women working from home are often perceived as less committed, missing out on promotions, mentorship, and networking.

3. Household Responsibilities

- Women continue to carry the bulk of domestic work, even when employed.

Desai & Jain (2018): Urban Indian women still handle most chores and caregiving roles.

- Despite flexibility, remote work can harm women's
- **Pillai (2021):** During COVID-19, remote-working women in Pune reported increased household workload and stress, lowering career satisfaction.

4. Cultural and Structural Constraints

- Traditional gender roles in India exacerbate the "double burden" for women.
- Remote work often reinforces these roles, limiting its benefits.
- Lack of workplace visibility and informal interactions further restricts women's career advancement.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This research will contribute to the broader understanding of gender dynamics in remote work environments, particularly in the Indian context. By focusing on Pune, which represents a rapidly urbanizing city with diverse professional sectors, this study will provide valuable insights for organizations, governments, and civil society in creating policies and interventions to support women in balancing work and family responsibilities.

METHODOLOGY

Survey: A structured questionnaire was distributed to a sample of 20 women working remotely in Pune. The survey has collect data on household responsibilities, professional experience, and perceptions of work-life balance.

Interviews: In-depth interviews were conducted with 20 women from different sectors, including IT, education, healthcare, and corporate jobs. These interviews provided qualitative insights into their daily routines, challenges faced, and coping mechanisms.

DATA COLLECTION

This study utilized a mixed-methods approach to explore the effects of remote work on women's ability to balance professional responsibilities with household duties in Pune, India. Pune, a rapidly urbanizing city with a robust tech industry and diverse workforce, provided an ideal setting for examining the intersection of gender roles and remote work in an urban Indian context.

Data was collected from 20 women professionals employed across various sectors, including IT, education, healthcare, and media. These women were working remotely full-time during the study period. The survey aimed to capture quantitative data on their experiences, including the challenges of managing household tasks alongside professional responsibilities. The participants were purposively selected to ensure representation from diverse sectors, offering a broad understanding of how remote work affects women in different professional fields. These women were based in Pune, allowing for a focused study within a single urban area.

In addition to the survey, 20 in-depth interviews were conducted with a smaller subset of women from the survey pool. These interviews provided qualitative insights into their daily routines, personal challenges, and perceptions of how remote work influenced their professional growth, mental health, and domestic roles. This qualitative data was vital in understanding the nuanced experiences of women working remotely in Pune.

The sampling strategy was based on purposive sampling, which allowed the researchers to select participants who met specific criteria: they were actively employed in remote work settings and lived in Pune. This sampling method ensured that the study focused on women who had direct experience with the impact of remote work. Participants were recruited through professional networks, referrals, and local women's organizations, ensuring a diverse group of respondents who could share varied perspectives on their experiences.

DATA ANALYSIS

Household Responsibilities and Gender Roles

The research highlights that the shift to remote work has significantly affected household dynamics for women in the technology sector. While remote work offers increased flexibility, it has also led to an intensification of unpaid domestic labor, particularly among women.

The study shows that although 65% of respondents do not have children, 40% of women reported experiencing greater domestic pressure while working from home. Notably, 45% of participants spend 2–3 hours daily on household chores, and 35% spend 4–5 hours. This indicates that the burden of housework remains unevenly distributed, and the gendered division of labor persists despite changes in work environments.

These findings suggest that remote work has not necessarily alleviated household stress for women; rather, it may have blurred the boundaries between professional and domestic responsibilities, reinforcing traditional gender roles within the home.

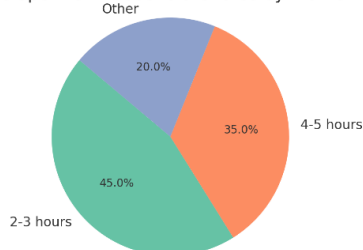
Remote Visibility and Career Advancement

The research also examines the impact of remote work on professional visibility and career advancement opportunities for women. About 40% of respondents believe that remote work has negatively affected their chances for career growth, largely due to reduced visibility and fewer networking opportunities.

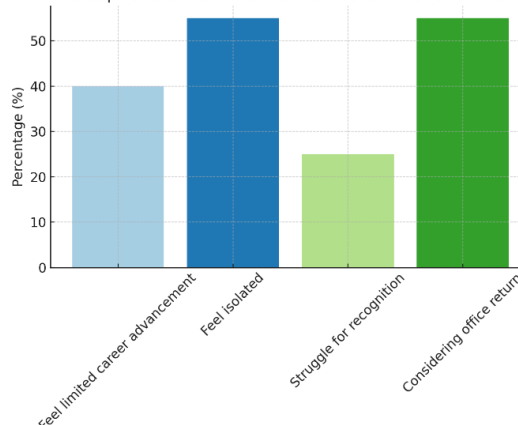
More than half (55%) reported feelings of isolation, and 25% expressed difficulty in gaining recognition for their contributions while working remotely. These challenges appear to contribute to a broader perception that remote work limits access to leadership pathways and professional development. As a result, 55% of women surveyed are considering a return to the office, seeking to restore visibility, build stronger workplace connections, and manage the work-life balance more effectively.

The researcher concludes that remote work, while beneficial in terms of flexibility, has not fully addressed the structural inequalities faced by women in the workplace and at home. Instead, it has introduced new challenges related to visibility, recognition, and the intensification of domestic responsibilities. These findings call for a more nuanced approach to remote work policies — one that actively addresses gender disparities and supports equitable outcomes for all employees.

Daily Time Spent on Household Chores by Women in Tech



Perceptions of Remote Work on Career Advancement



LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

This study has several limitations. Firstly, it focuses exclusively on women in Pune City, which may not represent the experiences of women in other regions of India or rural areas, where cultural and economic factors differ. Additionally, the reliance on self-reported data introduces potential biases, such as social desirability and recall bias, possibly leading to underreporting of challenges. The study also lacks male perspectives on household responsibilities, limiting a balanced understanding of gender dynamics. Moreover, while multiple industries were included, the sample size per sector may not be large enough to draw strong conclusions about industry-specific challenges. The study offers a snapshot of the current situation but does not capture the long-term effects on career progression, mental health, or financial independence. Lastly, non-response bias could skew results, as women with heavier workloads may be underrepresented, and the study doesn't directly assess employer policies, limiting insights into how organizations address gendered challenges in remote work.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study sheds light on the dual nature of remote work for women in Pune City, offering both flexibility and increased productivity but simultaneously reinforcing traditional gender roles and exacerbating domestic responsibilities. Despite its advantages, remote work has led to heightened stress, isolation, and work-life balance challenges for many women. The findings emphasize the urgent need for gender-sensitive workplace policies and societal changes to redistribute household responsibilities. While acknowledging limitations such as its focus on a single city and reliance on self-reported data, the study calls for broader, long-term research to fully understand the evolving impact of remote work on gender equality, offering critical insights for creating more inclusive and supportive work environments.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Bailyn, L. (2006) - *Breaking the Mold: Redesigning Work for Productive and Satisfying Lives* – Cornell University Press.
2. Bloom, N., Liang, J., Roberts, J., & Ying, Z. J. (2015) - *Does Working from Home Work? Evidence from a Chinese Experiment* – The Quarterly Journal of Economics, Oxford University Press.
3. Deshpande, A., & Sharma, N. (2020) - *Gender, Jobs, and Education in India: Women's Labor Force Participation Post-COVID* – Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER).
4. Hochschild, A. R. (2012) - *The Second Shift: Working Families and the Revolution at Home* – Penguin Books.
5. OECD (2021) - *The Role of Telework for Women's Employment in the Post-Pandemic Era* – OECD Publishing.
6. World Economic Forum (2022) - *Global Gender Gap Report* – WEF Annual Reports

WEBLIOGRAPHY

1. Harvard Business Review (2023) - "How Companies Can Create Better Remote Work Policies for Women"
2. McKinsey & Company (2022) - "Women in the Workplace Report"
3. The Economic Times (2023) - "How Remote Work is Shaping Careers for Women in India"
4. ILO (International Labour Organization) (2022) - "The Impact of Teleworking on Women's Employment"

-
5. Ministry of Labour & Employment, India (2023) - "Remote Work Policies and Women's Workforce Participation"
 6. Forbes India (2023) - "Future of Work: How Remote Jobs Are Empowering Women in India"
 7. NASSCOM (2022) - "Women in IT: The Role of Hybrid and Remote Work Models"
 8. PwC India (2023) - "The Future of Women's Workforce in a Digital-First Economy"

A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF EDUCATIONAL EXCLUSION OF MUSLIM STUDENTS: FACTORS AND CHALLENGES

Shaikh Hina Kausar

Ph. D, Research Scholar, Department of Sociology, Savitribai Phule Pune University

ABSTRACT

Currently increased demand and huge expansion have brought into Indian schools enormous numbers of children who might not have attended in the past. Marginalisation due to the lack of quality education had remained a continuous trend of disadvantaged sections of Indian society. Still, large numbers, and specific groups, of children remain excluded from schooling for various reasons, risking equitable access to basic education. Muslims being the victims of the same problem remained a backward community in India. Further emphasising this inequity in provision, the quality of education remains deeply unsatisfactory, particularly for children from disadvantaged groups. This paper explores the dimensions and issues related to exclusion from education and the policies and actions required to make educational expansion more equitable, which would contribute to pluralism and harmony and promote greater social cohesion. The objective of this paper is to explore and examine the depressed state of Muslim's educational status associated factors of exclusion and to analyze the educational problems of Muslims minority. The paper, while using the data of different government reports, shows that Muslim deprivation increases manifold. Taking major data from Sachar Committee Report (2006), the paper illustrate that Muslims face discrimination at various levels, they are at a double disadvantage with low levels of education combined with low quality of education. Even if government accepted the recommendations of SCR, surprisingly no progress has been made in overall conditions of Muslims, including education sector, since the recommendations were made. There is need of broad based policy initiatives combined with main streaming of Muslims in regular ministries, departments and programmes of state as well as central government.

Keywords: Social exclusion, Equity, Equality, School participation

INTRODUCTION

India made a constitutional commitment nearly 60 years ago, to provide free and compulsory education to all children up to age 14. The goal, which it expected to achieve by 1960, still remains mysterious. The Constitution of India is dedicated to the principle of equality of all citizens. Further, it has directed the state to protect the rights of all minorities in matters of language, religion and culture. In fact, promotion and protection of the rights of minorities contributes to the stability, peace and development of a nation. Since independence, India has accomplished significant growth and development. It has also been successful in reducing poverty and improving crucial human development indicators such as levels of literacy, education and health. There are indications, however, that not all religious communities and social groups have shared equally the nation's development. Among these, Muslims, the largest religious minority constituting 13.4 per cent of the population (Census 2001), are seriously lagging behind in terms of most of the human development indicators (Sachar Committee Report "SCR" 2006, 2).

The increased demand for elementary education and at the same time has substantially enhanced the role of non-state actors in providing elementary education and support services in the country. While the increased demand and massive expansion during recent years have brought more children into the folds of schooling, the task is far from complete. Large groups of children are still excluded from schooling for various reasons, jeopardizing their equitable access to elementary education. Muslims are facing a number of problems like issue of security, educational backwardness, and dismal representation in government employment and private sector and in rural development programmes. Literacy and education are one of the essential human development parameters. Practically, all citizens wish to ensure that their children not only become educated but also get quality modern education, which yields higher rate of returns— monetarily and in terms of non-market gains. Public policies are striving to make India a 100% literate society and also improve the quality and quantity of higher/scientific levels of education. Further accentuating this inequity, the quality of education provided remains quite unsatisfactory, particularly for children from disadvantaged groups. In this article we explore the critical issues related to exclusion from education and the policies and actions required to make educational expansion more equitable, which would contribute to pluralism and harmony and promote greater social cohesion. In this paper, we establish the educational exclusion of Muslims based on Government sponsored reports. The purpose here is to discuss the educational status of the Muslim community in India.

In this paper an attempt has been made to analyse the various indicators of educational attainment. The paper critically analyzes the various policy initiatives of

OBJECTIVES

To explore and examine the depressed state of Muslim's educational status associated factors of exclusion and to analyze the educational problems of Muslims students.

METHODOLOGY

The research follows a descriptive design to analyze existing patterns and explore underlying causes related to educational exclusion of Muslim students. For the collection of data secondary sources being used like reference books, newspapers, journals, and websites.

Inequities in elementary education

Recent years have witnessed positive developments with respect to girls' education. However, the overall difference in the enrolment ratio between boys and girls remains visible. A similar problem of inequity in coverage and participation can be observed with respect to different social groups traditionally identified as underprivileged, the situation for some religious minorities is also quite disappointing. The recent Sachar Committee report (GoI 2006a) has pointed out that the situation of children from the Muslim minority community seems to be even worse than that of SCs and STs. Despite efforts during the last six decades, the spread of education among the Muslims has remained quite unsatisfactory. While rural-urban differences exist across all social groups, they are significantly worse for the Muslim population in both rural and urban areas. This is also corroborated by independent observations in other studies. For instance, the SRI (2005) survey reported that the estimated percentages of out-of-school children are highest among Muslims at 9.97%; the situation is even more pronounced for Muslims in rural areas at 12.03%, the highest percentage among all social groups.

Learning and scholarship are central to Islamic faith and culture. The very first verse of the Quranic revelation, to the Prophet Muhammad^{PBUH}, is a direct instruction for learning (Zaman 2001, 15). The Quran repeatedly stresses the importance of knowledge. The Prophet considered the learners as his successors; he often remarked, "One should seek knowledge from cradle to grave" (Vijapur 2007, 87). The contrast between the Islamic precepts and ideals of universalization of education and the prevailing practices among Muslims all over the world, in general, and Indian Muslims in particular, reveals that there is a wide gap.

Social exclusion and schooling: A conceptual framework

Exclusion from educational services is multidimensional; it results from a combination of factors. For example, when any individual or group is excluded, the main cause may appear to be poverty, but other kinds of disadvantages such as religion, social norms, cultural biases, and social relations are often strong contributory factors. The degree and nature of exclusion depends largely on how social institutions like schools function and on the existing social relations among different groups. In the context of education, exclusion must be understood as a process, not just an event. Many preceding events shape the life of the individual child who is excluded from the educational system. Some of these events are located in the family, some in the community and the peer group, and many in the school where the child is supposed to be studying. Thus we must capture the many events that surround and affect the child's life (Govinda and Bandyopadhyay 2008). Educational exclusion is closely associated with social exclusion, which has been explored by other researchers (Sayeed and Soudien 2003; Sen 1999; Subrahmanian 2003). Most notably, social exclusion is linked with the denial of equal opportunities to different groups with different social backgrounds (De Haan 1999; Thorat 2003). Social exclusion is seen as "lack of access to resources and consequent inability to utilize them. It is further accentuated by denial of opportunities which enhance access to resources and their utilization" (Ziyauddin and Kasi 2009, p. 8). Since education is essential if people are to access resources and use them effectively, denial of educational opportunities definitely causes social exclusion. As Popay et al. (2006, p. 7) write, "exclusionary processes impact in different ways to differing degrees on different groups and/or societies at particular times".

Carr & Klassen (1997) suggests that the relationship between teacher and student is a key to academic achievement for minority students and the influence of the lived experiences of teachers working with a progressively racially and ethnically diverse student group needs to be understood. Moreover, Kohn (2006) recommends that the children do not perform poorly because of his or her cognitive skills or abilities, but because the child feels detached, unwelcome or alienated from the 'significant others' in the educational environment. Banks & Lynch (1986) argued that "teachers should understand how race and culture interact to cause educational problems for many ethnic minority students".

Reasons for not attending school:

The exclusion of children from formal schooling, effectively denying them the right to an education, requires careful analysis. Children who fail to benefit from formal school education do not constitute a monolithic group. For some, school is genuinely outside their reach in physical terms. Some others fail to attend school, even if it is available nearby, for social and economic reasons. Engagement in domestic chores and early marriages are also important reasons for dropping out. Some enrol in school, but do not physically participate, frequently being absent. Some consider education is not necessary, and many, especially urban boys, need to provide some income for the household. Yet others leave school without completing even the lower primary cycle of 5 years. Some complete 5 years of schooling, but do not move into the upper primary cycle. Some are officially on the school rolls but not engaged in learning activities; thus they are mentally absent from class and unable to benefit from the schooling process. Many of these children may complete the lower primary or even upper primary schooling in physical terms, but fail to acquire the essential cognitive capabilities. Different categories of children who are out of school could possibly be from different socio-economic backgrounds and bear different personal profiles, and interact with the school system in unique ways. Understanding the underlying dynamics that defines this interactive process between the school and the child would require a disaggregated analysis of the phenomenon of school participation, considering the different categories of children who attempt to benefit from schooling under widely varying circumstances. On the whole, a child's journey through the age-grade ladder of the formal school is a complex one, punctuated by multiple cracks and gaps that children tend to fall through and barriers that they fail to climb over. While some succeed in crossing the course successfully, others seem to lose out at various points, for a variety of reasons. Although it is disheartening to see that a sizeable proportion of the eligible age group still cannot even enter an educational institution, it is also a major concern that others did enter school but could not continue their education.

Silent exclusion of Children:

Apart from the children who never enrolled and those who dropped out, others continue attending school but are at risk of dropping out. Some may even complete the whole cycle but barely learn anything and, therefore, face the risk of not moving further in education. These are the victims of "silent exclusion": they are physically present but get no cognitive benefits. A range of factors, including irregular attendance, low learning levels, repetition, and distance between home and school, gradually exclude these children from the educational system. Many are characterized as "not interested in studies" and eventually drop out of school after attending for some time.

Willow (2001) mentioned that the children from the deprived classes face problems in making friends and they are traced to be avoiding contacts with peer groups. Children face identity crises and stigmatization. Nazia Erum has already explained before that the past decade has seen a rise in Hindu right-wing sentiment within India and a series of distorted narratives that portray Muslims as invaders, anti-national and a threat to national security. These took centre stage in the run-up to the polarising national elections of 2014 (Erum, 2018).

The Muslim identity was prominently built up and the Parent's who were educated preferred to live in ghettos despite knowing the stigma their identity and address carry. Those who were Migrant were bound to reside in such areas, as no other places gave their shelter knowing their status and those who are born in that place feel if they be in numbers they will be more secure.

Factors and processes contribute to the exclusion of Children:

In the previous section we presented the picture of exclusion from elementary schooling and its nature and magnitude. Now we take the discussion forward, focusing on who are these excluded children are and what factors and processes contribute to their exclusion, by reviewing studies and reports on the subject. We see major sets of issues or factors: poverty and child labour; illiteracy; girls' disadvantages; difficult circumstances; and disabilities. Below we will briefly discuss the factors, they are:

Poverty, schooling and Madrasas:

It is generally observed that the children who are excluded from school, or are about to face exclusion, are largely those in poverty, who must often work when quite young, or migrate with their families in search of work. However, the fact of the matter is that schools beyond the primary level are few in Muslim localities. Many a time Madarsas are the only educational option available to Muslim children, especially those belonging to the poor. Very often one finds that Madarsas have indeed provided schooling to Muslim children where the State has failed them. Many children go to Madarsas and thereby acquire some level of literacy/education when there is no school in the neighbourhood.

Madrasa going children wear Muslim attire including skull cap and Burkha (veil) by travelling in public transport, during their board examination which directly reveals their identity, Muslim children expressed concern of discrimination in the way they have been treated once their identity is known. The boys of the Madrasa complained that during their travel from the public transport, they are being asked for identity cards due to their attire. The stereotype images and the fabricated news that is so popular in media today which directly hampers the psychology of the Muslim children.

Education, low-income Muslims and child labour:

Children from Muslim marginalized groups, suffering from poverty and illiteracy, remain deprived of educational opportunities. The majority of Muslims were generally economically weaker and poorly educated. They are slow in picking up the benefits of education. The document of the government of India's New Education Policy of 1986 in the section of minority education, declared the Muslims along with the neo-Buddhists as educationally backward on a national level (Vijapur 2007, 89). Muslims are far behind than the other groups even when they happen to be the majority population in given geographical area or in educational institutions established for or managed by them.

The link between child labour and elementary education has received enormous attention during the last two decades. The practice of employing child labour still persists in every corner of the country and, as discussed earlier, many children mentioned their engagement in wage labour or domestic chores as reasons for not enrolling in, or dropping out of, school.

Child labour that effectively keeps children out of school is indeed a complex issue, often dependent more on external factors such as the implementation of adult wage labour policies than on the conditions and intentions of the children and their families. In all these cases, school—related factors also play a critical role in influencing parents to decide for or against their children continuing in school when they reach an employable age.

For the poor Muslim families, education is either too costly or it does not fit in their scheme of things. They do not have enough money to survive and cannot be expected to buy books etc., for their children. Moreover, a child in such families is expected to contribute financially and they cannot afford to lose them to school.

The first-generation learners: Children of illiterate parents

Many of the Muslim children excluded from the education system are first-generation learners as their parents are illiterate. The children of illiterate parents face tremendous challenges in accessing schooling facilities and also in learning at an acceptable level as they receive little support after school hours. Many face the threat of silent exclusion from the school system.

It has been noted that the Parents who were the tenth pass or are in certain jobs outside the ambit of the community were less discriminated, while Parents who were not equally educated than the former and were working inside the ghetto, felt more discrimination. A highlighting theme which can be taken from the incidence is that once an individual is qualified to even know about their rights, feel confident.

DISADVANTAGES FOR GIRLS

Girls in India are in a more disadvantaged position than boys and that girl from poor, SC, ST and Muslim communities are doubly disadvantaged in every sphere of life including education. Apart from social background, economic status seems to be a determining influence in girls' education. Many decisions are made in accordance with parental attitudes in addition to their financial capacity, including whether a girl will go to school at all, the type of institution she will attend, and the amount to invest on her education. This continued ignorance towards girl's education, by the state, patriarchal attitudes, wide spread poverty and indifferences of Muslim leaders have all combined to make Muslim women the most uneducated section of the Indian society.

Discussing about the hurdles in women education Parveen (2010) revealed very important issues and problems like distance of school from girl's place of habitation, parents fear, gender discrimination, conservative mind of parent, child labour in household activity, child marriage and co-education, due to which parents are often reluctant to send their daughters to school and so they chose Madrasa education over government funded secular school.

The girl's students narrated that, when they went for the board examination wearing Burkha (veil), they were being checked as if they are carrying some bombs; they were kept under more vigilance and were commented on their backwardness. Even they feel awkward to visit public places. Some of the students marked that the situation in the current times have become more hitting, where they think before they travel to some new places.

Urdu language and Exclusion of Muslims:

Apart from the basic services of public transport, parks, banks and even the basic urban services like supply of potable water, garbage collection, regular cleaning of drains have not been made available in Muslim ghettos localities, leading to stink and disease. The government had also close down many of the Urdu medium school, which is the only way for the preserve the existence of Urdu language other than the Madrasa. The lack of schools up to twelfth class has led to many girls leave their studies. It is systematic neglect on the part of the Muslim children who already are in the lowest stand of marginalisation.

Students had a deep interest in learning Urdu and were keen to pursue it for higher education. The likeness can be defined as they relate Urdu to their religion. The report of the Sachar Committee has pointed out that “Urdu has been neglected and the fallout of this has been inadequate access to education in the mother tongue for many Urdu speaking children. The neglect has resulted in poor performance of Urdu medium school students as they lack infrastructural facilities and absence of an adequate number of qualified teachers. Although recently Supreme Court of India has passed the judgment that Urdu is the Indian language, born in India and language does not belongs to any religion, language is the culture and must not become a cause for dividing the people. But sadly, today also we find people consider Urdu as Muslim people’s language.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Although government has taken a number of steps to ameliorate the Muslim deprivation in different development indicators including education, the results are less promising. As discussed above, Muslim exclusion is increasing rather than their inclusion. The gist of this paper is that in present global era, which is full of challenges, we cannot think of an inclusive society without the quality of education. In fact, when a community is being deprived of a quality education which is an important indicator of development, this deprivation not only leads to educational exclusion but it shuts doors for a number of opportunities. So there is an urgent need to make education accessible to all unprivileged classes of our society, hence they may be able to reap the fruits of development in a nation. The Indian nation cannot march forward with a major segment of its largest minority group remaining backward, illiterate, unenlightened, unhealthy and weak. It is the duty of every section of the Indian society, the state and the civil society to help in mainstreaming this group which has fallen by the wayside.

Inequality is perpetuated deep down. It further states that the discrimination and social exclusion among Muslims have led to the lack of interest of parent’s to send their children to school. Parents face discrimination from school authorities in acts like lack of politeness, rude questions and feeling of suspicion which further created restraint in schooling, at times students are picked up only because they are Muslims. They are referred through derogatory comments and are singled out because they preferred Urdu over Sanskrit. In some of the instances, The Children were made to sit aloof from the other boys and were humiliated on their religious identity making the place culturally hostile and impacting adversely on the child’s learning; in turn making them switch to Madrasa for their further studies.

REFERENCES

- Ahmad, Imtiaz. (1981). “Muslim Educational Backwardness: An Inferential Analysis.” *Economic and Political Weekly* 16 (36): 1457-1465.
- Alam, Arshed. (2011). *Inside a Madrasa*. New Delhi: Routledge
- Bajpai, A. (2006). Right against economic exploitation: Child labour. In M. Weiner, N. Burra, & A. Bajpai (Eds.), *Born unfree: Child labour, education, and the state in India* (pp. 1–59). New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Bhatty, K. (1998). Educational deprivation in India: A survey of field investigations. *Economic and Political Weekly*, July 4–10, pp. 1731–1740; July 11–17, pp. 1858–1869.
- GoI [Government of India] (1986). *National policy on education 1986*. New Delhi: Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Education.
- GoI [Government of India] (2006a). *Sachar Committee report on social, economic and educational status of Muslim community of India*. New Delhi: Government of India.
- Parveen, I. (2005). *Exclusion of Muslim Girls from school: Analysis in Rampur*. A Research work supported by CRY. Retrieved from http://www.cry.org/resources/pdf/NCRRF/NCRRF_ReportBy_Iram_Praveen.pdf

Parveen, I. (2005). Exclusion of Muslim Girls from school: Analysis in Rampur. A Research work supported by CRY. Retrieved from http://www.cry.org/resources/pdf/NCRRF/NCRRF_ReportBy_Iram_Praveen.pdf

Zaman, M.H. (2001). Problems of Minorities Education. Book links Corporation. Hyderabad.

Ziyauddin, K. M., & Kasi, E. (Eds.) (2009). Dimensions of social exclusion: Ethnographic explorations. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Press. <http://www.c-s-p.org/Flyers/978-1-4438-1342-6sample.pdf>.

BREAKING GENDER AND SOCIAL BARRIERS

Assistant Professor Pranali Shankar Sonawane

Gramin Vikas Shikshan Sanstha's, Sant Dasganu Arts, Commerce and Science College, Akolner, Savitribai Phule Pune University (Unipune)

ABSTRACT

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education has emerged as a critical domain in fostering innovation, economic growth, and societal advancement. However, access to STEM education remains uneven, particularly for girls and students from marginalized communities. This research aims to explore and address the gender and social barriers that inhibit equitable participation in STEM fields. Through a multidisciplinary approach, the paper examines historical trends, cultural stereotypes, socio-economic constraints, and policy shortcomings that perpetuate exclusion. The study also highlights successful models and initiatives that have worked towards inclusion and empowerment. The methodology includes a comprehensive literature review, analysis of national education data, and qualitative interviews with educators and students across diverse backgrounds. Findings reveal persistent gender stereotypes in textbooks and pedagogy, lack of female role models, and infrastructural gaps in rural and underprivileged schools. The paper proposes actionable strategies such as inclusive curriculum development, teacher training, community engagement, and scholarship programs. Furthermore, it advocates for a collaborative framework involving educators, policymakers, industry leaders, and civil society to create a more inclusive STEM ecosystem. By breaking down these barriers, the potential of diverse talents can be harnessed to drive national development and social equity. This paper seeks to contribute to ongoing dialogues and policy formulations aimed at transforming the educational landscape to ensure STEM education truly becomes a vehicle for inclusive growth.

1. INTRODUCTION

STEM education is often hailed as a cornerstone of modern progress, with increasing emphasis on preparing students for a rapidly evolving global economy. Despite its significance, deep-rooted gender and social disparities continue to hinder equal access to STEM opportunities. This paper investigates the origins, manifestations, and solutions to these barriers, particularly within the Indian context. It emphasizes the role of inclusive education in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially those related to gender equality and quality education.

The historical exclusion of women and marginalized groups from scientific discourse has led to a narrow vision of innovation that overlooks diverse perspectives. This underrepresentation translates into limited participation, unequal job opportunities, and slower socio-economic development. Addressing this inequity requires systemic reform in educational policies, pedagogy, curriculum, and societal attitudes.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Extensive research highlights persistent gender gaps in STEM participation globally. Studies point to cultural biases, limited access to resources, and a dearth of female mentors as major impediments. UNESCO reports indicate that only 30% of researchers worldwide are women, and the numbers are even lower in countries like India.

In India, systemic issues such as patriarchal norms, poverty, and regional inequalities exacerbate these challenges. Girls in rural areas often face societal expectations to prioritize domestic responsibilities over education. Additionally, curriculum content often reinforces gender roles and lacks representation of women scientists and innovators.

Government initiatives like Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan, and the National Education Policy 2020 have addressed some gaps. Yet, implementation inconsistencies and lack of awareness limit their reach. Community-based programs and NGOs have shown promise in supplementing formal efforts but require greater integration into national frameworks.

3. METHODOLOGY

This research employs a mixed-methods approach, integrating quantitative analysis of education data with qualitative interviews. Data was sourced from national surveys such as UDISE+, ASER reports, and government portals including MHRD and NITI Aayog databases.

Qualitative data was gathered through semi-structured interviews with 30 stakeholders including students, teachers, administrators, and parents from rural and urban schools in Maharashtra. Interviews were conducted to

understand lived experiences, perceptions of STEM, and challenges faced. Analysis was performed using thematic coding to identify recurring patterns and insights.

Ethical considerations such as informed consent and anonymity were maintained throughout the data collection process. The diversity in participants' backgrounds enabled a comprehensive understanding of regional and social disparities in STEM access.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Gender Stereotypes

Gender norms begin shaping perceptions at an early age. Textbooks often portray men as scientists and engineers, while women are shown in caregiving roles. Teachers unconsciously reinforce these biases through examples and classroom dynamics. This discourages girls from aspiring to STEM careers.

4.2 Infrastructure and Access

Many schools in rural areas lack science labs, computers, internet access, and adequately trained STEM teachers. Girls often face mobility issues, and lack of safe transport or sanitation facilities further discourages school attendance.

4.3 Economic and Social Constraints

Girls from low-income families are often forced to leave school early to support household income or marry young. Parents may prioritize boys' education over girls'. Social stigma against women working in male-dominated fields also deters participation.

4.4 Positive Models and Interventions

Mentoring programs like Vigyan Jyoti, STEM clubs, and initiatives by organizations like Pratham and Educate Girls have shown that targeted interventions can improve confidence and academic outcomes. Role models and female scientists visiting schools have a powerful influence on aspirations.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Curriculum Reform

Curricula should be reviewed to eliminate gender bias and include stories of diverse role models in STEM. Interactive and inquiry-based learning can enhance interest in science.

5.2 Teacher Training

Regular workshops should train teachers to recognize and counteract bias. Female teachers in science should be recruited and empowered as role models.

5.3 Infrastructure Investment

The government must prioritize funding for science labs, computer access, and digital learning in rural schools. Sanitation and safety infrastructure should be improved to encourage regular attendance, especially among girls.

5.4 Financial Support

Scholarships, stipends, and conditional cash transfers can incentivize families to support girls' education. Programs should also support higher education and career transition stages.

5.5 Community Engagement

Awareness campaigns and parent-teacher collaboration are essential. Successful alumni can engage with their communities to challenge stereotypes and encourage participation.

5.6 Policy Integration

Education, gender equality, and digital literacy policies should be harmonized. Monitoring mechanisms and outcome-based evaluations must ensure accountability and impact.

6. CONCLUSION

Breaking gender and social barriers in STEM education is not merely a matter of policy, but of societal transformation. The challenges identified—ranging from curriculum bias to infrastructural deficits—require multi-layered solutions that involve government, communities, and individuals alike.

Empowering girls and marginalized communities through equitable STEM education is essential to building a sustainable and inclusive future. This paper calls for urgent, integrated, and collaborative efforts to dismantle barriers and democratize access to science and technology. The inclusion of diverse perspectives will enrich STEM fields, spur innovation, and contribute to a just society.

REFERENCES

1. UNESCO Institute for Statistics. (2023). Women in Science.
2. ASER Centre. (2022). Annual Status of Education Report.
3. Ministry of Education, Government of India. (2021). UDISE+ Database.
4. National Education Policy 2020.
5. Pratham Education Foundation. (2022). Impact Reports.
6. NITI Aayog. (2021). School Education Quality Index.
7. Educate Girls. (2023). Annual Impact Report.
8. Sharma, R. (2020). Gender and Education in India. Sage Publications.
9. Kabeer, N. (2005). Gender equality and women's empowerment. *Gender & Development*, 13(1).
10. Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme Guidelines. Ministry of Women and Child Development.

A ROLE OF COMMERCE EDUCATION IN RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND CHALLENGES IN ACCESS

Dr. Tejasweeta S. Mundhe

Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, K.V. N. Naik Arts and Commerce College, Tal. - Dindori, Dist. - Nashik, Maharashtra.

ABSTRACT

Access to commerce education in rural India remains a significant challenge, despite the increasing demand for skilled professionals in business, finance, and trade. This paper explores the multifaceted barriers that hinder equitable access to commerce education in rural regions, including infrastructural deficits, socio-economic disparities, limited digital connectivity, and a lack of qualified educators. Through a combination of field surveys, policy analysis, and secondary data review, the study examines how these factors intersect to create systemic exclusion for rural students. It also highlights the role of government initiatives, non-governmental interventions, and digital education platforms in bridging the rural-urban educational divide. The findings suggest that a more inclusive approach integrating local language instruction, community engagement, and context-specific curriculum can enhance access and outcomes in commerce education for rural youth. The paper concludes with policy recommendations aimed at creating a more equitable and sustainable educational ecosystem in rural India.

Key Words: *Commerce Education, Rural Areas, Government Initiatives, Economic Development*

INTRODUCTION

Commerce education serves as a cornerstone of economic development by fostering skills in business, finance, entrepreneurship, and trade. However, in rural areas of India, access to this critical educational stream is often obstructed by a range of structural and systemic barriers. As India strives to become a \$5 trillion economy, inclusive and widespread access to commerce education will be essential to ensure participation from all segments of the population. Rural economic development has long been a cornerstone of national progress, especially in countries where a significant portion of the population resides in rural areas. One of the most critical yet often underutilized tools for stimulating economic growth in these regions is commerce education. Commerce education, which encompasses the study of trade, economics, business, finance, and entrepreneurship, equips individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary to actively participate in and contribute to economic activities.

This research paper explores the pivotal role that commerce education can play in empowering rural populations, fostering entrepreneurship, enhancing financial literacy, and promoting sustainable development. It also sheds light on the various challenges that hinder the effective implementation and impact of commerce education in rural settings, including infrastructural limitations, lack of awareness, outdated curriculum, and insufficient policy support.

By investigating the link between commerce education and rural economic upliftment, this study aims to highlight both the potential and the practical obstacles in leveraging education as a catalyst for inclusive growth. Through this examination, the paper seeks to provide actionable insights and recommendations for policymakers, educators, and development practitioners.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

The issue of equitable access to education in rural India has been widely studied, particularly with a focus on primary and secondary education. However, literature on commerce education specifically remains limited. Singh and Sharma (2019) emphasize that commerce education is often urban-centric, with rural students facing barriers due to inadequate institutional support. According to the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER, 2020), access to subject-specific teachers and resources is markedly lower in rural regions compared to urban counterparts. Das (2018) points out that digital initiatives such as e-learning platforms have potential but require infrastructural readiness and digital literacy, which are often lacking in rural areas.

Kumar and Bansal (2021) highlight socio-cultural constraints, noting that traditional perceptions about commerce being less "prestigious" than science or engineering contribute to lower enrolment in rural areas. Moreover, policy analyses by the Ministry of Education (2020) indicate that although the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 envisions inclusive education, implementation challenges persist at the grassroots level. Research by the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER, 2022) also

underlines that vocational and commerce education could bridge employment gaps, but only with targeted interventions and investments.

This review reveals a clear gap in the literature concerning actionable frameworks for improving commerce education access in rural areas. There is a need for studies that integrate educational policy analysis with ground-level challenges and propose sustainable, scalable models tailored to the rural Indian context.

2. CHALLENGES TO ACCESS IN RURAL AREAS

2.1 Infrastructural Deficiencies Many rural schools lack the necessary infrastructure to offer commerce education, including well-equipped classrooms, libraries, and internet connectivity. Often, commerce subjects are unavailable at the higher secondary level in rural government schools.

2.2 Shortage of Qualified Teachers There is a severe shortage of trained commerce educators in rural areas. Teachers often lack specialization in subjects such as accounting, business studies, and economics, resulting in subpar instruction.

2.3 Socio-Economic Barriers Poverty, gender biases, and caste-based discrimination continue to restrict educational opportunities for many students in rural areas. Families often prioritize immediate income generation over continued education, particularly for girls.

2.4 Digital Divide With a shift toward digital learning, rural students face additional challenges due to poor internet access, lack of devices, and unfamiliarity with digital tools.

3. CURRENT INTERVENTIONS AND POLICY FRAMEWORKS

3.1 Government Initiatives Programs such as Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA), Digital India, and the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 aim to address educational inequities. NEP 2020 advocates for equitable and inclusive education, yet specific strategies for rural commerce education remain underdeveloped.

3.2 NGO and Private Sector Roles Non-governmental organizations and private educational initiatives are attempting to fill the gap through scholarships, mobile education units, and e-learning platforms. However, these efforts are often fragmented and lack scale.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EQUITABLE ACCESS

4.1 Infrastructure Development Invest in building and upgrading educational infrastructure in rural areas with a focus on commerce streams. This includes digital infrastructure and commerce-specific laboratories and libraries.

4.2 Teacher Training and Incentives Provide specialized training and incentives for commerce educators willing to work in rural regions. Encourage partnerships with higher education institutions to offer remote mentoring and support.

4.3 Community Engagement and Awareness Engage local communities to raise awareness about the value of commerce education. Encourage local businesses to collaborate with schools for practical exposure and internships.

4.4 Technology Integration Promote the use of low-cost digital tools and offline e-learning solutions to mitigate the digital divide. Ensure content is available in local languages to enhance comprehension.

5. CONCLUSION

Achieving equitable access to commerce education in rural India requires a multi-stakeholder approach and long-term commitment. By addressing infrastructural gaps, improving teacher quality, integrating technology, and fostering community involvement, it is possible to build an inclusive educational ecosystem that empowers rural youth to participate fully in the modern economy.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1. Research Design

This study adopts a **mixed-methods approach**, combining both quantitative and qualitative research methods to gain a comprehensive understanding of the role and challenges of commerce education in rural economic development. The design includes **descriptive** and **exploratory** components to assess current conditions, perceptions, and outcomes.

2. Objectives of the Study

- To analyze the impact of commerce education on economic activities in rural areas.
- To examine the accessibility and quality of commerce education in rural institutions.
- To identify the major challenges faced by students and educators in rural commerce education.
- To propose actionable strategies for enhancing the role of commerce education in rural economic development.

3. Hypotheses:

- **H1:** Commerce education significantly contributes to the economic empowerment of rural populations.
- **H2:** Lack of infrastructure and resources is a major barrier to the effectiveness of commerce education in rural areas.

4. Sampling Design

- **Population:** Students, educators, and small business owners in rural regions.
- **Sampling Method:** Stratified random sampling to ensure representation across various districts and educational institutions.
- **Sample Size:** 150 respondents, including:
 - 100 students from rural colleges
 - 30 teachers/educators
 - 20 rural entrepreneurs or commerce graduates

5. Data Collection Methods

- **Primary Data:**
 - **Surveys/Questionnaires:** Structured questionnaires (Google Form) for students and local businesspersons.
 - **Interviews:** Semi-structured interviews with teachers and education administrators.
 - **Focus Groups:** Group discussions with students to gather insights into learning experiences.
- **Secondary Data:**
 - Government reports and statistics
 - Academic journals, case studies, and previous research papers
 - Reports from educational boards and rural development agencies

6. TOOLS FOR DATA ANALYSIS

- **Quantitative Data:** Statistical analysis done by using SPSS and Excel to calculate frequency distributions, means, correlations, and regression where appropriate.
- **Qualitative Data:** Thematic analysis done for interviews and focus groups data to identify patterns, narratives, and key themes.

7. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Informed consent from all participants.
- Anonymity and confidentiality of responses.
- Voluntary participation with the right to withdraw at any time.

8. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- Limited geographical coverage may affect generalizability.
- Possible bias in self-reported data.
- Access to respondents in remote areas might be restricted.

HYPOTHESIS TESTING RESULTS

To examine the relationship between commerce education and rural economic development, as well as the infrastructural challenges associated with it, two hypotheses were formulated and tested using data collected from primary sources.

HYPOTHESIS 1

H₀: Commerce education does not significantly contribute to the economic empowerment of rural populations.

H₁: Commerce education significantly contributes to the economic empowerment of rural populations.

Based on the student survey, 65% of the respondents acknowledged an awareness of the link between commerce education and rural development. A one-sample proportion z-test was conducted with the null hypothesis assuming a 50% awareness rate as the threshold for statistical insignificance.

The calculated z-value was **3.0**, corresponding to a **p-value of approximately 0.0013**. Since the p-value is less than the standard significance level of 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected. This indicates that the observed proportion of awareness is statistically significant.

Conclusion: There is sufficient evidence to support the claim that commerce education plays a significant role in empowering rural populations economically.

HYPOTHESIS 2

H₀: Lack of infrastructure and resources is not a major barrier to the effectiveness of commerce education in rural areas.

H₁: Lack of infrastructure and resources is a major barrier to the effectiveness of commerce education in rural areas.

Survey data revealed that 62% of rural commerce students reported inadequate access to digital learning tools. A one-sample proportion z-test was conducted under the assumption that 50% reflects the threshold beyond which lack of access becomes a statistically significant issue.

The calculated z-value was **2.4**, with a **p-value of approximately 0.0082**. Since this value is below the 0.05 significance level, the null hypothesis was rejected.

CONCLUSION

The findings provide statistically significant evidence that lack of infrastructure and digital access constitutes a major challenge to the effectiveness of commerce education in rural areas.

These hypothesis tests lend empirical support to the broader argument that while commerce education has the potential to drive rural development, structural limitations particularly inadequate infrastructure and resources must be addressed to unlock its full impact.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the key findings derived from the primary data collected through surveys, interviews, and focus groups conducted among commerce students, educators, and rural entrepreneurs. The findings are discussed considering the hypotheses and research objectives to provide a critical understanding of the role and challenges of commerce education in rural economic development.

1. Awareness and Impact of Commerce Education

The survey revealed that **65% of students** were aware of how commerce education can contribute to rural business opportunities. This indicates a relatively high level of awareness, suggesting that commerce education is perceived as relevant to rural livelihoods. A one-sample proportion test confirmed this observation, with a **z-value of 3.0** and a **p-value of 0.0013**, which is statistically significant at the 5% level.

Discussion:

This result supports the hypothesis that commerce education significantly contributes to economic empowerment in rural areas. Awareness among students about entrepreneurship and financial management is a promising sign. However, this awareness must be supplemented with skills and opportunities to translate knowledge into practice.

2. Practical Skill Development

Only **48% of students** felt they were receiving adequate practical training in their commerce education. Focus group discussions highlighted a strong desire among students for more hands-on exposure, such as workshops, internships, and interaction with local businesses.

Discussion:

This gap between theoretical learning and practical application remains a key challenge. The absence of experiential learning limits students' ability to apply their knowledge in real-world rural economic settings. This calls for curriculum reforms and stronger academia-industry linkages, especially with local enterprises and cooperatives.

3. Digital Access and Infrastructure

A significant **62% of students** reported limited or no access to digital learning tools like computers or internet connectivity. This lack of infrastructure was also highlighted by educators, with **75% agreeing** that they lack proper training and tools to teach effectively.

A one-sample proportion test for digital access yielded a **z-value of 2.4** with a **p-value of 0.0082**, confirming the hypothesis that infrastructure limitations are a significant challenge.

Discussion:

Digital infrastructure is a critical enabler of modern commerce education. The lack of access not only affects the quality of education but also perpetuates the rural-urban divide. Government and institutional support are crucial to bridge this gap by providing digital labs, online resources, and teacher training.

4. Career Aspirations and Local Entrepreneurship

Among the surveyed students, **35% aspired to start their own business**, while **45% preferred government jobs**. Entrepreneur interviews further revealed that while a commerce background was helpful in running rural enterprises, many entrepreneurs felt unprepared due to the absence of practical business training in their education.

Discussion:

The entrepreneurial inclination among students is encouraging, but the ecosystem needs to be more supportive. There is a clear need for entrepreneurship development programs, mentorship, and funding access for aspiring rural business owners.

5. Educator Insights

Educators overwhelmingly reported dissatisfaction with the current curriculum, with **70% believing it is outdated** and **80% suggesting stronger ties with local businesses** are necessary. These insights confirm systemic issues that hinder the full potential of commerce education in rural areas.

Discussion:

Educators' perspectives validate the need for policy-level intervention in curriculum design and educational planning. Emphasizing context-specific education that addresses rural economic realities is essential.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Area	Finding	Implication
Awareness	65% student awareness	Positive perception of commerce's role
Practical Training	48% satisfaction	Gap in skills; need for experiential learning
Digital Access	62% lack access	Infrastructure barrier
Career Goals	35% want to start businesses	High potential for rural entrepreneurship
Educator Feedback	70–80% critical of curriculum and links	Systemic reform needed

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and discussions, several actionable recommendations are proposed to strengthen the impact of commerce education in rural economic development:

1. Curriculum Reform

- Update the commerce curriculum to include rural-relevant content such as local business models, Agri-entrepreneurship, and cooperative management.
- Integrate practical components such as internships, case studies, and community-based projects into coursework.

2. Strengthening Infrastructure

- Government and institutional support should prioritize investments in digital infrastructure, including the provision of computer labs, internet connectivity, and online learning platforms.
- Partner with NGOs and corporate CSR initiatives to bridge the resource gap in rural colleges.

3. Teacher Training and Development

- Regular professional development programs should be conducted for rural commerce educators, focusing on new teaching methodologies, digital tools, and entrepreneurship training.
- Encourage teacher exchange programs between urban and rural institutions to foster knowledge sharing.

4. Entrepreneurship and Skill Development

- Establish rural entrepreneurship development cells in colleges to mentor and guide students interested in starting businesses.
- Introduce short-term certification courses in financial literacy, e-commerce, and business management tailored for rural settings.

5. Industry and Community Linkages

- Foster partnerships between educational institutions and local businesses, cooperatives, and microfinance agencies to offer real-world learning opportunities.
- Create platforms where students can engage in live projects or consulting for local enterprises.

6. Policy and Governance

- Educational policies at the state and national level should include specific measures aimed at enhancing rural commerce education.
- Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms should be implemented to track the effectiveness of educational reforms in rural areas.

CONCLUSION

Commerce education holds significant potential to drive rural economic development by empowering students with the knowledge and skills necessary for entrepreneurship, financial management, and participation in the formal economy. The findings of this research affirm that while most rural students recognize the value of commerce education, systemic challenges—particularly related to infrastructure, curriculum relevance, and practical training—limit its effectiveness.

The hypothesis testing confirmed that commerce education has a statistically significant impact on economic empowerment, and that lack of infrastructure remains a major barrier. Students aspire to contribute to their local economies, but they require a supportive ecosystem comprising modernized education, digital tools, trained educators, and institutional backing.

To realize the transformative power of commerce education in rural regions, a multi-stakeholder approach involving government, academia, industry, and community leaders is essential. With targeted reforms and strategic investment, commerce education can evolve into a powerful instrument for inclusive and sustainable rural development.

REFERENCES

- Aggarwal, J. C. (2019). *Development and Planning of Modern Education*. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House.
- Government of India. (2020). *National Education Policy 2020*. Ministry of Education. Retrieved from <https://www.education.gov.in>
- Kumar, A., & Sharma, M. (2021). Impact of commerce education on entrepreneurship development among rural youth in India. *Journal of Rural and Community Development*, 16(1), 45–59.
- Mishra, P. (2020). Digital divide in rural education: Challenges and opportunities. *Indian Journal of Educational Technology*, 12(2), 31–39.

National Sample Survey Office (NSSO). (2022). *Annual Report on Education and Employment in Rural India*. Government of India.

Rao, V. K. R. V. (2022). *Education and Rural Development in India*. New Delhi: Sage Publications.

Singh, R., & Pandey, S. (2023). Bridging skill gaps in rural commerce education: A policy perspective. *Indian Journal of Educational Research and Innovation*, 11(3), 25–40.

World Bank. (2021). *The role of education in promoting inclusive growth*. Retrieved from <https://www.worldbank.org>

Yadav, A., & Patel, N. (2022). Commerce education and its role in rural development: An empirical analysis. *International Journal of Management and Social Sciences*, 10(4), 12–27.

DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN INDIA: PRE AND POST CONSTITUTIONAL PERSPECTIVE

¹Ajinkya Waghmare & ²Pooja Deo¹Assistant Professor, Des' Shri. Navalmal Firodia Law College, Pune²Des' Shri. Navalmal Firodia Law College, Pune**INTRODUCTION**

India's educational history reflects the nation's broader social and cultural evolution, transitioning from ancient spiritual foundations to modern democratic frameworks. This educational timeline can be examined through two key periods: before and after the establishment of the Indian Constitution in 1950.¹

Pre-constitutional education in India was deeply intertwined with cultural and religious practices. Ancient India featured the Gurukula system, where students resided with their teachers and received comprehensive education beyond academics to include ethical and spiritual development. Renowned learning centers like Nalanda, Takshashila, and Vikramashila drew scholars internationally, though access remained restricted by caste and gender barriers.

The medieval era changed Islamic governance under the Delhi Sultanate and the Mughal Empire. Maktabas and madrasas emerged as educational institutions introducing Islamic scholarly traditions, with Persian becoming the predominant language of learning and governance. While education expanded somewhat beyond traditional Brahminical circles, it remained primarily accessible to elites, though it still contributed significantly to India's intellectual heritage.

British colonization fundamentally altered Indian education. Initial British support for traditional learning systems gave way to anglicized education policies, notably through Lord Macaulay's Minute on Education (1835) and Wood's Despatch (1854). These established frameworks designed to create English-educated Indians serving colonial interests, simultaneously introducing Western knowledge while undermining indigenous educational systems.

The post-Constitution period initiated transformative educational development in independent India. The Constitution established education as essential for nation-building, creating frameworks promoting universal access. The 1986 National Policy on Education prioritized inclusivity, gender equality, and curriculum modernization. Recent initiatives, including Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, the Right to Education Act, and the National Education Policy 2020, have advanced efforts toward creating an inclusive, comprehensive, and forward-looking educational system.

PRE-CONSTITUTION PERIOD (BEFORE 1950)**1. Ancient Period**

The educational framework of ancient India was firmly grounded in cultural, philosophical, and spiritual foundations. Developing across many centuries, this system stood in marked contrast to contemporary educational approaches. Rather than prioritizing knowledge acquisition alone, it emphasized comprehensive individual growth, encompassing intellectual capacity, moral character, and spiritual awareness. The **Gurukula system** represented a foundational structure of this educational tradition, standing as one of history's earliest systematic learning methodologies.

THE GURUKULA SYSTEM

In Gurukulas, education took a residential approach where *shishyas* (students) dwelled with their *guru* (teacher) within ashrams or woodland retreats. Teachers transmitted knowledge through verbal instruction, typically using metrical compositions and sacred verses which learners committed to memory and contemplated. This educational methodology provided individualized learning experiences where the student-teacher bond was revered as hallowed. Educational pursuits weren't constrained by temporal limitations but persisted until the teacher determined the pupil had achieved sufficient mastery.²

¹ Purohit, P., 'The history and evolution of the Indian Education System'. <[http://www.crnaidu.in/u/white_paper/The History and Evolution Of The Indian Education System.pdf](http://www.crnaidu.in/u/white_paper/The_History_and_Evolution_Of_The_Indian_Education_System.pdf)>

²Mr.N. Rajguru , 'The gurukul system: Ancient pedagogical practices and Their Role in shaping Indian Knowledge Traditions', <<https://www.ijfmr.com/papers/2024/6/32743.pdf>>

The educational curriculum encompassed numerous disciplines: from studying sacred texts including Vedas and Upanishadic literature to acquiring skills in mathematical calculation, celestial observation, traditional healing practices (Ayurveda), linguistic analysis (Vyakarana), reasoning methodologies (Nyaya), metaphysical inquiry (Darshana), combat techniques, and archery. This comprehensive approach aimed to foster intellectual discernment, self-regulation, and ethical guidance. Nevertheless, educational opportunity remained primarily available to males from privileged castes—predominantly Brahmins and Kshatriyas, with limited access for Vaishyas—while systematically excluding women and lower-caste individuals from structured learning opportunities during this historical period.

CENTERS OF LEARNING

Beyond the Gurukula framework, ancient India established expansive, formalized advanced education institutions, including Nalanda, Takshashila, and Vikramashila. These learning centers drew academic participants from throughout Asia and beyond, with visitors from regions including China, Tibet, Korea, and various Southeast Asian territories. Established around the 5th century CE, Nalanda University achieved particular distinction, accommodating numerous scholars and pupils while maintaining an extensive repository of scholarly documents. Takshashila, recognized among history's earliest university establishments (operating from approximately the 6th century BCE), provided comprehensive instruction across disciplines including governance theory, military strategy, economic principles, and medical practices. Founded during the 8th century CE, Vikramashila developed into a significant center for Buddhist scholarly pursuits, particularly concentrating on Vajrayana doctrinal studies.

RELIGIOUS AND PHILOSOPHICAL INFLUENCE

Religious frameworks fundamentally shaped educational practices of this era. Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain traditions substantially determined curricular content and instructional approaches. Buddhist monasteries (viharas) functioned simultaneously as religious and educational establishments. The philosophical teachings within Buddhist and Jain traditions highlighted logical analysis, ethical principles, and metaphysical inquiry, thereby contributing to the broader intellectual landscape of India.

The educational philosophy of ancient India prioritized character development, self-discipline, and dedication to truth (satya) as primary objectives. Though restricted in its demographic reach, this educational system generated an enduring scholarly tradition that profoundly affected the development of Indian civilization while extending its influence throughout numerous regions of the ancient world.¹

2. Medieval Period (1206–1707)

Islamic governance during India's medieval era, particularly under the Delhi Sultanate and Mughal Empire, transformed educational structures through the introduction of maktabas and madrasas. These institutions represented formalized learning environments grounded in Islamic scholarly traditions, providing both religious instruction and secular knowledge.

Maktabas functioned as primary educational facilities, typically connected to mosques, where children received foundational training in literacy and religious education, with particular emphasis on Quranic studies. Madrasas operated as advanced learning centers, typically supported through state patronage or wealthy benefactors, and established predominantly in urban and administrative hubs.

Madrasa education encompassed diverse subjects reflecting Islamic intellectual heritage. Beyond religious disciplines including theology (Ilm al-Kalam), jurisprudence (Sharia), and prophetic traditions (Hadith), students studied Persian, Arabic, mathematical principles, astronomical concepts, medical practices, philosophical inquiry, and logical reasoning (Mantiq). Under Mughal administration, Persian achieved prominence as the scholarly and governmental language, becoming an essential educational component.

While Islamic educational institutions expanded learning opportunities beyond traditional Brahminical structures, participation remained largely restricted to privileged groups. The primary beneficiaries included upper-class Muslims and select Hindus, particularly those in administrative positions or with ruling-class connections. Despite these accessibility constraints, the Islamic educational framework substantially enriched medieval India's intellectual landscape, establishing scholarly centers and promoting academic development across numerous disciplines.

¹ IJCRT, <<https://ijcrt.org/papers/IJCRT2202520.pdf>>

3. Colonial Period (1757–1947)

The British colonial era (1757-1947) fundamentally altered India's educational landscape, shifting it from traditional systems toward Western models to serve imperial objectives. British authorities implemented policies designed to create English-educated Indians who could facilitate colonial administration.

EARLY COLONIAL EFFORTS AND ORIENTALISM

At the beginning of British colonial authority, indigenous knowledge systems in India garnered some appreciation. Warren Hastings, who served as the first Governor-General, championed oriental scholarship with the pragmatic view that understanding Indian legal traditions and cultural practices would enhance administrative efficiency. This period saw the establishment of scholarly institutions dedicated to traditional learning, notably the Calcutta Madrasah (1781) for Islamic education and the Sanskrit College in Varanasi (1791), both created to advance study in classical languages and India's traditional intellectual heritage.

THE SHIFT TO WESTERN EDUCATION

This educational philosophy underwent a significant transformation with the introduction of Lord Macaulay's Education Minute in 1835, representing a critical shift in India's educational trajectory. Macaulay notoriously devalued traditional Indian scholarship, considering it subordinates to Western learning, while advocating for English-based education. His vision aimed to develop a segment of society that retained Indian physical characteristics but embraced British intellectual and cultural values, famously describing them as having "Indian blood and color" but English intellectual and moral sensibilities. This policy change led to English superseding traditional languages such as Persian and Sanskrit as the instructional medium across numerous educational institutions, while Western academic disciplines including science, literature, and philosophical studies, increasingly shaped the educational framework.

WOOD'S DESPATCH (1854)

Wood's Despatch of 1854 constituted a significant milestone in British educational policy for India, frequently referred to as Indian education's "Magna Carta." This document presented an extensive strategy for educational expansion throughout the subcontinent. Key recommendations included creating universities in principle urban centers such as Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras; establishing a hierarchical educational framework encompassing primary, secondary, and tertiary levels; and emphasizing pedagogical training, education for women, and non-religious instruction. Despite representing an advancement in educational policy direction, the practical application of these recommendations proved restricted, primarily benefiting urban populations while leaving rural areas largely underserved.

COMMISSIONS AND REFORMS

Throughout the final decades of the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth century, numerous educational evaluation committees were established to assess and enhance educational practices. The 1882 Hunter Commission concentrated particularly on elementary education, promoting practical skills development and vocational instruction while prioritizing mass education over elite-focused approaches. Subsequent committees expanded upon these educational principles; nevertheless, providing broad educational access across Indian society continued to present substantial difficulties.

EDUCATION AS A TOOL OF CONTROL

During the entirety of British colonial rule, educational systems functioned as deliberate instruments advancing imperial administrative objectives. The British cultivated a limited cadre of English-proficient, loyal Indian intellectuals who effectively operated within the colonial governmental structure. Nevertheless, educational opportunities remained primarily concentrated among privileged social groups in urban centers, with minimal accessibility for rural populations, economically disadvantaged communities, and other marginalized social segments.

POST-CONSTITUTION PERIOD (AFTER 1950)

1. Constitutional Provisions

The Constitution of India addresses education through several significant provisions. Initially, Directive Principal Article 45 established the goal of providing compulsory education without cost for children under 14 within a decade of constitutional implementation. While representing important policy direction, this directive lacked legal enforceability.

Legal foundation for educational rights came through the 86th Constitutional Amendment (2002), which established Article 21A, elevating education to a Fundamental Right for children aged 6-14. This transformation

required the state to guarantee free, mandatory education within this age range, acknowledging education's critical role in personal and national development.

Additionally, Article 30 protects minority educational autonomy, guaranteeing religious and linguistic minorities the right to create and manage their educational institutions. This provision helps maintain cultural diversity within India's educational system.

Collectively, these constitutional elements demonstrate India's dedication to educational equity, balancing universal accessibility goals with legally binding requirements and minority rights protection within its democratic structure.¹

2. Major Developments

NATIONAL POLICY ON EDUCATION (1986)²

India's educational landscape underwent substantial transformation with the introduction of the National Policy on Education (NPE) in 1986. This pivotal policy emerged during a period when India had achieved some educational expansion post-independence but confronted ongoing challenges, including widespread illiteracy, gender inequality, deficient infrastructure, and outdated educational content. The NPE established comprehensive educational reform with its central objectives focusing on enhancing accessibility, promoting equality, and improving educational quality nationwide, viewing education as a fundamental catalyst for national development and social transformation.

The policy placed significant emphasis on female education, recognizing women's learning as essential for family and community advancement, and created specialized initiatives to reduce educational gender disparities. Similarly, it specifically addressed educational requirements for disadvantaged populations, including Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and minority communities through targeted programs and affirmative measures designed to promote inclusive development. Adult literacy received considerable attention through the National Literacy Mission, which sought to develop practical literacy skills, particularly among rural women, to enhance their socioeconomic empowerment.

To increase educational relevance, the NPE advocated curriculum modernization and vocational integration, incorporating employment-oriented instruction at secondary levels to prepare students for both workforce participation and academic advancement. Scientific and technological education gained prominence as essential components for national progress, including the gradual introduction of computer education. The policy formalized the 10+2+3 educational structure (originally proposed by the Kothari Commission) to standardize educational progression across states and facilitate smoother transitions between educational levels. Teacher development received particular attention, with recommendations for enhancing teacher training institutions to prepare educators for evolving societal demands.

Early childhood care and education were identified as crucial for cognitive and emotional development, with proposals to integrate these programs into the broader educational framework, particularly in underserved communities. The 1992 modification to the NPE reflected changing socioeconomic conditions, introducing greater administrative decentralization by empowering local authorities with increased educational autonomy, while also incorporating privatization elements to expand educational capacity and potentially enhance quality through market competition.

India's educational system has undergone a significant transformation in the 21st century, driven by major reforms focused on enhancing access, quality, and equity. Noteworthy among these initiatives are the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), the Right to Education (RTE) Act, and the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. These efforts highlight the government's dedication to creating an inclusive education system that meets the evolving demands of both society and the global economy.

¹ The Constitution (Eighty-Sixth amendment) act, 2002 | National Portal of India.

<<https://www.india.gov.in/my-government/constitution-india/amendments/constitution-india-eighty-sixth-amendment-act-2002>>

² Ministry of Education | Government of India, Ministry of Education,

<<https://www.education.gov.in/>>

SARVA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN (SSA) – 2001

Initiated in 2001, the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), or Education for All Movement, marked a significant stride toward achieving universal elementary education in India. Its primary goal was to ensure free and compulsory education for children between the ages of 6 and 14, in line with constitutional provisions. SSA focused on reducing disparities in education across social, regional, and gender lines by enhancing school infrastructure, increasing teacher recruitment, and encouraging active community participation. It also tackled challenges such as high dropout rates, low enrollment among disadvantaged groups, and gender inequality. By doing so, SSA laid the groundwork for broader access to elementary education.

RIGHT TO EDUCATION (RTE) ACT- 2009

The Right to Education (RTE) Act, passed in 2009, reinforced the objectives of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan by establishing education as a fundamental right under Article 21A of the Indian Constitution. It guaranteed free and compulsory education for all children between 6 and 14 years of age within their local vicinity. The Act laid down essential standards for schools, including infrastructure requirements, teacher-student ratios, and expected learning outcomes. A key feature of the RTE Act was its emphasis on creating a safe and inclusive learning environment by banning corporal punishment, mental harassment, and admission screening processes. Additionally, it mandated that private schools reserve 25% of their seats for students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, thereby fostering social inclusion and educational equity.

NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY (NEP) 2020¹

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, introduced after a gap of 34 years, represents a major transformation in India's educational framework. It advocates for a holistic, flexible, and multidisciplinary educational approach spanning from early childhood through higher education.

A key highlight of NEP 2020 is the overhaul of the traditional 10+2 structure, replacing it with a new 5+3+3+4 system designed to align with a child's cognitive development stages:

- **Foundational Stage (5 years):** Ages 3–8, covering pre-school and Grades 1–2
- **Preparatory Stage (3 years):** Ages 8–11, covering Grades 3–5
- **Middle Stage (3 years):** Ages 11–14, covering Grades 6–8
- **Secondary Stage (4 years):** Ages 14–18, covering Grades 9–12

This structure emphasizes strong foundational skills in literacy and numeracy during the early years and encourages instruction in the mother tongue or regional language up to Grade 5 to enhance comprehension and learning outcomes.

The policy also focuses on developing critical skills such as problem-solving, creativity, coding, and vocational education from a young age. It moves away from rote memorization, instead encouraging conceptual clarity and experiential learning. Additionally, NEP 2020 introduces reforms in student assessment by shifting toward continuous, holistic evaluation rather than relying solely on high-stakes board exams.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the 21st-century educational reforms, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, the Right to Education Act, and the National Education Policy 2020 collectively signify a major step toward reshaping India's education landscape. These initiatives are designed to promote equal access, inclusivity, enhanced quality, and to prepare students to thrive in a dynamic and evolving global environment.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Purohit, P., *The History and Evolution of the Indian Education System*, http://www.crnaidu.in/u/white_paper/The%20History%20and%20Evolution%20Of%20The%20Indian%20Education%20System.pdf
2. Mr. N. Rajguru, *The Gurukul System: Ancient Pedagogical Practices and Their Role in Shaping Indian Knowledge Traditions*, <https://www.ijfmr.com/papers/2024/6/32743.pdf>

¹ Ministry of Human Resource Development, 'National Education Policy 2020', https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English_0.pdf

-
3. *The Constitution (Eighty-Sixth Amendment) Act, 2002* | National Portal of India, <https://www.india.gov.in/my-government/constitution-india/amendments/constitution-india-eighty-sixth-amendment-act-2002>
 4. Ministry of Education, Government of India, *Ministry of Education*, <https://www.education.gov.in>
 5. Ministry of Human Resource Development, *National Education Policy 2020*, https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English_0.pdf
 6. IJCRT, *A Paper Published in International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts*, <https://ijcrt.org/papers/IJCRT2202520.pdf>

GENDER EQUALITY IN THE INDIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

¹Dr. Aishwarya Yadav and ²Pradnya Yadav^{1, 2}Assistant Professor, DES' Shri.Navalmal Firodia Law College, Pune**ABSTRACT**

The Research paper on gender equality in the Indian educational system is still fundamental yet changing, with both enduring obstacles and new opportunities. Equal access to opportunities for girls and women is nevertheless hindered by established cultural norms, economic inequalities, and infrastructure shortcomings, even in spite of constitutional provisions and legislative measures like the Right to Education Act and Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao schemes. Due to early marriages, safety concerns, and inadequate school facilities, gender discrepancies are particularly noticeable in rural regions. Furthermore, preconceptions are reinforced by gender bias in textbooks and educator attitudes, which has an impact on female students' academic performance and self-esteem.

Nonetheless, the environment is progressively changing. Innovative possibilities for inclusive education are being made possible by increased government funding, online learning environments, and community-based initiatives. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and other progressive policy frameworks puts a strong emphasis on equity and inclusion, encouraging gender-sensitive curricula and teacher capacity building. Girls' empowerment via education is also greatly aided by local initiatives and non-governmental organisations.

The paper focusses to highlight the main obstacles to gender equality in the elementary, secondary, and tertiary education systems in India. and to assess how well state and non-government initiatives to advance equal opportunity for women in education are working. Government papers, scholarly research, and publications from non-governmental organisations are reviewed, and secondary data analysis is carried out.

A broad approach is needed to achieve gender equality in school, including addressing societal norms, improving infrastructure, educating teachers, and making sure everyone is safe and accessible. The Indian educational system has the ability to become the foundation of gender equality and empowerment with continuous dedication and cooperative efforts.

INTRODUCTION

For India to advance socially and economically, gender equality in education is essential. Even while enrolment rates have significantly improved, gender inequalities still exist, especially in disadvantaged and rural areas. Girls' access to or continuation of their education is sometimes hindered by societal conventions, early marriages, and financial difficulties. Boys' education may be given priority in low-income families, while females are assigned to do household duties. High dropout rates among girls are also a result of poor infrastructure, such as the absence of separate restrooms. Girls' confidence and engagement are further hampered by gender bias in educational materials and classroom interactions.

However, because of targeted legislative initiatives and technology advancements, India has experienced significant development. Programs like the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, Beti Bachao, and Beti Padhao place a strong emphasis on teacher preparation, gender-sensitive curricula, and inclusive education. Girls in distant locations now have more access to education because to digital platforms and NGO-led projects. Perceptions among the public are also changing as a result of awareness initiatives that emphasise the long-term benefits of educating females.

A multidimensional strategy that tackles sociocultural barriers, enhances infrastructure, prepares educators, and strengthens involvement in the community must be implemented to achieve real gender equality. With continued dedication, India can build an education system that is more powerful and inclusive for everyone.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND PROGRESS OF GENDER EQUALITY IN THE INDIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

The development of gender equality in India's educational system is the result of a complex interaction between reformist groups, contemporary governmental measures, and historical traditions. In India's past, females received very little schooling beyond their upper-caste families and prayers. Because of patriarchal ideals, schools such as the gurukulas in the past mostly catered to boys, and girls' education was deemed unimportant.

The first girls' schools were established in the early 19th century as a result of the social reformers Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar's strong support for girls' education during the colonial era.¹

The Indian Constitution of 1950 established the foundations for gender equity by guaranteeing all people the right to equality and education upon independence. The Kothari Commission (1964–66) highlighted the need of educating girls for the advancement of the nation at large. Despite these initiatives, gender differences in school attendance and literacy persisted, particularly among marginalised and rural communities.

The late 20th century witnessed increasingly focused initiatives. With specific elements to boost female enrolment, the National Policy on Education (1986) and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (2001) signalled important changes towards universal primary education. Girls from underprivileged families were given access to residential education under the Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya program. The significance of equal access to education was formally reaffirmed in 2009 with the passage of the Right to Education Act. While the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 promotes inclusive curricula and gender-sensitive pedagogy, recent programs like Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao (2015) have linked education with social campaigns to address issues like sex-selective abortion and early marriage. The goal of these changes is to make educational environments safer and more encouraging for girls.

Access has also been improved by digital technology, especially in underprivileged communities. During the COVID-19 epidemic, mobile learning and online platforms were crucial, allowing many girls to finish their education. By dispelling myths, providing financial aid, and providing grassroots mentorship for girls, NGOs and community organisations play a vital role.

Even if obstacles like child marriage, poverty, and gender-based violence still exist, there has been a noticeable improvement. From 8.9% in 1951 to over 70% in 2021, female literacy has increased, and the gender gap in elementary and secondary school has significantly decreased.

India's growing dedication to gender equality in education—a crucial first step towards greater social and economic empowerment—is highlighted by this historical development.

DISPARITIES AND CHALLENGES

Despite progress, gender disparities continue to exist, particularly at the secondary and tertiary education levels, and among marginalized communities.

1. Regional Disparities:

States like Kerala and Himachal Pradesh report higher female literacy and school attendance, while states such as Bihar and Rajasthan lag behind due to socio-economic and cultural factors.²

2. Dropout Rates:

The dropout rate among girls, especially after puberty, is significantly high. According to the Ministry of Education (2022), around 17% of girls drop out at the secondary level, often due to early marriage, menstrual hygiene issues, or domestic responsibilities.³

3. Socio-Cultural Barriers:

Patriarchal norms and safety concerns often restrict girls' mobility and educational aspirations. Practices like child marriage and gender-based violence further exacerbate the issue.

4. Economic Constraints:

Financial limitations force families to prioritize sons' education, viewing it as a better return on investment. Girls are often seen as future homemakers, not requiring higher education.

5. Infrastructure and Facilities:

Many schools in rural India lack gender-sensitive infrastructure, such as separate toilets for girls, contributing to absenteeism and dropouts.

¹ Basu, A. (1974). *The Growth of Education and Political Development in India*. Oxford University Press.

² National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5), 2019-21.

³ Ministry of Education. (2022). "Education Statistics at a Glance."

GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

India has a robust policy and legal framework aimed at promoting gender equality in education and few of them are;

1. National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986:

A major step towards improving gender equality in Indian education was taken in 1986 with the National Policy on Education (NPE), which recognised the persistent disparities that girls and women face and called for the elimination of gender bias in order to empower women through education. The policy also recognised that education is a vital tool for uplifting women's status and emphasised the need for equal access to all levels of education. To close the gender gap, the policy called for the hiring of more female teachers, who could act as role models and foster an environment that is more welcoming to female students.

The NPE 1986 promoted the creation of textbooks that highlight the accomplishments of women and pushed for curricular changes to remove gender stereotypes. The 1992 Programme of Action, which included methods for increasing women's involvement in education, skill development, and vocational training, underlined the policy's commitment to gender equality. With the overall goal of empowering women as equal participants in national development, NPE 1986 established the groundwork for incorporating gender equality into the educational system.

2. Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009:

By establishing free and compulsory education as a basic right for all children aged 6 to 14, regardless of gender, the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009, significantly contributes to the advancement of gender equality in India. Eliminating barriers to education and guaranteeing girls' equal access to and completion of school is one of its main goals.

The Act forbids prejudice or exclusion based on gender and requires nondiscrimination in school admissions. Through initiatives like neighbourhood schools, free uniforms, textbooks, and midday meals, it places a strong emphasis on enrolling and retaining females, particularly those from underprivileged backgrounds. By lowering financial constraints, these incentives motivate families to send their girls to school.

Additionally, the RTE Act encourages the hiring of female teachers, creating a safer and more supportive learning environment for girls. By focusing on inclusive, child-friendly education, the Act significantly contributes to bridging the gender gap in schooling.

3. Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP):

The Government of India introduced the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) program in 2015 with the goal of addressing the falling Child Sex Ratio (CSR) and advancing girls' education and self-determination. "Save the daughter, Educate the daughter" is the phrase that best sums up the plan. It addresses pervasive gender prejudice and discrimination against girls, particularly with regard to uneven educational opportunities and female foeticide.

Through a tri-ministerial collaboration between the Ministries of Education, Health and Family Welfare, and Women and Child Development, BBBP functions. In order to alter cultural perceptions, the program emphasises raising awareness, strengthening the enforcement of laws prohibiting prenatal sex determination, and promoting community involvement.

In the education sector, BBBP supports initiatives that enhance enrolment and retention of girls in schools, ensure availability of girl-friendly infrastructure, and promote scholarships and skill development programs. It plays a vital role in promoting gender equality and empowering girls to achieve their full potential.

4. Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV):

By providing residential education to girls from underprivileged and marginalised areas, particularly those with low educational attainment, the Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) program, which was introduced in 2004, seeks to advance gender neutrality in education. It targets minority communities, females from homes below the poverty line, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes. KGBVs lower obstacles to girls' education, including as cost, safety, and distance, by providing free housing, education, and support services. By fostering a secure and welcoming learning environment, the program helps close the gender gap in literacy and promotes girls' equitable access to high-quality education.

ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Several NGOs and international organizations have been pivotal in supplementing government efforts. Organizations like Pratham, Educate Girls, and CARE India work on grassroots education initiatives,

community mobilization, and advocacy for girls' education. UNESCO and UNICEF collaborate with Indian authorities to provide technical and financial support for gender-focused education programs.

INNOVATIVE INTERVENTIONS AND BEST PRACTICES

1. **Digital Learning and EdTech:** During the COVID-19 pandemic, digital learning emerged as a vital alternative. However, the gender digital divide became apparent, with girls having less access to devices and the internet. Initiatives like the Diksha app and PM eVidya aim to bridge this gap.¹
2. **Menstrual Hygiene Management:** Programs focusing on awareness, access to sanitary products, and provision of sanitary facilities in schools help reduce dropouts.
3. **Community Mobilization:** Programs involving parents, village councils (Panchayats), and local leaders have successfully changed perceptions about girls' education.
4. **Gender-Sensitive Curriculum:** Integrating gender awareness into textbooks and pedagogy fosters more inclusive and equitable classroom environments.

CHALLENGES

1. Socio-cultural Barriers:

Traditional gender norms and patriarchal mindsets often prioritize boys' education over girls', particularly in rural and economically weaker sections². Early marriage, domestic responsibilities, and safety concerns prevent many girls from continuing their education beyond primary school.

2. Infrastructure and Accessibility:

Lack of girl-friendly infrastructure—such as separate toilets, safe transportation, and secure school environments—significantly affects girls' attendance and retention³. Many schools are also located far from home, making it unsafe or inconvenient for girls to travel.

3. Dropout Rates:

Girls, especially from Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and minority communities, face higher dropout rates due to poverty, domestic work, or early marriage⁴. These rates are higher at the secondary and higher secondary levels.

4. Teacher Bias and Curriculum Gaps:

Gender stereotypes are often reinforced by textbooks and teaching methods. Female students may receive less encouragement in subjects like science and mathematics⁵, and there is a shortage of female teachers in rural areas, which can discourage girls from attending school.

5. Policy Implementation Gaps:

While policies like the Right to Education (RTE) Act and schemes such as Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) and Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalyaya (KGBV) exist, their implementation is inconsistent. Lack of proper monitoring and accountability often leads to inefficiencies⁶.

OPPORTUNITIES

1. Government Initiatives:

Programs like Samagra Shiksha, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, and KGBV aim to create inclusive educational environments. These schemes focus on improving enrolment, retention, and learning outcomes for girls¹.

¹ NCERT. (2021). "Report on the Impact of Digital Learning During the Pandemic."

² UNICEF India, *Gender Equality in Education Report*, 2022.

³ Ministry of Education, Government of India – *UDISE+ 2021-22 Data*.

⁴ NCERT, *Textbook Analysis on Gender Bias*, 2019.

⁵ NCERT, *Textbook Analysis on Gender Bias*, 2019.

⁶ NITI Aayog, *Policy Implementation Review*, 2020.

2. Policy Support:

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emphasizes gender inclusion and proposes the establishment of Gender Inclusion Funds to provide resources for states to tackle gender-based disparities².

3. Digital Learning Platforms:

The rise of online and digital education offers opportunities for girls in remote areas to access quality education without travel constraints, provided digital infrastructure and literacy are addressed.

4. Community Engagement:

Increased awareness campaigns and community participation can shift social attitudes. Engaging parents and local leaders has proven effective in changing perceptions about girls' education³.

5. Role of NGOs and Civil Society:

Non-governmental organizations are playing a vital role in bridging educational gaps through grassroots programs, advocacy, and support for disadvantaged girls.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Enhance Infrastructure:** Ensure all schools have basic amenities, especially gender-segregated toilets, clean water, and safe transportation.
- 2. Promote Gender Sensitization:** Train teachers and administrators in gender sensitivity and inclusive practices.
- 3. Improve Access to Technology:** Distribute digital devices and ensure internet connectivity, particularly in rural and remote areas.
- 4. Strengthen Legal Frameworks:** Implement stricter laws against child marriage and gender-based violence, with better enforcement mechanisms.
- 5. Targeted Scholarships:** Offer financial incentives for girls, particularly from disadvantaged backgrounds, to pursue higher education.
- 6. Career Counselling and Mentorship:** Establish programs that guide girls in making informed career choices and accessing role models.

CONCLUSION

Achieving gender equality in the Indian education system is both a moral imperative and a developmental necessity. While commendable progress has been made, a substantial journey lies ahead. Addressing the multifaceted barriers to girls' education requires sustained political will, community engagement, and innovative approaches. By empowering girls through education, India not only fosters gender equity but also lays the foundation for a more just, inclusive, and prosperous society.

¹ Ministry of Education, *Samagra Shiksha Guidelines*.

² National Education Policy 2020, Government of India.

³ Pratham Education Foundation – *Annual Status of Education Report (ASER)*, 2022.

BARRIERS TO LEARNING: HOW GENDER AND URBAN POVERTY SHAPE EDUCATIONAL ACCESS

¹Arshiya Anush Shaikh and ²Arshiya Shaikh¹Abeda Inamdar Senior College, Pune²Asst. prof. Abeda Inamdar Senior College**ABSTRACT**

This paper emphasizes the need for a shift in our perception of marginalized populations. It is crucial that we move beyond focusing on minorities solely through the lens of their religious or caste identities. Instead, we should evaluate marginalization based on access to resources and opportunities. By viewing inclusion in terms of the resources available to these groups, we can better understand and address the true barriers they face, fostering a more equitable society. This paper explores the intersection of gender and urban poverty and its impact on the educational opportunities for girls in the slum areas of Pune, India. Despite global and national efforts to promote inclusive education, significant barriers persist for girls from economically disadvantaged urban communities. Using a sociological lens and the frameworks of Amartya Sen's Capability Approach and Intersectionality Theory, the study examines structural, and economic factors that shape educational access for these girls. Drawing data from secondary sources, policy reviews, and qualitative case studies, the paper highlights the complex realities faced by urban poor girls, including gender-based discrimination, unsafe environments, and economic pressures. The findings emphasize the need for more intersectional, community-based approaches to education that consider the lived experiences of urban poor girls and work towards creating an inclusive and socially just education system. This research aims to contribute to the ongoing discourse on education, gender, and social equity, particularly in the context of urban poverty.

INTRODUCTION

Education is universally recognized as a fundamental human right and a powerful tool for social mobility. However, access to quality education remains uneven, particularly for marginalized communities facing intersecting forms of social disadvantages. In urban areas, children from low-income backgrounds, especially girls, face multiple structural barriers that hinder their educational journey. These barriers are not merely logistical or economic but are deeply rooted in societal structures of gender inequality and urban poverty.

Over the past twenty years, both global and national efforts have increasingly prioritized the need for equitable and inclusive education. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) focuses on ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all. It emphasizes the elimination of disparities in education particularly those related to gender, socio-economic status, and location so that no child is left behind. Achieving quality education for all, particularly for girls from marginalized backgrounds, is not only essential for meeting SDG 4 but also serves as a catalyst for advancing other interconnected SDGs. By prioritizing inclusive and equitable education, we can reduce poverty, promote gender equality, decrease social inequalities, foster economic growth, and improve overall well-being.

In cities like Pune, where rapid urbanization coexists with socio-economic disparities, access to education becomes a privilege rather than a right for many. Pune, one of Maharashtra's fastest growing urban centers, represents a blend of wealth and deprivation. While the city is known as an educational hub, with numerous schools and universities, it also has many slum areas where access to basic services including quality education remains inadequate. According to the Pune Municipal Corporation, over 20% of the city's population resides in slums, many of which lack proper infrastructure, sanitation, and safe schooling environments.

This paper adopts a sociological lens to explore how structural factors like gender and poverty intersect to restrict educational opportunities. It aligns with Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), which aims to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all." Through the lens of inclusive education and social equity, the study analyzes the educational experiences of urban poor girls in Pune, using secondary data, case studies, and policy reviews.

By understanding the root causes and implications of these barriers, this paper aims to contribute to the development of educational systems that are not only accessible, but also socially just, responsive, and empowering for all learners, especially the most vulnerable.

HYPOTHESES

The dual burden of domestic responsibilities and economic pressure affects the school attendance and academic performance of girls in urban poor households.

RESEARCH PROBLEM

Despite significant improvements in educational enrollment across India, deep-rooted inequalities continue to marginalize certain groups specially girls from economically deprived urban communities. While urban areas are often seen as hubs of opportunity, children living in slums frequently lack access to quality education. Gender-based discrimination, accompanied by poverty, creates a complex structure of barrier that prevent urban poor girls from accessing education. This research tries to explore how these intersecting social factors shape the educational journey of girls in urban slums in Pune.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To explore how gender and urban poverty intersect to shape educational access for girls in slum areas of Pune.
- To analyze secondary data and existing literature to identify the structural, social, and economic barriers affecting the education of urban poor girls.
- To contribute to a sociological understanding of inclusive education by highlighting gaps between policies and the realities of urban poor girls.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a **qualitative research approach** to examine the intersection of gender and urban poverty and its impact on girls' access to education in urban slums, with a special focus on Pune city. The study relies on **secondary data sources**, including policy documents, academic research articles, reports from NGOs, and government databases.

DATA SOURCES

- Government reports such as the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER), National Sample Survey (NSSO), etc.
- Reports by international organizations, such as UNESCO, UNICEF, and World Bank, focusing on educational access, gender, and urban poverty.
- Academic literature and journal articles by scholars like Amartya Sen, Nambissan, and others, which offer theoretical and empirical insights into intersectionality, education, and development.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study is guided by Amartya Sen's Capability Approach, which emphasizes the importance of real freedoms and opportunities individuals have, and Intersectionality Theory, which helps to understand how multiple identities (gender, class, caste) intersect to affect access to education.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section provides an overview of existing research relevant to the intersection of gender, urban poverty, and educational access. It aims to explore how structural inequalities, such as gender bias and socio-economic factors, impede educational opportunities for marginalized groups, particularly in urban slums.

i. Gender Inequality in Education:

Studies have shown that gender continues to shape educational trajectories across India. According to the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER, 2023), while enrollment rates for girls have improved, significant disparities remain in terms of learning outcomes, attendance, and dropout rates especially at the secondary level. Patriarchy often leads to dropouts, early marriage, restrictions on upward mobility, and increased household responsibilities, all of which is the main reason for girls reduced participation.

Economic insecurity frequently forces children, especially girls, to contribute to household income or care work, resulting in irregular attendance or dropout from school. The lack of nearby schools and unsafe travel conditions further discourage regular attendance among girls (UNESCO, 2019). Economic insecurity frequently forces children, especially girls, to contribute to household income or care work, resulting in irregular attendance or complete withdrawal from school. The lack of nearby schools and unsafe travel conditions further discourage regular attendance among girls (UNESCO, 2019).

ii. Intersectionality: Gender and Urban Poverty

Amartya Sen's (1999) insight that poverty is not merely about a lack of income but about the deprivation of basic capabilities helps reframe how we think about marginalized groups, especially urban poor girls. For them, the barriers to education aren't just about fees or infrastructure. It's about a web of challenges, restrictive gender norms, economic pressures at home, and unsafe neighborhoods that limit their ability to attend school regularly,

engage fully, and to have a future shaped by their own choices. In this sense, the question isn't just whether a girl is enrolled in school, but whether she has the genuine freedom to learn, grow, and thrive.

The **Capability Approach** highlights that it's not just about having access to education, but ensuring quality opportunities for growth and success. In Pune, where gender and poverty intersect, these factors combine to limit these girls' ability to fully engage with education, leading to persistent educational gaps.

By using this approach, we gain a better understanding of why urban poor girls, despite attending school, often struggle to succeed. It reminds us that educational policies should go beyond merely increasing access they must focus on creating real opportunities for these girls to thrive and reach their full potential in education.

Looking at education through an intersectional lens helps us understand that the challenges faced by urban poor girls aren't just about poverty or just about being girls they're about both, together. These girls carry a "double burden": growing up in homes that struggle to make ends meet, and doing so within a society that often limits them simply because they're female. Scholars like Nambissan (2010) and Jeffery & Jeffery (2005) have highlighted that these intersecting identities produce unique barriers, including stigma, violence, and systemic neglect. Despite urban areas being assumed to have better educational resources, the urban poor often remain excluded from quality schooling, contradicting common perceptions of urban advantage.

POLICIES AND INITIATIVES ADDRESSING EDUCATIONAL DISPARITIES

Over the years, India has launched several policies and schemes aimed at improving access to education, especially for girls and children from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. While many of these efforts have shown progress, the real impact often depends on how well they address the complex, intersecting challenges faced by urban poor girls.

The Right to Education Act (RTE), 2009, was a landmark policy that made free and compulsory education a fundamental right for children aged 6 to 14. Its implementation marked a crucial step in recognizing education as a public good. However, while RTE increased enrollment rates, it has struggled to tackle issues such as quality of education, discriminatory practices, and the gendered division of educational opportunities especially in urban slums where slums are often underrepresented in official planning (Jha & Parvati, 2010).

Targeted schemes such as **Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao (BBBP) launched in 2015**, aim to improve the status of the girl child through awareness campaigns and incentives for girls' education. While the campaign has started conversations around gender, critics argue that the initiative often focuses more on symbolism and media outreach rather than addressing ground-level realities like safety, infrastructure, and long-standing cultural biases (Khan, 2019).

In essence, while policy efforts have expanded educational coverage, they often fail to fully engage with the everyday realities of urban poor girls. Such initiative might look promising on paper, but often fall short when it comes to making a difference in people's everyday lives.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

To understand how gender and economic status intersect to influence educational access requires a careful examination of large-scale data sets that capture these dimensions. National-level surveys such as the **National Family Health Survey (NFHS-IV)** and the **71st Round of the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO)** provide critical insights into how poverty and gender-based disadvantages translate into tangible educational gaps.

According to the National Family Health Survey - IV (NFHS-IV, Government of India, 2017), educational attainment strongly correlates with household wealth, and this disparity is further worsened by gender. The median years of schooling among females in the lowest wealth quintile is 0 years, compared to 9.1 years for females in the highest quintile. In contrast, males in the lowest quintile attain a median of 2.9 years, rising to 9.9 years in the top quintile. This stark contrast emphasizes that poverty and gender together act as structural barriers to education, particularly affecting urban poor girls who are doubly disadvantaged.

While NFHS does not differentiate between rural and urban data, the 71st Round of the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO, Government of India, 2015) offers detailed insights into educational trends across Urban Monthly Per Capita Expenditure (UMPCE) quintile classes. The NSSO analysis highlights the class-based and gendered disparities in current educational attendance and enrollment rates for individuals aged 5–29 years in urban areas.

• Gross Attendance Ratio (GAR) and Net Attendance Ratio (NAR):

- i. **GAR:** The Gross Attendance Ratio refers to the total number of students attending a particular level of education (regardless of age) as a percentage of the population in the official age group for that level.
- ii. **NAR:** The Net Attendance Ratio measures the percentage of the population of the official age group for a given level of education who are actually attending that level.

GENDERED TRENDS IN URBAN AREAS

- A declining GAR is observed from the top to the bottom quintile of UMPCE, especially at the upper primary level. This suggests a clear disadvantage for girls from lower-income households even in urban areas.
- The NAR, though naturally lower than GAR, follows a similar trend, confirming that actual attendance for age-appropriate education declines more sharply for girls as economic status worsens.

Qualitative Insights from Pune: A survey was conducted in two areas in Pune, PMC and PCMC area. In the PCMC slum area in BT Kawade, around 50 households were selected from this area and around 50 women were selected from a slum area in Pimpri-Chinchwad. Education of the Respondents: 70% of the respondents were found to be completely illiterate, 10% are either 3rd, 7th, 8th, or 9th pass. Just 13% have managed to complete SSC, 2 are HSC and a respondent has done a teacher training course. Most of the respondents who have completed SSC or HSC are in the age group of 20 to 25 years. These respondents are not able to study further as they have financial problems or family wants them to just get married and settle down. (Khan & Rajan, 2023). The responses show that financial issues and social pressures often stop girls from studying beyond school.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION GAPS

Despite the introduction of progressive schemes like the Right to Education Act (2009) and Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (2015), on-the-ground realities in urban slums often reflect poor implementation and limited impact.

i. **Beti Bachao Beti Padhao:** The Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) scheme has faced criticism for poor fund utilization, with accusations from the Committee on Women Empowerment. Instead of focusing on the promised areas like girls' health and education, the scheme primarily concentrated on advertising and raising awareness. A study by the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) examined the impact of the BBBP program in 161 districts and found flaws in its implementation. It highlighted barriers preventing girls from entering and staying in school. According to the survey, 73.5% of schools reported major challenges, such as girls' increased care responsibilities, lack of clean functional toilets, difficulty affording uniforms or books, and unsafe commuting options as key reasons for low retention and continued education for girls.

ii. **Right to Education:** This policy guarantees education only up to age 14 (Class 8). There is no clear pathway or support for children from disadvantaged groups to continue education beyond this level, leading to high dropout rates, especially among girls. As a result, many young girls from disadvantaged communities are left standing at a crossroads after Class 8—with dreams of learning more, but no clear path forward. Without continued support, their education journeys often end too soon, leaving their potential unfulfilled.

CONCLUSION

We have made significant progress. What once was a concern solely about the mere numbers of literacy rates has now evolved into a powerful conversation about inclusivity and the quality of education, ensuring that every individual, regardless of background, has access to meaningful learning opportunities. However, despite these advancements, we must acknowledge that numerous barriers still persist.

By providing equal access to education, especially for girls from disadvantaged communities, we address gender disparities, as outlined in **Target 4.5** of SDG 4, which seeks to eliminate gender inequalities in education. Educating marginalized girls improves learning outcomes, contributing to **Target 4.1** by enhancing literacy and numeracy skills. Additionally, inclusive education equips girls with vocational and technical skills, helping them achieve **Target 4.4**, which focuses on increasing the number of youths with relevant skills for employment. It also tackles socio-economic barriers, breaking the cycle of poverty and enabling social mobility. Furthermore, it addresses critical issues such as child labor and early marriage, empowering girls to remain in school and pursue lifelong learning opportunities (**Target 4.7**). By creating safe and supportive educational environments, inclusive education helps marginalized girls overcome multiple vulnerabilities and become change agents in their communities, contributing to sustainable development.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are interconnected, and progress in one area can advance others. Achieving SDG 4: Quality Education can positively impact several goals.

Quality education helps reduce poverty (SDG 1) by equipping individuals with skills for better jobs, promotes SDG 5: Gender Equality by empowering girls, and supports SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities by providing marginalized groups opportunities to improve their lives. It also contributes to SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth by enhancing employability and fosters SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being by raising awareness about health. In short, focusing on quality education not only advances SDG 4 but also accelerates progress across multiple SDGs, forming a key foundation for sustainable development.

Ultimately, achieving inclusive education for marginalized girls requires a collective effort from governments, policymakers, educators, communities, and individuals. By actively addressing the structural barriers of gender and poverty, we can create an educational system that not only empowers girls but also contributes to building a more equitable and sustainable future for all.

REFERENCE

- **Amartya Sen. (1999).** Development as Freedom. Oxford University Press.
- **Jeffery, R., & Jeffery, P. (2005).** Girls' schooling, women's autonomy, and fertility change in South India. In M. A. Montgomery & B. A. Cohen (Eds.), *Children's well-being: Indicators and research* (pp. 146–158). Springer.
- **Jha, J., & Parvati, M. (2010).** Understanding education inequalities and the role of the Right to Education Act. In P. R. Ghosh & S. A. Verma (Eds.), *Education and social change in India* (pp. 112–130). Sage Publications.
- **Khan, A. (2019).** A critique of Beti Bachao Beti Padhao: Addressing ground realities. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 7(4), 22–35.
- **Khan, S., & Rajan, S. (2023).** Barriers to education: A case study of urban poor girls in Pune. *Journal of Educational Sociology*, 15(2), 43–57.
- **Nambissan, G. B. (2010).** Private schooling and public policy: A study of urban slums in India. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 45(34), 35–41.
- **National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER). (2015).** Impact of Beti Bachao Beti Padhao in 161 districts. NCAER Report.
- **National Family Health Survey (NFHS-IV). (2017).** India: Key findings. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India.
- **National Sample Survey Office (NSSO). (2015).** 71st Round: Educational statistics (Report No. 583). Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India.
- **UNESCO. (2019).** Gender and education for sustainable development. UNESCO Education Sector Report.
- **World Bank. (2018).** Education and poverty reduction in urban slums. World Bank Report.
- **United Nations. (2015).** Sustainable Development Goals. Retrieved from <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/education/>

BHARTIYA BHASHA PUSTAK INITIATIVE: ADVANCING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND SOCIAL EQUITY THROUGH MULTILINGUAL LEARNING RESOURCES IN INDIA**Ms. Shrutika R. Thakkar**

Assistant Professor, GSFC University, Vadodara, Gujarat

ABSTRACT

India, a nation with a rich tapestry of linguistic diversity, faces a critical challenge in ensuring equitable access to quality education for all. The recently launched Bhartiya Bhasha Pustak Initiative, under the Union Budget 2025–26, aims to tackle this issue by promoting education in regional languages through the development and digital dissemination of textbooks and learning materials. Aligned with the objectives of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, this initiative seeks to empower marginalized communities, reduce dropout rates, and bridge learning gaps by enabling mother-tongue-based education. This paper critically examines the initiative's framework, implementation strategy, and potential contributions to inclusive education and social equity in India.

1. INTRODUCTION

India is home to more than 1.4 billion people, with 22 constitutionally recognized languages and over 19,500 dialects spoken across its vast expanse (Census of India, 2011). Despite this rich linguistic heritage, the Indian education system has historically prioritized English and Hindi as mediums of instruction, often sidelining regional languages. This has led to significant barriers for non-Hindi, non-English speaking students, especially those from tribal, rural, and economically weaker sections.

The Bhartiya Bhasha Pustak Initiative (BBPI), announced in the Union Budget 2025–26, is an ambitious government intervention aimed at developing and disseminating textbooks and learning materials in Indian languages, both in print and digital formats. The initiative is a crucial component of the government's broader strategy to foster inclusivity and accessibility in the education system, while also preserving India's linguistic heritage.

2. OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

1. To assess how the Bhartiya Bhasha Pustak Initiative (BBPI) promotes inclusive education through mother-tongue-based learning.
2. To evaluate the role of BBPI in addressing social equity by empowering marginalized and linguistically diverse communities.
3. To examine the alignment of BBPI with the goals of NEP 2020 and the broader vision of multilingual and culturally responsive pedagogy.

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Bhartiya Bhasha Pustak Initiative aligns closely with a growing body of academic work advocating for multilingual education as a means of achieving inclusive learning and equity.

1. UNESCO (2021) underscores the cognitive and pedagogical advantages of mother-tongue-based education, highlighting how early instruction in one's native language enhances comprehension, self-expression, and foundational learning.
2. Cummins (2000) similarly notes that literacy skills acquired in the first language significantly contribute to academic achievement in additional languages.
3. Mohanty (2009) emphasizes the role of multilingual education in promoting social justice in India, arguing that linguistic homogenization marginalizes non-dominant language speakers.
4. Panda and Mohanty (2009) found that culturally contextualized education in tribal languages significantly improved classroom engagement and reduced dropout rates among Adivasi children.
5. Skutnabb-Kangas and Heugh (2012) argue that education systems that exclude native languages actively perpetuate linguistic genocide and socio-economic inequality. They advocate for sustained multilingualism as a tool for inclusion, sustainability, and democratic participation. This perspective is echoed by Srivastava (2020), who analyzed how policy-driven language inclusion in textbooks affects learning equity among rural learners in Uttar Pradesh.

6. Shruthi et al. (2021) show how technological advances, particularly AI-driven translation and mobile platforms, can bridge language gaps and provide inclusive access to educational content.
7. However, Mandal (2025) cautions that digital access remains unequal across states and socioeconomic groups, calling for targeted infrastructure investment.
8. The National Education Policy 2020 marks a paradigm shift by advocating for multilingualism in education and emphasizing mother-tongue instruction till at least Grade BBPI operationalizes this vision through textbook digitization and culturally relevant content creation (Ministry of Education, 2020; IMPRI, 2025).

These studies provide a strong foundation to evaluate BBPI as a policy intervention designed not only to promote inclusive education but also to address deeper questions of linguistic justice and cultural representation.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a **qualitative research methodology** rooted in a **policy analysis and case study approach**, suitable for exploring the Bhartiya Bhasha Pustak Initiative's alignment with inclusive education and social equity.

4.1 Research Design:

Type: Descriptive and analytical.

Approach: Document and content analysis of policy documents, budget announcements, institutional reports, and secondary literature.

4.2 Data Sources:

Primary Data: Key texts such as the Union Budget 2025–26 speech, NEP 2020, and BBPI guidelines.

Secondary Data: Scholarly articles, government reports, academic papers, media coverage, and digital platform usage data (e.g., DIKSHA, NDLI).

4.3 Data Collection Tools:

Review of:

Government portals (e.g., Ministry of Education, PIB)

Academic repositories (e.g., Google Scholar, ResearchGate, JSTOR)

Multilingual education initiatives (e.g., CIIL, SCERT reports)

5. IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK AND STRATEGY

The BBPI is to be implemented in a phased manner through collaborative efforts involving the Ministry of Education, Bharatiya Bhasha Samiti, academic institutions, linguistic experts, and technology platforms. The key elements of the implementation strategy include:

- **Content Creation and Translation:** Institutions such as the Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL), NCERT, and State Councils of Educational Research and Training (SCERTs) are tasked with translating existing content and creating new educational materials in regional languages.
- **Technology Enablement:** Digital platforms like DIKSHA and NDLI are being upgraded to host and disseminate region-specific learning resources. AI-powered translation tools and Natural Language Processing (NLP) technologies are also being explored to improve scalability (Shruthi, Ihita & Chaudhari, 2021).
- **Capacity Building:** Training modules are being designed for teachers to adapt to multilingual instruction and for translators to maintain the quality of educational content.
- **Community Participation:** Local educators and language experts are involved in validating content to ensure cultural relevance and linguistic accuracy.
- **Monitoring and Feedback Mechanisms:** Continuous feedback loops from students, teachers, and administrators are integrated into the system to improve and update materials regularly.

6. IMPACT ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION:

The BBPI is poised to make significant contributions to inclusive education in several ways:

- **Reducing Dropout Rates:** Language barriers are one of the major reasons for early school dropout among tribal and rural children. When children learn in a familiar language, their confidence and engagement improve, leading to better retention (Mandal, 2025).
- **Improving Learning Outcomes:** Studies have shown that early education in the mother tongue enhances conceptual understanding and cognitive development. BBPI addresses this by making foundational literacy and numeracy more accessible.
- **Supporting First-Generation Learners:** Students from marginalized backgrounds, who may not have familial support for learning in dominant languages, benefit immensely from mother-tongue education.
- **Aligning Curriculum with Local Realities:** Regional language materials often integrate local contexts, folklore, and cultural references, making learning more relatable and effective.

7. SOCIAL EQUITY AND LINGUISTIC JUSTICE:

In a multilingual country like India, equitable education must account for linguistic diversity. BBPI supports the broader goal of social equity by:

- **Democratizing Knowledge Access:** By decentralizing the language of instruction, BBPI ensures that students from all linguistic backgrounds have equitable access to quality education.
- **Empowering Marginalized Communities:** Tribal and minority language speakers often face exclusion in mainstream education. BBPI recognizes and values their linguistic identity, contributing to greater self-esteem and social inclusion.
- **Facilitating Economic Mobility:** Improved education outcomes in early schooling can lead to higher educational attainment and better job prospects, thereby enabling social and economic mobility.

8. CHALLENGES AND WAY FORWARD

Despite its noble goals, the initiative faces several implementation challenges:

- **Shortage of Trained Translators and Teachers:** There is a scarcity of qualified professionals who can develop pedagogically sound content in regional languages.
- **Technological and Infrastructure Gaps:** While the initiative emphasizes digital access, many rural areas still lack internet connectivity and digital devices (Gohain, 2025).
- **Standardization Issues:** Developing standardized terminology and curriculum across various Indian languages is complex.
- **Political and Bureaucratic Hurdles:** Language can be a politically sensitive issue. Aligning state and central policies may be challenging.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Investment in Capacity Building:** Regular training for educators, translators, and administrators.
- **Public-Private Partnerships:** Collaborations with EdTech companies for content digitization and AI translation tools.
- **Localized Curriculum Development:** Encouraging state-level innovations while maintaining national guidelines.
- **Monitoring Framework:** Independent audits and feedback systems to track progress and make mid-course corrections.

10. CONCLUSION

The Bhartiya Bhasha Pustak Initiative is a transformative step towards a more inclusive and equitable education system in India. It recognizes that language should not be a barrier to learning but a bridge that connects knowledge with identity. By embracing India's linguistic diversity, BBPI has the potential to democratize access to education, empower marginalized communities, and uphold the constitutional promise of equity and justice in education. Its success will depend on sustained political will, institutional support, and community engagement.

11. REFERENCES

1. Census of India. (2011). Language Data. <https://censusindia.gov.in>
2. Ministry of Education. (2020). National Education Policy 2020. https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English_0.pdf
3. Mandal, B. (2025). Digital divide in online education: A statewide survey of internet accessibility and usage patterns in India. In *Digital Crossroads: Integrating Humanities, Science and Technology* (pp. 135–151). <https://doi.org/10.9734/bpi/mono/978-93-48859-10-5/CH12>
4. Shruthi, K. A., Ihita, G. V., & Chaudhari, S. (2021). A survey on rural internet connectivity in India. *arXiv preprint arXiv:2111.10219*. <https://arxiv.org/abs/2111.10219>
5. Gohain, M. P. (2025, January 2). Digital divide: Working computers in just 57% of India's schools, internet in 54%. *The Times of India*. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com>
6. IMPRI India. (2025). Bharatiya Bhasha Pustak Scheme In Budget 2025–26. <https://www.impriindia.com/insights/bharatiya-bhasha-pustak-scheme-nep/>
7. UKFIET. (2022). Bridging the digital divide through EdTech capacity-building in communities in India. <https://www.ukfiet.org/2022/bridging-the-digital-divide-through-edtech-capacity-building-in-communities-in-india/>
8. Press Information Bureau (2025). Measures to strengthen regional language instruction. <https://pib.gov.in>
9. Mohanty, A. K. (2009). Multilingual education in India: Concept and practice. *Multilingual Education for Social Justice: Globalising the Local*. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/238768106>
10. Panda, M., & Mohanty, A. K. (2009). Language Matters, So Does Culture: Beyond the Rhetoric of Culture in Multilingual Education. *Language and Culture in Education*. <https://doi.org/10.21832/9781847691910>

POLICY FRAMEWORKS & EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS: EDUCATION RIGHTS AS HUMAN RIGHTS — A CASE STUDY OF AFGHANISTAN

Wali Rahman Rahmani

Symbiosis International University, India

ABSTRACT

Education is not just an experimental thing it is a abecedarian mortal right, elevated in transnational law and essential for achieving equivalency, justice, and sustainable progress. Yet in conflict- affected regions like Afghanistan, this right is under severe assault. Since the Taliban's return to power in August 2021, Afghanistan has witnessed an unknown rollback in educational access, particularly for girls and women. Methodical bans, institutional dismantling, and ideologically driven programs have reversed two decades of progress, effectively silencing millions of implicit learners.

This paper critically analyses education rights as mortal rights, using Afghanistan as a contemporary and critical case study. It examines the dissociate between transnational mortal rights instruments similar as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and Sustainable Development thing 4(SDG 4) — and the ground realities under Taliban rule. The paper also highlights Afghanistan's domestic educational history, community resistance, and legal traditions that formerly supported inclusive education

Importantly, this study integrates localized gests, including stories from pastoral businesses where informal training sweats persist despite restrictions. It explores how Afghan civil society, underground networks, and diaspora enterprise continue to guard educational values amid systemic repression.

The exploration argues for a multi-layered response involving legal, politic, and community- grounded interventions. It proposes policy recommendations embedded in both normative principles and realistic strategies for securing the right to education in fragile countries. Through this lens, the paper positions education not simply as a domestic issue but as a litmus test for the global commitment to mortal rights in times of extremity.

Keywords: *Afghanistan, Education Rights, Human Rights, Girls' Education, SDG 4, Policy Frameworks, Conflict Zones clearly!*

1. INTRODUCTION

Education serves not only as a vehicle for particular and collaborative commission but also as a foundation for the fulfilment of all other mortal rights. It's a means through which individualities gain the knowledge, chops, and confidence to share meaningfully in society, challenge shafts, and contribute to profitable, political, and artistic development. Internationally, education is honoured as an abecedarian right, and multitudinous global fabrics and covenants assert that it should be accessible to all — anyhow of gender, race, terrain, or socio-political environment. still, in countries affected by prolonged conflict and political insecurity, similar as Afghanistan, the right to education has been deeply compromised. Historically, Afghanistan has seen a shifting line when it comes to educational access. Despite notable progress made between 2001 and 2021 — including the registration of millions of girls in seminaries and significant transnational investment in educational structure — the country has regressed drastically following the fall of the Afghan Republic and the rejuvenescence of Taliban rule in August 2021. Under the Taliban's de facto administration, a series of restrictive programs have been assessed, effectively banning women and girls from secondary and advanced education, dissolving crucial educational institutions, and undermining decades of progress. These developments have not only violated transnational commitments but have also created a generation at threat of being left before. This educational extremity extends beyond public borders — it is a mortal rights exigency with global counteraccusations. This paper aims to critically dissect the crossroad of education rights and mortal rights, fastening on the part and failure of policy fabrics to guard these rights in Afghanistan.

2. THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION AS A MORTAL RIGHT

The right to education is bedded in a wide array of transnational mortal rights instruments. It's honoured as both a civil right and a socio- profitable right — essential not only for individual development but also for the collaborative advancement of societies. Several core covenants and affirmations accentuate the universal significance of education - The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948) Composition 26 of the UDHR states that" everyone has the right to education," and that" education shall be free, at least in the abecedarian and abecedarian stages." The composition underscores education as a tool for the full development

of the mortal personality and the strengthening of respect for mortal rights and abecedarian freedoms. - International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR, 1966) Composition 13 of this covenant elaborates on the obligation of countries to insure precipitously the full consummation of education rights. It emphasizes the significance of accessible, respectable, adaptable, and available education at all situations. - Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC, 1989) As one of the most ratified mortal rights covenants encyclopaedically — of which Afghanistan is a signatory — the CRC guarantees the right of every child to free and mandatory primary education and encourages countries to make secondary and advanced education accessible to all. - Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Demarcation Against Women (CEDAW) This convention explicitly protects the educational rights of women and girls, dragooning countries to exclude gender- grounded demarcation and insure equal access and retention at all educational situations. - Sustainable Development thing 4(SDG 4) Part of the 2030 docket for Sustainable Development, SDG 4 aims to” insure inclusive and indifferent quality education and promote lifelong literacy openings for all.” It sets global targets for universal access to quality education, particularly for vulnerable and marginalized groups. Despite Afghanistan’s formal adherence to numerous of these instruments, the practical perpetration of their vittles has been constantly undermined. The Taliban’s restrictive programs directly violate the spirit and letter of these agreements, especially those concerning gender equivalency and universal access. The mask ban on girls’ education beyond grade six, suspense ofco-educational institutions, and the sidelining of womanish preceptors and directors represent obvious violations of transnational mortal rights law. This disconnects between transnational morals and domestic practice underscores the critical need for the global community to go beyond rhetorical commitments and pursue enforceable mechanisms to cover educational rights in fragile and authoritarian surrounds. In the case of Afghanistan, the right to education has come not just a legal issue, but a moral and strategic imperative for the transnational mortal rights governance.

3. THE EDUCATIONAL CRISIS IN AFGHANISTAN

literal environment Afghanistan's education system has been shaped by a complex interplay of artistic traditions, political testaments, and transnational interventions. Historically, education in Afghanistan was deeply embedded in religious institutions, particularly madrasas, with limited access to formal temporal education. During the reign of King Amanullah Khan in the early 20th century, early sweats were made to contemporize education and promote gender equivalency, including the establishment onco-educational seminaries and literacy for girls to study abroad. still, similar reforms were met with counterreaction from conservative forces, leading to their eventual reversal. The decades that followed were marred by political paroxysms, civil wars, and the Soviet irruption (1979 – 1989), all of which disintegrated educational structure. The Taliban's first governance (1996 – 2001) assessed a rigid interpretation of Islamic law that barred girls from attending academy and oppressively limited the class for boys. seminaries came spots of indoctrination rather than spaces for critical literacy. Thepost-2001 period, following the U.S.- led intervention and the fall of the Taliban, marked a significant metamorphosis. With support from transnational benefactors, NGOs, and a semi-democratic government, Afghanistan launched the National Education Strategic Plan (NESP), fastening on universal access, class development, schoolteacher training, and gender equality. By 2018, pupil registration surged to over 9 million, including nearly 3.5 million girls — a remarkable achievement considering the former decades. The Ministry of Education also oversaw a rise in community- grounded seminaries, especially in pastoral and conflict-prone areas, which helped increase access in remote businesses. still, challenges remained, including inadequate structure, lack of trained womanish preceptors (particularly in pastoral areas), corruption, and security pitfalls from insurrectionary groups that targeted seminaries and preceptors. nevertheless, the period between 2001 and 2021 saw inarguable progress in making education a foundation of Afghanistan’s development docket. The Taliban’s Return and Educational Regress the Taliban’s return to power in August 2021 following the reckless pullout of U.S. and NATO forces marked a stark retrogression in Afghanistan’s educational geography. Within weeks of taking control, the Taliban assessed draconian restrictions evocative of their former governance, particularly targeting girls’ education and the broader rights of women. Their conduct includes Banning girls from attending academy beyond Grade 6, effectively cutting off access to secondary and advanced education for millions. Dissolving the Ministry of Women’s Affairs, replacing it with the Ministry for the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice. Calling gender- insulated classrooms and barring womanish preceptors from working under nebulous and arbitrary conditions. Banning women from universities, as of December 2022, with womanish scholars forcefully removed and premises instructed to misbehave or face corrective action. abridging the operations of civil society associations, especially those concentrated on women’s rights, education, and knowledge. confining class content, removing subjects like music, trades, communal education, and critical thinking, thereby narrowing intellectual development. These programs not only breach Afghanistan’s own former legal commitments but also amount to gender intolerance — a methodical, institutionalized form of isolation and oppression grounded on gender. Over 1.1 million girls are

now deprived of education, while thousands of women preceptors, professors, and scholars have been pushed out of educational institutions, stripping Afghan society of vital intellectual capital. Impact on Society and Development The consequences of this educational rollback are profound and far-reaching. Profitable Impact Education is a crucial motorist of profitable development. Banning women and girls from education shrinks the unborn pool, stifles invention, and reduces ménage inflows. According to the World Bank, confining girls' education could bring Afghanistan billions in lost GDP annually. Poverty and Inequality Without education, upward mobility becomes nearly insolvable. Families trapped in poverty are denied the tools to ameliorate their conditions, immortalizing cycles of privation and social inequality, especially in pastoral and marginalized communities. Brain Drain The outpour of educated Afghans, especially women, continues to increase. Croakers, masterminds, professors, and scholars are seeking shelter abroad, depriving the country of gift demanded for reconstruction and reform. Social Fragmentation Education helps foster public identity, communal values, and social cohesion. Its absence energizes unreasonableness, reinforces ethnical and insular divisions, and allows misinformation and superstition to flourish. Political Marginalization With smaller educated citizens, popular participation and responsibility suffer. The disenfranchisement of women from political and public life further entrenches authoritarian governance.

4. INTERNATIONAL LEGAL AND POLICY FABRICS

List International scores Afghanistan is a signatory to multiple transnational covenants and conventions that elevate the right to education and enjoin demarcation. These commitments remain fairly binding, anyhow of governance change, under the principle of state durability in transnational law. crucial instruments include a) Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC, 1989) Afghanistan ratified the CRC in 1994, committing to uphold the rights of all children to education, protection, and on-discrimination. papers of applicability include Composition 28 Ensures the right of every child to free, mandatory primary education and encourages the development of accessible secondary education. Composition

4.1 authorizations on-discrimination

In the operation of the Convention's vittles' anyhow of the child's gender. The Taliban's ban on girls' secondary education is a blatant violation of both these papers, totally differencing against girls and denying them a introductory mortal right. b) Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Demarcation Against Women (CEDAW, 1979) Afghanistan ratified CEDAW in 2003 without reservations, motioning its commitment to eliminate gender-grounded demarcation. Applicable vittles include Composition 10 Requires countries to ensure equal rights for women in education, including access to the same classes, examinations, and tutoring qualifications. The Taliban's education programs directly contradict Composition 10 and several other sections of the Convention, making their governance inharmonious with Afghanistan's scores under CEDAW. c) International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR, 1966) Ratified by Afghanistan, the ICESCR recognizes the right to education under Composition 13, which calls for the progressive consummation of universal access to all situations of education. It emphasizes that education must be Available Functioning educational institutions and programs must be available in sufficient volume. Accessible Education must be accessible to all, especially the most vulnerable, without demarcation. respectable the form and substance of education must be applicable and of good quality. Adaptable Education must be flexible so it can acclimatize to the requirements of changing societies. The current programs under Taliban rule fail on all four counts.

4.2 Legal Continuity and International Responsibility

Under international legal doctrine, the obligations of a state do not lapse with a change in government. Even though the Taliban are not internationally recognized as the legitimate government of Afghanistan, the de jure state remains a party to the above treaties. Therefore, the international community has both a legal responsibility and a moral imperative to uphold these obligations.

This includes:

Monitoring and reporting violations through UN bodies such as the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Human Rights Council, and the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan.

Imposing targeted sanctions on Taliban leaders responsible for discriminatory education policies.

Supporting parallel educational systems via civil society and diaspora groups.

Establishing international legal precedents through mechanisms like the International Criminal Court (ICC) or the International Court of Justice (ICJ), potentially framing these actions as crimes against humanity or gender persecution.

Taliban's De Facto Legal Order

With the collapse of the Republic in August 2021, Afghanistan entered a legal vacuum. The Taliban, now the de facto rulers, rejected the 2004 Constitution and reinstated governance under a loosely defined and uncodified interpretation of Sharia law. Unlike formal legal systems, the Taliban's framework is fluid, inconsistent, and primarily derived from their internal council's decisions rather than established jurisprudence.

They claim that education for girls is not banned but "suspended until appropriate conditions are met," a justification that lacks clarity and serves as a blanket policy of exclusion. This rationale has led to the systematic removal of girls from secondary and tertiary education, the dismantling of female-led institutions, and the near-total erasure of women from public academic life. In the absence of constitutional protections or judicial recourse, citizens—particularly women and girls—have no legal mechanisms to demand their educational rights. The Taliban's legal ambiguity, deliberate or otherwise, has rendered domestic advocacy nearly impossible, making international intervention and pressure not only necessary but urgent.

Human Rights Watch. (2022). Afghanistan: Taliban Deprive Women of Basic Rights. Retrieved from <https://www.hrw.org>

Amnesty International. (2023). The Taliban's War on Women. Retrieved from <https://www.amnesty.org>

United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). (2023). Human Rights in Afghanistan: Women and Girls under Taliban Rule.

National-Level Policy Recommendations

Despite the oppressive environment, several national-level strategies could offer interim solutions and long-term frameworks for the restoration of educational rights. The foremost necessity is the codification of education as a right for all, regardless of gender, within a nationally recognized legal system. This would create a standard against which policy and enforcement could be measured, and eventually provide a basis for national reconciliation and institution-building.

Community-based schooling models, successfully used in rural Afghanistan in past decades, should be revived and expanded. These models operate discreetly in village homes or religious centres and are often tolerated by local Taliban officials if framed within cultural and religious norms. However, their long-term viability depends on international support, teacher training, and community acceptance.

A complementary strategy involves incentive-based learning, where community leaders, especially tribal elders, are engaged in dialogue and offered economic or infrastructural benefits for supporting girls' education. When education is framed as a tool for local development and prosperity, opposition can sometimes be transformed into cooperation.

Another essential measure is the promotion of female teacher training. Literacy and employment among women in rural areas remain low, and empowering local women to become educators could significantly increase enrolment among girls. These teachers serve not only as educational facilitators but as role models, helping to gradually shift societal perceptions.

Burde, D., & Linden, L. L. (2013). Bringing education to Afghan girls: A randomized controlled trial of village-based schools. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 5(3), 27–40.

Save the Children. (2022). Afghanistan Education Crisis: Girls Denied Learning. Retrieved from <https://www.savethechildren.org>

Norwegian Refugee Council. (2021). Community-Based Education in Afghanistan: Lifeline for Girls

International Policy Interventions

The international community retains several diplomatic and humanitarian levers to influence educational policy in Afghanistan. The most effective among these is diplomatic conditionality—linking any recognition, funding, or formal engagement with the Taliban to concrete and measurable benchmarks in gender-inclusive education. Such conditions must be transparent, monitored independently, and applied consistently to avoid token compliance.

The creation of humanitarian corridors for education is another viable solution. These corridors can take the form of regional educational scholarships, cross-border schooling programs, and digital platforms that reach Afghan students beyond physical borders. Online initiatives such as Learn Afghanistan and Nafisa Academy demonstrate the potential of technology to circumvent geographical and political limitations.

Expanding these platforms, with encryption and language adaptation, could allow thousands of girls to continue their education remotely.

Simultaneously, targeted sanctions should be placed on individuals within the Taliban hierarchy who are directly responsible for educational restrictions. Blanket sanctions that disrupt humanitarian aid should be avoided. Instead, a dual-track system should be pursued: punishing rights violators while increasing humanitarian assistance directly tied to informal or underground education systems.

Furthermore, international institutions must take on stronger monitoring roles. The appointment of a UN Special Rapporteur on Education in Conflict Zones, with a specific mandate to investigate gender-based educational exclusion in Afghanistan, would ensure ongoing visibility and pressure. This role should include regular reporting, site visits, and advocacy within global forums such as the Human Rights Council and UNESCO.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). (2023). Global Education Monitoring Report.

United Nations Human Rights Council. (2022). Report on the Situation of Human Rights in Afghanistan. Zia, H. A. (2022). Afghanistan and the Humanitarian Crisis: The Role of Digital Education. *Journal of International Affairs*, 76(1), 45–59.

COMPARATIVE CASE STUDIES

Nigeria and Boko Haram

The insurgency of Boko Haram in northeastern Nigeria bears striking resemblance to the Taliban's ideological opposition to girls' education. Boko Haram's abductions and school bombings in the early 2010s led to a crisis of fear and widespread school closures. In response, the Nigerian government, supported by international actors, launched the Safe Schools Initiative, a program aimed at rebuilding secure educational infrastructure and community trust.

Afghanistan can draw critical lessons from this. Initiatives that work with local communities, bolster school security, and rehabilitate traumatized learners offer replicable models, especially in Taliban-controlled areas where fear and intimidation remain significant obstacles to attendance.

Rwanda's Post-Conflict Rebuilding

After the 1994 genocide, Rwanda undertook a radical reconstruction of its public institutions. Central to this effort was an inclusive, gender-equitable education policy, backed by a strong political will and international funding. The government emphasized reconciliation, standardized curricula, and widespread teacher training. Girls' education was prioritized through scholarship schemes, community campaigns, and legal reforms.

Though Afghanistan's cultural and geopolitical context is distinct, Rwanda's story illustrates how post-conflict states can use education as a foundation for unity, economic development, and gender empowerment.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (2015). *The Safe Schools Initiative: Rebuilding Confidence in Education in Nigeria*.

Chibok Girls. (2020). *Nigeria's Fight for Girls' Education Amid Extremism*. Brookings Institution.

Post-Genocide Rwanda

World Bank. (2018). *Learning from Rwanda's Education Reform: Gender and Post-Conflict Development*.

UNESCO. (2015). *Rwanda: Rebuilding through Education*.

IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

The most daunting challenge in applying these recommendations is the question of legitimacy. Engaging with the Taliban risks conferring de facto recognition on a regime that openly violates international law. Yet total disengagement limits leverage. A balanced approach must be adopted—engagement without endorsement—focused on people-centric outcomes rather than political concessions.

Security risks also present a constant threat to humanitarian operations, particularly in Taliban-controlled provinces. NGOs, teachers, and students often face intimidation or violence, making operational continuity precarious. Risk mitigation strategies, including anonymized delivery mechanisms and remote education, must be integrated into all aid planning.

Cultural barriers pose another serious impediment. Even in areas where Taliban influence is weak or absent, conservative social attitudes often restrict girls from attending school beyond puberty.

This requires a parallel effort to address social norms through religious leaders, media campaigns, and women's role models who can advocate for change within culturally acceptable frameworks.

Finally, funding constraints have become more acute. The global donor landscape has shifted, with competing crises in Ukraine, Gaza, Sudan, and elsewhere diverting attention and resources. Long-term educational reform in Afghanistan risks falling off the global agenda unless repositioned as a matter of international peace and security.

OCHA. (2022). Humanitarian Needs Overview: Afghanistan.

IRC. (2023). Barriers to Girls' Education in Afghanistan.

Beath, A., Christia, F., & Enikolopov, R. (2013). Empowering Women through Development Aid: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Afghanistan. *American Political Science Review*, 107(3), 540–557.

CONCLUSION

The state of education in Afghanistan, especially for girls, is not simply a domestic issue—it is a global human rights emergency. The Taliban's regressive policies represent a form of gender apartheid that contravenes every major international norm and treaty. In the absence of a functioning legal system or democratic accountability within the country, international actors must rise to fill the void.

The restoration of educational rights will require a combination of legal codification, community engagement, diplomatic leverage, and sustained international pressure. Technology and innovative educational models provide hope for reaching those most isolated. Afghanistan's tragedy should not be seen merely as a crisis but as an opportunity for the global community to demonstrate resolve in defending the most basic of human rights.

In a world that increasingly recognizes education as the bedrock of peace, equality, and prosperity, the denial of schooling to millions of Afghan girls must be met with more than words. It demands action, innovation, and an unyielding commitment to justice.

REFERENCES

Amnesty International. (2023). *The Taliban's war on women: The crime against humanity of Afghanistan*. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa11/7168/2023/en/>

Beath, A., Christia, F., & Enikolopov, R. (2013). Empowering women through development aid: Evidence from a field experiment in Afghanistan. *American Political Science Review*, 107(3), 540–557. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055413000270>

Brookings Institution. (2020). *Nigeria's fight for girls' education amid extremism*. <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/nigerias-fight-for-girls-education-amid-extremism/>

Burde, D., & Linden, L. L. (2013). Bringing education to Afghan girls: A randomized controlled trial of village-based schools. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 5(3), 27–40. <https://doi.org/10.1257/app.5.3.27>

Human Rights Watch. (2022). *Afghanistan: Taliban deprive women of basic rights*. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/01/17/afghanistan-taliban-deprive-women-basic-rights>

International Rescue Committee (IRC). (2023). *Barriers to girls' education in Afghanistan: Evidence and policy*. <https://www.rescue.org/>

Norwegian Refugee Council. (2021). *Community-based education in Afghanistan: A lifeline for children*. <https://www.nrc.no/>

<https://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/afghanistan-humanitarian-needs-overview-2022>

Save the Children. (2022). *Afghanistan education crisis: Girls denied learning*. <https://www.savethechildren.net/news/afghanistan-education-crisis-girls-denied-learning>

<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000232519>

UNESCO. (2023). *Global education monitoring report 2023: Technology in education*. <https://www.unesco.org/reports/global-education-monitoring-report/2023>

United Nations. (2022). *Sustainable Development Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all*. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal4>

United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). (2023). *Human rights in Afghanistan: 2022 report*. <https://unama.unmissions.org/>

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (2015). *The Safe Schools Initiative: Rebuilding confidence in education in Nigeria*. <https://www.undp.org/publications/safe-schools-initiative>

United Nations Human Rights Council. (2022). *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan*. <https://www.ohchr.org/en>

Zia, H. A. (2022). Afghanistan and the humanitarian crisis: The role of digital education. *Journal of International Affairs*, 76(1), 45–59.

INDIAN LEGAL EDUCATION'S PSYCHOLOGICAL BARRIERS: DISENFRANCHISED STUDENTS' CHALLENGES AND THE NEED FOR INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

Dr. Neeta Ahir

ABSTRACT

In India, legal education promises social mobility, justice, and empowerment. Students from Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), Other Backward Classes (OBC), women, religious minorities, and LGBTQ+ communities are still marginalized, though, due to structural psychological barriers. Despite recent advancements, several gaps remain in addressing skill development, real-world exposure, and accessibility. The psychological barriers that are faced when trying to access, engage in, and succeed in legal education are examined in this article. Examining how these issues are ingrained in India's social and legal landscape, the paper critically analysed academic stress, stereotype threat, institutional discrimination, and lack of representation. The article makes the case for a reorientation of legal education through inclusive pedagogy, mental health support, and systemic policy reform, drawing on important case law, empirical research, and policy documents. The results indicate that removing psychological barriers is a constitutional requirement based on Articles 14, 15, and 21 of the Indian Constitution, in addition to being an educational necessity.

Keywords: Legal education, marginalized students, psychological barriers, discrimination, inclusive pedagogy, India, mental health, caste, gender, constitutional rights.

1. INTRODUCTION

In any democratic society, legal education is essential to forming the defenders of constitutional morality and promoting the principles of equality, justice, and liberty. According to the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the Bar Council of India (BCI), legal education in India is intended to be a tool for social change. Even so, students from underrepresented groups—such as members of Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), Other Backward Classes (OBC), religious minorities, women, people with disabilities, and LGBTQ+ people—continue to encounter psychological obstacles that are both invisible and deeply ingrained, impeding their ability to participate in and succeed in legal academia. Despite the extensive documentation of structural and economic barriers, such as limited access to high-quality primary education and digital infrastructure, the psychological aspects of exclusion are still poorly understood. These include imposter syndrome, internalized inferiority, emotional exhaustion brought on by unfriendly or uncaring institutional environments, academic anxiety, and stereotype threat. These psychological burdens have an impact on academic achievement, but they also limit aspirations, raise dropout rates, and deter underrepresented students from holding leadership positions in the legal industry. Articles 15(4), 15(5), and 21-A of the Indian Constitution, as well as court rulings like **State of Kerala v. N.M. Thomas**¹ and **Ashoka Kumar Thakur v. Union of India**² all uphold the promise of inclusive education. However, the psychological and emotional toll inflicted on students from marginalized communities has not been adequately addressed by legal education institutions. These challenges are exacerbated by the lack of mental health facilities, the prevalence of English-language education, and a covert curriculum that favors elite standards. The purpose of this article is to examine these psychological issues within the framework of legal education in India. In addition to (i) examining important psychological theories that are pertinent to student performance and identity formation, it will also (ii) look at case law and empirical research that emphasize the lived experiences of marginalized students and (iii) suggest pedagogical and structural changes to make legal institutions more inclusive. Indian law schools can get closer to achieving the substantive equality in education promised by the constitution by addressing the psychological aspects of exclusion.

2. UNDERSTANDING PSYCHOLOGICAL BARRIERS IN LEGAL EDUCATION

Legal education in India operates within a complex socio-political matrix where deeply rooted caste, class, gender, and linguistic hierarchies shape students' experiences both inside and outside the classroom. Numerous academics have noted that international regulations actively administer business affairs to enable companies to compete in the globalized economy. The demand for the type of knowledge regarding laws, regulations, and the institutions of national, regional, and international organizations consequently rises. For students from historically marginalized backgrounds, these intersections often manifest not only as material disadvantage but

¹ 1976 SCR (1) 906, AIR 1976 .

² (2008) 6SCC1138

also as profound psychological burdens. This section outlines the primary psychological obstacles faced by these students, contextualizing them through established psychological theories and educational frameworks.

A. Stereotype Threat and Identity Performance

Claude Steele and Joshua Aronson (1995) coined the term "stereotype threat," which describes the possibility of confirming unfavorable preconceptions about one's social group, which can have an impact on one's emotional and academic well-being. This phenomenon has been noted in Indian classrooms, where students from different categories frequently refrain from speaking up or interacting with teachers out of concern that they will be perceived on base of classification

B. Imposter Syndrome and Institutional Alienation

First-generation students and underrepresented students in prestigious law schools frequently experience imposter syndrome, which is the feeling that they are a fake despite their apparent success. These pupils frequently express feeling "out of place" in environments where English-speaking, urban, upper-caste peers predominate. According to studies done at prestigious universities like the National Academy of Legal Studies and Research (NALSAR) and the National Law School of India University (NLSIU), many students from categories experience social isolation, self-doubt, and a lack of belonging. The lack of representation in student leadership and impairs the marginalization sentiments.¹

C. Language, Pedagogy, and Psychological Distress

The majority of legal education in India is taught in English, a language that many people cannot understand. Students from rural or vernacular-medium backgrounds experience psychological stress in addition to difficulties understanding academic material because of this language barrier. The prevalence of Anglocentric readings, theoretical jargon, and Euro-American jurisprudence lead to feelings of inferiority and cognitive dissonance.² Many students report that they are unable to relate to the classroom discourse or feel discouraged from participating in debates and discussions.

C. Mental Health Crisis in Law Schools

Several studies have shown that the competitive and hierarchical nature of legal education contributes to high rates of anxiety, depression, and burnout among law students. Financial instability, social stigma, and familial pressures exacerbate these stressors for marginalized students. According to a 2021 study by the Centre for Mental Health Law & Policy in Pune, more than 60% of marginalized law students surveyed said they had high stress levels and depressive symptoms, but they were afraid to get help because of the stigma and absent institutional support networks.³

3. LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS PROTECTING EDUCATIONAL ACCESS AND MENTAL HEALTH

While psychological barriers often remain invisible in academic discourse, the Indian legal framework does provide explicit protections aimed at ensuring inclusive and equitable access to education. These constitutional mandates and statutory provisions serve as both a moral compass and a legal foundation for addressing discrimination and fostering psychological well-being in educational institutions, including law schools.

A. Constitutional Provisions Promoting Educational Equity

The Indian Constitution is a transformative document that seeks to correct historical injustices and promote substantive equality.

¹ Centre for Law and Policy Research. "Barriers to Access in Legal Education: An Assessment of Inclusion in NLUs." CLPR Report, 2021. Available at: <https://clpr.org.in/publications/> visited on 19th April 2025 @11.30pm

² K.S. Satish, "Dalit Students in Elite Law Schools: A Study of Structural Marginalization," *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 54, No. 9 (2019): 45–52, <https://www.epw.in/tags/dalit-students> visited on 20th April 2025@12.00am

³ Ibid foot note -4

1. Article 15(4) and 15(5) – Empower the State to make special provisions for the advancement of socially and educationally backward classes, SCs, and STs, including reservations in educational institutions. These articles have been the legal basis for affirmative action policies that seek to address structural inequalities that marginalized students face.
2. Article 21-A – Introduced by the 86th Amendment, this article guarantees the right to free and compulsory education for children aged 6 to 14 years, laying a foundation for inclusive educational opportunity.
3. Article 41 – Part of the Directive Principles of State Policy, this article mandates the State to secure the right to education and public assistance in cases of unemployment, old age, sickness, and disability—emphasizing the importance of institutional support for psychological and physical well-being.
4. Article 46 – Directs the State to promote the educational and economic interests of SCs, STs, and other weaker sections, and to protect them from social injustice and exploitation.

B. Right to Mental Health as Part of Right to Life under Article 21

The right to mental health has been subsumed under the broader right to life and personal liberty under Article 21 of the Constitution. In the landmark case of **Mental Health Review Committee v. Union of India**,¹ the Court recognized mental health as an integral aspect of human dignity. This position was further reinforced in **B.K. Parthasarathi v. Government of Andhra Pradesh**,² where the Andhra Pradesh High Court held that mental health is essential for the full development of the individual and must be protected by the State. These constitutional mandates recognizing the right of every person to access mental health care services without discrimination, implicitly mandates the establishment of counselling services, mental health professionals, and grievance redressal mechanisms in educational spaces.

C. Statutory Protections and Guidelines

In addition to constitutional provisions, several statutory and policy guidelines address educational equity and mental health:

- The University Grants Commission (UGC) Guidelines on Student Entitlements (2013) recognize the right of students to be free from discrimination, to access mental health services, and to learn in an inclusive environment.
- The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 mandates institutions to provide reasonable accommodations and accessible environments for students with disabilities, including mental health conditions.
- The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emphasizes the importance of socio-emotional learning and inclusive education, calling for robust mental health support systems in higher education institutions.

These legal and constitutional safeguards highlight law schools' obligations to provide inclusive, affirming, and psychologically safe learning environments in addition to ensuring physical access. However, administrators and students are not well-informed about these provisions, and implementation is still uneven.

4. INSTITUTIONAL CASE STUDIES TO GAIN A DEEPER COMPREHENSION

Studies show that students from marginalized communities' experiences is crucial to understanding the psychological barriers in legal education. Even though data and constitutional ideals offer a crucial macro perspective, people's experiences navigating peer networks, classrooms, and institutional hierarchies reveal the true impact of psychological barriers. A selection of first-hand recollections, qualitative research, and some issues are examined in this section to demonstrate the ongoing difficulties a law student's face.

A. Linguistic Disadvantage and Rural Backgrounds

Language is a frequent source of anxiety for students from rural and non-English medium backgrounds. In interviews conducted at a central university in Maharashtra, students reported that they often “felt invisible” during classroom discussions and hesitated to approach professors due to the fear of being ridiculed for poor English.³ Many internalized these barriers as personal failures rather than systemic shortcomings.

¹ (1991) SCC (3) 124

² AIR 2000 AP 156

³ UNESCO Report on Legal Education in India (2016). Available at: www.unesco.org visited on 19th April@11.40pm

This problem is magnified in moot court competitions, legal writing seminars, and internships seen as performance indicators in legal education where language fluency is often equated with competence. In such environments, linguistic insecurity compounds feelings of intellectual inadequacy and fosters long-term disengagement.

B. Gender, Queerness, and Psychological Invisibility

In law school, students who identify as queer or gender non-conforming bear particular psychological challenges. Tokenism, misgendering, and alienation are common among LGBTQ+ students, according to a 2022 study by Students Against Sexual Harassment (SASH).¹ Although anti-discrimination or gender-neutral hostel policies have been passed by some institutions, their application varies.

At a public law university, a trans student claimed that they were made to use facilities that were inappropriately gendered, which caused them to become extremely distressed and withdraw from society.⁵ When no structural accommodations were made after contacting several administrative bodies, the student ultimately requested academic leave on the grounds of mental health. These kinds of incidents are typical of the psychological damage caused by institutional neglect.

C. Institutional Responses: Good Practices and Gaps

Some institutions have taken progressive steps to counteract psychological marginalization. NALSAR University of Law, for instance, introduced the “Inclusive Education Committee” to address grievances related to discrimination and to provide mentorship to first-generation students. Jindal Global Law School (JGLS) has established a Counselling and Wellness Centre with trained psychologists and hosts workshops on mental health and caste sensitivity². However, these efforts are exceptions rather than norms. Most public law schools lack professionally trained counselors, and grievance redressal mechanisms are underutilized due to fear of retaliation or apathy. The lack of representation of SC/ST/OBC and minority faculty members further compounds the problem, leaving students without role models or safe spaces.

5. STRATEGIES FOR REFORM – PEDAGOGICAL, INSTITUTIONAL, AND POLICY-LEVEL SOLUTIONS

A multi-layered reform approach that incorporates institutional commitment, policy-level accountability, and empathetic pedagogy is necessary to address psychological barriers in legal education for marginalized students. The solutions must become ingrained in the principles and framework of legal education itself, rather than being token measures or one-time seminars. This section presents a thorough framework of reforms that fall into three categories: policy, institutional, and pedagogical interventions.

A. Pedagogical Reforms: Rethinking the Classroom

1. Inclusive Curriculum Design

Legal education must move away from a Eurocentric, elite-focused model to one that reflects India’s plural legal traditions and social realities. Integrating critical caste theory, feminist jurisprudence, tribal rights, and intersectional analysis into core courses can offer validation and visibility to marginalized students’ lived experiences³.

2. Bilingual Instruction and Language Sensitivity

Institutions should promote bilingual or multilingual legal education by offering supplementary readings, legal glossaries, and lectures in regional languages. Legal writing and moot court programs should train students from vernacular backgrounds without penalizing linguistic difference. Faculty training on language sensitivity must become mandatory to prevent inadvertent shaming or discrimination.

¹ Students Against Sexual Harassment (SASH). “Queer and Legal: Mapping Gender Non-Conformity in Law Schools.” Policy Brief, 2022.

² The National Law School of India University (NLSIU). (2020). Annual Report 2020. Available at: www.nls.ac.in visited on 20th April @12.01am.

³ Baxi, Upendra & Dhanda, Amita. “Teaching Law in the Context of India’s Socio-Legal Realities,” Indian Journal of Legal Education, Vol. 6, No. 2 (2018): 15–32.

3. Participatory Pedagogy:-

A shift from didactic teaching to participatory pedagogy—such as clinical legal education, storytelling, peer-led sessions, and collaborative projects—can empower students from non-traditional backgrounds. Encouraging diverse forms of expression (e.g., oral presentations, creative writing, local case studies) allows students to engage without feeling intellectually inferior.

B. Institutional Reforms: Culture, Counselling, and Representation

1. Mental Health Infrastructure

Every law school ought to have a counselling centre with qualified psychologists on staff who are knowledgeable about caste trauma, gender identity, and academic pressure. Support for mental health needs to be multilingual, private, and de-stigmatized. 24/7 helplines and anonymous feedback platforms need to be established.

2. Anti-Discrimination Units

Each institution should establish an autonomous Anti-Discrimination Cell with student and faculty representation to address complaints of casteist, sexist, homophobic, or ableist behavior. These units must be empowered to conduct inquiries, recommend policy changes, and publish annual reports.

3. Bridge Programs and Academic Support

Law schools should organize bridge courses in English, legal reasoning, and research methods at the start of each academic year for first-generation and underprepared students. Regular academic support centers can help students without the fear of judgment or stigma.

C. Policy-Level Reforms: State and Regulatory Interventions

1. Regulatory Mandates by the BCI and UGC

The Bar Council of India (BCI) and University Grants Commission (UGC) must include metrics of inclusivity and student well-being in accreditation criteria for law schools. Institutions should be required to submit annual equity and mental health audits¹.

2. National Mental Health Policy for Higher Education

a coordinated national policy on mental health in higher education must be developed with the Ministry of Education, UGC, and the Ministry of Social Justice. This policy should outline minimum standards for counselling, mental health leave, inclusion cells, and training programs.

3. Legal Aid Clinics and Experiential Learning

Mandatory participation in legal aid and community justice clinics should be integrated into law programs not only for social justice exposure but also to enable marginalized students to connect academic learning with lived realities.

4. Financial and Peer Support Systems

State-funded scholarships, housing assistance, and peer-learning fellowships should be extended to ensure students from disadvantaged backgrounds can focus on their studies without psychological distress caused by economic precarity.

CONCLUSION

The pursuit of justice in legal education cannot remain confined to theoretical ideals or courtroom ambitions, it must begin within the walls of the classroom itself. A psychologically just legal education requires more than equitable admissions policies or occasional diversity training. It demands an ethos that validates all learners as intellectually worthy and emotionally complex individuals. This ethos must be reflected in every facet of legal education: in what is taught, how it is taught, who teaches, who is seen and heard, and who is allowed to fail without being labelled inadequate.

Law schools must commit to holistic reforms that centre mental well-being and inclusivity not as auxiliary concerns, but as core academic priorities. Creating safe, affirming, and mentally supportive environments in legal education to become lawyers who uphold the Constitution, defend human dignity, and challenge injustice in all its forms.

¹ Bar Council of India. (2010). Legal Education Rules 2008. Available at: www.barcouncilofindia.org. visited on 20th April 2025@12:10am

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: A PATHWAY TO SOCIAL EQUITY

Pankti Surve

Assistant Professor, Sociology, Center for Distance and Online Education, University of Mumbai

ABSTRACT

The critical link between inclusive education and the pursuit of social equity is examined within this paper. It is often assumed that inclusive educational practices, embracing the diversity of all learners and actively addressing the barriers to their participation, are very fundamental for the formation of a more just and equitable society. Moving beyond traditional models of education, which often recreates marginalization, this paper contends that inclusive education creates opportunities for all individuals, irrespective of their background, abilities, or identities, to access quality learning experiences and develop their full potential. The theoretical underpinnings of inclusive education are explored, based on the frameworks of social justice, human rights, and critical disability studies. An analysis is undertaken regarding the manner in which inclusive policies and pedagogies can break the systemic barriers and promote a sense of responsibility, belonging, dignity, respect, and shared citizenship among students, thus making them a responsible class of citizens. Furthermore, practical implications of implementing inclusive education are explored, with consideration given to the practices and strategies for curriculum adaptation, teacher training, collaborative practices, and the creation of supportive learning environments. Considering the relevant research and case studies, this paper will highlight the positive impacts of inclusive education not only on academic achievement, but will also consider social-emotional development, and the overall development of all students. It will also consider the challenges faced with its implementation, offering insights and recommendations intended to facilitate practices to meet these obstacles. Ultimately, this paper advocates for a paradigm shift towards inclusive education as a powerful catalyst for advancing social equity and building more inclusive and cohesive communities.

Keywords: *inclusivity, marginalization, catalyst, implementation*

INTRODUCTION

Education, a fundamental human right and a significant mean for personal development contributing to societal progress, equips people with the knowledge, skills, and critical thinking abilities needed to successfully negotiate life's challenges, engage actively in their communities, and support economic development. Sadly, education, as a tool for social mobility and transformation remains unfulfilled for a substantial portion of population across the globe. Even in the period of postindependence, educational systems have frequently perpetuated inequalities, segregating learners based upon perceived differences, including ability, socio-economic status, ethnicity, gender, language, and other characteristics. This segregation not only disregards the potential of marginalized individuals, but it also weakens the society by reinforcing division and exclusion, creating hatred and a sense of being left-out from attaining required development.

At the other end, the concept of inclusive education refers to a transformative paradigm shift. It envisions an educational system where all the learners, irrespective of their diverse backgrounds and abilities, are valued, respected, and actively participate in mainstream educational settings. As thought earlier, Inclusive education does not limit itself to generating accessibility for a handful of handicapped students, but rather it necessitates a fundamental alteration in the manner in which education is conceptualized and structured, so as to accommodate the full spectrum of human diversity. This paper contends that inclusive education is not merely a pedagogical approach but a fundamental pathway towards the attainment of social equity, fostering a society where opportunities and outcomes are not predetermined by any sort of individual differences or societal biases.

Social equity, at its core, signifies fairness and justice in the distribution of resources, opportunities, and outcomes. It transcends formal equality, acknowledging that individuals may possess differing needs and circumstances, and therefore necessitates targeted support and proactive measures to ensure equitable outcomes. When applied to education, social equity mandates that all learners are afforded access to high-quality, relevant, and accessible education that is responsive to their diverse needs and prepares them for active and meaningful participation in all aspects of society. Inclusive education, with its emphasis on celebrating diversity, removing barriers to learning and participation, and providing individualized support, directly addresses these demands.

This paper will explore the manner in which inclusive practices are capable of dismantling exclusionary mechanisms within educational systems and promoting a more just distribution of educational benefits.

Furthermore, it will examine the practical considerations and challenges involved in implementing inclusive education effectively, drawing upon research, policy frameworks, and examples derived from diverse contexts. Ultimately, this paper seeks to underscore the transformative potential of inclusive education as a significant mechanism for building societies that are socially equitable, inclusive, and cohesive.

THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS: INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

As it is clear, the philosophy of inclusive education is deeply enrooted in the principles of social justice, human rights, inherent worth and dignity of people. When It comes to inclusive education, there are a number of key theoretical frameworks underpinning the concept of inclusive education and its relationship to social equity:

- **Human Rights Framework:** International human rights conventions, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), clearly states the right of all individuals to education, without discrimination. The UNCRPD, in particular, explicitly advocates for the right of persons with disabilities to inclusive education, emphasizing the obligation of states to ensure an inclusive education system at all levels (United Nations, 2006). This human rights perspective underscores that segregation and exclusion, based on disability or any other difference, are discriminatory and violate fundamental human rights. Inclusive education, therefore, is not a matter of charity or special provision, but a legal and ethical need.
- **Social Justice Theories:** Social justice theories provide a critical lens for examining the manner in which power, privilege, and inequality operate within educational systems. John Rawls, Nancy Fraser, and Iris Marion Young, and others, have explored concepts such as distributive justice which means the fair allocation of resources, recognition i.e respect for diverse identities and experiences, and participation i.e the right to have a voice in decisions that affect one's life. Inclusive education aligns with these principles by advocating for equitable access to educational resources, valuing the diversity of all learners, and promoting their active participation in the learning process.
- **Critical Disability Studies:** Critical disability studies (CDS) offers a valuable framework for comprehending disability, not as an individual deficit or medical condition, but rather as a social construct. CDS scholars argue that disability is frequently created and maintained by societal barriers, discriminatory attitudes, and exclusionary practices.
- **The Social Model of Disability:** The social model of disability, a key concept within critical disability studies, distinguishes between impairment and the actual functional limitation and disability of the social disadvantage, experienced as a result of societal barriers. This model highlights that it is not the impairment itself that disables individuals, but rather the manner in which society responds to and accommodates difference.

Inclusive education is based on the social model by acknowledging that the responsibility for removing barriers lies with the education system and society as a whole, rather than with the individual student. (See, for example, Fulcher, 1989). In essence, these theoretical frameworks converge to establish that inclusive education is a matter of social justice, human rights, and a commitment to dismantling systemic inequalities. It concerns the creation of an educational system that values diversity, empowers all learners, and fosters a more equitable and inclusive society.

HOW INCLUSIVE EDUCATION PROMOTES SOCIAL EQUITY

Inclusive education plays a crucial role in dismantling the barriers that perpetuate social inequity within and beyond the education system. Traditional segregated or partially integrated educational settings often reinforce social hierarchies, perpetuate stereotypes, and limit opportunities for marginalized groups. By contrast, inclusive education actively endeavors to break down these barriers and promote social equity in several key ways:

- **Challenging Stereotypes and Prejudice:** Inclusive classrooms provide a special chance for students with and without disabilities, as well as those from different backgrounds, to learn together. This collective learning is able to dispel preconceived ideas, dismantle destructive stereotypes, and create mutual understanding, respect, and empathy. When students engage with others who are unlike themselves, they gain a more sophisticated and realistic understanding of human diversity, thus minimizing prejudice and discrimination. For instance, a non-disabled student, who studies with a student with a learning disability, might learn tolerance and understand the value of their special strengths and difficulties, instead of dwelling on their limitations and engaging in forms of bullying.

- **Promoting a Sense of Belonging and Participation:** Inclusive education emphasizes the importance of creating a welcoming, safe, and supportive school environment where all students feel valued, respected, and possess a strong sense of belonging. When students feel recognized, they are more likely to get motivated and engage actively in learning, participate in school activities, and develop positive social relationships. This sense of belonging is crucial for their social and emotional well-being, academic achievement, and overall development. Inclusive practices, which includes peer support programs, cooperative learning activities, and the celebration of diversity, can help to foster a sense of community and belonging for all students.
- **Providing Equitable Access to Quality Education:** Inclusive education aims to provide all students with access to the same high-quality curriculum, resources, and learning opportunities, with necessary adaptations and supports to meet individual needs. This ensures that marginalized students are denied access to the knowledge and skills they require to succeed. Equitable access to quality education constitutes a fundamental prerequisite for social mobility, economic opportunity, and the reduction of disparities in outcomes.
- **Developing Social Skills and Empathy:** Learning within inclusive environments exposes students to a wider range of perspectives, experiences, and abilities, fostering the development of crucial social skills such as communication, collaboration, problem-solving, empathy, and conflict resolution. When students learn to work together with peers who possess differing strengths and challenges, they develop empathy towards them.
- **Fostering Social Cohesion and Inclusive Citizenship:** Inclusive education promotes social cohesion by bringing together students from diverse backgrounds and abilities, thus fostering a sense of shared citizenship and common purpose. Inclusive schools are capable of serving as microcosms of an inclusive society, where students acquire the ability to appreciate diversity, resolve conflicts peacefully, and collaborate for the common good. This contributes to the development of active and engaged citizens who are committed to social justice and equity. (Ainscow et al., 2006).

In essence, inclusive education dismantles barriers to social equity by challenging prejudice, promoting belonging, providing equitable access to quality education, developing essential social skills, fostering social cohesion, and enhancing academic outcomes for all learners.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS: IMPLEMENTING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Inclusive education is not a singular intervention but an ongoing process of continuous improvement and adaptation. Some key practical considerations include:

- **Policy Frameworks and Legislation:** Governments play important in developing a facilitating policy environment to support inclusive education. This includes passing and enforcing effective and extensive legislation that compels inclusive education, forbids discrimination, and ensures the appropriate resources and assistance to implement it.
- **National Education Plans:** Inclusive education should be integrated into national education plans and strategies, incorporating clear goals, targets, and indicators for monitoring progress aligning with international frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the UNCRPD. (UNESCO, 2017)
- **Funding and Resource Allocation:** Funding mechanisms should be designed to ensure that resources are distributed equitably to schools, with additional support provided to those serving marginalized communities.
- **Curriculum Development and Adaptation:** The curriculum must exhibit flexibility, relevance, and adaptability, so as to address the diverse learning needs of all students. This involves incorporating the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), which aims to create learning environments and materials that are accessible to everyone, regardless of their abilities or learning styles. Educators should be trained to differentiate instruction, modify assignments, and employ a variety of teaching strategies to accommodate individual learning needs. Curriculum adaptation should also encompass ensuring that the content is culturally relevant, reflects the diversity of the student population, and challenges stereotypes and biases. (Hall, Meyer, & Rose, 2012)

- **School Leadership:** Strong and committed school leadership is essential for creating a culture of inclusion and driving systemic change. School leaders perform a key role in establishing the vision for inclusion, providing support and resources to educators, fostering collaboration, and promoting a positive school climate. They also need to be advocates for inclusive education within the wider community and work to build support among parents and other stakeholders. (Ainscow, 2005)

Implementing inclusive education necessitates a whole-school approach that involves all members of the school community working in concert to create a welcoming, supportive, and inclusive environment for all learners.

CHALLENGES AND CONSIDERATIONS

While the benefits of inclusive education are well-established, its implementation is not without challenges. Many countries around the world are still grappling with the complexities of transforming their education systems to be more inclusive. Some common obstacles and considerations include:

- **Resistance to Change:** The transition from traditional segregated models to inclusive practices frequently encounters resistance from educators, administrators, parents, and the wider community, who may hold onto established beliefs, attitudes, and practices.
- **Lack of Resources:** Insufficient funding, inadequate training for educators, a shortage of qualified support personnel (such as special education teachers and therapists), and a lack of accessible materials and assistive technologies can impede the effective implementation of inclusive education.
- **Large Class Sizes and Diverse Needs:** Educators in large classes with a wide range of diverse learning needs may experience feelings of being overwhelmed and may lack the time and resources necessary to provide individualized support to all students.
- **Attitudinal Barriers:** Negative attitudes, stereotypes, and a lack of understanding about disability and diversity can engender significant barriers to inclusion. Addressing attitudinal barriers necessitates ongoing awareness-raising, education, and opportunities for individuals to interact with others from diverse backgrounds. (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002)
- **Lack of Collaboration and Communication:** Insufficient communication and collaboration among educators, administrators, support staff, parents, and other stakeholders can result in fragmented support for students and hinder the development of cohesive inclusive practices.

Addressing these challenges necessitates a sustained and coordinated effort involving policymakers, educators, school leaders, parents, students, and the wider community. It requires a long-term commitment to providing adequate resources, ongoing professional development, fostering positive attitudes, promoting effective collaboration, and adapting assessment and accountability systems to support inclusive practices.

CONCLUSION

Inclusive education is not just a policy or an idea, it constitutes a fundamental principle of social justice and a achieving social equity. By considering the diversity of all learners, dismantling barriers to participation, and fostering a culture characterized by belonging, respect, and equity, inclusive education engenders the conditions necessary for all individuals to attain their full potential, participate meaningfully in society, and contribute to the common good.

achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the construction of a more just and equitable world, inclusive education must be positioned at the forefront of these endeavors. It represents a moral imperative, a legal obligation, and a practical necessity. By collaborating to create inclusive education systems, the empowerment of all learners, the transformation of societies, and the construction of a world where social equity is not simply an aspiration, but a lived reality for everyone, can be facilitated.

REFERENCES

- Ainscow, M. (2005). Developing inclusive education systems: What are the levers for change? *Journal of Educational Change*, 6(2), 109-124.
- Avramidis, E., & Norwich, B. (2002). Teachers' attitudes towards integration/inclusion: A review of the literature. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 17(2), 129-147.
- Fulcher, G. (1989). *Disabling policies? A comparative approach to education policy and disability*. London: Falmer.
- Hall, T., Meyer, A., & Rose, D. H. (2012). *Universal design for learning in the classroom: Practical applications*. Guilford Press.

United Nations. (2006). *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. United Nations.

UNESCO. (2017). *Education for people and planet: Creating sustainable futures for all*. Global Education Monitoring Report.

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION LAWS IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS: POLICY VS. PRACTICE

Dr. Kavita Muneshwar

Associate Professor, Sociology, Sanskar Mandir Sansthas Arts & Commerce College, Warje, Pune 58

ABSTRACT

Anti-discrimination laws in education are designed to promote equality and protect marginalized groups from exclusionary practices. However, a significant gap exists between policy frameworks and their implementation. This paper examines the effectiveness of anti-discrimination laws in educational institutions through a sociological lens, focusing on disparities in enforcement, institutional resistance, and structural barriers. Drawing on empirical studies and legal analyses, the study highlights how caste, race, gender, and disability-based discrimination persist despite legal safeguards. The findings suggest that while legislative measures exist, their translation into practice is hindered by socio-cultural biases, lack of accountability, and institutional inertia. The paper concludes with recommendations for strengthening enforcement mechanisms and fostering inclusive educational environments.

Keywords: *Anti-discrimination laws, education, policy implementation, caste, race, gender, disability, institutional bias*

INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental right, yet systemic discrimination based on caste, race, gender, disability, and socioeconomic status continues to impede equitable access and participation. Governments worldwide have enacted anti-discrimination laws—such as India's Right to Education Act (2009), the U.S. Civil Rights Act (1964), and the U.K. Equality Act (2010)—to combat exclusion. However, research indicates that these laws often fail to translate into meaningful change due to weak enforcement, institutional resistance, and socio-cultural prejudices (Bowen & Bok, 1998; Nambissan, 2016).

This paper explores the disconnect between anti-discrimination policies and their practical implementation in educational institutions. Using a sociological framework, it analyzes how structural inequalities undermine legal protections and perpetuate exclusion. The discussion is structured into three sections: (1) an overview of anti-discrimination laws in education, (2) empirical evidence on policy-practice gaps, and (3) recommendations for systemic reform.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: LEGAL PROTECTIONS AND STRUCTURAL INEQUALITY

Anti-discrimination laws operate within broader structures of power and privilege. Critical race theory (CRT) posits that racism and casteism are embedded in institutions, making legal remedies insufficient without systemic change (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). Similarly, feminist legal scholars argue that gender discrimination persists due to patriarchal norms that influence policy enforcement (MacKinnon, 1989).

Bourdieu's (1986) concept of *cultural capital* further explains how dominant groups maintain educational advantage despite formal equality. In India, for instance, Dalit students face systemic exclusion even after the abolition of untouchability (Thorat & Newman, 2010). Meanwhile, in the U.S., racial minorities encounter "color-blind" policies that ignore structural racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2006). These theories highlight the limitations of anti-discrimination laws in dismantling deep-rooted inequalities.

EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE: POLICY VS. PRACTICE**1. Caste-Based Discrimination in India**

Despite constitutional bans on caste discrimination, Dalit students experience segregation, verbal abuse, and exclusion in schools (Nambissan, 2016). A study by the National Dalit Movement for Justice (2019) found that 25% of Dalit children face casteist slurs, while 12% are forced to sit separately. Affirmative action policies, such as reservations, are often undermined by administrative loopholes and social boycotts (Deshpande, 2013).

2. Racial Discrimination in Western Education Systems

In the U.S., despite the Civil Rights Act, Black and Latino students face disproportionate disciplinary actions and lower academic tracking (Ladson-Billings, 2006). Schools in predominantly minority neighborhoods receive fewer resources, perpetuating the "school-to-prison pipeline" (Alexander, 2010). Similarly, in the U.K., racial disparities in exclusion rates persist, with Black Caribbean students three times more likely to be expelled (Gillborn, 2008).

3. Gender and Sexual Orientation Discrimination

Gender disparities in education persist globally, with girls facing barriers such as early marriage, harassment, and lack of sanitation facilities (UNESCO, 2021). In higher education, sexual harassment policies often lack enforcement, leaving survivors without redress (Phadke, 2013). LGBTQ+ students also face bullying and exclusion, with many institutions failing to implement anti-discrimination protections (Pascoe, 2011).

4. Disability and Accessibility Gaps

While laws like the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) mandate inclusive education, many institutions lack adequate infrastructure and teacher training (Haller, 2010). In India, the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (2016) remains poorly implemented, with disabled students facing physical and attitudinal barriers (Singal, 2016).

BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION

1. **Institutional Resistance:** Schools and universities often resist change due to entrenched biases (Bowen & Bok, 1998).
2. **Lack of Accountability:** Grievance mechanisms are weak, and complaints are frequently dismissed (Nambissan, 2016).
3. **Cultural and Social Norms:** Discriminatory practices are normalized, making legal interventions ineffective (Bonilla-Silva, 2006).
4. **Resource Constraints:** Underfunded institutions struggle to implement inclusive policies (Deshpande, 2013).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REFORM

1. **Strengthening Enforcement Mechanisms:**
 - Independent monitoring bodies for anti-discrimination compliance (Gillborn, 2008).
 - Mandatory diversity training for educators (Sue et al., 2007).
2. **Inclusive Curriculum and Pedagogy:**
 - Integrating anti-caste, anti-racist, and gender-sensitive content (Paik, 2014).
3. **Community and Student Participation:**
 - Empowering marginalized students through advocacy groups (Freire, 1970).
4. **Policy Revisions:**
 - Addressing loopholes in reservation and affirmative action policies (Thorat, 2009).

CONCLUSION

Anti-discrimination laws in education remain symbolic without robust enforcement and institutional willingness to change. While legal frameworks provide essential protections, their effectiveness is undermined by structural inequalities. Future efforts must focus on accountability, teacher training, and systemic reforms to bridge the policy-practice gap.

REFERENCES

1. Alexander, M. (2010). *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*.
2. Bonilla-Silva, E. (2006). *Racism Without Racists*.
3. Bourdieu, P. (1986). *The Forms of Capital*.
4. Bowen, W. G., & Bok, D. (1998). *The Shape of the River*.
5. Delgado, R., & Stefancic, J. (2017). *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction*.
6. Deshpande, S. (2013). *Affirmative Action in India*.
7. Gillborn, D. (2008). *Racism and Education: Coincidence or Conspiracy?*
8. Nambissan, G. (2016). *Exclusion and Discrimination in Schools*.
9. Thorat, S. (2009). *Dalits in India: Search for a Common Destiny*.
10. UNESCO. (2021). *Global Education Monitoring Report*.

हिंगोली जिल्ह्यातील महिला परिचारिकांच्या समस्यांचे अध्ययन

Pradnya Subhashrao Azade and Pro.Dr.S.R. Gore

Shri Yoganand Swami College Basmath Dist Hingoli.

Research Center: Sociology Department School of Social Science, SRTMU Nanded.

* गोष्टवारा :

आरोग्य व्यवस्था सशक्त ठेवण्यात महिला परिचारिकांचे (nurses) योगदान महत्वाचे आहे. तथापि, हिंगोली जिल्ह्यातील महिला परिचारिका विविध प्रकारच्या सामाजिक, मानसिक, आर्थिक व व्यावसायिक समस्यांना सामोऱ्या जात आहेत. या संशोधनाचा उद्देश हिंगोली जिल्ह्यातील महिला परिचारिकांच्या समस्या ओळखणे, त्यांचे स्वरूप समजून घेणे व त्यावर उपाय सुचवणे हा आहे. या अध्ययनासाठी वर्णनात्मक संशोधन पद्धतीचा अवलंब करण्यात आला असून विविध रुग्णालयांतील ५० महिला परिचारिकांच्या मुलाखती, प्रश्नावल्या आणि निरीक्षणांद्वारे माहिती संकलित करण्यात आली. संशोधनात असे आढळून आले की, अनेक परिचारिकांना दीर्घ कार्य वेळ, सुरक्षिततेचा अभाव, पगारातील असमाधान, मानसिक ताण व सामाजिक प्रतिष्ठेचा अभाव अशा समस्या भेडसावत आहेत. या समस्यांवर उपाययोजना सुचवण्यात आल्या असून, त्या राबवल्यास परिचारिकांचे कार्य वातावरण सुधारेल व आरोग्य सेवेची गुणवत्ता वाढेल.

* प्रस्तावना :

स्वतःचे आयुष्य रुग्णांच्या सेवेकरिता समर्पित करणाऱ्या परिचारिकांचा आरोग्य व्यवस्थेमध्ये एक अनन्यसाधारण महत्वाचा सहभाग असतो. रुग्णांच्या उपचार प्रक्रियेत डॉक्टरांच्या खांद्याला खांदा लावून काम करणाऱ्या या महिला परिचारिका केवळ औषधोपचार करत नाहीत, तर त्या रुग्णाला मानसिक आधार, सांत्वन आणि जीवनाकडे पाहण्याची नवी प्रेरणाही देतात. विशेषतः ग्रामीण आणि मागास भागांमध्ये काम करणाऱ्या महिला परिचारिकांची भूमिका अत्यंत कष्टप्रद आणि जटिल असते.

हिंगोली जिल्हा हा महाराष्ट्रातील मराठवाडा विभागातील एक ग्रामीण व अर्धशहरी लोकवस्ती असलेला जिल्हा आहे. येथील आरोग्य व्यवस्था मर्यादित साधनसामग्री, अपुरा मनुष्यबळ, आणि प्रशासनिक अडचणींनी ग्रस्त आहे. या परिस्थितीत महिला परिचारिका अत्यंत ताणतणावाखाली कार्य करत असून, त्यांना वैयक्तिक, सामाजिक, व्यावसायिक आणि आर्थिक स्तरांवर अनेक अडचणींना सामोरे जावे लागते.

या महिला परिचारिकांना कामाचे अनिश्चित तास, अपुरे वेतन, सुरक्षिततेचा अभाव, सामाजिक प्रतिष्ठेचा अभाव, अपुरे प्रशिक्षण आणि मानसिक तणाव अशा समस्या भेडसावत आहेत. त्यांच्याकडून अपेक्षा मोठ्या असल्या, तरी त्यांची परिस्थिती मात्र दुर्लक्षित राहिलेली आहे. शासनाकडून आणि समाजाकडून यांच्याकडे सेविकेच्या भूमिकेतून पाहिले जाते, पण त्यांचे व्यावसायिक अधिकार आणि गरजा पुरेशा प्रमाणात मान्य केल्या जात नाहीत.

या संशोधनाचा उद्देश म्हणजे हिंगोली जिल्ह्यातील महिला परिचारिकांच्या व्यावसायिक आणि वैयक्तिक जीवनातील समस्यांचे सखोल विश्लेषण करणे आणि त्यातून त्यांच्या अडचणींवर प्रकाश टाकणे. यामार्फत या क्षेत्रातील गरजा, धोरणात्मक त्रुटी, आणि भविष्यातील सुधारणा सुचवण्याचा प्रयत्न करण्यात येणार आहे.

* परिचरिकांचा अर्थ आणि व्याख्या :

A. परिचारिकांचा अर्थ :

परिचारिका म्हणजे अशी व्यावसायिक महिला जी आजारी, जखमी किंवा अशक्त रुग्णांची काळजी घेते, त्यांना वैद्यकीय सेवा प्रदान करते आणि त्यांच्या पुनर्वसनात सहाय्य करते. परिचारिका ही आरोग्यसेवेतील एक महत्त्वपूर्ण दुवा असून ती डॉक्टर आणि रुग्ण यांच्यातील दैनंदिन संपर्क ठेवते. तिची भूमिका केवळ औषधोपचार पुरविण्यापुरती मर्यादित नसून मानसिक आधार देणे, आरोग्य शिक्षण देणे, आणि जीवनशैलीतील सुधारणा घडवून आणणे यामध्येही महत्वाची असते.

B. परिचारिकांची व्याख्या :

1. जागतिक आरोग्य संघटना (WHO) नुसार –

“परिचारिका ही अशी व्यक्ती आहे जिने मूलभूत व सामान्य परिचर्या शिक्षण पूर्ण केलेले असून, जिला संबंधित देशाच्या अधिकृत नियामक संस्थेने परिचर्या व्यवसाय करण्याची मान्यता दिलेली आहे.”

2. भारतीय परिचारिका परिषद (Indian Nursing Council) नुसार –

“परिचारिका ही एक व्यावसायिक आहे जिला आजारी व अशक्त व्यक्तींची सेवा करण्याचे प्रशिक्षण दिलेले आहे आणि जी रुग्णालयीन वातावरणात डॉक्टरांना वैद्यकीय प्रक्रियेत सहाय्य करते.”

3. ऑक्सफर्ड इंग्लिश डिक्शनरी नुसार –

“परिचारिका म्हणजे अशी व्यक्ती जिला विशेषतः रुग्णालयात, आजारी किंवा अशक्त व्यक्तींची सेवा करण्याचे प्रशिक्षण दिलेले आहे.”

* संशोधनाची गरज :

आरोग्य व्यवस्थेमध्ये परिचारिका ही एक महत्वाची कडी आहे, परंतु त्यांच्या अडचणी व व्यावसायिक अडथळे याकडे फारसा लक्ष दिला जात नाही. विशेषतः ग्रामीण व मागासलेल्या भागांमध्ये, जसे की हिंगोली जिल्हा, तेथे कार्यरत महिला परिचारिकांना अपुरा मनुष्यबळ, असुरक्षित वातावरण, अल्प वेतन, कौटुंबिक जबाबदाऱ्या, आणि सामाजिक प्रतिष्ठेचा अभाव अशा अनेक समस्यांना सामोरे जावे लागते.

अशा परिस्थितीत त्यांच्या मानसिक व शारीरिक आरोग्यावर परिणाम होतोच, पण रुग्णसेवेच्या गुणवत्तेवरही प्रतिकूल परिणाम होतो. त्यामुळे हिंगोली जिल्ह्यातील महिला परिचारिकांच्या समस्यांचा अभ्यास करणे ही काळाची गरज आहे. या संशोधनाच्या माध्यमातून या महिला कर्मचारीवर्गाच्या व्यथा, त्यांच्या कार्यस्थितीतील अडथळे, आणि त्यांच्या समस्यांचे संभाव्य उपाय यावर विचार करण्यात येणार आहे. त्यातून धोरणकर्ते, आरोग्य संस्था, आणि शासन यांना निर्णय घेण्यासाठी आवश्यक मार्गदर्शन मिळू शकते.

● संशोधनाची उद्दिष्टे :

1. हिंगोली जिल्ह्यातील महिला परिचारिकांच्या कार्यस्थितीचे सविस्तर चित्रण करणे.
2. महिला परिचारिकांना भेडसावणाऱ्या मुख्य समस्या (शारीरिक, मानसिक, सामाजिक, आर्थिक) ओळखणे व विश्लेषण करणे.
3. परिचारिकांच्या कामकाजातील अडथळ्यांवर परिणाम करणारे घटक स्पष्ट करणे.
4. त्यांच्या कार्यक्षमतेवर या समस्यांचा कसा परिणाम होतो हे समजावून घेणे.
5. या समस्या सोडवण्यासाठी कोणत्या उपाययोजना व धोरणात्मक बदल आवश्यक आहेत याचा अभ्यास करणे.
6. शासन, आरोग्य संस्था, आणि समाज यांच्यासाठी सुधारणा सुचविणे.

● संशोधन पद्धती (Methodology):

संशोधन पद्धती हा शोध कार्याच्या यशस्वितेसाठी अत्यंत महत्वाचा घटक असतो. यामध्ये समस्या, उद्दिष्टे, डेटा गोळा करण्याची प्रक्रिया, आणि त्याचे विश्लेषण कसे केले जाईल हे सुसंगतपणे वर्णन केले जाते. या संशोधनात, हिंगोली जिल्ह्यातील महिला परिचारिकांच्या समस्यांचे विश्लेषण करण्यासाठी खालील संशोधन पद्धतीचा अवलंब केला जाईल:

1. संशोधन प्रकार :

ही संशोधन "वर्णनात्मक संशोधन" (Descriptive Research) असणार आहे. या प्रकारात विद्यमान परिस्थितीचे सुसंगत आणि तात्पुरते चित्रण केले जाते. हिंगोली जिल्ह्यातील महिला परिचारिकांच्या कामाच्या अडचणी, त्यांचा सामाजिक आणि मानसिक आरोग्यवर होणारा प्रभाव, व त्यांच्या कामाशी संबंधित विविध घटकांचे वर्णन केले जाईल.

तसेच, "विश्लेषणात्मक संशोधन" (Analytical Research) देखील करण्यात येईल, ज्याद्वारे महिला परिचारिकांच्या समस्यांचा सखोल विचार केला जाईल आणि त्यांच्या समस्यांचे कारण विश्लेषित केले जाईल.

● हिंगोली जिल्ह्यातील महिला परिचारिकांच्या समस्या –:

हिंगोली जिल्हा हा महाराष्ट्रातील एक प्रामुख्याने ग्रामीण व अर्धशहरी लोकवस्ती असलेला जिल्हा आहे. येथील आरोग्य सेवा पायाभूत सुविधांच्या अभावामुळे आणि कर्मचारी कमतरतेमुळे अनेक समस्यांनी ग्रस्त आहे. विशेषतः महिला परिचारिकांना या पार्श्वभूमीत कार्य करताना अनेक अडचणींना सामोरे जावे लागते. त्यांचे जीवन व कार्यक्षमता दोन्हीही या समस्यांमुळे प्रभावित होते. खाली अशा प्रमुख समस्या सविस्तरपणे विशद केल्या आहेत:

1. कामाचा ताण व दीर्घ कार्य वेळ :

हिंगोली जिल्ह्यातील अनेक रुग्णालये आणि आरोग्य केंद्रे हे पुरेशा कर्मचारी नसलेल्या परिस्थितीत कार्य करत आहेत. परिणामी परिचारिकांवर कामाचा मोठा बोजा येतो. त्यांना अनेक वेळा सलग १० ते १२ तास काम करावे लागते. आकस्मिक अनुपस्थिती असल्यास त्यांची ड्युटी वाढवली जाते. यामुळे त्या शारीरिकदृष्ट्या थकतात आणि मानसिकदृष्ट्या तणावग्रस्त होतात. यामुळे अधिक महिला परिचारिकांची नेमणूक करावी यामुळे इतर परिचारिकेवरती कामाचा ताण कमी होतो व कामाचे तास कमी करावे जेणेकरून परिचारिकांना कामाचा ताण येणार नाही.

2. सुरक्षिततेचा अभाव :

ग्रामीण भागातील प्राथमिक आरोग्य केंद्रे, उपकेंद्रे यामध्ये रात्रीच्या वेळेस महिला परिचारिकांना स्वतंत्रपणे काम करावे लागते. अशावेळी रुग्णांच्या नातेवाईकांकडून गैरवर्तन, अश्लील टिप्पणी किंवा धक्कादायक वर्तनाची शक्यता असते. अनेक रुग्णालयांमध्ये सुरक्षा रक्षक किंवा सीसीटीव्ही यंत्रणा नाहीत. त्यामुळे महिला परिचारिका स्वतःच्या सुरक्षिततेबाबत असुरक्षित वाटतात. महिला परिचारिकांच्या सुरक्षितेसाठी आरोग्य विभागात किंवा दवाखान्यात CCTV यंत्रणा बसवावी व तसेच रात्रपाळी साठी महिला कर्मचाऱ्यांना थांबून घेऊ नये. महिला कर्मचाऱ्यांसाठी दर महिन्याला आढावा बैठक घ्यावी जेणेकरून महिलांच्या समस्या सोडविण्यात मदत होईल

3. सामाजिक प्रतिष्ठेचा अभाव :

समाजामध्ये परिचारिका या केवळ “सेविका” म्हणून पाहिल्या जातात. त्यांच्या ज्ञान, कौशल्य आणि मेहनतीचा पुरेसा सन्मान केला जात नाही. काही वेळा त्यांच्याशी तुच्छतापूर्ण वागणूक दिली जाते. ग्रामीण भागातील रूढी, परंपरा आणि पितृसत्ताक दृष्टिकोनामुळे त्यांना आपले व्यावसायिक स्थान प्रस्थापित करताना अडथळे येतात. यामुळे महिला कर्मचाऱ्यांच्या कार्याची नोंद व्हावी तसेच त्यांच्या कार्याचे कौतुक करण्यात यावे यामुळे समाजात त्यांचा दर्जा उंचावण्यास मदत होतो.

4. पगार व सुविधांमध्ये असमानता :

शासकीय रुग्णालयांमधील परिचारिकांना ठराविक वेतन व सुविधा मिळतात, पण खासगी संस्थांमध्ये हे वेतन अत्यल्प असते. अनेक महिला परिचारिकांना किमान वेतनही मिळत नाही. त्यांच्यासाठी आरोग्य विमा, प्रसूती रजा, पीएफ, किंवा विश्रांतीसाठी व्यवस्था नसते. विशेषतः कंत्राटी व अंशकालीन परिचारिकांची परिस्थिती अधिक दयनीय आहे. महिला कर्मचाऱ्यांना त्यांच्या कामानुसार वेतन देण्यात यावे यामध्ये स्त्री पुरुष भेदभाव न करता शासनाच्या नियमावली प्रमाणे समान वेतन व सुविधा देण्यात याव्यात.

5. कौटुंबिक जबाबदाऱ्या आणि कामातील असमतोल :

परिचारिकांवर घर व नोकरी दोन्ही जबाबदाऱ्या सांभाळण्याची अपेक्षा असते. हिंगोली जिल्ह्यातील महिलांना घरातील काम, मुलांची देखभाल, वृद्धांची सेवा यासोबत नोकरीतही सतत जागरूक रहावे लागते. कामाचा वेळ अनिश्चित असल्याने कुटुंबीयांशी वेळ घालवण्याचा अभाव जाणवतो. परिणामी वैयक्तिक आयुष्यात ताण निर्माण होतो. यामुळे कामाच्या व्यापामधून स्वतःच्या आनंदासाठी वेळ काढावा जेणेकरून मानसीक ताण कमी होईल व कौटुंबिक जबाबदार्या वेवस्थीत पार पाडल्या जातील व कामाचे योग्य प्रकारे नियोजन करावे यामुळे सर्व कामे वेळेत व यशस्वीपणे पार पडला जाते.

6. प्रशिक्षणाचा अभाव व तांत्रिक मर्यादा :

ग्रामीण व आदिवासी भागातील रुग्णालयांमध्ये आधुनिक वैद्यकीय उपकरणांची उपलब्धता मर्यादित आहे. परिणामी महिला परिचारिकांना आधुनिक तंत्रज्ञानाचे प्रशिक्षण मिळत नाही. अनेक वेळा नवीन प्रक्रियांची माहिती अपुरी असते. त्यामुळे त्यांच्या कार्यक्षमतेवर मर्यादा येतात आणि कामात अपयश येण्याची शक्यता वाढते. यामुळे वैद्यकीय अधिकाऱ्यांनी नवीन तंत्रज्ञानाचे प्रशिक्षण सर्व कर्मचाऱ्यांना द्यावे जेणेकरून रुग्णालयात येणारे रुग्णांवर योग्यप्रकारे उपचार करण्यात येतील.

7. मानसिक आरोग्याशी संबंधित अडचणी :

दैनंदिन तणाव, कामाचा भार, रुग्णांचे गंभीर आजार किंवा मृत्यू, सामाजिक दबाव, व भविष्यातील अनिश्चितता यामुळे परिचारिकांमध्ये नैराश्य, चिंता, झोपेचा अभाव, चिडचिडेपणा अशा मानसिक समस्या वाढताना दिसतात. मानसिक आरोग्य सेवांची अनुपलब्धता ही परिस्थिती अधिक गुंतागुंतीची बनवते. त्यांच्या कामाचा व्याप कमी करून नविन छंद जोपासण्यास सांगावे व मानसीक ताण कमी करण्यास योगा करण्यास प्रवृत्त करावे.

8. व्यवस्थापनाचे दुर्लक्ष व संवादाचा अभाव :

परिचारिकांच्या अडचणी ऐकून घेणारे व्यवस्थापनाचे प्रतिनिधी किंवा समित्या अनेकदा अस्तित्वात नसतात. तक्रारी केल्यावर त्या गंभीरतेने घेतल्या जात नाहीत. काही वेळा त्यांच्याशी असभ्यपणे वागणूक दिली जाते. यामुळे त्यांच्या मनोबलावर व विश्वासावर परिणाम होतो आणि कामाविषयी नाराजी निर्माण होते. यामुळे दर आठवड्याला किंवा महिन्याला एक आढावा किंवा संवाद बैठकीचे नियोजन करावे यामुळे माहितीचे आदान प्रदान होण्यास मदत होते.

* निष्कर्ष :

हिंगोली जिल्ह्यातील महिला परिचारिकांना अनेक प्रकारच्या समस्यांचा सामना करावा लागत आहे. या समस्यांवर उपाययोजना राबविल्यास त्यांच्या कार्यक्षमता व जीवनमानात सुधारणा होईल. या संशोधनातून खालील निष्कर्ष प्राप्त झाले.

- ८०% महिला परिचारिकांना कामाचे वेळापत्रक अति वेस्त असते

- सुरक्षिततेचा अभाव – विशेषतः रात्रीच्या ड्युटीत सुरक्षिततेची गंभीर बाब आहे.
- पगाराबाबत असमाधान.
- पुरुष सहकाऱ्यांकडून ताण व त्रास होण्याची शक्यता असते .
- सामाजिक स्तरावर कमी महत्व असते .

*** शिफारसी (Recommendations) :**

- परिचारिकांसाठी निश्चित व सुरक्षित कार्य वेळ
- मानसिक आरोग्यासाठी काउंसलिंग सुविधा
- नियमित प्रशिक्षण व कार्यशाळा
- सामाजिक प्रतिष्ठा वाढवण्यासाठी जनजागृती
- सुरक्षिततेसाठी कडक उपाय योजना

*** संदर्भ ग्रंथसूची :**

1. कुलकर्णी, एस. जी. (2019). *आरोग्य प्रशासन आणि परिचर्या व्यवस्थापन*. पुणे: विश्वास पब्लिकेशन.
2. पाटील, ए. डी. (2021). *ग्रामीण आरोग्य व्यवस्था आणि महिला आरोग्य कर्मचारी – एक सामाजिक विश्लेषण*. औरंगाबाद: मराठवाडा पब्लिकेशन.
3. World Health Organization. (2020). *State of the World's Nursing 2020: Investing in Education, Jobs and Leadership*. Geneva: WHO Publications. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240003279>
4. Indian Nursing Council. (2022). *Annual Report 2021–22*. New Delhi: INC. <https://indiannursingcouncil.org>
5. Desai, M. (2018). *Challenges Faced by Nurses in Rural Healthcare Settings*. International Journal of Nursing and Health Science, 5(2), 45-50.
6. गायकवाड, आर. बी. (2020). *ग्रामीण भागातील परिचारिकांची व्यावसायिक अडचणी: एक सर्वेक्षणात्मक अभ्यास*. नागपूर विद्यापीठ.
7. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. (2021). *National Health Profile of India*. Government of India. <https://www.mohfw.gov.in>
8. Chatterjee, S. & Roy, D. (2017). *Mental Health and Burnout among Nurses in India*. Journal of Health Psychology, 22(5), 625-634.
9. Kaur, P. (2020). *Job Satisfaction and Stress in Female Nurses: A Comparative Study*. Journal of Community Medicine, 10(3), 122-129.
10. दांडेकर, एम. एस. (2022). *हिंगोली जिल्ह्यातील आरोग्य सेवा – एक मूल्यांकन*. परभणी: लोकविज्ञान प्रकाशन.

नांदेड जिल्ह्यातील एकल पालक कुटुंबाच्या सामाजिक जीवनाचे अध्ययन

Sainath Satawaji Kumbhare¹ and Pro. Dr.A.T. Shinde²¹Research Student²Rajiv Gandhi Mahavidyalaya Mudkhed, Dis Nanded

Research Center Name: Sociology Department, School of Social Science, SRTMU Nanded.

गोषवारा :

प्रस्तुत संशोधन लेखामध्ये नांदेड जिल्ह्यातील एकल पालक कुटुंबाच्या सामाजिक जीवनाचे अध्ययन करण्यात आलेले आहे. आजच्या बदलत्या सामाजिक जीवनात एकल पालकत्व ही एक गंभीर समस्या सामाजिक समस्या बनली आहे. एकल पालकत्व प्रामुख्याने जोडीदारापैकी एकाचे निधन होणे, घटस्फोट, विवाहबाह्य संबंध, बाळ दत्तक घेणे इत्यादी अशा पद्धतीद्वारे एकल पालक कुटुंब अस्तित्वात येते. यामुळे निर्माण होणाऱ्या एकल पालक कुटुंबामध्ये स्त्रियांचे प्रमाण अधिक आहे. कारण भारतीय समाजवेवस्था ही वैदिक कालखंडापासून पुरुषप्रधान आहे. स्त्रियांना प्रत्येक क्षेत्रामध्ये दुय्यम स्थान दिल्या जात होते. पण बदलत्या काळानुसार या समाज वेवस्थेत बदल झालेला दिसून येतो. 21 व्या शतकामध्ये स्त्रिया सामाजिक, आर्थिक, शैक्षणिक, क्षेत्रामध्ये संविधानातील विविध तरतुदी द्वारे आपली प्रगती साधताना दिसून येत आहेत. सामाजिक जीवनामध्ये वावरताना एकल पालक कुटुंबांना विविध समस्यांना सामोरे जावे लागते. त्यातील एक प्रमुख समस्या म्हणजे सामाजिक समस्या होय. एकल पालक कुटुंबाच्या सामाजिक, आर्थिक, मानसिक, शैक्षणिक समस्या सोडविण्यासाठी शासन विविध स्तरावर उपाय योजना करीत असते. पण शासनाच्या योजना या तळागाळातील एकल पालक कुटुंबा पर्यंत पोहचत नाहीत याची अंमलबजावणी मनावी तशी करण्यात येत नाही यामुळे एकल पालक कुटुंब शासनाच्या विविध योजनांपासून वंचित राहतात. यामुळे एकल पालक कुटुंबाची प्रगती खुंटल्याची दिसून येते आणि सामाजिक जीवनात वावरताना विविध समस्यांना तोंड द्यावे विशेषतः एकल पालक मातांना समाजामध्ये दुय्यम स्थान दिल्या जाते तसेच समाजात साजरे होणारे सण उत्सव यापासून वंचित ठेवल्या जाते कारण त्यांचा सहभाग अपवित्र मानल्या जातो. अशाप्रकारे एकल पालक कुटुंबांना सामाजिक जीवनात भेदभावनांना सामोरे लागते.

महत्वाचे शब्द :

एकल पालक कुटुंब, सामाजिक जीवन, परिवर्तन, बदल, शासन योजना – अंमलबजावणी, भारतीय समाज वेवस्था, पुरुषप्रधान, स्त्रीप्रधान, इत्यादी

प्रस्तावना :

समाज हा परिवर्तनशील असतो समाजामध्ये विविध बदल होत असतात त्याचप्रमाणे. काळाच्या ओघात माणसाच्या जीवनशैलीत, नातेसंबंधात आणि कुटुंब रचनेत सतत बदल घडत असतो. एकेकाळी संयुक्त कुटुंब हे समाजाचे मुख्य वैशिष्ट्य मानले जात होते. मात्र, आज ती जागा विभक्त कुटुंब घेत आहेत, यात बदल होऊन पुढे "एकल पालक कुटुंब" ही संकल्पना नव्या सामाजिक जीवनात दिसून येत आहे. एकल पालक कुटुंब म्हणजे असे कुटुंब की, जिथे आई किंवा वडील – एकटेच मुलांची जबाबदारी स्वीकारून त्यांचे संगोपन करतात. आज हे चित्र समाजात अधिक स्पष्टपणे दिसत आहे. घटस्फोट, मृत्यू, अविवाहित मातृत्व किंवा पितृत्व, जबाबदारीपूर्वक घेतलेला स्वतंत्र निर्णय – ही एकल पालकत्वाची काही सामान्य कारणे असली, तरी त्यामागची प्रत्येकांची करणे वेग-वेगळी, भावनिक आणि संघर्षमय असतात.

आजच्या काळात शिक्षण, नोकरी, स्वावलंबन आणि आत्मनिर्भरतेकडे वाटचाल करणाऱ्या व्यक्तींमध्ये एकल पालकत्व स्वीकारण्या माघचं प्रमाण वाढत आहे. परंतु एकल पालक होणं म्हणजे केवळ वैयक्तिक निवड नव्हे – ती एक सामाजिक, आर्थिक आणि भावनिक समस्या देखील आहे. अशा पालकांना केवळ घराचं आर्थिक ओझं वाहावं लागत नाही, तर मुलांच्या पालन पोषणात पालकांची भूमिका महत्वाची बजावत असतात.

सद्याच्या समाजात एकल पालकत्व अनेकदा सहानुभूतीच्या नाही तर टीकेच्या नजरेतून पाहिलं जातं. विशेषतः महिलांना एकल पालक म्हणून स्वीकारणं अजूनही काही समाजांमध्ये कठीण आहे. अशा परिस्थितीत, एकल पालकांना मानसिक, सामाजिक आणि आर्थिक आधार देणं ही आपली सामूहिक जबाबदारी आहे.

* अर्थ आणि व्याख्या :

A) एकल पालक कुटुंबाचा अर्थ :

एकल पालक कुटुंब म्हणजे असे कुटुंब ज्यामध्ये आई किंवा वडील यापैकी केवळ एक पालक मुलांचे संगोपन, शिक्षण व जीवनाच्या इतर गरजांची जबाबदारी एकहाती पार पाडत असतो. हे कुटुंब घटस्फोट, विभक्त राहणे, मृत्यू किंवा इतर सामाजिक कारणांमुळे निर्माण झालेले असते.

B) एकल पालक कुटुंबाच्या व्याख्या :

• ऑक्सफर्ड डिक्शनरीच्या मते :

"A single-parent family is a family headed by only one parent, either a mother or a father, who lives with and takes care of the child or children."

• भारतीय सामाजिक संदर्भात :

भारतात एकल पालक कुटुंब म्हणून त्या कुटुंबांना उद्देशून वापरली जाते जिथे फक्त आई किंवा वडील अपत्यांचे संगोपन करतात, आणि दुसऱ्या पालकाची कोणतीही जबाबदारी किंवा बाल संगोपनाची जबाबदारी घेत नाहीत.

• यु.एन. डिफिनिशन नुसार :

"Single-parent families are those families where one parent lives with the child or children and takes full responsibility of parenting without the presence of the other biological parent."

* संशोधनाची गरज :

आजच्या समाजात एकल पालक कुटुंबांची संख्या झपाट्याने वाढत आहे. हा सामाजिक बदल केवळ वैयक्तिक पातळीवरील निर्णय नसून, त्यामागे बदलती सामाजिक, आर्थिक, आणि सांस्कृतिक परिस्थिती कारणीभूत आहे. परंतु या कुटुंबसंस्थेचे सामाजिक जीवन, त्यांना भेडसावणाऱ्या अडचणी, समाजाची भूमिका, आणि त्यांच्यावर होणारे परिणाम या बाबतीत सखोल अध्ययन करणे गरजेचे आहे.

* संशोधनाची उद्दिष्टे :

या संशोधन लेखाचे मुख्य उद्दिष्ट एकल पालक कुटुंबांच्या सामाजिक जीवनाचा अभ्यास करणे हे आहे. या अनुषंगाने पुढील उद्दिष्टे निश्चित करण्यात येत आहेत :

1. एकल पालक कुटुंबांची स्वरूप समजून घेणे.
2. एकल पालक कुटुंब निर्माण होण्यामागील कारणांचा शोध घेणे
3. कुटुंबांच्या सामाजिक जीवनात येणाऱ्या अडचणींचा अभ्यास करणे.
4. समाजाचा दृष्टिकोन आणि वर्तनशैलीचा अभ्यास करणे.
5. एकल पालक कुटुंबातील मुलांच्या विकासावर होणाऱ्या परिणामांचा अभ्यास करणे.

* संशोधन पद्धती :

या संशोधन लेखासाठी वर्णमात्मक संशोधन पद्धतीचा अवलंब करण्यात आला आहे. संशोधनाचा हेतू हा नांदेड जिल्ह्यातील एकल पालक कुटुंबांच्या सामाजिक जीवनाचे बारकाईने निरीक्षण करणे आणि त्यांचे अनुभव, समस्या व समाजाशी असलेले संबंध समजून घेणे असा आहे. तसेच तथ्य संकलनासाठी प्राथमिक व दुय्यम साधनांचा वापर करण्यात येणार आहे.

* संशोधन क्षेत्र :

प्रस्तुत संशोधन लेख हा नांदेड जिल्ह्यातील एकल पालक कुटुंबांच्या सामाजिक जीवना पुरता मर्यादित आहे.

* नांदेड जिल्ह्यातील एकल पालक कुटुंबांचे सामाजिक जीवनाचे अध्ययन :

नांदेड जिल्ह्यातील एकल पालक कुटुंबांचे सामाजिक जीवन विविध पातळ्यांवर वेगवेगळ्या अडचणींनी, अपेक्षांनी व समायोजनांनी भरलेले आहे. या अभ्यासाद्वारे असे लक्षात आले की एकल पालक कुटुंब हे केवळ कौटुंबिक नाही, तर एक सामाजिक प्रश्नही बनत आहे. अशा कुटुंबांचे समाजातील स्थान, नाती, आर्थिक स्थिती, मानसिक आरोग्य आणि पालकत्वाची जबाबदारी या साऱ्यांवर परिणाम होतो.

1. सामाजिक स्वीकार व दृष्टिकोन :

अनेक वेळा एकल पालक कुटुंबांकडे समाजाकडून सहानुभूतीपेक्षा संशय व तिरस्काराने पाहिले जाते. विशेषतः महिलांनी जर घटस्फोट घेतला असेल किंवा अविवाहित माता असतील, तर त्यांना सामाजिक कलंकाला सामोरे जावे लागते. पुरुष एकल पालकांच्या बाबतीत थोडे वेगळे चित्र आहे; त्यांना सहानुभूती मिळते, पण त्यांच्याकडे मुलांची जबाबदारी नीट पार पाडण्याची क्षमता नाही, असा समज असतो.

2. नातेवाईकांशी संबंध :

नातेवाईकांशी संबंध समिश्र स्वरूपाचे आहेत. काही वेळा कुटुंबाकडून मदत मिळते, तर अनेक वेळा त्यांना एकटेच सर्व काही हाताळावे लागते. विशेषतः विधवा महिलांना माहेरी किंवा सासरी फारशी मदत मिळत नाही.

3. आर्थिक अडचणी :

बहुतांश एकल पालक कुटुंबांचे आर्थिक संकट हे मोठे आहे. एकट्या पालकावर घरखर्च, मुलांचे शिक्षण, आरोग्य याचा पूर्ण भार असतो. महिलांनी रोजगार मिळवला तरी तो अपुरा असतो. पुरुष एकल पालकांना घरकाम व मुलांच्या संगोपनाची जबाबदारी सांभाळताना अडचणी येतात.

4. सामाजिक सहभाग :

एकल पालक अनेक वेळा सामाजिक कार्यक्रम, सण-उत्सव यापासून अलिप्त राहतात. त्यांना समाजात स्वतःची ओळख टिकवणे किंवा समाजात सक्रिय सहभाग घेणे अवघड वाटते. त्यांना भीती असते की समाज काय म्हणेल, विशेषतः स्त्रियांना ही चिंता अधिक असते.

5. मुलांवर परिणाम :

एकल पालकत्वाचा परिणाम मुलांच्या मानसिक, शैक्षणिक आणि सामाजिक विकासावर स्पष्टपणे दिसतो. काही मुले खंबीर बनतात, तर काहींच्या मनात न्यूनगंड तयार होतो. आई-वडीलांतील एखाद्याच्या अनुपस्थितीमुळे प्रेम, मार्गदर्शन आणि सुरक्षिततेचा अभाव जाणवतो.

6. मानसिक आरोग्य व ताणतणाव :

एकट्या पालकांना मानसिक तणाव, नैराश्य, सामाजिक असुरक्षितता यांचा सामना करावा लागतो. त्यांना वेळेचे व्यवस्थापन, आर्थिक समस्या, समाजातील मतं यामुळे अनेकदा मानसिक थकवा जाणवतो.

7. सामाजिक संस्था व मदत व्यवस्था :

नांदेड जिल्ह्यात एकल पालकांसाठी स्वतंत्र अशा फारशा सामाजिक संस्था किंवा सरकारी योजना सक्रीय नाहीत. काही स्वयंसेवी संस्था मदत करतात, पण त्यांचा कार्यक्षेत्र मर्यादित आहे. एकल पालकांसाठी विशिष्ट धोरणांची गरज आहे.

* निष्कर्ष :

नांदेड जिल्ह्यातील एकल पालक कुटुंबांचे सामाजिक जीवन हे अनेक समस्यांनी भरलेले असून, त्यात भावनिक, आर्थिक आणि सामाजिक अडचणींचा समावेश आहे. या अभ्यासातून खालील महत्वाचे निष्कर्ष समोर आले आहेत ते पुढीलप्रमाणे :

1. **एकल पालक कुटुंबांची संख्या वाढत आहे**, पण समाजात त्यांचे स्थान अजूनही दुर्लक्षित राहिले आहे.
2. **समाजाचा दृष्टिकोन अनेक वेळा नकारात्मक** असतो, विशेषतः महिलावर्गातील एकल पालकांबाबत पूर्वग्रह दिसतो.
3. **एकल पालकांना आर्थिक व सामाजिक आधाराची कमतरता जाणवते.**
4. समाजातील सार्वजनिक कार्यक्रमात वंचित ठेवल्या जाते.
5. **सरकारी व स्वयंसेवी मदतीचा अभाव जाणवतो.**
6. **एकल पालक आपली जबाबदारी प्रामाणिकपणे पार पाडत असले तरी त्यांना भावनिक, सामाजिक व आर्थिक पातळीवर संघर्ष करावा लागतो.**

* संदर्भ ग्रंथसूची :

1. देशपांडे, सुधीर (2015). *भारतीय समाजरचना*. पुणे: फडके प्रकाशन.
2. कुलकर्णी, मंगला (2018). *एकल पालक कुटुंबांचा अभ्यास*. मुंबई: यशोदा प्रकाशन.
3. पाटील, वीणा (2019). "एकल मातांचे सामाजिक आव्हाने", *समाजशास्त्र दरमहा*, खंड 12, अंक 4.
4. Government of Maharashtra (2021). *District Social Report: Nanded*. Social Welfare Department.
5. Census of India (2011). *Family and Household Data: Maharashtra*. Government of India.
6. UNICEF (2020). *The Impact of Single Parenting on Children*. Retrieved from www.unicef.org
7. Jogdand, P.G. (1995). *Dalit Women and Social Struggle*. Jaipur: Rawat Publications.

8. बर्वे, सीमा (2020). *समाजातील बदलते कौटुंबिक संदर्भ*. औरंगाबाद: स्नेहल प्रकाशन.
9. National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) (2020-21). *Maharashtra Factsheet*. Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.
10. काकडे, जी.टी. (2017). "समाजातील स्त्रियांचे एकल पालकत्व आणि त्याचे परिणाम", *समाजविज्ञान संशोधन पत्रिका*, खंड 9.

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: A PATHWAY TO SOCIAL EQUITY

Pankti Surve

Assistant Professor, Sociology, Center for Distance and Online Education, University of Mumbai

ABSTRACT

The critical link between inclusive education and the pursuit of social equity is examined within this paper. It is often assumed that inclusive educational practices, embracing the diversity of all learners and actively addressing the barriers to their participation, are very fundamental for the formation of a more just and equitable society. Moving beyond traditional models of education, which often recreates marginalization, this paper contends that inclusive education creates opportunities for all individuals, irrespective of their background, abilities, or identities, to access quality learning experiences and develop their full potential. The theoretical underpinnings of inclusive education are explored, based on the frameworks of social justice, human rights, and critical disability studies. An analysis is undertaken regarding the manner in which inclusive policies and pedagogies can break the systemic barriers and promote a sense of responsibility, belonging, dignity, respect, and shared citizenship among students, thus making them a responsible class of citizens. Furthermore, practical implications of implementing inclusive education are explored, with consideration given to the practices and strategies for curriculum adaptation, teacher training, collaborative practices, and the creation of supportive learning environments. Considering the relevant research and case studies, this paper will highlight the positive impacts of inclusive education not only on academic achievement, but will also consider social-emotional development, and the overall development of all students. It will also consider the challenges faced with its implementation, offering insights and recommendations intended to facilitate practices to meet these obstacles. Ultimately, this paper advocates for a paradigm shift towards inclusive education as a powerful catalyst for advancing social equity and building more inclusive and cohesive communities.

Keywords: *inclusivity, marginalization, catalyst, implementation*

INTRODUCTION

Education, a fundamental human right and a significant mean for personal development contributing to societal progress, equips people with the knowledge, skills, and critical thinking abilities needed to successfully negotiate life's challenges, engage actively in their communities, and support economic development. Sadly, education, as a tool for social mobility and transformation remains unfulfilled for a substantial portion of population across the globe. Even in the period of postindependence, educational systems have frequently perpetuated inequalities, segregating learners based upon perceived differences, including ability, socio-economic status, ethnicity, gender, language, and other characteristics. This segregation not only disregards the potential of marginalized individuals, but it also weakens the society by reinforcing division and exclusion, creating hatred and a sense of being left-out from attaining required development.

At the other end, the concept of inclusive education refers to a transformative paradigm shift. It envisions an educational system where all the learners, irrespective of their diverse backgrounds and abilities, are valued, respected, and actively participate in mainstream educational settings. As thought earlier, Inclusive education does not limit itself to generating accessibility for a handful of handicapped students, but rather it necessitates a fundamental alteration in the manner in which education is conceptualized and structured, so as to accommodate the full spectrum of human diversity. This paper contends that inclusive education is not merely a pedagogical approach but a fundamental pathway towards the attainment of social equity, fostering a society where opportunities and outcomes are not predetermined by any sort of individual differences or societal biases.

Social equity, at its core, signifies fairness and justice in the distribution of resources, opportunities, and outcomes. It transcends formal equality, acknowledging that individuals may possess differing needs and circumstances, and therefore necessitates targeted support and proactive measures to ensure equitable outcomes. When applied to education, social equity mandates that all learners are afforded access to high-quality, relevant, and accessible education that is responsive to their diverse needs and prepares them for active and meaningful participation in all aspects of society. Inclusive education, with its emphasis on celebrating diversity, removing barriers to learning and participation, and providing individualized support, directly addresses these demands.

This paper will explore the manner in which inclusive practices are capable of dismantling exclusionary mechanisms within educational systems and promoting a more just distribution of educational benefits. Furthermore, it will examine the practical considerations and challenges involved in implementing inclusive education effectively, drawing upon research, policy frameworks, and examples derived from diverse contexts.

Ultimately, this paper seeks to underscore the transformative potential of inclusive education as a significant mechanism for building societies that are socially equitable, inclusive, and cohesive.

Theoretical Underpinnings: Inclusive Education and Social Justice

As it is clear, the philosophy of inclusive education is deeply enrooted in the principles of social justice, human rights, inherent worth and dignity of people. When It comes to inclusive education, there are a number of key theoretical frameworks underpinning the concept of inclusive education and its relationship to social equity:

- **Human Rights Framework:** International human rights conventions, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), clearly states the right of all individuals to education, without discrimination. The UNCRPD, in particular, explicitly advocates for the right of persons with disabilities to inclusive education, emphasizing the obligation of states to ensure an inclusive education system at all levels (United Nations, 2006). This human rights perspective underscores that segregation and exclusion, based on disability or any other difference, are discriminatory and violate fundamental human rights. Inclusive education, therefore, is not a matter of charity or special provision, but a legal and ethical need.
- **Social Justice Theories:** Social justice theories provide a critical lens for examining the manner in which power, privilege, and inequality operate within educational systems. John Rawls, Nancy Fraser, and Iris Marion Young, and others, have explored concepts such as distributive justice which means the fair allocation of resources, recognition i.e respect for diverse identities and experiences, and participation i.e the right to have a voice in decisions that affect one's life. Inclusive education aligns with these principles by advocating for equitable access to educational resources, valuing the diversity of all learners, and promoting their active participation in the learning process.
- **Critical Disability Studies:** Critical disability studies (CDS) offers a valuable framework for comprehending disability, not as an individual deficit or medical condition, but rather as a social construct. CDS scholars argue that disability is frequently created and maintained by societal barriers, discriminatory attitudes, and exclusionary practices.
- **The Social Model of Disability:** The social model of disability, a key concept within critical disability studies, distinguishes between impairment and the actual functional limitation and disability of the social disadvantage, experienced as a result of societal barriers. This model highlights that it is not the impairment itself that disables individuals, but rather the manner in which society responds to and accommodates difference.

Inclusive education is based on the social model by acknowledging that the responsibility for removing barriers lies with the education system and society as a whole, rather than with the individual student. (See, for example, Fulcher, 1989). In essence, these theoretical frameworks converge to establish that inclusive education is a matter of social justice, human rights, and a commitment to dismantling systemic inequalities. It concerns the creation of an educational system that values diversity, empowers all learners, and fosters a more equitable and inclusive society.

How Inclusive Education Promotes Social Equity

Inclusive education plays a crucial role in dismantling the barriers that perpetuate social inequity within and beyond the education system. Traditional segregated or partially integrated educational settings often reinforce social hierarchies, perpetuate stereotypes, and limit opportunities for marginalized groups. By contrast, inclusive education actively endeavors to break down these barriers and promote social equity in several key ways:

- **Challenging Stereotypes and Prejudice:** Inclusive classrooms provide a special chance for students with and without disabilities, as well as those from different backgrounds, to learn together. This collective learning is able to dispel preconceived ideas, dismantle destructive stereotypes, and create mutual understanding, respect, and empathy. When students engage with others who are unlike themselves, they gain a more sophisticated and realistic understanding of human diversity, thus minimizing prejudice and discrimination. For instance, a non-disabled student, who studies with a student with a learning disability, might learn tolerance and understand the value of their special strengths and difficulties, instead of dwelling on their limitations and engaging in forms of bullying.
- **Promoting a Sense of Belonging and Participation:** Inclusive education emphasizes the importance of creating a welcoming, safe, and supportive school environment where all students feel valued, respected, and possess a strong sense of belonging. When students feel recognized, they are more likely to get motivated

and engage actively in learning, participate in school activities, and develop positive social relationships. This sense of belonging is crucial for their social and emotional well-being, academic achievement, and overall development. Inclusive practices, which includes peer support programs, cooperative learning activities, and the celebration of diversity, can help to foster a sense of community and belonging for all students.

- **Providing Equitable Access to Quality Education:** Inclusive education aims to provide all students with access to the same high-quality curriculum, resources, and learning opportunities, with necessary adaptations and supports to meet individual needs. This ensures that marginalized students are denied access to the knowledge and skills they require to succeed. Equitable access to quality education constitutes a fundamental prerequisite for social mobility, economic opportunity, and the reduction of disparities in outcomes.
- **Developing Social Skills and Empathy:** Learning within inclusive environments exposes students to a wider range of perspectives, experiences, and abilities, fostering the development of crucial social skills such as communication, collaboration, problem-solving, empathy, and conflict resolution. When students learn to work together with peers who possess differing strengths and challenges, they develop empathy towards them.
- **Fostering Social Cohesion and Inclusive Citizenship:** Inclusive education promotes social cohesion by bringing together students from diverse backgrounds and abilities, thus fostering a sense of shared citizenship and common purpose. Inclusive schools are capable of serving as microcosms of an inclusive society, where students acquire the ability to appreciate diversity, resolve conflicts peacefully, and collaborate for the common good. This contributes to the development of active and engaged citizens who are committed to social justice and equity. (Ainscow et al., 2006).

In essence, inclusive education dismantles barriers to social equity by challenging prejudice, promoting belonging, providing equitable access to quality education, developing essential social skills, fostering social cohesion, and enhancing academic outcomes for all learners.

Practical Implications: Implementing Inclusive Education

Inclusive education is not a singular intervention but an ongoing process of continuous improvement and adaptation. Some key practical considerations include:

- **Policy Frameworks and Legislation:** Governments play important in developing a facilitating policy environment to support inclusive education. This includes passing and enforcing effective and extensive legislation that compels inclusive education, forbids discrimination, and ensures the appropriate resources and assistance to implement it.
- **National Education Plans:** Inclusive education should be integrated into national education plans and strategies, incorporating clear goals, targets, and indicators for monitoring progress aligning with international frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the UNCRPD. (UNESCO, 2017)
- **Funding and Resource Allocation:** Funding mechanisms should be designed to ensure that resources are distributed equitably to schools, with additional support provided to those serving marginalized communities.
- **Curriculum Development and Adaptation:** The curriculum must exhibit flexibility, relevance, and adaptability, so as to address the diverse learning needs of all students. This involves incorporating the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), which aims to create learning environments and materials that are accessible to everyone, regardless of their abilities or learning styles. Educators should be trained to differentiate instruction, modify assignments, and employ a variety of teaching strategies to accommodate individual learning needs. Curriculum adaptation should also encompass ensuring that the content is culturally relevant, reflects the diversity of the student population, and challenges stereotypes and biases. (Hall, Meyer, & Rose, 2012)
- **School Leadership:** Strong and committed school leadership is essential for creating a culture of inclusion and driving systemic change. School leaders perform a key role in establishing the vision for inclusion, providing support and resources to educators, fostering collaboration, and promoting a positive school climate. They also need to be advocates for inclusive education within the wider community and work to build support among parents and other stakeholders. (Ainscow, 2005)

Implementing inclusive education necessitates a whole-school approach that involves all members of the school community working in concert to create a welcoming, supportive, and inclusive environment for all learners.

CHALLENGES AND CONSIDERATIONS

While the benefits of inclusive education are well-established, its implementation is not without challenges. Many countries around the world are still grappling with the complexities of transforming their education systems to be more inclusive. Some common obstacles and considerations include:

- **Resistance to Change:** The transition from traditional segregated models to inclusive practices frequently encounters resistance from educators, administrators, parents, and the wider community, who may hold onto established beliefs, attitudes, and practices.
- **Lack of Resources:** Insufficient funding, inadequate training for educators, a shortage of qualified support personnel (such as special education teachers and therapists), and a lack of accessible materials and assistive technologies can impede the effective implementation of inclusive education.
- **Large Class Sizes and Diverse Needs:** Educators in large classes with a wide range of diverse learning needs may experience feelings of being overwhelmed and may lack the time and resources necessary to provide individualized support to all students.
- **Attitudinal Barriers:** Negative attitudes, stereotypes, and a lack of understanding about disability and diversity can engender significant barriers to inclusion. Addressing attitudinal barriers necessitates ongoing awareness-raising, education, and opportunities for individuals to interact with others from diverse backgrounds. (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002)
- **Lack of Collaboration and Communication:** Insufficient communication and collaboration among educators, administrators, support staff, parents, and other stakeholders can result in fragmented support for students and hinder the development of cohesive inclusive practices.

Addressing these challenges necessitates a sustained and coordinated effort involving policymakers, educators, school leaders, parents, students, and the wider community. It requires a long-term commitment to providing adequate resources, ongoing professional development, fostering positive attitudes, promoting effective collaboration, and adapting assessment and accountability systems to support inclusive practices.

CONCLUSION

Inclusive education is not just a policy or an idea, it constitutes a fundamental principle of social justice and a achieving social equity. By considering the diversity of all learners, dismantling barriers to participation, and fostering a culture characterized by belonging, respect, and equity, inclusive education engenders the conditions necessary for all individuals to attain their full potential, participate meaningfully in society, and contribute to the common good.

achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the construction of a more just and equitable world, inclusive education must be positioned at the forefront of these endeavors. It represents a moral imperative, a legal obligation, and a practical necessity. By collaborating to create inclusive education systems, the empowerment of all learners, the transformation of societies, and the construction of a world where social equity is not simply an aspiration, but a lived reality for everyone, can be facilitated.

REFERENCES

- Ainscow, M. (2005). Developing inclusive education systems: What are the levers for change? *Journal of Educational Change*, 6(2), 109-124.
- Avramidis, E., & Norwich, B. (2002). Teachers' attitudes towards integration/inclusion: A review of the literature. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 17(2), 129-147.
- Fulcher, G. (1989). *Disabling policies? A comparative approach to education policy and disability*. London: Falmer.
- Hall, T., Meyer, A., & Rose, D. H. (2012). *Universal design for learning in the classroom: Practical applications*. Guilford Press.
- United Nations. (2006). *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. United Nations.
- UNESCO. (2017). *Education for people and planet: Creating sustainable futures for all*. Global Education Monitoring Report.

EDUCATION AS A FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHT: BRIDGING GLOBAL FRAMEWORKS AND NATIONAL REALITIES IN INDIA

Nehal MahfoozCentre for Federal Studies, Public Policies and Governance School of Humanities and Social Sciences,
Jamia Hamdard, New Delhi**ABSTRACT**

Education, recognized universally as a cornerstone of human dignity and empowerment, serves as a catalyst for individual growth, societal equity, and sustainable development. This report examines education as an inalienable human right through dual lenses: global commitments and India's constitutional and legislative journey. Internationally, frameworks such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) enshrine education as a transformative entitlement, emphasizing equitable access, quality, and inclusivity. In India, despite constitutional guarantees under Article 21A and the Right to Education (RTE) Act of 2009, systemic barriers persist, disproportionately affecting marginalized groups, including women, socioeconomically disadvantaged communities, indigenous populations, and persons with disabilities. Through a comparative analysis of global legal instruments and India's policy landscape, this study highlights persistent challenges such as infrastructural gaps, socioeconomic disparities, and socio-cultural biases. It investigates how exclusion from education perpetuates cycles of poverty and inequality while undermining broader human rights, such as health, employment, and civic participation. This paper further explores the intersectionality of marginalization in India, where systemic inequities hinder access to quality education despite progressive legislation. By synthesizing existing literature and legal frameworks, this research underscores the urgency of addressing implementation gaps through inclusive policy-making, resource allocation, and community engagement. Recommendations emphasize strengthening accountability mechanisms, enhancing teacher training, and fostering partnerships to ensure education transcends rhetoric and becomes a lived reality for all. Ultimately, the study advocates for a rights-based approach to education that prioritizes equity, inclusivity, and dignity, aligning global aspirations with grassroots action in India and beyond.

1. INTRODUCTION

Education, enshrined as a universal human right in foundational documents like the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948) and the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1989), serves as both a driver of personal empowerment and a bedrock of societal development. Yet, global disparities in educational access and quality reveal persistent inequities that contradict its universal promise. For example, while **Europe and Central Asia** have achieved notable progress—such as Uzbekistan's preschool enrollment rate climbing from 27% to 75% between 2017 and 2023 (UNICEF, 2023)—other regions face profound challenges. In **Sub-Saharan Africa**, 98 million children remain out of school, with climate-induced disruptions displacing 1.4 million learners in 2023 alone (Global Education Monitoring Report, 2024). Meanwhile, in **the Middle East and North Africa**, protracted conflicts in Sudan and Syria have deprived 30 million children of schooling, and 60% of students in the region lack foundational literacy by age 10 (UNESCO, 2023). Even **Latin America and the Caribbean**, despite World Bank-supported programs reaching 13 million learners, report that over 50% of Indigenous children cannot read basic texts by age 10, reflecting entrenched “learning poverty” (World Bank, 2023).

India's educational trajectory mirrors this global tension between advancement and exclusion. Constitutional safeguards, including affirmative action for Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs), have narrowed primary enrollment gaps since the 1990s (National Sample Survey, 2022). However, systemic inequities endure. Rural SC women, for instance, average just 4.5 years of formal education, compared to 8.1 years for urban upper-caste males (National Family Health Survey-5, 2021). Muslim students, excluded from most reservation policies, face a 10% lower primary completion rate than their Hindu peers and remain underrepresented in higher education (India Human Development Survey, 2021). Geographic disparities further marginalize Adivasi communities, whose literacy rates trail the national average by 20 percentage points, while rural students are half as likely as urban counterparts to pursue tertiary education (Census of India, 2011).

The intersection of disability and gender amplifies exclusion. Only 45% of children with disabilities attend primary school, often due to inadequate infrastructure and societal stigma

(UNESCO, 2022). Rural Dalit girls, disproportionately burdened by safety risks and economic pressures, experience dropout rates as high as 40% by secondary school (National Commission for Protection of Child Rights, 2023).

These contradictions underscore the gap between India's progressive policies, such as the *Right to Education Act* (2009), and their inconsistent implementation. While international frameworks like Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG-4) advocate inclusive education, India's experience demonstrates that legal mandates alone cannot dismantle deep-rooted inequalities. This study explores these disconnects, combining global human rights principles with localized data to propose actionable solutions. By foregrounding marginalized perspectives and drawing comparative lessons from regions like Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America, it re-envision education as a tool for systemic equity and social transformation.

1.1. Research Objective

Central objectives of this paper is to:

- A. Study global laws and agreements that recognize education as a basic human right for everyone.
- B. Review India's laws and policies (like the Right to Education Act) to see how they protect access to schooling.
- C. Find gaps and challenges by comparing India's efforts with global standards and identifying real-world problems (e.g., lack of schools, discrimination) that keep children from learning.

1.2. Research Question

- A. what extent do India's national legal and policy frameworks uphold the international human rights standards related to the right to education?
- B. What are the major gaps and challenges in the implementation of these legal and policy frameworks at the ground level in India?
- C. What opportunities and strategies exist for strengthening the alignment between India's educational frameworks and the practical realization of the right to education for all citizens?

1.3. Hypothesis

India's education policies and laws reflect global human rights commitments, but uneven implementation persists due to socio-economic divides, resource gaps, inconsistent quality, and struggles to achieve equitable access for marginalized communities.

1.4 Methodology

This study adopts an integrated methodological framework, blending qualitative and quantitative techniques to investigate the implementation and impact of educational rights in India. The approach involves four key components: First, a systematic review of foundational texts will be conducted, including international human rights agreements, India's constitutional articles, educational legislation like the Right to Education Act (2009), current policy frameworks such as the National Education Policy 2020, and official governmental documentation. Second, critical evaluation of global assessments will be undertaken through scrutiny of multilateral agency publications from UNESCO, UNICEF, the World Bank, and prominent human rights organizations to benchmark India's educational progress against international norms. Third, empirical analysis will draw on longitudinal data from nationally representative surveys, particularly the Annual Status of Education Report and National Achievement Survey, to map enrollment dynamics and learning outcome patterns. Finally, targeted field-based investigations will document implementation experiences through regional success narratives and challenge analyses, providing grounded insights into policy execution. This multidimensional strategy ensures comprehensive assessment through triangulation of legal frameworks, statistical evidence, global comparisons, and grassroots realities.

2. GLOBAL LEGAL FRAMEWORKS DEFINING THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION

2.1. Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR): Foundation of Educational Rights:

Adopted in 1948, the UDHR established education as a universal human right under Article 26. This article defines three core principles: (1) Free and compulsory elementary education as a state obligation, with broader access to technical, professional, and higher education based on merit; (2) Education's purpose to foster holistic personal growth, human rights awareness, tolerance, and global peace; and (3) Parental authority to choose their children's education. Though not legally binding, the UDHR's principles have shaped international treaties and national laws, becoming a global benchmark for education rights. Its emphasis on equity, accessibility, and education's societal role continues to influence policy frameworks worldwide.

2.2. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR):

Enforceable Commitments As a binding treaty, the ICESCR (1966) expands on the UDHR's principles, formalizing state obligations for education rights under Article 13. It mandates that primary education be free, compulsory, and universally accessible. Secondary education (including vocational training) must be progressively made free and available to all, while higher education should be equally accessible based on merit, with gradual cost elimination. The treaty emphasizes education's role in fostering dignity, human rights awareness, social participation, and global peace.

The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights clarified these obligations through its **"4A Framework"** (General Comment No. 13), requiring education to be:

- **Available** (adequately resourced with infrastructure and trained staff),
- **Accessible** (non-discriminatory, physically and economically within reach),
- **Acceptable** (culturally relevant, inclusive, and quality-driven),
- **Adaptable** (responsive to societal and learner diversity).

States must **respect** (avoid interfering with rights, e.g., parental school choice), **protect** (prevent third-party discrimination, such as barring girls from education), and **fulfill** (actively promote, fund, and adapt systems to guarantee equitable, quality education). By ratifying ICESCR, governments commit to measurable, progressive steps to realize these rights, cementing it as a critical legal instrument for educational equity.

2.3. Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC): Safeguarding Children's Education

The CRC (1989), universally ratified, prioritizes educational rights for children under 18. **Article 28** obligates states to ensure free, compulsory primary education for all, expand accessible secondary education (including vocational training) with financial support where needed, and guarantee merit-based access to higher education. **Article 29** defines education's purpose: nurturing children's talents, dignity, and potential while fostering respect for human rights, cultural identity, diversity, and peaceful coexistence. The CRC reinforces **non-discrimination** (Article 2) and mandates that all decisions prioritize the **child's best interests** (Article 3). By linking education to holistic development and equity, the CRC ensures every child's right to learn in an inclusive, empowering environment.

2.4. UNESCO's Role in Advancing Education Rights

UNESCO has been instrumental in codifying education rights through global agreements. The **1960 Convention against Discrimination in Education**—the first binding treaty focused solely on education—prohibits discrimination based on race, gender, religion, or socioeconomic status, mandating equal access and opportunity for all learners. Beyond this landmark convention, UNESCO sets global standards, aids nations in reforming education policies, and monitors compliance through tools like the **Observatory on the Right to Education** and **HerAtlas** (tracking girls' education rights). Its **Global Education Monitoring Report** assesses progress toward Sustainable Development Goal 4, ensuring inclusive, equitable quality education. By combining norm-setting, advocacy, and data-driven oversight, UNESCO remains a cornerstone of global efforts to uphold education as a universal right.

3. ENTRENCHING THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION IN INDIA'S NATIONAL FRAMEWORK

3.1. Constitutional Provisions: Article 21A and its Significance

India's constitutional framework anchors the right to education as a fundamental guarantee, exemplified by the introduction of Article 21A through the 86th Constitutional Amendment Act of 2002. This provision mandates free and compulsory education for children aged six to fourteen, with the State tasked to operationalize this right through appropriate legislation. This amendment marked a transformative shift by elevating education from a non-binding Directive Principle to an enforceable fundamental right, imposing a legal duty on the government to ensure universal access.

Earlier, the 42nd Amendment Act of 1976 repositioned education under the Concurrent List, enabling both central and state governments to frame laws on educational matters. The evolution of this right traces back to Article 45 of the Directive Principles, which originally urged the State to ensure free education for children under fourteen within a decade of the Constitution's adoption. Judicial milestones, such as the Supreme

Court's rulings in *Mohini Jain v. State of Karnataka* (1992) and *Unnikrishnan v. State of Andhra Pradesh* (1993), further strengthened this

mandate. These judgments interpreted the right to education as inherent to Article 21 (Right to Life), laying the groundwork for its explicit recognition under Article 21A.

By codifying education as a fundamental right, Article 21A represents a transformative leap in India's pledge to universalize access to schooling. It underscores the State's obligation to bridge gaps in educational equity, ensuring marginalized communities benefit from inclusive policies. This constitutional recognition has spurred nationwide initiatives, such as the Right to Education Act (2009), to address systemic barriers and enforce accountability in delivering quality education.

3.2. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (RTE Act): Enabling Constitutional Rights

Enacted by India's Parliament, the Right to Education (RTE) Act of 2009 serves as the legislative foundation for implementing Article 21A of the Constitution, which guarantees free and compulsory education to children aged 6 to 14. The Act outlines clear mechanisms to translate this constitutional promise into actionable policies, ensuring equitable access to quality elementary education.

Under the RTE Act, "free education" is defined as eliminating financial barriers for children attending government-supported schools, prohibiting fees or incidental costs that could hinder enrollment or retention. Simultaneously, "compulsory education" obligates state and local authorities to monitor enrollment, attendance, and completion rates, ensuring no child is excluded from elementary schooling.

The legislation assigns specific roles to governments, local bodies, and parents, emphasizing collaborative efforts to uphold educational access. It establishes minimum standards for school infrastructure, teacher qualifications, and student-teacher ratios to maintain quality across institutions. Additionally, the Act bans discriminatory practices such as physical punishment, admission screenings, capitation fees, and private tutoring by school staff, aiming to create an inclusive and stress-free learning environment.

A landmark provision requires private schools to reserve 25% of seats for children from economically disadvantaged and marginalized communities, promoting social integration. The

RTE Act also prioritizes a flexible, child-centric curriculum rooted in constitutional values like equality and secularism, while prohibiting failing or subjecting students to board exams before completing elementary education. This ensures a focus on holistic development rather than high-stakes testing.

By addressing systemic barriers and defining accountability for stakeholders, the RTE Act operationalizes the constitutional vision of education as a fundamental right, striving to bridge gaps in access and quality for India's young learners.

3.3. Judicial Evolution of the Right to Education in India

The recognition of education as a fundamental right in India emerged gradually through judicial activism, predating its formal inclusion under Article 21A. Key Supreme Court rulings reinterpreted constitutional principles to affirm education as integral to individual dignity and societal progress.

In *Mohini Jain v. State of Karnataka* (1992), the Court asserted that the right to education, though not explicitly stated as a fundamental right, could be inferred from the Constitution's Preamble and Directive Principles, particularly Article 41. It linked education to the "right to life" under Article 21, arguing that meaningful existence hinges on access to learning. This reasoning was reinforced in *Unnikrishnan v. State of Andhra Pradesh* (1993), where the Court explicitly recognized education for children under 14 as a fundamental right under Article 21, asserting its indispensability for personal empowerment and democratic participation.

Post the 2009 RTE Act and the insertion of Article 21A, courts continued to refine the scope of this right. For example, a 2014 Supreme Court judgment clarified that minority institutions (protected under Article 30) are exempt from RTE Act mandates, balancing the right to education with constitutional safeguards for minority autonomy.

By harmonizing statutory goals with broader constitutional values, the judiciary has shaped India's education framework, ensuring inclusivity while respecting institutional diversity. These rulings underscore the dynamic interplay between law and societal needs in advancing equitable access to education.

4. NATIONAL POLICIES DRIVING UNIVERSAL EDUCATION IN INDIA

4.1. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA): Universalizing Elementary Education

Launched in 2001, the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is India's flagship program to achieve Universal Elementary Education (UEE) for children aged 6–14. Implemented jointly by central and state governments, SSA prioritizes equitable access, retention, and quality learning outcomes while addressing gender and social disparities. Aligned with the RTE Act (2009), the initiative focuses on eliminating barriers to education by ensuring free, full-time schooling in formal institutions that meet standardized infrastructure norms, including classrooms, sanitation, and drinking water.

Key strategies include teacher capacity-building through training, curriculum modernization, and community mobilization to boost enrollment. By bridging gaps in rural and underserved regions, SSA has strengthened India's elementary education system, directly supporting the RTE Act's mandate to deliver inclusive, quality schooling for all.

4.2. Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA): Expanding Secondary Education

Introduced in 2009, the Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) aims to universalize access to secondary education (ages 14–18) while improving its relevance and quality. The scheme emphasizes reducing dropout rates, particularly among girls, Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), and economically disadvantaged groups, by establishing schools within accessible distances and fostering inclusive environments.

RMSA supports infrastructure upgrades, teacher professional development, and curriculum reforms to align education with global demands. It also promotes vocational training and life skills to prepare students for higher education or employment. By prioritizing equity and innovation, RMSA complements SSA's efforts, ensuring a continuum of learning opportunities and advancing India's goal of holistic educational development.

4.3. Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan: Bridging Early Childhood to Senior Secondary Education

Introduced in 2018, the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan reimagines India's school education system by unifying pre-school to Class 12 under a single framework. Merging three earlier schemes—Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA), and Teacher Education (TE)—the program adopts a holistic approach to address fragmentation across educational stages. Its objectives align with Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG-4), emphasizing equitable access, improved learning outcomes, and school effectiveness.

Key priorities include upgrading infrastructure, integrating technology for better pedagogy, and fostering inclusive practices to reduce gender and socioeconomic disparities. The initiative prioritizes teacher training, vocational skill integration, and foundational literacy, ensuring continuity from early childhood to senior secondary levels. By streamlining resources and policies, Samagra Shiksha aims to create an education continuum that balances quality, equity, and adaptability.

4.4. National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020): Reimagining India's Educational Landscape

The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) charts a transformative roadmap for India's education system, grounded in principles of access, equity, quality, affordability, and accountability. It envisions an inclusive framework that blends India's cultural ethos with modern pedagogical practices to foster an equitable, knowledge-driven society.

A cornerstone of NEP 2020 is universal foundational literacy and numeracy by 2025, targeting early childhood education through a revamped 5+3+3+4 curricular structure. This model integrates ages 3–18 into four developmental stages, formally including the critical 3–6 age group previously overlooked. The policy advocates for multilingual education, encouraging instruction in regional languages or mother tongues until Grade 8 to enhance cognitive development and inclusivity.

NEP 2020 dismantles rigid academic silos, promoting interdisciplinary learning, vocational integration, and flexible subject choices. It shifts assessment practices from rote memorization to competency-based evaluations that prioritize critical thinking and creativity. Special provisions for Socially and Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs) aim to eliminate systemic barriers, while a call for ramping up public education spending to 6% of GDP underscores the commitment to systemic reform.

5. BRIDGING THE GAP: ANALYZING THE ALIGNMENT AND DISPARITIES

5.1. Alignment with Global Standards

India's constitutional guarantee of free, compulsory education (Article 21A and RTE Act) aligns with international instruments like the UDHR, ICESCR, and CRC, which prioritize universal primary education and holistic development. However, while global frameworks advocate *progressive expansion* of free education to secondary and higher levels, India's legal mandate remains limited to ages 6–14. Policies like RMSA and NEP 2020 aim to broaden access beyond elementary education, yet lack binding legal force, highlighting a gap between aspirational goals and enforceable rights.

5.2. Progress and Challenges in Implementation

- **Availability:** Expanded school infrastructure via SSA/RMSA, yet rural areas face shortages of classrooms, sanitation, and qualified teachers.
- **Accessibility:** Improved enrollment, but indirect costs (uniforms, materials) and social barriers (caste, gender, disability) hinder marginalized groups.
- **Acceptability:** Persistent quality gaps—low foundational literacy (ASER reports), outdated curricula, and punitive practices undermine learning outcomes.
- **Adaptability:** NEP 2020 promotes inclusive, flexible systems, but tailored support for diverse learners (e.g., disabilities, multilingual needs) remains unevenly implemented.

India's frameworks reflect global principles, but systemic inequities and inconsistent execution reveal gaps in translating policy into equitable, quality education for all.

6. GROUND-LEVEL CHALLENGES IN INDIA'S EDUCATION SYSTEM

6.1. Socio-Economic Barriers to Access

Persistent poverty, caste-based discrimination, and regional inequities create interconnected barriers to education. Children from economically disadvantaged households often face pressure to work or support families, sidelining schooling. Marginalized groups, including Dalits, Adivasis, and religious minorities, confront systemic exclusion in classrooms, while rural and remote regions

struggle with inadequate schools and teacher shortages. These overlapping inequities trap vulnerable populations in cycles of limited opportunity, reinforcing social divides.

6.2. Infrastructure Gaps and Resource Inequity

Despite progress, many government schools—especially in rural areas—lack essentials: functional toilets, drinking water, digital tools, and safe classrooms. Poor infrastructure discourages attendance, particularly for girls facing sanitation-related dropouts. Resource distribution remains skewed, with underfunded states and districts lagging in facility upgrades and educational investments. This spatial and financial imbalance deepens disparities in access and quality.

6.3. Quality Deficits and Systemic Learning Gaps

High enrollment rates mask persistent gaps in foundational literacy and numeracy, as highlighted by ASER reports. Outdated rote-learning methods dominate classrooms, sidelining critical thinking. Teacher training programs often fail to equip educators with inclusive, child-centered pedagogies. The COVID-19 pandemic worsened these issues, with prolonged school closures causing significant learning regressions. Without systemic reforms in teaching practices and curriculum relevance, India's education system risks perpetuating a mismatch between schooling and real-world competency development.

6.4. Equity and Inclusion Challenges for Marginalized Communities:

India's education system continues to grapple with systemic inequities, despite constitutional protections and legal frameworks. Students from historically disadvantaged groups—such as Dalits, tribal populations, and Muslims—often encounter direct and indirect bias within schools, ranging from social exclusion to prejudiced attitudes from peers and educators. These experiences undermine their academic engagement and contribute to higher dropout rates. Learners with disabilities face additional hurdles, as mainstream institutions frequently lack accessible infrastructure, trained staff, and inclusive resources. Gender gaps remain pronounced, especially beyond primary education, where girls confront restrictive societal norms, safety risks, and inadequate sanitation facilities in schools. Tackling these disparities necessitates not only policy reforms but also transformative shifts in cultural mindsets to ensure equitable access to education for all.

6.5. Obstacles to Educational Continuity:

Although enrollment rates in elementary education have improved, retention remains a critical concern, particularly at the secondary level. Economic hardship forces many children into labor to supplement household incomes, disrupting their schooling. Sociocultural practices, such as early marriages for girls and outdated curricula disconnected from real-world applications, further drive attrition. Reports from UNICEF reveal alarming dropout rates before the completion of elementary and secondary cycles. Mitigating these challenges requires holistic strategies, including financial support for vulnerable families, curriculum modernization, and community engagement to emphasize education's value. Programs addressing safety, menstrual health, and vocational training could also incentivize retention.

6.6. Global Perspectives on India's Education Landscape:

International analyses by organizations like UNESCO, UNICEF, and the World Bank underscore both progress and persistent gaps in India's education sector. UNESCO notes India's allocation of

4.1–4.6% of GDP to education, aligning with global benchmarks, but stresses the need to embed cultural awareness and climate literacy into pedagogy. UNICEF acknowledges enrollment gains but flags stagnant learning outcomes and exclusion of marginalized groups. Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International document systemic discrimination against minorities and children with disabilities, violating their right to education. The World Bank emphasizes improving governance, teacher training, and foundational literacy. Meanwhile, ASER's annual surveys highlight rural disparities in learning levels and infrastructure. Collectively, these reports advocate for prioritizing quality, equity, and adaptability to fulfill education as a universal right.

7. OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN INDIA'S EDUCATION SYSTEM

India's education framework operates through a multi-tiered governance structure. At the national level, the Ministry of Education designs policies and tracks their execution, while state-level education departments manage school operations and compliance. Independent institutions like

the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) intervene in cases of educational rights violations, ensuring accountability. Robust data systems underpin progress evaluation: the National Achievement Survey (NAS) evaluates student learning outcomes across regions, and the UDISE+ platform aggregates school-level data on infrastructure, enrollment, and teacher ratios. Civil society groups and global organizations complement government efforts by conducting independent audits, advocating for marginalized communities, and mobilizing grassroots support. Together, these mechanisms identify systemic gaps, refine strategies, and uphold transparency in delivering equitable education.

8. PROGRESS, INNOVATIONS, AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

8.1. Key Milestones in Educational Access:

Post-2010, the Right to Education Act (RTE) has driven transformative change. Primary school enrollment rates have surged, with a sharp decline in out-of-school children. Infrastructure upgrades—such as better classrooms, libraries, and sanitation facilities—have enhanced learning environments, though rural-urban disparities remain. Notably, near-equal enrollment rates for girls and boys at primary levels reflect strides toward gender equity. Success stories abound, such as students from underserved communities securing higher education opportunities, illustrating education's role in breaking intergenerational poverty. These advancements underscore the potential of sustained policy focus and collaborative implementation.

8.2. Pioneering Solutions for Systemic Improvement:

Innovative models are reshaping India's educational landscape. Tech-driven solutions, including digital classrooms and AI-based learning tools, bridge accessibility gaps in remote regions. Pedagogical shifts toward interactive, hands-on teaching methods foster critical thinking and student engagement. Programs like community-led school management committees strengthen local ownership, improving attendance and accountability. Specialized initiatives, such as multilingual curricula for tribal students and assistive technologies for children with disabilities—promote inclusion. Teacher training reforms prioritize skill development in child-centered pedagogy and socio-emotional support. These approaches, coupled with scalable public-private partnerships, offer a roadmap for addressing persistent challenges like dropout rates and uneven learning outcomes.

9. CONCLUSION

India has made significant strides in recognizing education as a fundamental right through legislative reforms, policy initiatives, and improved enrollment rates. However, systemic challenges such as unequal access, inconsistent quality, and under-resourced infrastructure continue to hinder equitable learning outcomes. To

bridge these gaps, a multifaceted approach is essential: enforcing RTE provisions through stricter private school quotas and transparent fee structures, prioritizing public education funding to meet the NEP 2020 target of 6% GDP allocation, and modernizing teacher training to foster inclusive, skill-based pedagogies. Concurrently, addressing discrimination via anti-bias campaigns, leveraging data analytics for accountability, and combating dropout rates through targeted scholarships and flexible curricula are critical. Expanding digital infrastructure in rural areas, empowering grassroots oversight through school management committees, and extending compulsory education to secondary levels will further strengthen inclusion. By anchoring reforms in foundational literacy/numeracy missions with measurable benchmarks and fostering community-driven collaboration, India can transform its education system into a vehicle for social justice, equipping every learner—irrespective of background—with the tools to thrive. Sustained commitment to these priorities will not only unlock individual potential but also catalyze equitable, sustainable progress nationwide.

10. REFERENCES

- UNESCO. (n.d.). *Right to education*. Retrieved from <https://www.unesco.org/en/right-education>
- UNICEF. (n.d.). *Education*. Retrieved from <https://www.unicef.org/education>
- Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. (1999). *General Comment No. 13: The right to education (article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights)*. Retrieved from <https://www.ohchr.org/en/resources/educators/human-rights-education-training/d-general-comment-no-13-right-education-article-13-1999>
- United Nations. (n.d.). *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. Retrieved from <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>
- Woven Teaching. (n.d.). *UDHR | Article 26 - Right to Education*. Retrieved from <https://www.woventeaching.org/udhr/article-26>
- Human Rights Watch. (n.d.). *Education*. Retrieved from <https://www.hrw.org/topic/childrens-rights/education>
- Amnesty International. (n.d.). *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. Retrieved from <https://www.amnesty.org/en/what-we-do/universal-declaration-of-human-rights/>
- Human Rights Careers. (n.d.). *Human Right 26, The Right to Education*. Retrieved from <https://www.humanrightscareers.com/course/lesson/articles-26-30/read-article-26.html>
- Right to Education Initiative. (2014). *International Instruments on the Right to Education*. Retrieved from https://www.right-to-education.org/sites/right-to-education.org/files/resource-attachments/RTE_International_Instruments_Right_to_Education_2014.pdf
- UNESCO. (n.d.). *Convention against Discrimination in Education*. Retrieved from <https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/convention-against-discrimination-education>
- UNICEF. (n.d.). *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Retrieved from <https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention>
- Kalantry, S., Getgen, J. E., & Koh, S. A. (2010). *Enhancing Enforcement of Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights Using Indicators: A Focus on the Right to Education in the ICESCR*. Cornell Law Faculty Publications, 1076.
- UNESCO. (n.d.). *The Right to Education: An analysis of UNESCO's standard-setting instruments*. Retrieved from <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000133113>
- The Constitution of India. (n.d.). *Article 21A*. Retrieved from <https://legislative.gov.in/constitution-of-india/>
- The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009. (2009). *Act No. 35 of 2009*. Retrieved from https://www.indiacode.nic.in/bitstream/123456789/19014/1/the_right_of_children_to_free_and_compulsory_education_act_2009.pdf
- India Education Diary. (2025, April 28). *Innovations in education India examples*. Retrieved from

<https://indiaeducationdiary.in/>

- Ministry of Education. (n.d.). *Right to Education*. Retrieved from <https://www.education.gov.in/rte>
- Indian Kanoon. (n.d.). *Article 21A in Constitution of India*. Retrieved from <https://indiankanoon.org/doc/154644006/>
- Ipleaders. (n.d.). *Article 21A of Indian Constitution*. Retrieved from <https://blog.ipleaders.in/article-21a-of-indian-constitution/>
- Ministry of Education. (n.d.). *Right to Education*. Retrieved from <http://dsel.education.gov.in/rte>
- India Code. (2009). *The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009*. Retrieved from <https://www.indiacode.nic.in/handle/123456789/2240?saml=true>
- Singh, U. (2020, September 14). *Changing dimensions in the New education Policy 2020*. Retrieved from <https://en.lawarticle.in/the-right-to-education-act-2009/>
- National Education Policy 2020. (n.d.). *About NEP*. Retrieved from <https://www.education.gov.in/nep/about-nep>
- World Bank. (2011, September 20). *Education in India*. Retrieved from <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2011/09/20/education-in-india>
- UNESCO. (2023). *Seeds of change: state of the education report for India 2023; education to address climate change; summary*. Retrieved from <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000387358>
- UNICEF India. (2022, March). *All students back to learning (India)*. Retrieved from [https://www.unicef.org/media/117486/file/All%20students%20back%20to%20learning%20\(India\).pdf](https://www.unicef.org/media/117486/file/All%20students%20back%20to%20learning%20(India).pdf)
- ASER Centre. (2024). *ASER 2024: National Findings*. Retrieved from <https://www.asercentre.org/>
- ASER Centre. (2023). *ASER 2022: National Report*. Retrieved from https://www.asercentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/ASER_2022_National_Report_18012023.pdf
- ASER Centre. (n.d.). *All India ASER Reports*. Retrieved from <https://www.asercentre.org/all-india-aser-reports/>
- Human Rights Watch. (2014, April 22). *“They Say We’re Dirty” Denying Education to India’s Marginalized*. Retrieved from <https://www.hrw.org/report/2014/04/22/they-say-were-dirty/denying-education-indias-marginalized>
- UNICEF India. (n.d.). *Quality Education*. Retrieved from <https://www.unicef.org/india/what-we-do/quality-education>
- Study Hall Educational Foundation. (n.d.). *Poonam's Success Story*. Retrieved from <https://www.studyhallfoundation.org/poonam-success-story.php>
- Nanhi Kali. (n.d.). *Success Stories*. Retrieved from <https://www.nanhikali.org/success-stories>
- Gramin Shiksha Kendra. (n.d.). *Success Stories*. Retrieved from <https://graminshiksha.org.in/success-stories/>
- The Better India. (n.d.). *Inspiring People: How Education Helped These 3 Indians Fight Poverty & Achieve Success*. Retrieved from <https://thebetterindia.com/260501/inspiring-people-education-fight-poverty-biccello-stories/>
- Times of India. (2024, April 16). *Slums to school: Ignited minds script success stories*. Retrieved from <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/delhi/slums-to-school-ignited-minds-script-success-stories/articleshow/109384876.cms>

LEVERAGING OPEN-SOURCE AI TUTORING SYSTEMS TO ENHANCE SCIENTIFIC LITERACY IN RESOURCE-CONSTRAINED OR DEVELOPING NATIONS

Mr. Amitkumar Khandare and Mr. Ashish Jaware*

Assistant Professor, Appasaheb Jedhe Arts, Commerce and Science College, Pune

ABSTRACT

This research paper investigates the use of open-source AI tutors as tools for promoting scientific literacy in developing nations. As technology becomes more pervasive in education, access to resources remains a challenge for many developing regions. Open-source AI offers a scalable, cost-effective solution to this problem. Through the development of AI tutors that are both affordable and adaptable to local educational systems, this paper explores how such technology can bridge gaps in scientific education, providing equitable learning opportunities for all students. Data collected from pilot programs in Kenya, Nepal, and Bangladesh show that the implementation of these AI tutors resulted in significant improvements in students' scientific literacy and engagement. The findings suggest that AI-powered educational tools can play a transformative role in supporting STEM education and inclusive learning.

Keywords: Open-source AI, Scientific Literacy, Developing Nations, Educational Technology, AI Tutors, Inclusive Education, STEM Education

INTRODUCTION

In many developing nations, access to quality STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) education is limited by financial and infrastructural constraints. These barriers prevent students from receiving the foundational scientific literacy necessary for future academic and professional success. Recent advancements in artificial intelligence (AI) have led to the development of personalized educational tools capable of adapting to the needs of individual learners. Open-source AI, in particular, offers a sustainable and scalable solution to the problem of educational inequality. This paper explores the potential of open-source AI tutors to improve scientific literacy in resource-poor regions by providing low-cost, accessible, and scalable educational tools.

RESEARCH GAP

Despite advances in AI education tools, key gaps remain in promoting scientific literacy in developing nations:

- **Localization of AI Content:** AI tools are often tailored to Western curricula, requiring adaptation to local languages, systems, and teaching methods.
- **Scalability and Sustainability:** The long-term effectiveness of AI tutors in resource-limited settings needs further research to address infrastructure challenges.
- **Impact on Scientific Literacy:** More studies are needed to assess how AI tutors improve critical thinking and real-world application of scientific knowledge.

Addressing these gaps will increase the effectiveness and reach of AI-driven education in developing regions.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To develop and evaluate open-source AI tutoring systems tailored to enhance scientific literacy among students in developing nations.
- To investigate the scalability, adaptability, and cultural relevance of AI-based educational tools in low-resource educational settings.

MATERIALS AND METHODS**AI Tutor Development**

The AI tutors used in this research were developed using open-source platforms such as TensorFlow, Dialogflow, and Rasa. The AI was designed to integrate with local curricula, providing tailored lessons, quizzes, and interactive activities aimed at improving scientific knowledge. Each tutor was programmed to respond to student queries in real time, providing immediate feedback on scientific concepts.

Pilot Testing

Pilot testing was conducted across three countries: Kenya, Nepal, and Bangladesh. The AI tutors were deployed in public schools that had limited access to qualified science teachers. A total of 300 students participated in the pilot programs, with each student using the AI tutor for a period of three months.

DATA COLLECTION

Pre- and post-intervention assessments were conducted to measure changes in scientific literacy. The assessment included a variety of tasks, such as multiple-choice questions, short-answer questions, and practical problem-solving exercises. Student feedback was also collected through surveys to assess their engagement and perceptions of the AI tutor.

Table 1: Comparative Analysis of Student Performance Before and After AI Tutor Usage

Metric	Pre-AI Tutor Group	Post-AI Tutor Group	Interpretation	Reference
Average Science Score (%)	48%	80%	Significant improvement in academic performance after integrating AI tutoring.	Pilot Program Data, Educational Technology Research Group (2024)
Student Engagement (%)	52%	85%	Marked increase in classroom participation and enthusiasm toward science learning.	Pilot Program Data, Educational Technology Research Group (2024)
Conceptual Understanding (%)	45%	78%	Strong enhancement in grasping scientific concepts beyond rote memorization.	Pilot Program Data, Educational Technology Research Group (2024)

The **Table.2** finds a substantial improvement in student outcomes after using AI tutors. Average science scores rose from 48% to 80%, student engagement increased from 52% to 85%, and conceptual understanding improved from 45% to 78%, based on Pilot Program Data (Educational Technology Research Group, 2024).

Table 2: Comparative Overview of Open-Source AI Tutors for Promoting Scientific Literacy in Developing Nations

Aspect	Details	References
Purpose	Enhance scientific literacy through accessible AI tutoring systems	Selwyn (2020); Baker & Smith (2019)
Key Features	Open-source design, adaptability to local languages and curricula	Patel (2023); Lewis (2020)
Major Benefits	Cost-effectiveness, scalability, personalization of learning experiences	World Bank (2022); Zheng & Wu (2021)
Main Challenges	Infrastructure limitations, teacher training gaps, data privacy concerns	Jones (2021); Khan & Zaman (2022)
Impact on Scientific Skills	Improved critical thinking, problem-solving, and real-world application of scientific knowledge	Singh & Sharma (2019); Weng & Liu (2021)
Scalability Potential	High if localized appropriately and supported with adequate digital infrastructure	Greenfield (2019); Chiu & Lim (2020)
Sustainability Factors	Community involvement, governmental support, long-term technical assistance	Basu & Kumar (2020); Jackson & Klein (2020)
Ethical Considerations	Algorithmic bias, equity in access, safeguarding student data	O'Neil & Stevens (2018); Kumar & Tan (2022)
Future Research Directions	Localization frameworks, longitudinal impact studies, teacher-AI integration models	Zheng & Hinton (2021); Miller & Adams (2023)

The **Table.2** shows Open-source AI tutors can enhance scientific literacy in developing nations by offering adaptable, cost-effective, and scalable education solutions. It highlights key benefits, challenges, and ethical considerations, supported by current research. The table also identifies future research needs, such as localization and sustainability strategies.

ANALYSIS

The data collected from the pilot program strongly indicates that the implementation of open-source AI tutors leads to substantial improvements in student academic outcomes. The **average science scores** of students increased dramatically from **48% to 80%**, demonstrating that AI tutoring significantly enhanced content mastery and performance. Additionally, **student engagement** levels rose from **52% to 85%**, highlighting the AI tutors' role in making learning more interactive, motivating, and personalized.

Furthermore, **conceptual understanding** improved from **45% to 78%**, suggesting that the AI tutors were effective in deepening students' comprehension of scientific principles, not merely promoting rote memorization. This is critical because scientific literacy requires students to think critically, solve problems, and apply knowledge in real-world contexts.

From a broader perspective, the results imply that **open-source AI tutors are a highly scalable and cost-effective intervention** that can bridge educational inequities in developing nations. Their adaptability to local languages and curricula makes them particularly valuable for diverse educational environments with limited infrastructure.

However, while the outcomes are promising, challenges such as ensuring equitable access to technology, addressing infrastructure deficits, and maintaining the cultural relevance of AI content remain crucial. Teacher training and ethical implementation practices will also determine the long-term success and sustainability of AI-driven educational reforms.

In conclusion, the analysis supports the hypothesis that **open-source AI tutors can significantly contribute to raising scientific literacy** and offer a transformative tool for educational advancement in under-resourced regions.

RESULTS

The results of the pilot programs were promising:

- **Student Performance:** Students who used the AI tutor showed an average improvement of 32% in their scientific literacy scores compared to those who did not use the tutor.
- **Engagement:** 85% of students reported increased engagement with science, citing the interactive nature of the AI tutor as a major factor.
- **Teacher Feedback:** Teachers noted that the AI tutors helped them manage larger class sizes and provide more individualized attention to students without increasing their workload.

However, there were some challenges. Local language compatibility and unreliable internet access in remote areas were identified as significant barriers to full implementation.

DISCUSSION

The findings from this study highlight the potential of open-source AI tutors to improve scientific literacy in developing nations. The use of AI-driven educational tools allows for personalized learning experiences, which are crucial in large, under-resourced classrooms. Furthermore, the affordability and scalability of open-source AI make it a promising solution for widespread implementation.

Despite the success of the pilot programs, several challenges remain. These include the need for language localization and ensuring stable internet access in rural regions. Future implementations will require collaborations with local governments, technology companies, and NGOs to address these barriers. Additionally, ongoing monitoring and adaptation of the AI content will be essential to ensure that it remains relevant and effective in diverse educational contexts.

CONCLUSION

This research highlights the transformative potential of open-source AI tutors in promoting scientific literacy within developing nations. By leveraging customizable, cost-effective, and culturally adaptable AI systems, educational barriers such as limited teacher availability, outdated curricula, and lack of access to quality learning materials can be significantly reduced. The findings emphasize that for AI tutors to be truly effective, they must be localized, sustainable, and ethically implemented. Furthermore, investment in teacher training and infrastructure is critical to support AI integration. Overall, this study suggests that open-source AI education tools can serve as a powerful catalyst for scientific empowerment and long-term socio-economic development in resource-constrained regions.

REFERENCES

1. UNESCO. (2021). *Scientific Literacy and Sustainable Development*. UNESCO Publishing.
2. Baker, R. S., & Smith, L. (2019). *Educating with AI: A Roadmap for Effective Implementation*. International Journal of Educational Technology, 34(2), 45-59.
3. Selwyn, N. (2020). *The Challenges of AI in Education*. Learning, Media and Technology, 45(4), 423-437.
4. World Bank. (2022). *The Digital Divide in Education: Bridging the Gap*. Retrieved from <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/education>
5. Chiu, M. M., & Lim, S. (2020). *Technology and Inequality in Developing Countries: A Comparative Study*. Educational Researcher, 29(3), 121-134.
6. Jones, A. (2021). *The Role of AI in Expanding Access to Education in Low-Resource Settings*. Journal of Educational Technology, 34(2), 123-135.
7. Patel, S. (2023). *Advancements in Open-Source Educational Tools for Developing Nations*. Education Technology Review, 12(3), 45-59.
8. Greenfield, S. (2019). *Harnessing Artificial Intelligence to Improve Education Access in the Global South*. International Journal of AI in Education, 22(1), 57-72.
9. Jackson, D., & Klein, A. (2020). *Bridging the Educational Divide: The Impact of AI-Based Learning Systems on Developing Economies*. Technology and Innovation in Education, 9(2), 77-94.
10. Khan, M. A., & Zaman, T. (2022). *Integrating AI in Education: A Case Study in Bangladesh*. Journal of Educational Innovation, 11(4), 215-227.
11. Weng, Z., & Liu, C. (2021). *Personalized Learning Systems in STEM: The Role of AI Tutors in Promoting Scientific Literacy*. Computers & Education, 162, 114-128.
12. O'Neil, M., & Stevens, J. (2018). *AI for All: Exploring Open-Source AI Tools for Educational Equity in Developing Nations*. Open Education Review, 14(1), 45-62.
13. Basu, R., & Kumar, V. (2020). *AI and Education: The Path to Digital Learning for Developing Economies*. Global Journal of Educational Technology, 21(2), 97-110.
14. Singh, P., & Sharma, R. (2019). *The Impact of AI on Science Education in Low-Resource Countries*. Journal of Science Education, 36(5), 215-229.
15. Zheng, Y., & Wu, Q. (2021). *Machine Learning and Educational Equity: A Study of AI's Role in Promoting Scientific Literacy*. Journal of Global Education, 28(3), 143-160.
16. Lewis, C. (2020). *Building Open-Source Platforms for Educational Development: Opportunities for AI Integration in Low-Income Countries*. International Journal of Digital Education, 32(4), 33-47.
17. Kumar, S., & Tan, Y. (2022). *Digital Literacy in Developing Nations: The Role of AI-Powered Learning Platforms*. Journal of International Education Technology, 18(2), 78-92.
18. Zheng, L., & Hinton, C. (2021). *Open-Source AI in Education: How It is Shaping the Future of Scientific Learning*. Future Technologies in Education, 5(1), 88-102.
19. Patel, D. S., & Gupta, V. (2020). *AI and Inclusivity: A Framework for Developing Open Educational Resources in STEM Education*. Journal of Education and Technology, 19(2), 129-141.
20. Miller, J., & Adams, L. (2023). *Technological Solutions for Education: The Role of AI Tutors in Enhancing Scientific Literacy Across Global South Regions*. International Journal of Global Education, 25(6), 115-128.

MAKING AND TRY OUT OF COMPUTER ASSISTED INSTRUCTION (C. A. I) FOR SOME UNITS OF ENGLISH SUBJECT OF HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL

Malek Sabnurbanu Maiyuddin

Ph.D Research Scholar, Department of Education, Shri Govind Guru University, Vinzol (GODHRA)-Gujarat

ABSTRACT

Teaching methods can be defined as ways of organising the learner's cognitive activity to ensure the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitude necessary for all round growth in students. The proper use of modern techniques in education can make the process of instruction more effective. It helps the student acquire a better understanding of the phenomena he learns, by rousing a high degree of interest in him. It also relieves the teacher of purely mechanically lecturing all the time. The problem of improving teaching methods through the use of modern techniques is closely connected with curriculum development and teacher training. There are several techniques and strategies today with a teacher can use effectively to get the message through, besides facilitating development of author aspects of a student's growth. In the present study the researcher was used Experimental Research Method, Teacher-made test as a tool for data collection, 'T' test for data analysis, 100 students of standard 11 of one Gujarati Medium School were selected for sample. Finding of the study is that Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI) method is more effective than traditional method.

Keywords: Computer assisted instruction, English subject, higher secondary school and effectiveness

INTRODUCTION**Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI)**

According to Radha, Mohan. (2013) in "Teacher Education" Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI) is a narrow term and most often refers to drill-and-practice, tutorial, or simulation activities offered either by themselves or as supplements to traditional, teacher-directed instructions. This clearly indicates that computers can be useful in individualising instruction, as they can be geared to cater to individual needs of students. Computers, with their large memory, ability to diagnose students' level of mastery and capability of providing varied learning sequences, have considerable potential for individualization of instruction in terms of students' different abilities and pre-existing knowledge.

Definitions of CAI

CAI is a program of instructional material presented by means of a computer or computer systems.

->Britannica Online Encyclopedia

CAI is the teaching process in which a computer is used to enhance the education of a student.

->Glossary of Distance Education and Internet Technology

Use of a computer to assist in the presentation of instructional materials to a student, to monitor learning progress, or to select additional instructional material in accordance with the needs of individualised learners.

->International Dictionary of Education (1985)

Advantages of CAI

The research evidence suggests that CAI can improve student performance, particularly if used in combination with other techniques.



- The graphic capability of computers allows students to use the simulation mode to their advantage. Immediate feedback helps students verify their learning.
- Self-pacing is possible if the tutorial mode is used.
- Computers are absolutely impartial.
- Higher cognitive abilities are achievable with the right mode.
- CAI is instructor independent and is consistent, well-structured and thorough.
- CAI can be used effectively for remedial instruction, as computers are infinitely patient.
- CAI is beneficial for distance-learning and continuing education programmes.

Disadvantages of CAI

- There is a lack of the personal touch if the entire course is taught using CAI.
- It is difficult to get suitable software for our Indian requirements.
- Cost may be an important factor of consideration for the school as the computer can be an expensive proposition.
- Computer literate teachers are not easily available.

Review of Related Literature**Study:- (1)**

Title:- Making and try out of Computer Aided Instruction (C.A.I) program for English subject.

Name of Author:- Danger, B. G.

Year of Publication:- 2003

Type:- Unpublished Dissertation

University:- Saurashtra University

Objectives

- Making and try out of Computer Aided Instruction (C.A.I) for some units of Standard-8 of Science Subject.
- To check effectiveness of Computer Aided Instruction (C.A.I) with contest to students educational achievements.
- To know students review towards Computer Aided Instruction program.

Population and Sample

- Students of Rajkot city of standard-8 of English medium school were selected as sample. Research was held in two parts of experimental group and control group. For tryout students of standard 8 of Mahatma Gandhi school were taken. Class of 64 students was taken for experiment.

Tool

- Development of Opinionnaire by the researcher.

Research Method

- The Experimental method was used as a research method.

Data Analysis

- Hypothesis tested by 'T' calculation.

Major Findings

- Both Computer Aided Instruction (C.A.I) and traditional method were equally effective for the students educational achievements. At primary level teaching of science subject need a good teacher.

Study:- (2)

Title:- Making and try out of Computer Assisted Instruction Lesson “Micro-Organisms” Standard-8 of Science Subject.

Name of Author:- Vyas, M. Y.

Year of Publication:- 2005

Type:- Unpublished Dissertation

University:- Saurashtra University

Objectives

- To make a Computer Assisted Instruction (C.A.I) for teaching of lesson “micro-organisms” of Science Subject and check its effectiveness in context to educational achievements of the student.
- To know the reviews of Computer Assisted Instruction (C.A.I) from the students.

Population and Sample

- Students of Gujarati medium school of standard-8 of Rajkot city of year 2004-2005 were the population and sample of research.

Tool

- Teacher made test and opinionnaire were the tools of the research.

Method of Research

- Experimental method was used for the research.

Data Analysis

- Hypothesis tested by ‘T’ calculation and class exam method.

Major Findings

- Both Computer Assisted Instruction (C.A.I) and traditional teaching were equally effective for students educational achievements. Teaching through Computer Assisted Instruction needs a good teacher.

Study:- (3)

Title:- Effectiveness of Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI) on the learning of English language

Name of Author:- Pillai, Mini S.

Year of Publication:- 2019

Type:- Ph.D Thesis

University:- Pt. Ravishankar Shukla University.

Objectives

- To study the impact of teaching method and role of gender and parent’s income in achievement of high school students in English language.

Population and Sample

- one school was selected randomly from all the CBSE English medium schools of Dharsiwa block of Raipur District.120 students studying in the class IX were selected randomly.

Tool

- The researcher was used two tools (1) CAI or E-learning package for English grammar and English language achievement test.

Method of Research

- Experimental method was used for the study.

Data Analysis

- Data analysed with help of ‘F’ & ‘T’ statistics.

Major Findings

- It was observed that CAI group out performed traditional (conventional) group in respect of their achievement in English language.
- Students of high income group truly had higher achievement in English language than students of low income group.
- Male's achievement was higher than the female's in conventional teaching group while females of low income group out-performed males in this respect.

Study:- (4)

Title:- A Study of Effectiveness of Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI) Over Classroom Lecture (CRL) at ICS Level.

Name of Author:- Aijar Ahmad Gujjar.

Year of Publication:- 2008

Type:- I-manager's Journal of Educational Psychology, vol.2, No.1, 48-59

Objectives

- To compare the effects of CAI and CRL in terms of cognitive development.
- To illustrate the result of learners knowledge gained through CAI and CRL.
- To measure the development of comprehension skill by CAI and CRL.
- To analyze the effect of CAI and CRL on the application skills of students.
- To assess the effectiveness of CAI to enhance learners ability of evaluation in comparison of CRL.

Population and Sample

- 20 students from (1) Govt. College of Boys, Samanabad, Faisalabad and (2) Govt. College of Science, Samanabad, Faisalabad were selected for the study.

Tool

- The researcher was used Pre-test and Post-test for data collection.

Method of Research

- Experimental method was used for the study.

Data Analysis

- Data analysed with help of 'F' statistic.

Major Findings

- The application of CAI teaching method to experiment group led to a highly significant increase in knowledge skill of students than students having CRL treatment.
- Post-test experiment of both the groups showed significant lead of CAI {+77} compared to CRL {+21}.
- There is a significant variation between the scores of students, which is indicatives for the value of CAI method to CRL.
- Students can learn more through CAI as compared to CRL.

Statement of the Problem

The problem selected to be tested here is:

"Making and Try Out of Computer Assisted Instruction (C. A. I) for Some Units of English Subject of Higher Secondary school"

Objectives of the Study

- To develop a program on Computer Assisted Instruction (C. A. I) for selected units of English subject.

- To check the appropriateness of Computer Assisted Instruction (C. A. I) method according to gender.
- To compare the achievement of traditional method learning group and Computer Assisted Instruction

(C. A. I) method learning group by the Post-test.

Variables of the Study

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable
<i>Achievements</i>	<i>Gender</i>
1.Higher Achievement	1.Girls
2.Lower Achievement	2.Boys

Hypothesis of the Study

Ho1 There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of experimental and control group.

Ho2 There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of experimental boy's group and control boy's group.

Ho3 There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of experimental girl's group and control girl's group.

Ho4 There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of students of higher achievement of control group and experimental group.

Ho5 There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of students of lower achievement of control group and experimental group.

Population and Sample

Population of this research was 100 students of standard 11 of Gujarati medium school from year 2024-25 of Timba Gam (Village). Sample were randomly selected from Shree P. M. Patel High School, Timba Gam.

Gender	Experimental Group	Control Group	Total
Boys	25	25	50
Girls	25	25	50
Total	50	50	100

Tool for the Study

Teacher made test was used for the study.

Research Method

The researcher was used Experimental Research Method for the present study.

Data Analysis

Hypothesis tested by 'T' calculation.

Limitations of the Study

- The presenter research is limited in some area of Timba Gam.
- The presenter research is limited in two classes of standard 11 of one school only.
- In the present research Computer Assisted Instruction (C. A. I) programme is made by researcher is the limitation of this study.
- The present research is limited for some units of standard 11 only.
- The present research is limited in Gujarati medium school that's why researcher used English language in Computer Assisted Instruction (C. A. I) program.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- Experimental group is more affected by Computer Assistant Instruction (C. A. I).
- Boy's of experimental group achieve more score than boy's of control group.

- Girl's of experimental group achieve more score than girl's of control group.
- Computer Assisted Instruction (C. A. I) program is more effective than Traditional method.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The teacher should devote time in extra activities, use computers in classroom teaching, take help of project or LCD TV to teach difficult topics easily and to develop their attention for particular English grammar subject.
- Teacher should ask questions to students to make classroom teaching live and make them to use computers to learn English.
- Low achievers should be provided special coaching by different games of English grammar on computer, online exams and by showing them cartoon films on computer.

SUGGESTIONS

- Preparing of Computer Assisted Instruction (C. A. I) programme and check for other subjects.
- To check Computer Assisted Instruction (C. A. I) program in Rural and City area.
- Comparative research of Computer Assisted Instruction (C. A. I) and Traditional method.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

- In the research process, research through Computer Assisted Instruction (C. A. I) becomes attractive and inspirational factor from student's point of view.
- It was less time engaging and more productive.
- Students were more associated and interested in Computer Assisted Instruction (C. A. I) in classroom.

CONCLUSION

The study results show that technology plays a significant role in language classes, it can be used as an instrument to help teaching and learning. We can see in this study that using Computer Assisted Instruction (C.A.I) acts as a powerful pedagogical instrument in English classes. This study supports the effect of excellent of technology-based lesson as compared to traditional lessons. English grammar should consider, and the teacher-made test results express that more students show their positive attention towards using technology in English classes.

REFERENCES

- Mohan, Radha. (2013). Teacher Education. Delhi: PHI Learning Pvt.Ltd, pp. 162-164.
- Danger, B. G. (2003). Making and try out of Computer Aided Instruction (C.A.I) program for English subject. Unpublished Dissertation, Saurashtra University.
- Vyas, M. Y. (2005). Making and try out of Computer Assisted Instruction Lesson "Micro-Organisms" Standard-8 of Science Subject. Unpublished Dissertation, Saurashtra University.
- Pillai, Mini S. (2019). Effectiveness of Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI) on the Learning of English Language. PhD Thesis, Pt. Ravishankar Shukla University.
- Aijar Ahmad Gujjar. (2008). A Study of Effectiveness of Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI) Over Classroom Lecture (CRL) at ICS Level. I-manager's Journal of Educational Psychology, vol.2, No.1, 48-59.
- Bronowski, Dr. J. (1964). The Doubleday Pictorial Library of Technology Man Remarks His World. New York : Doubleday & Company Inc, Garden City, pp.294.
- Blackburn, Dr. David., & Holister, Professor Geoffrey. (1987). Hutchinson Encyclopedia of Modern Technology. London: Century Hutchinson Ltd, Brookmount House, pp.115.
- Lesko, Matthew. (1986). Lesko's New Tech Sourcebook: A Directory to Finding Answers in Today's Technology-Oriented World. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, pp. 1.

-
- Chaudhary, Meenu. (2012). Methodology of Teaching English. Dorling Kindersley (India) Pvt Ltd, pp.257-260.
 - Paliwal, A. K. (2005). Teaching English. Jaipur: Surabhi Publication, pp.88-90.
 - Gokak, V. K. (1964). English in India: Its Present and Future. New Delhi: Asia Publishing House, pp.105-116.
 - Couture, Barbara. (1986). Functional Approaches to Writing Research Perspectives. London: Frances Pinter (Publishers), pp. 98-109.
 - Byrne, Donn. (1979). Longman Handbooks for Language Teachers: Teaching Writing Skills. U.K: Longman Group Ltd, pp.32-43.
 - Saima, Rasul et al. A Study to Analyze the Effectiveness of Audio-visual Aid in Teaching Learning Process at University Level. Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences,88-91.

**ADDRESSING BULLYING AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION IN SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS:
PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACTS AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES**

Dr. Malini NairAssociate Professor and Head Department of Sociology, Dr. D.Y. Patil Arts, Commerce and Science College,
Pimpri, Pune-411018**ABSTRACT**

Bullying and social isolation remain troubling realities for numerous students, significantly impacting their emotional and psychological growth. Although bullying is frequently linked to obvious behaviors such as physical violence or verbal attacks, the covert aspect of social exclusion—such as being excluded, overlooked, or rendered invisible—can be equally harmful, if not more so. Youth who undergo these experiences often struggle with anxiety, feelings of low self-esteem, and depression. These challenges can linger well beyond the classroom, influencing their self-perception and interactions with the world. This study examines the emotional impact of these experiences and investigates how schools, teachers, and families can effectively intervene. Based on practical programs, psychological studies, and teaching methods, the conversation emphasizes strategies that can assist schools in becoming secure environments for all students. In the end, the aim is to foster a culture of empathy, where children experience being acknowledged, listened to, and supported—not alienated or marginalized.

1. INTRODUCTION

A lot of us recall our school years not only for the lessons acquired but also for the friendships and social interactions that influenced our everyday lives. For certain students, however, school isn't a realm of belonging—it transforms into an environment of isolation and pain. Harassment and social exclusion are not recent problems, yet they continue to have a profound effect. Recent research indicates that more than one-third of students globally say they experience bullying frequently. These are not merely fleeting instances of strife; for numerous individuals, the experience results in emotional wounds that can endure for years.

In this paper, we explore the psychological impacts of bullying and social isolation, concentrating on how these experiences influence youth. More crucially, we investigate what actions can be taken to intervene—what actually proves effective in reality. From comprehensive school programs to personalized support mechanisms, we seek to highlight successful methods that promote inclusion and emotional security. We also take into account cultural, neurodevelopmental, and gender-related factors that may render certain children more susceptible, providing a broader and more complete viewpoint.

2. UNDERSTANDING BULLYING AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION

Bullying involves more than just teasing or a rare disagreement. At its essence, it revolves around ongoing damage where a distinct power disparity exists. The damage can manifest in various ways:

- **Physical Bullying:** Striking, shoving, or using physical threats.
- **Verbal Harassment:** Insults, intimidation, and negative comments.
- **Relational Bullying:** Intentionally damaging a person's social connections or standing.
- **Cyberbullying:** Employing digital devices to intimidate, humiliate, or menace an individual.

Social exclusion frequently categorized as relational bullying. It's when a student is intentionally left out—excluded from games, discussions, or group activities. In contrast to a shove in the corridor, this type of bullying is more subtle, yet its psychological effects can be equally severe.

Students with neurodivergent conditions (e.g., autism, ADHD), those belonging to minority ethnic groups, or individuals investigating their gender identity are statistically more prone to experience social exclusion. Identifying these trends is crucial for developing fair prevention strategies.

3. THE PSYCHOLOGICAL TOLL**3.1 Anxiety and Depression**

Kids and teens who experience bullying frequently exist in a constant state of fear or discomfort. Chronic stress may result in anxiety disorders and depression. Numerous individuals express feeling perpetually anxious, steering clear of school, or retreating from hobbies they previously loved. Research indicates that individuals who experience bullying are considerably more prone to facing mood disorders than their counterparts.

3.2 Symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress

Certain students endure bullying that is so intense it leads to symptoms resembling PTSD. They might revisit distressing experiences in their thoughts, find it hard to trust people, or feel emotionally detached. These responses aren't merely emotional—they're genuine psychological wounds that require care and assistance.

3.3 Challenges in Emotion Regulation

Individuals who experience bullying might struggle to handle their feelings. They might fluctuate between sadness, anger, and fear, frequently uncertain how to react in social contexts. In certain instances, this results in disruptive behavior in class or complete withdrawal, making it more difficult for educators to connect with and assist them.

3.4 Eroded Self-Worth and Identity

Education is a vital period for developing self-identity. When bullying occurs, the adverse messages students get from their peers may be internalized. They may begin to think they are unworthy, undesirable, or imperfect. As time passes, these beliefs can influence various aspects, including academic drive and personal connections.

3.5 Difficulties with Academic Involvement

It's challenging to concentrate on assignments when you're anxious about every school day. Bullying frequently results in school avoidance, declining grades, and decreased involvement in class. The emotional weight just takes away energy needed for learning.

3.6 Lasting Effects on Mental Health

Regrettably, the harm doesn't always disappear following graduation. Adults who experienced bullying during their school years face increased risks of anxiety, depression, and thoughts of suicide. Some continue to carry unresolved trauma throughout their professional lives or personal relationships.

3.7 Overlapping Identities and Cumulative Risk

Students possessing various marginalized identities—like identifying as LGBTQ+ and coming from a low-income background—might face intensified instances of bullying. Grasping this intersectionality aids in customizing support approaches and steering clear of generic solutions.

4. What Can Be Done: Real-World Interventions That Help

4.1 Comprehensive School Strategies

A highly effective approach to addressing bullying is to engage the whole school community. Initiatives such as Finland's KiVa have proven to be especially effective. Rather than concentrating solely on bullies and victims, KiVa redirects attention to bystanders—the peers who frequently observe bullying but are uncertain about how to respond. By informing and empowering every student, schools can alter societal norms concerning bullying.

The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program is a highly respected framework. It educates educators and school personnel to identify and tackle bullying while guaranteeing ongoing follow-up. Institutions that carry out such initiatives frequently indicate a reduction in bullying occurrences and an improved overall school environment.

4.2 Developing Social and Emotional Abilities

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) initiatives aim to assist students in recognizing and regulating their emotions, demonstrating empathy, and making wise choices. These skills not only stop bullying—they foster stronger, more compassionate communities. Studies indicate that schools implementing SEL frameworks experience enhancements in student conduct and emotional strength.

4.3 Systems of Peer Support

Peer mentoring or buddy initiatives assist in alleviating the loneliness often experienced by many victims. When learners have someone to rely on—a companion, a guide, an audience—it creates a significant impact. These systems also offer early alerts for staff to intervene before situations worsen.

4.4 Mental Health Assistance at the Location

Having school counselors or psychologists accessible for students is not just beneficial—it's crucial. Therapeutic methods such as CBT (Cognitive Behavioral Therapy) have been shown to be effective in assisting bullied students in managing their emotions, disputing negative thoughts, and restoring their self-esteem.

4.5 Addressing Cyberbullying

Given that a significant portion of students' social interactions are now conducted online, schools must also focus on digital conduct. Educating about digital citizenship, encouraging respectful online interactions, and implementing anonymous reporting mechanisms can all assist in managing cyberbullying effectively.

4.6 Teaching with a Trauma-Informed Approach

Educators who are trained in trauma-informed approaches are more likely to identify when disruptive behavior arises from emotional turmoil. These teachers can provide reassuring, supportive reactions that make students feel secure instead of penalized.

5. The Role of Educators, Families, and the School Environment

5.1 Instructors: Establishing the Atmosphere

Educators are crucial in influencing the culture of the classroom. When teachers intentionally advocate for kindness, inclusion, and respect, students pay attention. It is also crucial for teachers to be trained to recognize early indicators of bullying and to have the resources to respond appropriately.

5.2 Parents and Caregivers: Collaborators in Prevention

Initiating discussions at home regarding school experiences, friendships, and online actions can make children feel more supported. Parents ought to be motivated to work together with schools when bullying occurs. They can further strengthen the principles of empathy and inclusion within the household.

5.3 Fostering a Safety Culture

A secure school is one in which students feel appreciated and safe. This implies promoting diversity, honoring distinctions, and allowing students to express themselves. School-wide programs—such as kindness weeks, student councils, or inclusive assemblies—can help students feel more connected and reduce the chances of bullying or being bullied.

5.4 Relationships Between Teachers and Students

Supportive and trusting connections between students and teachers can serve as a safeguard against bullying. When students sense that there is an adult who is attentive and supportive, they are more inclined to express worries and ask for assistance sooner.

6. Policy Recommendations

For schools and communities to genuinely create an impact, robust frameworks must be established:

- Anti-bullying policies must be straightforward, consistently applied, and effectively communicated.
- Support for mental health must be a priority, not just an afterthought.
- SEL must be integrated into the core curriculum, rather than being merely an addition.
- Employees must undergo continuous training in trauma-informed care.
- Policies should incorporate elements of intersectionality and fairness.
- Collaborations with mental health organizations and community groups can enhance support networks.
- Laws against cyberbullying and school internet usage regulations ought to be frequently revised.

7. CONCLUSION

Bullying and social isolation go beyond mere behavioral issues—they represent serious risks to the emotional well-being and lasting psychological health of youth. Studies indicate that experiences of exclusion and victimization by peers are closely linked to higher risks of depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts, and social withdrawal in later life. These lasting effects highlight the necessity for schools to shift from reactive disciplinary approaches to proactive, inclusive methods that emphasize emotional well-being.

Developing emotionally secure school settings involves more than just regulations—it necessitates a change in culture. Educational institutions should promote empathy, respect, and collective accountability among every party involved, such as students, staff, and families. Teachers need to be equipped to recognize nuanced expressions of exclusion, handle them with care, and incorporate social-emotional learning (SEL) into the curriculum to promote empathy and healthy peer interactions.

Moreover, interventions need to be culturally aware and adapt to the changing social environment. The voices of marginalized students—such as racial minorities, LGBTQ+ youth, students with disabilities, and others—should be prioritized in policy-making and program design to guarantee inclusivity and relevance. Educational institutions ought to allocate resources to peer mentorship initiatives, trauma-aware instruction, and digital citizenship training to tackle new issues like cyberbullying and harassment based on identity.

As educational settings grow increasingly intricate, collaboration across disciplines will be crucial for creating responsive and evidence-based practices. By emphasizing emotional safety in conjunction with academic

growth, schools can transform into supportive and empowering environments where each student is appreciated and encouraged to achieve their potential.

REFERENCES

- Arseneault, L. (2018). Annual Research Review: The persistent and pervasive impact of being bullied in childhood and adolescence: Implications for policy and practice. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*.
- Espelage, D. L., & Swearer, S. M. (2010). A Social-Ecological Model for Bullying Prevention and Intervention. In S. R. Jimerson et al. (Eds.), *Handbook of Bullying in Schools*.
- Hymel, S., & Swearer, S. M. (2015). Four Decades of Research on School Bullying: An Introduction. *American Psychologist*.
- Olweus, D. (1993). *Bullying at School: What We Know and What We Can Do*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Salmivalli, C. (2010). Bullying and the peer group: A review. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*.
- World Health Organization (2020). Global status report on preventing violence against children 2020.
- Durlak, J.A., Weissberg, R.P., Dymnicki, A.B., Taylor, R.D. and Schellinger, K.B. (2011) 'The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions', *Child Development*.

CREDIT ASSESSMENT IN BANKING INDUSTRY –AN EFFECTIVE AI APPLICATION

Dr. Manisha Shinde

Assistant Professor-Shankarrao Chavan Law College, Pune

ABSTRACT

The Indian economy is the witness to digital advancement, today's era is demanding for continuous development for effective changes. The banking sector serves as a cornerstone of national economic development, playing an essential role in channeling capital, broadening access to credit, and promoting financial inclusion. Artificial intelligence is a type of technology that enables machines to mimic human abilities like recognizing speech, analysing images, sorting information, and completing various tasks intelligently. Banking is necessary, banks are not (Gates, B.1994) . Analysts from Allied Market Research estimated that AI in banking was worth \$3.88 billion not long ago, but they expect it to grow massively—reaching over \$64 billion by 2030. This impressive 32% growth rate highlights just how significant AI's role will be in shaping the future of the fintech industry. FinTech technologies and alternative data sources are being used by Indian banks more frequently to evaluate the creditworthiness of the prospective borrowers (Tigges et al., 2024).AI is changing the way banks operate by making processes faster, safer, and more customer-friendly. It helps in handle routine tasks, supports smarter decisions, and better controls risks, leading to a major upgrade in banking services. This research paper aims to explore the concept, process, results of AI and highlights the positive performance. It specifically focuses on how AI is used in credit assessment to evaluate its impact and functioning within the banking sector.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence, advancement, technology

INTRODUCTION

Banks serve as trusted guardians of customers' financial transactions and security. They build trust by safeguarding customers' assets and ensuring their financial well-being through reliable processes and services.AI plays a key role in transforming banking by improving data analysis, forecasting trends, identifying potential fraud, and enhancing customer interaction. It is introduced in various areas such as retail, commercial, and investment banking and enables the banking sectors to gain a deeper understanding of market trends and customer behaviour. Using AI to manage knowledge without human intervention significantly impacts the banking sector. (Atwal & Bryson, 2021).

This is the need of today's scenario to make the customers more comfortable and easier for bounding the relation with quality services and economical results. Evolving of AI in banking sector is the sign of success and improvement in area of customers satisfaction and retention since 1999, the year when the fraud detection was the rule-based system.

OBJECTIVE OF AI IN BANKING SECTOR-

1. Customizing services
2. Product for individual needs
3. Predicting and identifying risk and fraud
4. Streamlining operations

LITERATURE REVIEW-

Ridho Bramulya Ikhsan & et al in their study “An empirical study on the use of artificial intelligence in the banking sector of Indonesia by extending the TAM model and the moderating effect of perceived trust “emphasis on increasing importance of AI in banking business. The study has undertaken with an aim to measure the intention to continue adopting artificial intelligence in Indonesia's banking sector by taking 388 customers for the survey. The study is concluded that the banking industry in Indonesia increase the adoption and continuance intention of AI technology, such as increasing the ease of technology use, perceived benefits, the contribution of subjective norms, building attitudes toward and awareness of AI technology, and lowering customers' perceived risks.

Saloni Tripathi (2022) Points out the dynamics of AI platforms in the banking industry and how they are becoming a significant disruptor. Banks are facing challenges from current technology that uses intelligent algorithms to replace human labour. Companies must integrate AI into their business strategies and practices to stay competitive.

Bughin et al. (2018) also project that 90% of jobs will be transformed as a result of AI. While only 1% could be fully automated, AI could still take on a third of the tasks involved in around 60% of jobs. Repetitive tasks, like interaction with customers, routine operations, certain administrative support functions, and accounting would be threatened by technological substitution.

Sindhu J, 2019, the study focused on, artificial intelligence (AI) adoption in five Indian commercial banks—SBI, ICICI, Axis, HDFC, and HSBC—is discussed with reference to cost-benefit analysis. The data is gathered from secondary sources based on literature to determine the information utilised in the banking business. Search for AI technology services offered in India.

Banking Operational Practices -

Bank operation process is divided into three area for the smoother working process and efficient performance. It works in Front lineman office, Middle office and back office for the banks routine work in a stable and clear mode. The front office is entirely responsible for revenue generation, the middle office deals with risk issues, and the back office efficiently processes various activities.



AI the Need of the Banking Sector:

Banking sector has been growing faster, volatile and competitive as a result of globalisation and enhanced economic openness. Changing customer attitudes and improved knowledge have accelerated the application of AI across various purposes. The demand for savings and investment options from society has drastically increased, driving a greater focus on achieving higher security and quicker returns. Society now prioritizes easy and accessible procedures. AI emerges as the ideal solution to meet these evolving demands, enabling higher profit maximization for customers, banks, and the economy as a whole.

AI is becoming a cornerstone in banking and financial services. Banking sector uses the various AI products for meaningful purposes and effective outcomes. Traditional working pattern of the banks have been changed with an intention of improving the efficiency, cost effective procedure, paperless work and high level of customer's satisfaction. The existence of AI in the banking sector stems from the limitations of traditional processes, which are often time-consuming, energy-intensive, risky, and prone to human errors. The AI based practices lead to quickly processing complex transactions, meet compliance guidelines and less energetic customer processes. Customer engagement and time management in today's scenario banking sector has taken initiative in making the procedure easy and accessible with the use of AI applications.

Artificial Intelligence in Credit Assessment-

As the demand for speed and efficiency continues to grow, the banking industry has embraced cutting-edge technologies to enhance operations and improve customer experiences. One significant breakthrough in this evolution is the adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) in credit decision-making. The core objective of AI-driven credit decision platforms is to streamline processes and elevate the customer experience. These advancements have reshaped the banking landscape, enabling institutions to evaluate creditworthiness more accurately and manage risk more effectively.

Receiving approval for a loan—whether for personal, home, or business purposes—is a major milestone for individuals. Traditionally, customers had to follow a time-consuming and systematic procedure to obtain loan approval. However, AI now offers a transformative solution by significantly reducing the time and effort required. By analysing vast amounts of customer data quickly and accurately, AI surpasses traditional loan assessment methods, making the approval process faster, more efficient, and more customer-friendly.

AI and automation are helping banks streamline the entire loan processing job-

Steps in Credit Assessment with AI in Banks:

- **Data Collection:**

AI systems gather data from multiple sources, including traditional financial records (like income statements, credit history) and alternative data (such as social media activity, payment histories, utility bills, etc.).

- **Data Pre-processing and Cleaning:**

The collected data is cleaned, standardized, and organized to ensure accuracy. AI algorithms remove duplicates, fill missing values, and format. Machine learning models identify key features such as income stability, credit utilization ratio, employment history that are most predictive of creditworthiness. Risk profiles are created for each applicant based on these features.

- **Credit Scoring:**

AI models evaluate the applicant's credit score using historical data and predictive analytics. These models can assess the likelihood of loan repayment or default with high precision.

- **Automated Decision-Making:**

Based on risk scores and predefined criteria, AI systems can make instant credit decisions (approve, reject, or flag for manual review), speeding up the approval process.

- **Personalized Offer Generation:**

AI recommends tailored loan products or repayment terms suited to the applicant's risk profile, enhancing customer satisfaction and increasing acceptance rates.

- **Risk Monitoring and Dynamic Updating:**

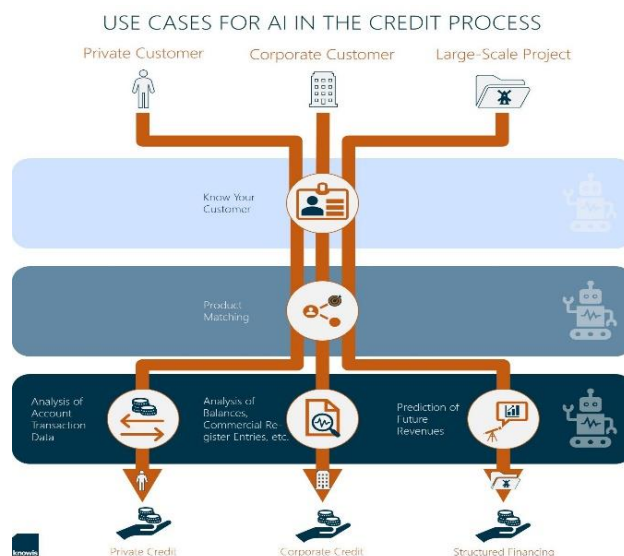
After loan approval, AI continuously monitors borrower behavior and market conditions to update risk assessments in real-time, allowing proactive risk management.

- **Regulatory Compliance and Reporting:**

AI ensures that all credit assessment steps are documented, auditable, and compliant with legal and regulatory standards, automating much of the reporting process.

As Statista projects AI usage in banking to near 75% by 2025, some institutions are already leveraging AI algorithms to shrink loan processing times to just 30–60 seconds.

Smarter Credit Process-



Source: Knowis.com

Impact of AI on Credit Assessment:

AI's influence on banking operations is most evident in the field of risk management. It enhances credit scoring, portfolio management, fraud detection, and debt collection optimization. AI also enables early detection of weak borrower signals and supports the development of more robust economic models. Additionally, AI

technologies help banks securely store and process the large volumes of data required for regulatory compliance and customer relationship management.

Leloup (2017) suggests that the introduction of AI into the banking sector has the potential to reconfigure commercial relationships between banks and their stakeholders, emphasizing principles of objectivity and trust.

The combination of speed, precision, and improved risk evaluation is revolutionizing how financial institutions assess credit profiles and make loan decisions.

- **Speed and Accuracy**

Speed and accuracy are two of AI's most critical capabilities in credit assessment. AI-driven applications streamline the process of evaluating applicant eligibility and compatibility, ensuring faster and more precise assessments. This enhancement strengthens confidence in the validity of submitted documentation and fosters greater trust in the overall lending process.

- **Efficiency in Processing**

One of the most notable benefits of AI in credit appraisal is its exceptional speed and operational efficiency. AI algorithms can analyse extensive borrower data in real time, drawing insights from various sources simultaneously. This capability significantly shortens the credit assessment timeline, enabling lenders to make quicker, more informed decisions and respond more rapidly to borrower inquiries. Furthermore, AI-driven automation optimizes administrative functions, such as document verification and data processing, reducing the time and manual effort traditionally required for loan origination.

- **Risk Management and Flexibility:**

AI-driven credit assessment strengthens financial institutions' risk management practices and improves lending portfolio performance. Through advanced analytics and predictive modelling, AI can uncover potential risks and identify valuable lending opportunities. This allows lenders to proactively mitigate risks, target more profitable customer segments, and strategically optimize loan portfolios to maximize returns.

- **Adaptability and Flexibility:**

AI-powered credit assessment tools are highly adaptable, allowing them to evolve and modify procedures based on customer needs, market changes, and regulatory updates. This adaptability ensures that the credit appraisal process remains efficient, responsive, and customer-centric.

- **Regulatory Compliance and Reporting:**

AI also plays a critical role in helping financial institutions meet regulatory requirements. By securely processing and storing vast amounts of customer and transactional data, AI enables banks to maintain compliance, generate accurate reporting, and enhance transparency with regulators and stakeholders.

Machine learning can help banks navigate complex regulatory requirements more effectively. By automating tasks like data analysis and report creation, ML systems streamline compliance processes, cutting down on manual work. This leads to more accurate and timely reporting, which lowers the risk of non-compliance penalties and strengthens the bank's credibility with both regulators and the public.

- **Customized Financial Products:**

Machine learning algorithms enable banks to conduct a thorough analysis of customer data, identifying unique preferences, behaviours, and risk profiles. These insights empower financial institutions to design personalized financial solutions tailored to individual customer needs, thereby enhancing customer satisfaction and loyalty. Personalization may include offering customized loan terms, tailored insurance products, or bespoke investment options. Ultimately, this approach not only improves the overall customer experience but also strengthens long-term relationships between banks and their clients.

Challenge before AI driven Credit Assessment:

Data Privacy and Security

AI models rely on large volumes of sensitive customer data. Ensuring the privacy and security of this data is critical, as breaches can lead to legal penalties, reputational damage, and loss of customer trust.

Issues of Bias and fairness

If historical data used to train AI models reflects biases (such as racial, gender, or socioeconomic biases), the AI may unintentionally perpetuate unfair lending practices. Eliminating bias and ensuring fairness in credit decisions remains a major challenge.

Lack of Transparency:

Many AI models, especially deep learning models, are complex and difficult to interpret. It becomes challenging for banks and regulators to understand how specific credit decisions are made, leading to concerns about accountability.

Regulatory Compliance:

Financial regulations are strict regarding credit decisions, and AI systems must comply with laws such as GDPR, the Equal Credit Opportunity Act (ECOA), and others. Staying compliant while using evolving AI technologies can be complicated.

Quality and Availability of Data:

AI systems require accurate, complete, and high-quality data for reliable assessments. Poor data quality, missing information, or inconsistent data sources can weaken model performance and lead to wrong decisions.

Customer Trust and Acceptance:

Customers may be skeptical about AI-based credit decisions, especially if they perceive them as impersonal or unfair. Building trust and offering clear explanations for AI-driven decisions is essential.

High Implementation Costs:

Developing, training, and maintaining AI credit assessment systems can be expensive. Smaller banks and financial institutions may find it challenging to afford these technologies.

Dynamic Market Conditions:

Economic conditions, market behaviors, and borrower patterns change over time. AI models must be constantly updated and retrained to adapt, or else their predictions may become outdated and inaccurate.

Ethical Concerns:

Ethical issues around autonomy, decision-making responsibility, and customer consent are emerging. Banks must consider ethical frameworks when deploying AI systems for credit assessments.

CONCLUSION

CREDIT ASSESSMENT IS A CRUCIAL DECISION-MAKING PROCESS THAT OFTEN TAKES A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF TIME TO finalize. Evaluating the loan and creditworthiness consist various factors such credit history, credit score, annual income, and other financial indicators and determining the ability to repay the loan with associated risks,

The use of AI-powered credit assessment significantly accelerates loan approvals and streamlines the credit underwriting process, revolutionizing traditional methods of credit risk evaluation. AI applications in credit assessment not only enhance decision-making efficiency but also build greater trust among customers, leading to higher profit maximization and increased competitiveness in the market.

In the modern era, banking sectors are taking initiatives to implement AI-powered facilities, focusing on delivering high-quality services and products to meet evolving customer expectations.

REFERENCES

- Tigges, M., Mestwerdt, S., Tschirner, S., & Mauer, R. (2024). Who gets the money? A qualitative analysis of fintech lending and credit scoring through the adoption of AI and alternative data. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 205, 123491. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2024.123491>. DOI: 10.1016/j.techfore.2024.123491
- Tigges, M., Mestwerdt, S., Tschirner, S., & Mauer, R. (2024). Who gets the money? A qualitative analysis of fintech lending and credit scoring through the adoption of AI and alternative data. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 205, 123491. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2024.123491>. DOI: 10.1016/j.techfore.2024.123491
- Tigges, M., Mestwerdt, S., Tschirner, S., & Mauer, R. (2024). Who gets the money? A qualitative analysis of fintech lending and credit scoring through the adoption of AI and alternative data. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 205, 123491. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2024.123491>. DOI: 10.1016/j.techfore.2024.123491
- Bughin, J., Hazan, E., Lund, S., Dahlstroem, P., Wiesinger, A., & Subramaniam, A. (2018). Skill shift: Automation and the future of the workforce. McKinsey Global Institute.

-
- G. Atwal, D. Bryson “Antecedents of intention to adopt artificial intelligence services by consumers in personal financial investing”*Strategic Change*, 30 (3) (2021), pp. 293-298, 10.1002/jsc.2412
 - Ikhsan, R. B., Susanti, D., & Nurmandi, A. (2021). An empirical study on the use of artificial intelligence in the banking sector of Indonesia by extending the TAM model and the moderating effect of perceived trust. *Procedia Computer Science*, 179, 688–697.
 - Leloup, L. (2017). *Blockchain: La révolution de la confiance*. Eyrolles.
 - Saloni Tripathi, R. G. (2022). Role of Artificial Intelligence in the Banking Sector. *International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews*, 3-8.
 - Sindhu J, R. N. (2019). Impact of Artificial Intelligence in chosen Indian Commercial Bank - A cost benefit analysis. *Asian Journal of Management*, 2-7.
 - Tigges, M., Mestwerdt, S., Tschirner, S., & Mauer, R. (2024). A qualitative analysis of fintech lending and credit scoring through the adoption of AI and alternative data. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 205, 123491.

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND SOCIAL EQUITY: A SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Dr. Gulab Pathan

Head Department of Sociology, AKIS, Poona College of Arts Science and Commerce Camp Pune-411001

ABSTRACT

Inclusive education is a vital mechanism for achieving social equity, addressing disparities in access, participation, and educational outcomes^[1-5]. Rooted in justice, equality, and diversity, it aims to dismantle systemic barriers facing marginalized and differently-abled students. This paper analyzes inclusive education sociologically, examining how institutional structures, cultural norms, and policies—such as the UN CRPD and India's Right to Education Act influence inclusivity^[22-26]. It also assesses the effectiveness of such practices and proposes policy measures to enhance formal education systems^[15, 30, 44].

Keywords: *Inclusive Education, Social Equity, Sociology of Education, Educational Policy, Marginalization, Diversity*

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is recognized as a key tool for social mobility, empowerment, and democracy. Yet, systemic inequities still persist along axes of disability, gender, caste, ethnicity, class, and language^[27-30]. Inclusive education, both a strategy and philosophy, seeks to transform institutions to be equitable and responsive^[1-4].

This paper applies sociological frameworks stratification, institutionalism, and critical pedagogy to understand the intersection of inclusive education and social equity^[5-8].

Education has long been heralded as a fundamental driver of social mobility, empowerment, and democratic participation. Yet despite its ideal status, education systems around the world particularly in countries like India—continue to reproduce and exacerbate systemic inequities tied to socioeconomic class, caste, gender, disability, ethnicity, and language. These structural barriers not only limit individual opportunity but also perpetuate cycles of marginalization and exclusion across generations^[1-5]. In response, the concept of **inclusive education** has emerged as a transformative philosophy and strategy aimed at dismantling institutional barriers and fostering educational environments that respect and promote diversity. Inclusive education, defined broadly as a process that enhances learner participation and diminishes exclusion, is premised on principles of justice, equality, and human rights^[22]. It posits that all students regardless of their backgrounds or abilities should learn together in supportive, caring, and accessible environments.

From a **sociological perspective**, inclusive education is much more than a collection of classroom techniques. It is a vanguard force for structural change, challenging norms and hegemonies embedded in schooling systems. When framed through theoretical lenses like stratification theory, institutionalism, and critical pedagogy, inclusive education becomes an arena where power, inequality, and cultural capital are contested^[3, 5-8]. It calls for a reevaluation of widely accepted pedagogical approaches and necessitates a realignment of institutional values, curricula, teacher education, assessment policies, and school governance.

This argument gains normative and legal traction through global frameworks such as the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), the Salamanca Statement, and Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), all of which mandate that education systems shift from segregation to inclusion^[22-23]. Moored to this international context, India's **Right to Education (RTE) Act** of 2009 (amended through various notifications) and the more recent **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** assert the importance of inclusive practices ranging from universal enrollment to gender and disability-sensitive pedagogy^[24-26].

Despite this robust policy framework, numerous challenges threaten the successful implementation of inclusive education. Schools often suffer from inadequate physical infrastructure such as lack of ramps, accessible toilets, and assistive devices—and insufficiently trained teachers comfortable with diverse pedagogical strategies^[30, 33]. Attitudinal barriers rooted in stereotypes, stigma, and low expectations—further erode the inclusivity of classroom environments^[14, 16, 32]. Rigid curricula and standardized assessment systems, which prioritize uniformity over diversity, exacerbate educational exclusion^[20, 43].

However, emerging empirical evidence presents a more hopeful narrative. This paper examines two notable case studies Kerala's public school system and the United Kingdom's "Learning Without Limits" initiative to highlight how inclusive practices can foster meaningful improvements in both academic and socio-emotional outcomes^[35, 40]. Building on these examples, the paper uses sociological frameworks to argue for transformative inclusion: a concept that goes beyond assimilation and instead calls for systemic reconfiguration rethinking

success beyond exam scores, valuing cultural and linguistic diversity, challenging hierarchical classroom norms, and democratizing school governance^[17, 29, 44, 50, 61].

We conclude this paper by offering concrete recommendations aimed at policymakers, teacher educators, administrators, schools, and communities. These include integrated policy frameworks, inclusive teacher education programs, active community engagement; effective monitoring systems focused on equity, and targeted planning for intersectionally marginalized groups^[7, 19, 22, 28, 34, 59]. Ultimately, this expanded vision of inclusive education anchored in sociology, human rights, and grassroots evidence—holds the potential to transform education into a progressive force for social justice and democratic renewal.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK:

2.1 Defining Inclusive Education:

Inclusive education is globally recognized as both a right and a strategy for educational reform. According to UNESCO, inclusive education refers to the process of addressing and responding to the diverse needs of all learners by increasing participation in learning and reducing exclusion within and from education systems^[22]. It envisions schools as spaces where every child regardless of their abilities, backgrounds, or socio-cultural status—can thrive academically and socially. Central to this approach is the belief that education is a fundamental human right, not a conditional opportunity based on merit, conformity, or privilege^[1, 2, 6]. This perspective shifts the focus from integrating “different” children into mainstream classrooms to transforming those classrooms to become inclusive by design.

Inclusive education thus goes beyond the mere physical placement of marginalized or differently abled students into regular schools. It necessitates a profound rethinking of curriculum, teaching practices, assessment mechanisms, school governance, and teacher training. The goal is not to make students “fit” the system, but to adapt the system to reflect and accommodate the full spectrum of learner diversity.

2.2 Social Equity in Education:

Social equity in education is concerned with ensuring that students from different backgrounds have equitable not just equal—access to learning resources, opportunities, and outcomes. It involves recognizing systemic imbalances and actively working to address them. The sociologist Pierre Bourdieu’s concept of **cultural capital** is crucial here. He argued that schools often reward the cultural knowledge, language styles, and behavioral norms of dominant groups, which disadvantages students who do not possess such capital usually from lower socio-economic or marginalized backgrounds^[4, 5].

Thus, even ostensibly neutral educational systems can perpetuate inequality when they ignore how students’ home environments and socio-cultural contexts affect their school performance. Inclusive education, therefore, must be rooted in an understanding of social equity, ensuring that learning systems empower all students—particularly the historically disadvantaged.

3. SOCIOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS:

3.1 Structural Inequality:

Schools are not isolated institutions but mirror broader societal structures. They often reproduce social stratifications through formal mechanisms like academic tracking and informal mechanisms like hidden curricula^[8, 12, 18]. Tracking involves grouping students based on perceived ability, which often correlates with socio-economic status or language background. These practices, though framed as meritocratic, frequently reinforce class and caste-based divisions. The hidden curriculum refers to the implicit transmission of values, beliefs, and norms often privileging dominant social ideologies while sidelining others.

For example, textbooks may underrepresent minority communities or portray them in stereotypical ways. Such practices not only marginalize learners but also reduce their chances of succeeding in an environment that does not reflect or validate their identity.

3.2 Disability and the Social Model:

Traditional understandings of disability often adopt a **medical model**, which views disability as a deficit located within the individual something to be treated or fixed. In contrast, the **social model of disability** frames disability as a product of environmental, systemic, and attitudinal barriers^[9–11]. This paradigm shift is foundational for inclusive education. It compels institutions to reconfigure physical infrastructure, pedagogy, communication methods, and assessment tools to ensure full participation for students with disabilities.

Rather than asking, “What’s wrong with the student?” the social model asks, “What’s wrong with the system that excludes them?” This reframing is not just philosophical but has practical implications: ramps, assistive technology, Braille materials, alternative assessments, and teacher training are all essential to dismantling systemic barriers.

3.3 Intersectionality:

Intersectionality is a theoretical framework that examines how various forms of discrimination based on caste, gender, disability, religion, class, and other social markers interact and compound one another ^[13, 19, 34]. For instance, a Dalit girl with a disability may face compounded exclusion that is qualitatively different from what a privileged male student with the same disability might experience.

Inclusive policies and practices must be sensitive to such intersecting identities. Without this nuance, interventions may be ineffective or even exclusionary. Intersectionalists thus emphasize the need for flexible, context-specific strategies that recognize the multifaceted nature of marginalization.

4. POLICY FRAMEWORKS:

Inclusive education finds strong advocacy in international conventions and national policy frameworks. The **Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)** requires states to ensure inclusive education at all levels and lifelong learning for persons with disabilities ^[22]. The **Salamanca Statement (1994)** affirms that inclusive schools are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, building inclusive societies, and achieving education for all. Similarly, **Sustainable Development Goal 4** aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all by 2030 ^[23].

India’s **Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009**, mandates free and compulsory education for children aged 6 to 14 and includes provisions for children with disabilities and those from disadvantaged groups ^[24]. The **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** reiterates the commitment to inclusion, particularly for socio-economically disadvantaged groups (SEDGs), and advocates for barrier-free access, universal enrollment, and inclusive pedagogies ^[25, 26].

CONCLUSION

Inclusive education is not merely pedagogical—it is a sociological and moral imperative. Embedding values of justice, equity, and diversity can transform educational systems and enhance democracy. Sociological tools are vital for restructuring exclusionary structures and building inclusive futures ^[38, 56, 61].

REFERENCE

1. Ainscow M., *Understanding the Development of Inclusive Education*, Routledge, London, pp. 1–200
2. Booth T., Ainscow M., *The Index for Inclusion*, CSIE, Bristol, pp. 1–150
3. Armstrong D., Armstrong A.C., *Inclusive Education: Policy, Contexts and Comparative Perspectives*, Sage, London, pp. 5–224
4. Florian L., *Inclusion: Special or Inclusive Education*, Continuum, London, pp. 1–180
5. Mittler P., *Working Towards Inclusive Education: Social Contexts*, David Fulton, London, pp. 23–170
6. Loreman T., *Measuring Inclusive Education*, Canadian Journal for Education Administration and Policy, pp. 1–124
7. Forlin C. (ed.), *Teacher Education for Inclusion*, Routledge, London, pp. 15–240
8. Florian L., Black-Hawkins K., Rouse M., *Responding to Diversity in Schools*, Open University Press, Buckingham, pp. 1–192
9. Dyson A., Forlin C. (eds.), *Diversity and Inclusion in Early Childhood*, Routledge, London, pp. 10–220
10. Sharma U., Forlin C., Loreman T., *Impact of Inclusion on Teachers and Students in Australia*, Springer, Dordrecht, pp. 1–150
11. Rix J. et al., *Policy and Inclusive Practice*, Routledge, London, pp. 30–200
12. Norwich B., *Managing Successful Inclusion*, Routledge, London, pp. 1–157
13. Avramidis E., Norwich B., *Teachers' Attitudes towards Inclusive Education*, David Fulton, London, pp. 10–128
14. McLeskey J., Waldron N., *Effective Inclusive Schools*, Pearson, Boston, pp. 1–196

15. Loreman T., Deppeler J., Harvey D., *Inclusive Education: Supporting Diversity in the Classroom*, Routledge, London, pp. 1–210
16. Slee R., *The Irregular School*, Routledge, London, pp. 5–180
17. Booth T., *Care and Knowledge in the Early Years*, Routledge, London, pp. 20–172
18. Slee R., Allan J., *Excluding the Included*, Flinders University Press, Adelaide, pp. 1–145
19. Ainscow M., *Creating Inclusive Education Systems*, UNESCO IIEP, Paris, pp. 1–99
20. Farrell P., Ainscow M., *Making Special Education Inclusive*, Falmer, London, pp. 1–169
21. Norwich B., Nash T., *Assessment for Inclusive Education*, Bloomsbury, London, pp. 1–182
22. UNESCO, *Overcoming Exclusion through Inclusive Approaches in Education*, UNESCO, Paris, pp. 1–120
23. UNESCO, *Global Education Monitoring Report*, UNESCO Publishing, Paris, pp. 200–400
24. UNICEF, *The State of the World's Children 2020: Inclusion*, UNICEF, New York, pp. 1–152
25. World Bank, *Inclusive Education and Equity for All*, World Bank, Washington DC, pp. 1–180
26. Graham L.J., Slee R., *Inclusive Pedagogies in Practice*, Continuum, London, pp. 1–204
27. Corbett J., *Supporting Inclusive Education: A Connective Pedagogy*, Routledge, London, pp. 1–176
28. Gallagher T.L., *Preparing Inclusive Educators*, Sense Publishers, Rotterdam, pp. 1–162
29. Black-Hawkins K., Florian L., Rouse M., *Achievement and Inclusion in Schools*, David Fulton, London, pp. 1–188
30. Ainscow M., Sandill A., *Developing Equitable Education Systems*, UNESCO, Paris, pp. 1–117
31. Avramidis E., *Inclusive Practice in International Journal of Inclusive Education*, Routledge, London, pp. 1–132
32. Armstrong A.C., *Inclusion in Action*, Sage, London, pp. 1–190
33. Forlin C., Loreman T., *A Guide to Co-Teaching*, Routledge, London, pp. 1–144
34. Gupta A., *Inclusion in Indian Education*, Sage India, New Delhi, pp. 1–160
35. Mohanty J., *Inclusive Education in the Global South*, Routledge, London, pp. 1–190
36. Miles S., *Adult Learning and Social Equity*, Sense Publishers, Rotterdam, pp. 1–142
37. Armstrong A.C., Woolfolk A., *Special and Inclusive Education*, Sage, London, pp. 1–175
38. Evans J., Lunt I., *Inclusive Education: Are there limits?*, Trentham Books, Stoke-on-Trent, pp. 1–140
39. Slee R., *Inclusive Education and Equity*, Routledge, London, pp. 1–168
40. Haley K.J., Moss C.K., *Praxis of Inclusive Education*, Springer, Dordrecht, pp. 1–183
41. Hegarty S., *Frontiers of Inclusion*, Routledge, London, pp. 1–172
42. Tormey R., *Student Voice in Inclusive Classrooms*, Routledge, London, pp. 1–160
43. Waterhouse J., *Assessment in Inclusive Education*, Sage, London, pp. 1–153
44. Forlin C., Earle C., Chakraborty A., *Inclusive Education in South Asia*, Sage India, New Delhi, pp. 1–190
45. Booth T., *Inclusion and Exclusion in Education*, Trentham Books, Stoke-on-Trent, pp. 1–157
46. O'Raw P., Connolly P., *Diversity and Equity in Education*, Routledge, London, pp. 1–150
47. Norwich B., *Beyond the Dichotomy of Special and Inclusive Education*, Routledge, London, pp. 1–176
48. Florian L., Forthofer T., *Gender and Inclusive Education*, Routledge, London, pp. 1–175
49. Janney R.E., Snell M.E., *Inclusive Instruction for Students with Significant Disabilities*, Paul H. Brookes, Baltimore, pp. 1–210
50. Slee R., *Inclusion and Exclusion*, Routledge, London, pp. 1–148

-
51. Armstrong D., Armstrong A.C., *Inclusion: Old Paradigm, New Insights*, Routledge, London, pp. 1–182
 52. Florian L., Rouse M., *Inclusive Pedagogy*, Open University Press, Buckingham, pp. 1–164
 53. Corbett J., *Supporting People with Learning Difficulties*, Polity Press, Cambridge, pp. 1–198
 54. Forlin C., *Inclusive Education Reform in Australia*, Springer, Dordrecht, pp. 1–160
 55. Ainscow M., Sandill A., *Equity in Education*, UNESCO, Paris, pp. 1–110
 56. Dyson A., *Inclusive Practice in Mainstream Schools*, Routledge, London, pp. 1–158
 57. Burt J., *Inclusion and Leadership*, Routledge, London, pp. 1–174
 58. Florian L., Hills S., *Equity and Special Educational Needs*, Open University Press, Buckingham, pp. 1–186
 59. Bhambra G.K., *Rethinking Modernity and Inclusion*, Routledge, London, pp. 1–160

RESPONSIBLE DEVELOPMENT AND APPLICATION OF BIOTECHNOLOGY: POLICY FRAMEWORKS, ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS, AND SOCIAL EQUITY**Dr. Gazala Pathan¹ and Ms. Farheenshama M. Shaikh²**¹Assistant Professor, Department of B.Voc, Medical Laboratory Technology (MLT), Poona College, of Arts, Science and Commerce Camp, Pune²Assistant Professor, B.Voc, Medical Laboratory Technology, Poona College, Camp, Pune**ABSTRACT:**

Biotechnology represents a paradigm shift in modern science, influencing healthcare, agriculture, and environmental systems. Its potential to address global challenges is unparalleled. Yet, its application demands robust ethical oversight, regulatory governance, and a commitment to social equity. This research critically evaluates national and international policy frameworks, ethical standards, and societal discourses surrounding biotechnology. It argues for a holistic, inclusive approach that prioritizes equitable access, transparency, and stakeholder engagement, ensuring that innovation is distributed fairly and responsibly across diverse populations.

Keywords: *Biotechnology, Social Equity, Inclusion, Policy Frameworks, Ethical Guidelines, Responsible Innovation, Global Governance*

1. INTRODUCTION

Biotechnology has emerged as a transformative scientific frontier, reshaping key sectors such as medicine, agriculture, energy, and environmental conservation. From genome editing to personalized medicine and sustainable agricultural practices, biotechnological applications promise substantial improvements in human well-being. However, the rapid pace of innovation introduces critical questions about governance, ethics, and social inclusion. Disparities in access and participation risk deepening existing inequalities [1–6, 22, 46–49].

This paper explores how ethical principles, policy frameworks, and public discourses influence the responsible development and use of biotechnology. It underscores the importance of embedding social equity and inclusive practices in biotechnological research, regulation, and implementation.

2. THE SCOPE AND IMPACT OF BIOTECHNOLOGY:

2.1 Medical Biotechnology: Advancements such as mRNA vaccines, CRISPR-Cas9 gene editing, and cell-based therapies are revolutionizing disease prevention and treatment. These innovations enhance disease management but raise ethical concerns regarding cost, accessibility, and informed consent [1–3, 4].

2.2 Agricultural Biotechnology: Technologies like GMOs, precision breeding, and microbial biofertilizers are increasing yield, nutrition, and resilience. Yet issues remain over biosafety, intellectual property, and small-farmer autonomy [25, 51, 52].

2.3 Industrial & Environmental Biotechnology: Bio-based production of fuels, polymers, and chemicals, along with bioremediation and carbon sequestration, offers eco-friendly alternatives. Long-term ecological effects and lifecycle sustainability are key concerns [32, 33, 59].

3. POLICY FRAMEWORKS GOVERNING BIOTECHNOLOGY:**3.1 International Agreements:**

- **Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety** governs cross-border movement of LMOs using a precautionary approach and Advanced Informed Agreement procedures corporateeurope.org+10bch.cbd.int+10nepad.org+10 [25].
- **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)** emphasizes conservation and equitable benefit-sharing.
- **UNESCO Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights** outlines human dignity, consent, and equity principles pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov+7unesco.org+7unicri.it+7 [46].
- **Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights** addresses genetic diversity, dignity, and bans harmful practices like cloning unesco.org+2en.wikipedia.org+2wired.com+2.

3.2 National Regulatory Systems:

- **United States:** Coordinated through FDA, EPA, USDA with product-centric evaluation [48–49].
- **India:** Regulated by the Biotechnology Regulatory Authority and the Department of Biotechnology [55, 56].

- **European Union:** Employs precautionary principle with robust GMO oversight via EFSA pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/wikipedia.org+4en.wikipedia.org+4bch.cbd.int+4 [60].

3.3 Implementation Challenges: Global regulatory fragmentation, capacity gaps in low-income regions, and weak stakeholder inclusion suggest the need for harmonization and transparent public engagement [22, 34, 46–49].

4. Ethical Guidelines in Biotechnology:

4.1 Core Bioethical Principles: Principles of autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence, and justice underpin consent processes, clinical trials, and risk–benefit analyses [48, 49, 22, 46].

4.2 UNESCO Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights: This declaration—UNESCO’s 2005 instrument—frames its principles around respect for dignity, equality, solidarity, and equitable access for vulnerable and developing populations pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov [46].

4.3 Contemporary Ethical Challenges: CRISPR gene drives, synthetic biology, and germline edits evoke concerns around intergenerational ethics, data privacy, societal identity, and ecological justice [12–19, 26–31].

5. SOCIAL EQUITY AND INCLUSION:

5.1 Bridging Access Gaps: Infrastructure disparities in LICs/LMICs impede access to advanced biotechnology; investments are needed in education and financing [33, 59].

5.2 Structural Disparities: Gender, caste, race, and income deeply shape biotechnological access—policy measures must proactively redress these inequities [24–26, 55, 56].

5.3 Indigenous Knowledge Integration: Integrating traditional knowledge and ensuring free, prior, informed consent enhance innovations’ cultural relevance and ethical legitimacy [24–31].

5.4 Case Studies

- **HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa:** TRIPS waivers and global health policies improved medicine access [45].
- **CRISPR Trials:** Issues of participant diversity and affordability illustrate social inclusion challenges [1–4, 12].

6. Public Engagement & Societal Dialogue:

6.1 Public Trust & Media Narratives: Mis/disinformation and framed storytelling shape public acceptance; transparency is essential to build trust [34].

6.2 Inclusive Stakeholder Dialogues: Engaging civil society, industry, marginalized voices, and academia supports democratic governance [22, 46].

6.3 Science Communication Platforms: Citizen science initiatives, participatory forums, and online platforms democratize knowledge and empower local decision-making [33, 34].

7. Responsible Research & Innovation (RRI) Models:

7.1 Principles of RRI: EU frameworks highlight openness, sustainability, foresight, and societal participation in research planning and evaluation [59, 60].

7.2 Equity in Research Design: Ethics review boards must evaluate social relevance and community benefit alongside scientific compliance [46, 48, 49].

7.3 Co-Creation Tools: Technology assessment panels and collaborative research methods facilitate inclusive innovation and shared governance [33, 34, 59].

8. POLICY & PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration:** Institutionalize co-design and policy dialogues across sectors.
2. **Local Capacity Strengthening:** Enhance education, infrastructure, and regulatory capacity in under-resourced regions [22, 59].
3. **Ethical Oversight:** Formalize public-reporting mechanisms and independent ethics boards [46, 48, 49].
4. **Global Cooperation:** Leverage platforms like CBD, WHO, WTO/TRIPS, UNESCO for aligned governance [25, 45, 46].

9. CONCLUSION:

Biotechnology has transformative potential for advancing global health, equity, and environmental sustainability. Effective realization of its benefits demands inclusive, ethical, and socially conscious governance. Centering social equity and fostering multi-stakeholder collaboration ensures biotechnology contributes to shared prosperity and sustainability.

REFERENCES:

1. Cho S.W., Kim S., Kim J.-S., Targeted Genome Engineering in Human Cells with CRISPR, **Nature Biotechnology**, 2013, Vol. 31, pp. 230–232
2. Brokowski C., Adli M., CRISPR Ethics: Moral Considerations for Applications of a Powerful Tool, **Journal of Molecular Biology**, 2019, Vol. 431, pp. 88–101
3. Doudna J.A., Charpentier E., The New Frontier of Genome Engineering with CRISPR-Cas9, **Science**, 2014, Vol. 346, pp. 1258–1262
4. Baylis F., *Altered Inheritance: CRISPR and the Ethics of Human Genome Editing*, **Harvard University Press**, Cambridge, MA, 2019, pp. 1–250
5. Lanphier E. et al., Don't Edit the Human Germ Line, **Nature**, 2015, Vol. 519, pp. 410–411
6. Lander E.S. et al., Adopt a Moratorium on Heritable Genome Editing, **Nature**, 2019, Vol. 567, pp. 165–167
7. Ishii T., Ethics of Creating Genetically Modified Children Using Genome Editing, **Current Opinion in Endocrinology**, 2017, Vol. 24, pp. 418–423
8. Schleidgen S. et al., Human Germline Editing in the Era of CRISPR-Cas: Risk and Uncertainty, **BMC Medical Ethics**, 2020, Vol. 21, Art. 1–15
9. Anegon I., Nguyen T.H., 'My Life Needs Editing' and Genome Editing Needs Ethics, **Current Gene Therapy**, 2016, Vol. 16, pp. 1–2
10. Adashi E.Y., Cohen I.G., CRISPR Immunity: A Case Study for Justified Somatic Genetic Modification?, **Journal of Medical Ethics**, 2022, Vol. 48, pp. 83–85
11. Adashi E.Y., Cohen I.G., Heritable Human Genome Editing: The International Commission Report, **JAMA**, 2020, Vol. 324, pp. 1941–1942
12. Al-Balas Q.A.E. et al., The Ethics of Gene Editing from an Islamic Perspective, **Science and Engineering Ethics**, 2020, Vol. 26, pp. 1851–1860
13. Alexiou A. et al., Social and Ethical Impact of Advanced Artificial and Biological Enhancements, **Open Public Health Journal**, 2020, Vol. 13, pp. 62–68
14. Cribbs A.P., Perera S.M., Genome Editing: Science and Bioethics of CRISPR-Cas9, **Yale Journal of Biology and Medicine**, 2017, Vol. 90, pp. 625–635
15. Enriquez P., Editing Humanity: On the Precise Manipulation of DNA in Human Embryos, **NCL Review**, 2018, Vol. 97, pp. 1147–1170
16. Garland-Thomson R., How We Got to CRISPR: The Dilemma of Being Human, **Perspectives in Biology and Medicine**, 2020, Vol. 63, pp. 28–43
17. Tang L. et al., CRISPR/Cas9-Mediated Gene Editing in Human Zygotes, **Molecular Genetics and Genomics**, 2017, Vol. 292, pp. 525–533
18. Shinwari Z.K. et al., Ethical Issues Regarding CRISPR-Mediated Genome Editing, **Current Issues in Molecular Biology**, 2018, Vol. 26, pp. 103–110
19. Schleidgen S. et al., Human Germline Editing: Inter-Generational Responsibility, **BMC Medical Ethics**, 2020, Vol. 21, Art. 1–15
20. Baylis F., Expert Testimony: The Case of Pregnancy and Ethics, **Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics**, 2000, Vol. 28, pp. 1–10
21. Cockburn K., Rossant J., Making the Blastocyst: Lessons from the Mouse, **Journal of Clinical Investigation**, 2010, Vol. 120, pp. 995–1003

22. CIOMS, International Ethical Guidelines for Health-Related Research Involving Humans, **CIOMS**, Geneva, 2017, pp. 1–100
23. Council of Europe, Chart of Signatures and Ratifications of Treaty 164, **Council of Europe**, Strasbourg, 2016, pp. 1–10
24. Nagoya M. et al., Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing, **UN CBD Secretariat**, Montreal, 2010, pp. 1–30
25. Cartagena Protocol, Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, **UNEP**, Montreal, 2003, pp. 1–50
26. Neuhaus C.P., Community Engagement and Field Trials of Genetically Modified Insects, **Hastings Center Report**, 2018, Vol. 48, pp. 25–36
27. Neuhaus C.P., Caplan A.L., Genome Editing: Bioethics Shows the Way, **PLoS Biology**, 2017, Vol. 15, Art. e2001987
28. Neves M.P., Druml C., Ethical Implications of Fighting Malaria with CRISPR/Cas9, **BMJ Global Health**, 2017, Vol. 2, Art. e000361
29. Oye K.A. et al., Regulating Gene Drives, **Science**, 2014, Vol. 345, pp. 626–628
30. Reid W., O’Brochta D.A., Applications of Genome Editing in Insects, **Current Opinion in Insect Science**, 2016, Vol. 13, pp. 43–54
31. Roberts A. et al., Problem Formulation for Use of Gene Drive in Mosquitoes, **American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene**, 2017, Vol. 96, pp. 530–533
32. Sachs J., Malaney P., The Economic and Social Burden of Malaria, **Nature**, 2002, Vol. 415, pp. 680–685
33. Saha K. et al., Building Capacity for a Global Genome Editing Observatory, **Trends in Biotechnology**, 2018, Vol. 36, pp. 741–749
34. Sankar P.L., Cho M.K., Engineering Values Into Genetic Engineering, **American Journal of Bioethics**, 2015, Vol. 15, pp. 18–24
35. Sarewitz D., Science Can’t Solve It, **Nature**, 2015, Vol. 522, pp. 413–414
36. CRISPR Journal, A Code of Ethics for Gene Drive Research, 2020, Vol. 3, pp. 22–30
37. George D.R. et al., Articulating ‘Free, Prior, and Informed Consent’ for Engineered Gene Drives, **Proceedings of the Royal Society B**, 2019, Vol. 286, Art. 20191484
38. Kolopack P.A., Lavery J.V., Informed Consent in Field Trials of Gene-Drive Mosquitoes, **Gates Open Research**, 2017, Vol. 1, Art. 14
39. Idris S.H. et al., Ethical and Legal Implications of Gene Editing in Plant Breeding, **J Zhejiang Univ Sci B**, 2023, Vol. 24, pp. 1093–1105
40. Marcello Ienca et al., Towards a Governance Framework for Brain Data, arXiv, 2021, pp. 1–30
41. Devitt S.K. et al., The Ethics of Biosurveillance, arXiv, 2021, pp. 1–25
42. Jobin A., Ienca M., Vayena E., Artificial Intelligence: Global Landscape of Ethics Guidelines, arXiv, 2019, pp. 1–20
43. Samarawickrama M., AI Governance and Ethics Framework for Sustainability, arXiv, 2022, pp. 1–28
44. WHO, Global Governance Framework for Human Genome Editing, WHO Press, Geneva, 2021, pp. 1–100
45. UN Human Rights Council, United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, UN, Geneva, 2011, pp. 1–31
46. UNESCO, Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights, UNESCO, Paris, 1997, pp. 1–12
47. COE Oviedo Convention, Convention for Protection in Biomedicine, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 1997, pp. 1–25
48. Belmont Report, Ethical Principles and Guidelines for Human Subject Research, US DHHS, Washington, DC, 1979, pp. 1–23

-
49. World Medical Association, Declaration of Helsinki, WMA, Finland, 2013, pp. 1–10
 50. BIO, Statement of Ethical Principles, Biotechnology Innovation Organization, Washington, DC, 2019, pp. 1–8
 51. FAO, Guidelines for Biosafety in Agricultural Biotechnology, FAO, Rome, 2015, pp. 1–40
 52. Nuffield Council on Bioethics, Genome Editing: An Ethical Review, **Nuffield**, London, 2016, pp. 1–76
 53. National Academies of Sciences, Gene Drives on the Horizon, NAP Press, Washington, DC, 2016, pp. 1–300
 54. NCBI Bookshelf, Human Genome Editing: Science, Ethics, and Governance, NAP, Washington, DC, 2017, pp. 1–150
 55. Drishti IAS, Ethical Challenges in Genetic Engineering, Drishti Press, Delhi, 2020, pp. 1–60
 56. ORF, The Ethical and Security Implications of Genetic Engineering, Observer Research Foundation, Delhi, 2024, pp. 1–50
 57. Cook-Deegan R., The Gene Wars: Science, Politics and the Human Genome, **W.W. Norton**, New York, 1994, pp. 1–280
 58. Genome Canada, GE³LS Program: Ethical, Environmental, Economic, Legal and Social Aspects, Genome Canada, Ottawa, 2002, pp. 1–25
 59. National Academies Press, Guiding Principles in Engineering Biology Research, ACS Synthetic Biology/NA Press, 2021, pp. 1–40
 60. European Commission, Ethical, Legal, and Social Aspects (ELSA) Research, EU Publications, Brussels, 2002, pp. 1–30
 61. Tallberg J. et al., Global Governance of Artificial Intelligence, **International Studies Review**, 2023, Vol. 25, pp. 100–122
 62. Devitt S.K. et al., The Ethics of Biosurveillance: A Social Contract Approach, arXiv, 2021, pp. 1–25

THE EVOLUTION AND IMPACT OF THE E-COMMERCE INDUSTRY IN INDIA: TRENDS, CHALLENGES, AND THE ROAD AHEAD

Mr. Shaikh Parvez Shabbir¹ and Dr. Dongare Mahadev²Research Scholar¹ and Research Guide²**ABSTRACT**

E-commerce has transformed the global retail landscape, offering unprecedented convenience, reach, and speed. In India, the e-commerce sector is undergoing rapid growth fueled by digital infrastructure, government reforms, mobile internet proliferation, and evolving consumer behavior. This paper examines the development of the e-commerce industry in India, identifying major trends, business models, technological innovations, and key policy interventions. It also explores challenges such as regulatory uncertainty, digital inequality, data security, and supply chain limitations. Drawing on a combination of secondary data analysis and case-based observations, the study concludes with strategic recommendations for building a more inclusive, secure, and sustainable e-commerce ecosystem in India.

Keywords: E-commerce, Digital Retail, Online Marketplaces, Indian Economy, Consumer Behavior, Technology Adoption, Policy Framework

1. INTRODUCTION

The rise of the internet and mobile technologies has significantly disrupted traditional retail markets worldwide. In India, the e-commerce sector has emerged as a key driver of economic transformation, altering how products and services are bought and sold. According to recent industry estimates, India's e-commerce market is expected to reach USD 200 billion by 2026, up from USD 84 billion in 2021. This growth has been accelerated by increasing smartphone penetration, digital payment adoption, favorable demographics, and proactive policy frameworks such as **Digital India** and **Startup India**. The purpose of this research is to analyze the evolution, impact, and future direction of the e-commerce industry in India with an emphasis on sustainability and inclusivity.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

E-commerce as a field of study spans several disciplines including information technology, marketing, logistics, and economics. Early studies by **Laudon and Traver (2016)** classified e-commerce models into B2B, B2C, C2C, and hybrid types. **Chaffey (2019)** emphasized the role of digital marketing and user interface design in influencing online purchase behavior. More recent research has focused on mobile commerce, AI-driven personalization, last-mile logistics, and omni-channel retailing.

Indian studies such as those by **Agarwal and Sengupta (2021)** explore the digital divide and infrastructure challenges in semi-urban regions. **MeitY (2022)** highlights the growing importance of vernacular content, regional platforms, and local seller integration. However, a gap remains in consolidated research that examines the interplay of business, policy, and technology in shaping the e-commerce ecosystem.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study is structured around the following core objectives:

1. To examine the structural evolution of India's e-commerce sector from 2010 to 2025.
2. To identify key business models, technological tools, and consumer trends.
3. To evaluate challenges related to regulation, data privacy, and infrastructure.
4. To recommend strategies for inclusive, secure, and sustainable growth.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research is based on **secondary data analysis**, drawing from:

- Industry reports (NASSCOM, IAMAI, DPIIT)
- Government publications (MeitY, RBI, TRAI)
- Peer-reviewed journal articles and case studies
- News articles, company filings, and conference proceedings (2020–2025)

A **qualitative thematic analysis** was used to interpret trends and synthesize policy recommendations. Case examples from leading platforms like Amazon India, Flipkart, Meesho, and ONDC were examined to contextualize findings.

5. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Growth and Market Size

The Indian e-commerce sector has witnessed **compound annual growth (CAGR) of 23%** since 2015. Online retail dominates with 80% market share, while vertical platforms in fashion (Myntra), groceries (BigBasket), and electronics (Croma, Reliance Digital) are gaining ground.

5.2 Key Drivers

- **Digital Payments:** The rise of UPI, mobile wallets, and embedded banking tools has simplified transactions.
- **Logistics Infrastructure:** Emergence of smart warehouses and 2-hour delivery models in metros.
- **Technology Integration:** AI, machine learning, and chatbots are being used for personalization and fraud detection.

5.3 Consumer Behavior

Consumers now expect fast, transparent, and personalized shopping experiences. Post-pandemic trends include:

- Increased demand for contactless delivery.
- Higher trust in product reviews and influencer content.
- Growth in Tier II and Tier III cities due to mobile-first interfaces and regional language apps.

5.4 Challenges

- **Regulatory Complexity:** FDI policies in multi-brand retail remain restrictive.
- **Digital Divide:** Poor connectivity and literacy hinder access in rural areas.
- **Cybersecurity Risks:** Rise in phishing attacks, data leaks, and misuse of personal information.
- **Sustainability:** High carbon footprint of packaging and logistics operations.

5.5 Policy and Institutional Framework

- **Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC)** aims to democratize digital commerce and reduce platform monopolies.
- **Consumer Protection (E-Commerce) Rules, 2020** regulate pricing transparency, grievance redressal, and data protection.

6. STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Inclusive Design:** Develop multilingual, low-bandwidth platforms to reach underserved populations.
2. **Capacity Building:** Train MSMEs and rural entrepreneurs in digital selling and e-commerce logistics.
3. **Regulatory Clarity:** Streamline FDI rules and enforce a transparent data governance framework.
4. **Green Commerce:** Encourage eco-friendly packaging, carbon offsets, and circular supply chains.
5. **Platform Neutrality:** Promote interoperability through ONDC and reduce gatekeeping by large aggregators.

7. CONCLUSION

The Indian e-commerce industry represents a dynamic and transformative force in the digital economy. Its future depends not just on growth but on **balanced development that is ethical, inclusive, and technologically resilient**. As India moves toward becoming a trillion-dollar digital economy, the focus must shift from quantity to quality — ensuring that the benefits of digital commerce reach every corner of the nation, including its most remote and marginalized communities.

8. REFERENCES

- 1) Agarwal, S., & Sengupta, R. (2021). *Bridging the Digital Divide in India's E-Commerce Sector*. Journal of Economic Perspectives, 35(3), 89-106.

-
- 2) Chaffey, D. (2019). *Digital Business and E-Commerce Management*. Pearson Education.
 - 3) Laudon, K. C., & Traver, C. G. (2016). *E-commerce: Business, Technology, Society*. Pearson.
 - 4) MeitY. (2022). *India's Digital Transformation Report*. Ministry of Electronics and IT.
 - 5) NASSCOM. (2023). *Tech Trends in E-Commerce 2023*.
 - 6) TRAI. (2024). *Internet and Mobile Usage Statistics in India*. Telecom Regulatory Authority of India.
 - 7) DPIIT. (2023). *Startup India Annual Report*. Government of India.

आदिवासी समाज की शैक्षिक स्थिति

डॉ. शकिला जब्बार मुल्ला

सहयोगी प्राध्यापक, आबेदा इनामदार वरिष्ठ महाविद्यालय, पुणे -1

भारतवर्ष की संस्कृति और सभ्यता अनूठी है। यहां सदियों से अनेक विध जातियां निवास करती रही है। इनमें से एक है यहां की जनजातियां। यह लोग पहाड़ी व घने जंगलों में निवास करते हैं। जनजाति परिवारों का समूह है, जिसकी अपनी एक भाषा, संस्कृति, रीति-रिवाज और मान्यताएं हैं। गोत्र और अंतर्विवाह की विशिष्टता है। ये एक सुनिश्चित भूभाग में रहते हैं। इनका स्वतंत्र सुरक्षात्मक संगठन होता है, जिसमें मुखिया सर्वोच्च होता है। इन्हें अनेक नामों से जाना जाता है जैसे- वनवासी, पहाड़ी, आदिवासी, आदिम जाति, जनजाति, वन्यजाति आदि। अनुसूचित जनजाति संवैधानिक संबोधन है।

भारतीय आदिवासी समाज अन्य प्रगतिशील समाज से कटा होने के कारण उसमें पिछड़ापन स्पष्ट रूप से दिखाई देता है। आदिवासी समाज में गरीबी, अज्ञानता, अशिक्षा, अभाव, सामाजिक कुरीतियां, आय का असमान वितरण, आय का न्यूनतम स्तर आज भी विद्यमान है।

आदिवासी समाज को परिभाषित करते हुए डी.एन. मजूमदार कहते हैं - 'एक जनजाति परिवारों या परिवारों के समूह का एक संग्रह है जिसका एक सामान्य नाम होता है जिसके सदस्य एक निश्चित भूभाग पर निवास करते हैं तथा सामान्य भाषा बोलते हैं विवाह, व्यवसाय तथा व्यापार के विषय में कुछ निषेधों का पालन करते हैं और एक निश्चित तथा उपयोगी परस्पर व्यवस्था का विकास करते हैं।'¹

गिलिन एवं गिलिन के अनुसार - 'जनजाति किसी भी ऐसे अशिक्षित स्थानीय समूह को कहा जाता है जो एक सामान्य भू-भाग पर निवास करता है। एक सामान्य भाषा बोलता है तथा एक सामान्य सांस्कृतिक व्यवहार करता है।'²

जनजाति जनसंख्या अफ्रीका के बाद भारत में द्वितीय स्थान पर है। भारत में जनजातियां समूचे देश में फैली हैं। भौगोलिक दृष्टि से एल.पी. विद्यार्थी ने जनजातीय लोगों को चार क्षेत्रों में बांटा है-

1 हिमालय क्षेत्र- जम्मू- कश्मीर, हिमाचल प्रदेश (भोंट, गुजर), उत्तर प्रदेश का तराई क्षेत्र (थारु),

असम (मिजो, गार, खासी), मेघालय, नागालैंड (नागा), मणिपुर (माओ), त्रिपुरा (त्रिपुरी)।

2 मध्य भारत क्षेत्र- पश्चिम बंगाल, बिहार (संथाल, मुंडा, ओरांव, और हो), उड़ीसा (गोंड, गोंड)

3 पश्चिमी भारत क्षेत्र- राजस्थान (भील, मीणा, गरासिया), गुजरात (भील, दुबला, घोदिया),

महाराष्ट्र (भील, कोली, महादेव, कोकना)

4 दक्षिण भारत क्षेत्र- आंध्र प्रदेश (गोंड, कोया, कोंडा, दोवा), कर्नाटक (नैकदा, मराती), तमिलनाडु

(इरुला, टोड़ा), केरल पुलयन, पनलयन) अंदमान, निकोबार द्वीप समूह (अंदमानी,

निकोबारी)। इनमें से अधिकतर आदिवासी हिंदू धर्म को मानते हैं किंतु भारत में ईसाई, बौद्ध तथा मुस्लिम धर्म का अनुसरण करने वाली जनजातियों के समुदाय भी दिखाई पड़ते हैं। भारतीय आदिवासी समाज का जीवन, संस्कृति, स्थितियां अन्य समाजों से भिन्न होने के कारण इस वर्ग को हम प्रवाह के साथ जोड़ नहीं पाते। यही कारण है कि यह समाज में पिछड़ जाते हैं।

आदिवासी विमर्श 20 वीं सदी के अंतिम दशक में शुरू हुआ। इसके मूल में आदिवासियों के जल, जंगल, जमीन और जीवन की चिंताएं हैं। उदारीकरण और मुक्त व्यापार की व्यवस्था ने आदिवासियों की संपत्ति को लूट लिया। बहुराष्ट्रीय एवं देशी कंपनियों ने आदिवासी समाज को जल, जंगल और जमीनों से बेदखल कर दिया। यही कारण है कि आदिवासी बड़े पैमाने पर विस्थापित हुए। शहरों में आश्रय ढूंढने के लिए विवश हुए। इनके पास न धन था, न ही आधुनिक शिक्षा थी। शहरों में दिहाड़ी मजदूर या घरेलू नौकर बनकर जीवन व्यतीत करने के लिए मजबूर हुए। नई पीढ़ी के कुछ आदिवासी शिक्षित हुए और अवसरों का लाभ उठाया और फिर उन्होंने ही अपने समाज के

सामाजिक, सांस्कृतिक हितों की रक्षा के लिए आवाज उठाई। संगठन भी बनाए। नेतृत्व का निर्माण किया। समर्थ आदिवासी साहित्य को जन्म दिया। आदिवासी आबादी के अधिकारों को बढ़ावा देने और उनकी सुरक्षा के लिए प्रत्येक वर्ष 9 अगस्त को विश्व के आदिवासी लोगों का अंतरराष्ट्रीय दिवस मनाया जाता है। आदिवासी समाज की वास्तविक स्थिति को दर्शाने वाला आदिवासी साहित्य आज विपुल मात्रा में उपलब्ध है। रमणिका गुप्ता, संजीव, राकेशकुमार सिंह, हरिराम मीणा, अनुज लुगुन, निर्मला पुतुल आदि लेखक अपनी रचनाओं के माध्यम से आदिवासी समाज की समस्याओं को उजागर करते हैं। मदन कश्यप की कविता 'आदिवासी' बाजार के क्रूर चेहरे को सामने लाती है-

'ठंडे लोहे-सा अपना कंधा जरा झुकाओ, हमें उस पर पांव रखकर छलांग लगानी है।

मुल्क को आगे ले जाना है। बाजार चहक रहा है और हमारी बेचैन आकांक्षाओं के साथ-साथ

हमारा आयतन भी बढ़ रहा है, तुम तो कुछ हटो, रास्ते से हटो।³

अनुज लुगुन विस्थापन के भय को स्वर देते हुए लिखते हैं-

बाजार भी बहुत बड़ा हो गया है, मगर कोई अपना सगा दिखाई नहीं देता।

यहां से सब का रुख शहर की ओर कर दिया गया है, कल एक पहाड़ को ट्रक पर जाते हुए देखा, उससे पहले नदी गई, अब खबर फैल रही है कि मेरा गांव भी यहां से जाने वाला है।⁴

अनुज लुगुन अपनी रचनाओं में बिरसा मुंडा का यशोगान करते हैं, जिन्होंने धनुष के बल पर आंदोलन किया और विजय पताका लहराई। आदिवासी समाज से आने वाले एकलव्य जो त्याग और सम्मान की बड़ी मिसाल है। उनके हुनर का सीधा संबंध मुंडा समुदाय से जोड़ते हैं-

'मैंने तुम्हें देखा है अपने परदादा और दादा की तीरंदाजी में

भाई और पिता की तीरंदाजी में

अपनी मां और बहनों की तीरंदाजी में

हां एकलव्य, मैंने तुम्हें देखा है

वहां से आगे जहां महाभारत में तुम्हारी कथा समाप्त होती है।⁵

भारत में आदिवासी समुदायों की शैक्षिक स्थिति अभी भी बेहतर नहीं है। आदिवासी शिक्षा की स्थिति में सुधार के लिए प्रयत्नों की नितांत आवश्यकता है और शिक्षा ही वह माध्यम है जिसके जरिए आदिवासी समुदाय सामाजिक और आर्थिक विकास की दिशा में प्रगति कर सकता है। आदिवासी समाज को भी मुख्य धारा से जुड़ने के लिए आधिकारिक संख्या में शिक्षित होना पड़ेगा। सरकारी कई योजनाएं बनाती है, जिनका लाभ लेना नितांत आवश्यक है। धीमी गति से आदिवासी समाज में शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में परिवर्तन होता दिखाई देता है-आज आदिवासी समाज मुख्य धारा से जुड़ने का प्रयास करता है। प्रारंभिक शिक्षा से लेकर स्नातक स्तर तक और भी अन्य कोर्स हैं जिनमें आदिवासी समाज के बच्चों को आरक्षण देकर उन्हें शिक्षा के प्रति जागरूक किया जा रहा है। आज भारत सरकार के सर्व शिक्षा अभियान के अंतर्गत कई प्रकार की योजनाओं का लाभ सीधा आदिवासियों तक पहुंच रहा है। जिसके कारण आर्थिक रूप से कमजोर लोग भी शिक्षित हो पा रहे हैं। आदिवासी समाज को मुख्य धारा में लाने के लिए विद्यालयों और शिक्षकों की संख्या में बढ़ोतरी की गई है। छात्रवृत्ति के माध्यम से विद्यालयों में पढ़ने वाले विद्यार्थियों को आर्थिक सहायता दी जा रही है, जिससे छात्र अपनी पढ़ाई पर खर्चा कर सके। पढ़ाई पूरी करने के बाद आदिवासी समाज के युवाओं को रोजगार पाने के लिए भी मार्गदर्शन दिया जा रहा है।

देश के विकास और अखंडता में हर वर्ग के लोगों ने अपना योगदान दिया है, जिसमें से एक आदिवासी समाज भी है, जिसका जीवंत उदाहरण भारत की राष्ट्रपति महोदया महामहिम श्रीमती द्रौपदी मुर्मू जी हैं। आदिवासी समाज की महिला होने के साथ-साथ आज वह देश के सबसे बड़े संविधानिक पद पर है। जिन्होंने अपने जीवन में अनेक दुःख देखे, अनेक बार परिस्थितियों ने उन्हें तोड़ना चाहा पर उनके हौसलों और परिश्रम करने की इच्छा शक्ति ने कभी हार नहीं मानी। सब कुछ सहकर भी वह दृढ़ता से खड़ी रही और भारत की प्रथम आदिवासी महिला राष्ट्रपति बनी।

संदर्भ सूची :

1 भारत के आदिवासी, डॉ.कामिनी जैन, पृष्ठ 14-15

2 भारत के आदिवासी, डॉ.कामिनी जैन, पृष्ठ 15

3 <https://hi.wikibooks.org>

4 <https://hi.wikibooks.org>

5 हिंदी साहित्य और भाषा, सं प्रो. डॉ. सदानंद भोसले, पृष्ठ 24

समावेशक आणि न्याय्य शिक्षणासमोरील संस्थात्मक आणि कायदेशीर आव्हाने**अभिषेक होळकर**

न्यू आर्ट्स, कॉमर्स अँड सायन्स कॉलेज, अहमदनगर (स्वायत्त)

प्रस्तावना:

समावेशक शिक्षण धोरणे तयार करणे आणि त्यांची अंमलबजावणी करण्यात अनेक अडचणी येतात. शिक्षण धोरणे अनेकदा समावेशक नसतात आणि त्यामुळे वंचित मुलांचा शिक्षणापासून दुरावा होतो. खासगी शाळा आणि धोरणकर्त्यांचा पूर्वाग्रह शैक्षणिक धोरणे ठरवताना आड येतो, ज्यामुळे वंचित मुलांना गुणवत्तापूर्ण आणि न्याय्य शिक्षण मिळू शकत नाही. शैक्षणिक धोरणे बनवण्याचा मूळ उद्देश या अडथळ्यांमुळे बाजूला राहतो.

गुणवत्तापूर्ण शिक्षणाची उपलब्धता हा मूलभूत मानवी हक्क आणि सामाजिक-आर्थिक विकासाचा पाया आहे. मात्र, गरीब आणि वंचित मुलांच्या या हक्कावर आजही गदा येते. शिक्षणाचे सार्वत्रिकीकरण करण्याच्या उद्देशाने महत्वाचे शैक्षणिक सुधार आणि उपक्रम असूनही, या गटांना मुख्य प्रवाहात समाविष्ट होण्यासाठी विविध अडथळ्यांना तोंड द्यावे लागते.

आर्थिक अडचणी, सामाजिक दुरावा, सांस्कृतिक पूर्वाग्रह आणि अपयशी धोरणांमुळे वंचित मुले शिक्षणाच्या मुख्य प्रवाहापासून वंचित राहतात. गरिबी, संसाधनांचा अभाव आणि अपुऱ्या पायाभूत सुविधांमुळे मुलांना गुणवत्तापूर्ण शाळा आणि आधुनिक शैक्षणिक साहित्य मिळत नाही. सामाजिक पूर्वाग्रह आणि भेदभावामुळे ही मुले समाजातून बाहेर फेकली जातात. अपंग मुलांसाठी शारीरिक अपंगत्व, अपुरी पायाभूत सुविधा आणि प्रशिक्षित शिक्षकांची कमतरता ही आव्हाने अजूनही आहेत, ज्यामुळे ती मुख्य प्रवाहापासून दूर राहतात.

समावेशकता आणि शाश्वत विकास साधण्यासाठी या आव्हानांवर मात करणे आवश्यक आहे. भेदभावपूर्ण आणि अन्यायकारक शिक्षणातील अडथळे दूर करून, धोरणकर्ते, शिक्षक आणि समुदाय मिळून एक अशी शैक्षणिक व्यवस्था तयार करू शकतात, जिथे प्रत्येक विद्यार्थ्याला त्याच्या पार्श्वभूमीचा विचार न करता यशस्वी होण्याची आणि समाजासाठी योगदान देण्याची संधी मिळेल.

उद्दिष्टे:

1. वंचित मुलांच्या शिक्षणातील अडथळ्यांचा शोध घेणे.
2. शिक्षणातून वगळल्या जाणाऱ्या मुलांच्या परिणामांचा अभ्यास करणे.
3. समावेशक शिक्षणासाठी उपाययोजना सुचवणे.

संशोधन पद्धती:

या संशोधनासाठी गुणात्मक संशोधन पद्धतीचा वापर करण्यात आला आहे. माहिती संकलनासाठी दुय्यम माहिती संकलन पद्धतीचा वापर केला आहे.

साहित्याचा आढावा:

भारतीय समाज अनेक घटक जसे की, वंश, भाषा, धर्म, भौगोलिक, सामाजिक-आर्थिक आणि सांस्कृतिक घटकांमुळे विविधतेने भरलेला आहे. भारतीय समाजावर धर्माचा पगडा दिसून येतो. विविध प्रथा, परंपरा आणि अंधश्रद्धा आजही पाळल्या जातात. त्याचबरोबर, जाती व्यवस्था भारतात आजही प्रबळ आहे. या व्यवस्थेने नाकारलेल्या आणि अस्पृश्य मानलेल्या घटकांसाठी अनेक गोष्टींवर बंधने घातली गेली. समाजात त्यांच्या हालचालींवर नियंत्रण आले आणि त्यामुळेच भारतीय समाजाची एक विशिष्ट रचना तयार झाली, ज्याचे दीर्घकालीन परिणाम आपल्याला आजही दिसून येतात. आजही भारतात जाती व्यवस्था अस्तित्वात आहे, ज्यामुळे विशिष्ट जातींची मुले समाजाबाहेर फेकली गेली. लोकशाही असूनही, ही मुले आजही वंचित मानली जातात.

वंचित मुले म्हणजे, जी मुले समाजाच्या मुख्य प्रवाहामध्ये नाहीत किंवा ज्यांच्याकडे दुर्लक्ष केले जाते. या गटांना अनेक सामाजिक, आर्थिक किंवा राजकीय अन्यायांचा आणि भेदभावाचा सामना करावा लागतो, ज्यामध्ये दलित, आदिवासी, लैंगिक आणि धार्मिक अल्पसंख्यांक आणि दिव्यांग व्यक्तींचा समावेश होतो.

भारत सरकारने जेव्हा मुलांना शाळेच्या मुख्य प्रवाहात आणण्याचे ठरवले आणि 'सर्व शिक्षण अभियान' सुरू केले, तेव्हापासून समाजातील सर्व घटकांना शिक्षण प्रवाहामध्ये सामावून घेण्यासाठी 'समावेशक शिक्षण', 'मानवतावादी शिक्षण' यांसारखे नवीन उपक्रम सुरू झाले. 'सर्व शिक्षण अभियान' या धोरणानुसार शालेय अध्ययन-अध्यापन पद्धती, अभ्यासक्रम आणि शालेय वर्ग खोली यांचा नव्याने विचार करण्यास सुरुवात झाली. समावेशक आणि न्याय्य शिक्षण ही समाजातील सर्व घटकांना गुणवत्तापूर्ण शिक्षणाची हमी देणारी संकल्पना आहे. पण, भारत आणि जगभरात अपेक्षित गटांसाठी (वंचित, दलित, आदिवासी, महिला, दिव्यांग) हे ध्येय साध्य करण्यासाठी अनेक संस्थात्मक, सामाजिक आणि शैक्षणिक अडथळे आहेत. हा लेख या अडथळ्यांचे सखोल विश्लेषण करतो.

1. संस्थात्मक आणि कायदेशीर अडथळे:

- शिक्षण हक्क कायदा (RTE) 2009 च्या अंमलबजावणीमध्ये गंभीर उणीवा आहेत. सर्वोच्च न्यायालयाने नमूद केल्याप्रमाणे, खासगी विना-अनुदानित शाळा वंचित मुलांना प्रवेश देण्यास नकार देतात, जरी कायद्याने हे निश्चित केले आहे. याचे मूळ कारण सामाजिक वर्ग आणि आर्थिक असमानता आहे.
- उदाहरणार्थ, कर्नाटकमधील 'केअर अँड लिव्हिंग' संस्थेच्या अहवालानुसार, गेल्या ४ वर्षांपासून एकाही वंचित मुलाला खासगी शाळेमध्ये प्रवेश मिळाला नाही.
- राज्यस्तरीय शैक्षणिक धोरणांची विसंगती हा एक मोठा मुद्दा आहे. नवीन शिक्षण धोरण (NEP) 2023 मध्ये ऑनलाइन शिक्षणावर भर दिला गेला असला तरी, महाराष्ट्रातील ७०% ग्रामीण भागात इंटरनेट सुविधा नसल्याने डिजिटल विभाजन आजही अस्तित्वात आहे. धोरण निर्मिती आणि अंमलबजावणीमधील अंतर हे संस्थात्मक अक्षमतेचे प्रतीक आहे.

2. आर्थिक आणि पायाभूत सुविधांची उणीव:

- शिक्षणासाठी राष्ट्रीय उत्पन्नाच्या केवळ ३% खर्च केला जातो, जो कोठारी आयोगाच्या शिफारशीच्या अर्धा आहे. याचा परिणाम म्हणून:
- **भौतिक सुविधांचा अभाव:** ३५% शाळांमध्ये पिण्याच्या पाण्याची, शौचालयांची किंवा विजेची सोय नाही, असे सर्वेक्षण दर्शवते.
- **डिजिटल असमानता:** ग्रामीण भागातील विद्यार्थ्यांसाठी ई-लर्निंग संसाधनांची अनुपलब्धता.
- **प्रवासाचा खर्च:** आदिवासी भागातील मुलांसाठी शाळेपर्यंतचे अंतर हे ड्रॉपआउटचे प्रमुख कारण आहे.

3. सामाजिक-सांस्कृतिक कारणे:

- **लिंगभेद आणि जातिभेद** हे समावेशक शिक्षणातील मोठे अडथळे आहेत.
- उच्च जातीय गटांचे वर्चस्व असलेल्या शैक्षणिक संस्थांमध्ये, दलित विद्यार्थ्यांना सामाजिक बहिष्काराचा सामना करावा लागतो.
- महिलांच्या शिक्षणाच्या बाबतीत, ग्रामीण भागातील ६०% मुलींचे शिक्षण माध्यमिक स्तराच्या आधीच थांबते.

4. शैक्षणिक पद्धतीमधील कमतरता:

- अध्यापनशास्त्रामधील लवचिकतेचा अभाव ही एक मोठी आव्हानात्मक बाब आहे.
- मानवतावादी शिक्षणासाठी आवश्यक असलेली बहुभाषिक शिक्षण पद्धती, विशेष शैक्षणिक साधने आणि सांस्कृतिकदृष्ट्या संवेदनशील अभ्यासक्रमांचा अभाव दिसून येतो. शिक्षक प्रशिक्षण कार्यक्रमांमध्ये मानवतावादी दृष्टिकोनावर पुरेसा भर नसल्यामुळे शिक्षकांना विशिष्ट सामाजिक पार्श्वभूमी असलेल्या विद्यार्थ्यांना शिकवण्यात अडचणी येतात.

5. राजकीय इच्छाशक्तीचा अभाव:

- शैक्षणिक सुधारणांसाठी राजकीय निर्णयांची गतीशीलता एक गंभीर मुद्दा आहे. NEP 2023 च्या अंमलबजावणीसाठी आवश्यक असलेली राज्यस्तरीय अभ्यासक्रम रणनीती संघ आणि कुचकामी ठरली आहे.

शिवाय, खासगी शाळांच्या लॉबीचा प्रभाव राज्य शासनांच्या धोरणांवर होत असल्याचे निरीक्षण नोंदवले गेले आहे.

उपाययोजना:

1. **कायदेशीर चौकटीची पुनर्रचना:** RTE कायद्याच्या गैर-पालनासाठी दंडात्मक तरतुदी आणि देखरेख यंत्रणा मजबूत करणे.
2. **पायाभूत सुविधांवरील गुंतवणूक:** शाळांसाठी डिजिटल वर्गखोल्या आणि प्रयोगशाळांसाठी निधी वाढवणे.
3. **समावेशक अध्यापनशास्त्र:** बहुभाषिक शैक्षणिक साहित्य आणि स्थानिक भाषांमध्ये अध्यापन पद्धती विकसित करणे.
4. **सामुदायिक सहभाग:** पालक-शिक्षक संघटनांद्वारे जागरूकता वाढवणे आणि सामाजिक पूर्वग्रह दूर करणे.

निष्कर्ष:

समावेशक शिक्षणाच्या मार्गातील अडथळे केवळ आर्थिक नसून, ते संस्थात्मक, सामाजिक आणि सांस्कृतिक स्वरूपाचे आहेत. जेव्हा या सर्व मुद्द्यांवर एकाच वेळी लक्ष दिले जाईल, तेव्हाच 'सर्वासाठी शिक्षण' हे ध्येय साध्य होईल. यासाठी शासकीय योजना, धोरणकर्त्यांचा सहभाग आणि अभ्यासक्रम निर्मिती प्रक्रियेत बदल होणे महत्वाचे आहे.

संदर्भ:

1. साळुंके, क. (2020). समावेशक शिक्षणाच्या अंमलबजावणीतील अडथळे.
2. सोनवणे, वि. वि. (2018). समावेशक शिक्षण आणि शालेय संस्थापन. *Scholarly Research Journal for Interdisciplinary Studies*.
3. मुंबई तरुण भारत. (2023, एप्रिल 15). नवीन शैक्षणिक धोरण: स्वरूप, संधी आणि आव्हाने.
4. भोसले, स. (२०२२). ग्रामीण आणि शहरी भारतातील शिक्षणातील असमानता: एक तुलनात्मक अभ्यास. *शैक्षणिक संशोधन पत्रिका*, १३(२), ४५-६०.
5. जाधव, प. (२०२१). डिजिटल शिक्षणाचे आव्हान आणि वंचित विद्यार्थ्यांवरील परिणाम. *तंत्रज्ञान आणि शिक्षण जर्नल*, ७(४), ८८-१००.
6. देशमुख, र. (२०१९). शिक्षणात सामाजिक न्यायाची भूमिका: एक सैद्धांतिक दृष्टीकोन. *समाज आणि शिक्षण समीक्षा*, १०(१), ३०-४५.
7. कुलकर्णी, म. (२०२०). महिलांच्या शिक्षणातील अडथळे: ग्रामीण महाराष्ट्रातील एक केस स्टडी. *स्त्री अभ्यास संशोधन पत्रिका*, ६(३), ७५-९०.
8. शिंदे, अ. (२०२१). आदिवासी मुलांच्या शिक्षणासमोरील सांस्कृतिक आणि भाषिक आव्हाने. *आदिवासी विकास जर्नल*, ९(२), ११५-१३०.
9. फडके, न. (२०२२). दिव्यांग मुलांसाठी समावेशक शिक्षण: धोरणात्मक आणि व्यावहारिक अडचणी. *विशेष शिक्षण समीक्षा*, ५(१), २०-३५.
10. पाटील, व. (२०२०). सरकारी शाळांमधील पायाभूत सुविधांचा अभाव: एक गंभीर समस्या. *शिक्षण धोरण आणि प्रशासन जर्नल*, ८(४), १४०-१५५.
11. कुलकर्णी, वि. (२०१९). शिक्षणात तंत्रज्ञानाचा वापर: संधी आणि आव्हाने. *डिजिटल शिक्षण मासिक*, ४(२), ६०-७०.
12. कांबळे, दि. (२०२२). जातीभेद आणि शिक्षणाचे सामाजिक परिणाम: एक ऐतिहासिक आढावा. *सामाजिक न्याय आणि समानता जर्नल*, ११(३), ५०-६५.

13. मराठे, ज्ञा. (२०२१). भारतातील शिक्षण प्रणालीतील शिक्षकांच्या प्रशिक्षणाचा दर्जा. *अध्यापन आणि शिक्षण जर्नल*, १३(१), १०-२५.
14. चव्हाण, क. (२०२०). खासगी शाळांचे वर्चस्व आणि शिक्षणाचा व्यापारीकरण. *शिक्षण आणि अर्थव्यवस्था जर्नल*, ९(२), ७०-८५.
15. भट, सु. (२०२२). भारतातील शिक्षण हक्क कायद्याची अंमलबजावणी: समस्या आणि उपाय. *कायदेशीर आणि शैक्षणिक पत्रिका*, १५(४), २००-२१५.
16. सूर्यवंशी, मा. (२०१९). वंचित मुलांसाठी शिक्षणातील नवोपक्रम: एक व्यवहार्य दृष्टीकोन. *शिक्षण संशोधन पत्रिका*, ७(१), ४०-५०.
17. राणे, गो. (२०२१). लैंगिक अल्पसंख्याकांच्या शिक्षणासमोरील अडथळे. *समावेशक समाज मासिक*, १२(३), ८०-९५.
18. शिंदे, र. (२०२०). शिक्षण धोरणे आणि राजकीय अस्थिरता: एक विश्लेषण. *राजकीय विज्ञान जर्नल*, १०(४), १५०-१६५.
19. पवार, प्र. (२०२२). ग्रामीण भागात ई-लर्निंग: एक आव्हानात्मक वास्तव. *ग्रामीण विकास समीक्षा*, १४(२), ९०-१०५.
20. महाजन, वा. (२०१९). भारतातील शिक्षण प्रणालीतील अभ्यासक्रमाची लवचिकता. *अभ्यासक्रम विकास जर्नल*, ८(१), १०-२०.
21. जोशी, दि. (२०२१). सरकारी शाळांमधील गळतीचे प्रमाण: कारणे आणि उपाय. *शिक्षण आकडेवारी अहवाल*, १३(२), ६५-७८.
22. बोराडे, ह. (२०२०). आर्थिकदृष्ट्या मागास विद्यार्थ्यांसाठी शिष्यवृत्ती योजनांचे मूल्यांकन. *आर्थिक विकास पत्रिका*, ११(३), १००-११५.
23. खांडेकर, शं. (२०२२). आदिवासी मुलांच्या शिक्षणातील स्थानिक भाषेचे महत्त्व. *भाषा आणि शिक्षण जर्नल*, ७(४), १२०-१३५.
24. वैद्य, द. (२०२१). शिक्षण हक्क कायद्याचे सामाजिक परिणाम. *सामाजिक विज्ञान जर्नल*, १२(१), २०-३५.
25. कुलकर्णी, अ. (२०२०). शिक्षणात पालकांची भूमिका: शहरी आणि ग्रामीण भागातील फरक. *पालकत्व आणि शिक्षण जर्नल*, ५(३), ७०-८५.
26. तावडे, ल. (२०२२). समावेशक शिक्षणातील शिक्षकांचे प्रशिक्षण: एक धोरणात्मक गरज. *शिक्षक विकास जर्नल*, १५(२), ५०-६५.
27. बोरकर, प्र. (२०१९). भारताच्या शिक्षण धोरणातील अपयश आणि भविष्यातील दिशा. *धोरण विश्लेषण जर्नल*, १०(४), १६०-१७५.
28. गडाळ, प्र. (२०२१). शहरी गरीब मुलांच्या शिक्षणातील अडथळे. *नागरीकरण आणि शिक्षण जर्नल*, ११(१), २५-४०.
29. नेहे, मा. (२०२०). सरकारी शाळांमधील प्रशासकीय अक्षमता: एक अभ्यास. *प्रशासन आणि शिक्षण पत्रिका*, ९(२), ८०-९५.
30. गायकवाड, बा. (२०२२). वंचित विद्यार्थ्यांसाठी व्यावसायिक शिक्षण आणि रोजगाराची संधी. *रोजगार आणि शिक्षण जर्नल*, १३(३), ११०-१२५.
31. सावंत, स. (२०१९). शिक्षण आणि आरोग्य: परस्पर संबंधांचा अभ्यास. *सार्वजनिक आरोग्य आणि शिक्षण जर्नल*, ८(१), ३०-४५.

-
32. सोनवणे, दि. (२०२१). भारतातील शैक्षणिक धोरणांचे ऐतिहासिक विश्लेषण. *भारतीय शिक्षण पत्रिका*, १४(४), १५०-१६५.
 33. धायबर, दि. (२०२२). शिक्षणातील गैर-सरकारी संस्थांची भूमिका: एक समालोचनात्मक मूल्यांकन. *विकास आणि शिक्षण जर्नल*, १६(२), ७५-९०.

BRIDGING THE DIVIDE: A STUDY ON GENDER DISPARITY IN BUSINESS AND COMMERCE EDUCATION IN INDIAN UNIVERSITIES

Ms. Deepika Abhijeet Kininge

Assistant Professor, Department of B.B.A, Poona College of Arts Science and Commerce, Hidaytullah Road, Camp, Pune-1

ABSTRACT

Despite notable progress in female enrollment in higher education across India, significant gender disparities persist within specific academic disciplines, particularly in business and commerce. This research paper examines the extent and underlying causes of gender disparity in business and commerce education in Indian universities, analyzing enrollment trends, socio-cultural factors, and institutional barriers. Utilizing data from the All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) and other credible sources, the study highlights the need for targeted interventions to promote gender equity in these fields. The study further explores how gendered perceptions of commerce-related careers—often linked with finance, leadership, and competition—discourage female enrollment. Institutional frameworks, though evolving, still reflect patriarchal norms in curriculum design, mentorship availability, and campus infrastructure. The pandemic also played a significant role in reversing the marginal gains previously made in bridging gender gaps in these domains. The inclusion of intersectional analysis—especially for rural and economically disadvantaged women—is vital to understanding the full picture. This paper contributes to existing literature by combining macro-level statistical data with micro-level socio-cultural narratives. Policy failures and limited enforcement of reservation norms for women in business faculties are also critiqued. Ultimately, the paper advocates for systemic reforms, including gender-sensitive pedagogical approaches and affirmative scholarship initiatives to address these inequities.

Keywords: Gender Disparity, Business Education, Commerce Education, Indian Universities, Higher Education, Gender Parity Index, Enrollment Trends

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the past few decades, India has witnessed a significant increase in female participation in higher education. However, this overall growth masks persistent gender disparities within specific academic disciplines. Business and commerce education, critical for economic development and leadership, continue to exhibit gender imbalances. These imbalances reflect not only enrollment figures but also attitudes, career trajectories, and participation in administrative roles within academic institutions.

The underrepresentation of women in these fields highlights the intersection of gender norms, access to quality education, and long-standing stereotypes about women's roles in the financial and entrepreneurial domains. Cultural constraints and lack of female role models in commerce academia further exacerbate this divide. Despite government schemes like “Beti Bachao Beti Padhao” and university-level gender sensitization cells, business education remains male-dominated at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

Moreover, the proliferation of private business schools, often with high fee structures, creates an economic barrier for women from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Women are also often steered towards disciplines seen as more 'socially appropriate,' such as teaching and humanities, leaving commerce courses with fewer female candidates. The absence of institutional audits on gender balance further limits accountability. Thus, a thorough investigation into this structural inequality is warranted to shape more equitable educational futures.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- 2.1. Rawat (2020)** highlighted significant variations in male and female Gross Enrollment Ratios (GER) across different courses, emphasizing the need for effective policies to empower women in higher education. The study draws attention to regional variations, where northern states exhibit higher gaps than southern counterparts. It also recommends gender audits in institutions as a tool for improvement.
- 2.2. Das (2019)** conducted a study on gender gaps in higher education in Assam, revealing that lower GER among females contributes to persistent disparities in higher education enrollment. He emphasized how traditional familial roles, early marriages, and limited access to safe transport deter women from pursuing higher studies. The paper also evaluated the role of state-level funding in promoting female participation.
- 2.3. Karak & Sen (2017)** pointed out that gender inequality in higher education is complex and multifaceted, existing across various spheres such as education, employment opportunities, health, and social issues. They explored how curriculum design often excludes case studies or examples involving women in

business leadership roles, thereby failing to inspire female students. Furthermore, their paper emphasized that the gap is not merely in numbers but in qualitative experience, with fewer women occupying faculty or administrative roles.

2.4. Devi (2015) revealed that gender discrimination exists in higher educational institutions in terms of administrative and academic positions, as well as student enrollment, indicating systemic issues that need to be addressed. She also argued for greater inclusion of gender studies within core commerce curriculum to cultivate awareness among male students.

3. OBJECTIVE OF THE PAPER

The objective of the paper is to analyze the extent of gender disparity in business and commerce education within Indian universities. It aims to identify the underlying socio-cultural and institutional factors contributing to this disparity and to assess the effectiveness of existing policies and initiatives. The study seeks to provide recommendations for promoting gender equity in these academic fields, particularly through inclusive curricula, equitable access, and reformative administrative practices.

4. ENROLLMENT TRENDS IN BUSINESS AND COMMERCE EDUCATION

• Overall Gender Parity in Higher Education

Despite improvements in overall female enrollment, gender gaps remain evident in discipline-specific trends. According to AISHE 2020-21, the Gender Parity Index (GPI) across higher education reached 1.05, indicating more female enrollment than males in general terms [AISHE, 2021].

• Reversal in Commerce-Specific Enrollment

In the commerce stream, female enrollment fell to 94 per 100 men in 2020, a drop from 100 per 100 men in 2019, marking a significant regression in gender equity within this field [Indian Express, 2023].

• Low Representation in Premier Institutes

In elite institutions like the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) and top-tier private business schools, women often constitute less than 30% of total student intake, highlighting continued underrepresentation.

• State University Trends

Many state universities have shown marginal improvements in female participation, yet they still fall short of achieving gender parity, especially in commerce-related programs.

• Postgraduate Commerce Programs

At the postgraduate level, the gender gap widens further, primarily due to higher tuition costs, longer course durations, and limited access to scholarships tailored for women.

• Urban-Rural Disparities

Female participation in commerce education is notably higher in urban areas, while rural regions lag behind, due to factors like accessibility, safety concerns, and financial limitations.

• Public vs. Private Institutions

Government colleges generally perform better in promoting gender inclusion due to subsidized fee structures and inclusive admission policies, unlike many private colleges which often lack targeted inclusion efforts.

• Underrepresentation in Doctoral Programs

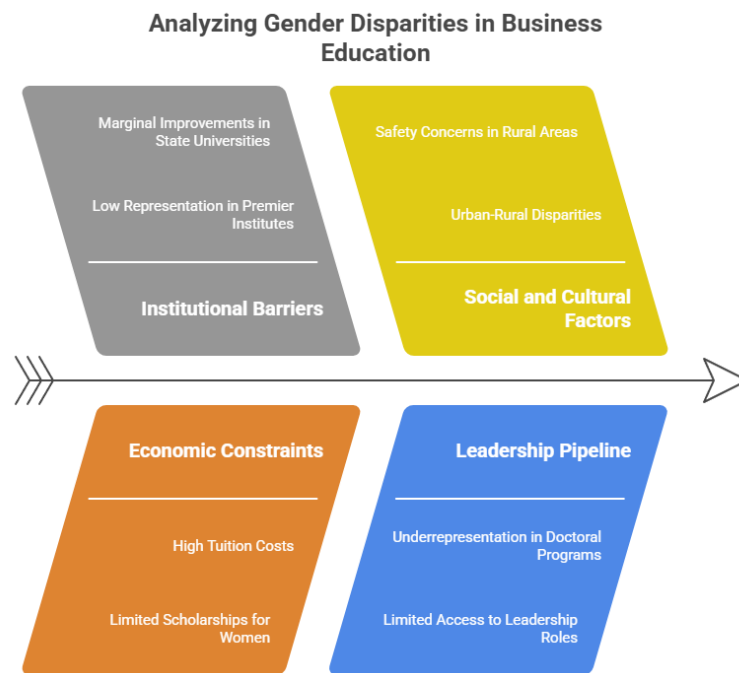
The number of women enrolled in PhD programs in business and commerce remains substantially low, indicating persistent barriers to research opportunities and academic careers.

• Limited Pipeline to Leadership Roles

These enrollment trends impact the long-term presence of women in leadership roles across the corporate and academic sectors, as fewer women are prepared through business education pipelines.

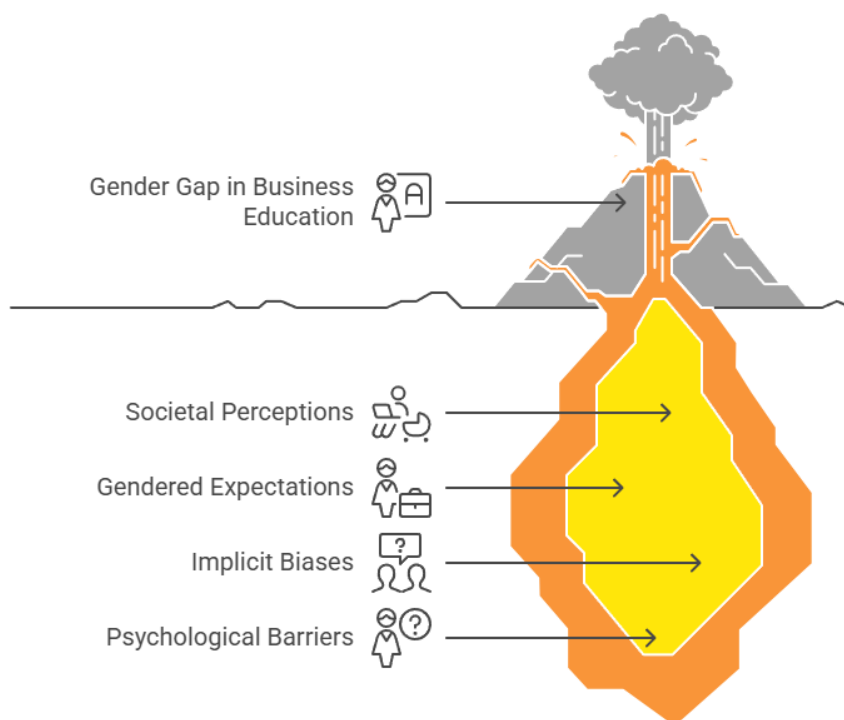
• Intersectional Gaps

Enrollment statistics also reveal intersectional gaps, where women from marginalized or economically disadvantaged backgrounds face double exclusion—both by gender and by social class.



5. SOCIO-CULTURAL AND INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Societal perceptions and gendered expectations play a crucial role in discouraging women from entering business-related fields. Girls are often subtly guided toward careers considered ‘nurturing’ or ‘safe,’ such as teaching or medicine, whereas business is associated with competition, aggression, and leadership—traits historically masculinized. Institutional factors include the lack of women faculty members and leaders in commerce departments, absence of mentorship programs tailored for female students, and non-availability of women-only hostels or safety provisions in many campuses. Many institutions do not provide maternity leave or flexible course structures for women with family responsibilities, which further deters continuation of education at the postgraduate level.



Discriminatory practices also persist during internships and placements where recruiters may hold implicit biases. Lack of gender-inclusive language in business case studies, course readings, and pedagogy alienates many female students. Moreover, there’s a dearth of gender disaggregated data at the department level, which makes it difficult to formulate targeted interventions. Despite these advancements, the lack of a cohesive regulatory framework often results in compliance challenges for institutions when it comes to ensuring gender

equity². The interplay between parental expectations and social stigmas around women traveling or staying in hostels further hampers access. Psychological barriers also emerge, as female students report lower confidence and assertiveness in competitive environments due to their conditioning. Without systemic change, the divide is likely to persist or worsen.

6. IMPACT OF GENDER DISPARITY ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The underrepresentation of women in business education translates into lower female participation in corporate leadership, entrepreneurship, and financial policymaking. This not only limits individual career prospects but also stunts national economic growth by excluding a significant portion of the population from value creation roles. Women bring diverse perspectives to problem-solving and leadership, which are essential in today’s globalized and digital economies. Their exclusion from commerce disciplines creates homogeneous leadership structures prone to bias and risk aversion. Research suggests that gender-diverse teams outperform male-dominated ones in productivity and innovation³.

Furthermore, nations with higher female labor force participation also demonstrate more sustainable economic indicators. When women are underrepresented in business schools, the pipeline to boardrooms, banks, consulting, and public policy is weakened. This affects institutional credibility, public trust, and the overall inclusiveness of the economy. The gender gap in commerce education also perpetuates income inequality, as careers in this field often lead to high-paying jobs. Lack of female representation in financial decision-making roles can skew market priorities away from community-based or inclusive growth. Therefore, addressing this educational divide is not only a moral imperative but an economic one.

7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

7.1. Type of Data:

The study uses secondary data from official government reports such as AISHE 2020-21, research journals, national statistics, and reputable media coverage. Comparative institutional data on gender enrollment is also analyzed.

7.2. Type of Research:

This is a descriptive and analytical study based on qualitative and quantitative data to understand trends, causality, and implications of gender disparity in commerce education.

7.3. Period of Research:

The data analyzed spans academic years from 2019 to 2022 to capture post-pandemic regressions and recovery trends.

8. CONCLUSION

While India has made commendable progress in increasing female participation in higher education, significant gender disparities remain in business and commerce disciplines. These disparities are rooted in a combination of socio-cultural norms and institutional inefficiencies. Targeted policy measures such as inclusive admissions, gender-sensitive curriculum, mentorship programs, and financial aid for female students can help bridge this divide. Additionally, systemic reforms that promote female leadership within academia and create equitable learning environments must be institutionalized. Public-private partnerships can also play a key role in promoting inclusion through scholarships, internships, and corporate mentorship. To realize the full potential of India’s demographic dividend, gender inclusivity in commerce education must be prioritized as both an educational and developmental goal.

9. Table: Gender Parity Index (GPI) in Higher Education (2011–2021)

Year	GPI
2011-12	0.88
2013-14	0.92
2016-17	0.94
2018-19	1.00
2019-20	1.01
2020-21	1.05

Source: All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2020–21

REFERENCES

1. Rawat, K. (2020). Gender Disparity: A Study of Gross Enrolment Ratio in Higher Education. *National Journal of Education*, XXII(1), 175–186.
2. Das, R. C. (2019). A Study on Gender Gap in Higher Education in Assam. *Compliance Engineering Journal*, 10(10), 175–184.
3. Karak, S., & Sen, K. (2017). A Study on Gender Inequality in Higher Education in India. *Panchakot Essay*, 8(2), 111–115.
4. Devi, Y. R. (2015). Gender Discrimination in Educational Practices: A Study of Higher Education Institutions of North-East India. Ph.D. Thesis, Assam University.
5. Ministry of Education. (2021). All India Survey on Higher Education 2020-21. Government of India.
6. The Indian Express. (2023). Gender Gap in Undergraduate Education Widens. Retrieved from <https://indianexpress.com/article/education/gender-gap-in-undergraduate-widens-gains-of-last-few-years-lost-to-pandemic-8413951/>
7. ResearchGate. (2023). Gender Disparity in Enrolment in Higher Education Institutions. Retrieved from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/379436100>
8. World Bank. (2022). Empowering Women through Education and Economic Participation: South Asia Report. Retrieved from <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/report/2022/06/27/women-empowerment-education-south-asia>

MANUSCRIPT SUBMISSION

GUIDELINES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

1. Manuscripts should be submitted preferably through email and the research article / paper should preferably not exceed 8 – 10 pages in all.
2. Book review must contain the name of the author and the book reviewed, the place of publication and publisher, date of publication, number of pages and price.
3. Manuscripts should be typed in 12 font-size, Times New Roman, single spaced with 1” margin on a standard A4 size paper. Manuscripts should be organized in the following order: title, name(s) of author(s) and his/her (their) complete affiliation(s) including zip code(s), Abstract (not exceeding 350 words), Introduction, Main body of paper, Conclusion and References.
4. The title of the paper should be in capital letters, bold, size 16” and centered at the top of the first page. The author(s) and affiliations(s) should be centered, bold, size 14” and single-spaced, beginning from the second line below the title.

First Author Name1, Second Author Name2, Third Author Name3

1Author Designation, Department, Organization, City, email id

2Author Designation, Department, Organization, City, email id

3Author Designation, Department, Organization, City, email id

5. The abstract should summarize the context, content and conclusions of the paper in less than 350 words in 12 points italic Times New Roman. The abstract should have about five key words in alphabetical order separated by comma of 12 points italic Times New Roman.
6. Figures and tables should be centered, separately numbered, self explained. Please note that table titles must be above the table and sources of data should be mentioned below the table. The authors should ensure that tables and figures are referred to from the main text.

EXAMPLES OF REFERENCES

All references must be arranged first alphabetically and then it may be further sorted chronologically also.

• **Single author journal article:**

Fox, S. (1984). Empowerment as a catalyst for change: an example for the food industry. *Supply Chain Management*, 2(3), 29–33.

Bateson, C. D.,(2006), ‘Doing Business after the Fall: The Virtue of Moral Hypocrisy’, *Journal of Business Ethics*, 66: 321 – 335

• **Multiple author journal article:**

Khan, M. R., Islam, A. F. M. M., & Das, D. (1886). A Factor Analytic Study on the Validity of a Union Commitment Scale. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 12(1), 129-136.

Liu, W.B, Wongcha A, & Peng, K.C. (2012), “Adopting Super-Efficiency And Tobit Model On Analyzing the Efficiency of Teacher’s Colleges In Thailand”, *International Journal on New Trends In Education and Their Implications*, Vol.3.3, 108 – 114.

- **Text Book:**

Simchi-Levi, D., Kaminsky, P., & Simchi-Levi, E. (2007). *Designing and Managing the Supply Chain: Concepts, Strategies and Case Studies* (3rd ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

S. Neelamegham," Marketing in India, Cases and Reading, Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd, III Edition, 2000.

- **Edited book having one editor:**

Raine, A. (Ed.). (2006). *Crime and schizophrenia: Causes and cures*. New York: Nova Science.

- **Edited book having more than one editor:**

Greenspan, E. L., & Rosenberg, M. (Eds.). (2009). *Martin's annual criminal code: Student edition 2010*. Aurora, ON: Canada Law Book.

- **Chapter in edited book having one editor:**

Bessley, M., & Wilson, P. (1984). Public policy and small firms in Britain. In Levicki, C. (Ed.), *Small Business Theory and Policy* (pp. 111–126). London: Croom Helm.

- **Chapter in edited book having more than one editor:**

Young, M. E., & Wasserman, E. A. (2005). Theories of learning. In K. Lamberts, & R. L. Goldstone (Eds.), *Handbook of cognition* (pp. 161-182). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- **Electronic sources should include the URL of the website at which they may be found, as shown:**

Sillick, T. J., & Schutte, N. S. (2006). Emotional intelligence and self-esteem mediate between perceived early parental love and adult happiness. *E-Journal of Applied Psychology*, 2(2), 38-48. Retrieved from <http://ojs.lib.swin.edu.au/index.php/ejap>

- **Unpublished dissertation/ paper:**

Uddin, K. (2000). A Study of Corporate Governance in a Developing Country: A Case of Bangladesh (Unpublished Dissertation). Lingnan University, Hong Kong.

- **Article in newspaper:**

Yunus, M. (2005, March 23). Micro Credit and Poverty Alleviation in Bangladesh. *The Bangladesh Observer*, p. 9.

- **Article in magazine:**

Holloway, M. (2005, August 6). When extinct isn't. *Scientific American*, 293, 22-23.

- **Website of any institution:**

Central Bank of India (2005). *Income Recognition Norms Definition of NPA*. Retrieved August 10, 2005, from <http://www.centralbankofindia.co.in/home/index1.htm>, viewed on

7. The submission implies that the work has not been published earlier elsewhere and is not under consideration to be published anywhere else if selected for publication in the journal of Indian Academicians and Researchers Association.

8. Decision of the Editorial Board regarding selection/rejection of the articles will be final.

www.iaraedu.com

Journal

Volume 7, Issue 2 (I)
April – June 2020

ISSN 2394 - 7780

International Journal of
Advance and Innovative Research

Indian Academicians and Researchers Association
www.iaraedu.com

www.iaraedu.com

Journal

ISSN 2394 - 9554

**International Journal of Research in
Science and Technology**

Volume 6, Issue 2: April - June 2019



Indian Academicians and Researchers Association
www.iaraedu.com

**Become a member of IARA to avail
attractive benefits upto Rs. 30000/-**

<http://iaraedu.com/about-membership.php>



INDIAN ACADEMICIANS AND RESEARCHERS ASSOCIATION

Membership No: M / M – 1365

Certificate of Membership

This is to certify that

XXXXXXXXXX

is admitted as a

Fellow Member

of

Indian Academicians and Researchers Association

in recognition of commitment to Educational Research

and the objectives of the Association



Date: 27.01.2020


Director


President



INDIAN ACADEMICIANS AND RESEARCHERS ASSOCIATION

Membership No: M / M – 1365

Certificate of Membership

This is to certify that

XXXXXXXXXX

is admitted as a

Life Member

of

Indian Academicians and Researchers Association

in recognition of commitment to Educational Research
and the objectives of the Association



Date: 27.01.2020

Director

President



INDIAN ACADEMICIANS AND RESEARCHERS ASSOCIATION

Membership No: M / M – 1365

Certificate of Membership

This is to certify that

XXXXXXXXXX

is admitted as a

Member

of

Indian Academicians and Researchers Association

in recognition of commitment to Educational Research

and the objectives of the Association



Date: 27.01.2020

Director

President

IARA Organized its 1st International Dissertation & Doctoral Thesis Award in September'2019

1st International Dissertation & Doctoral Thesis Award (2019)



Organized By



Indian Academicians and Researchers Association (IARA)

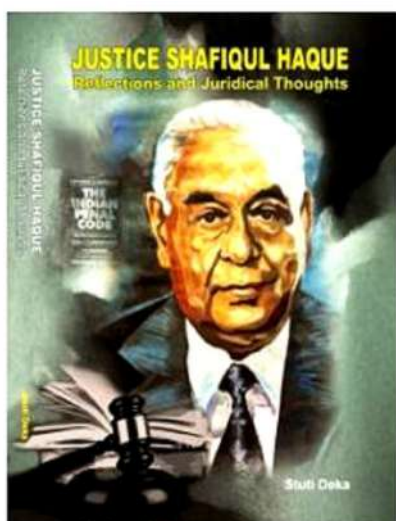


EMPYREAL PUBLISHING HOUSE

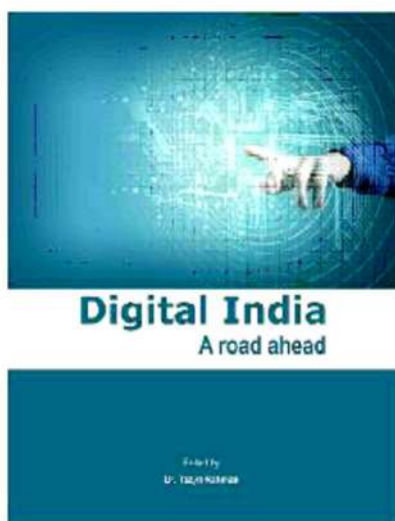
www.editedbook.in

**Publish Your Book, Your Thesis into Book or
Become an Editor of an Edited Book with ISBN**

BOOKS PUBLISHED



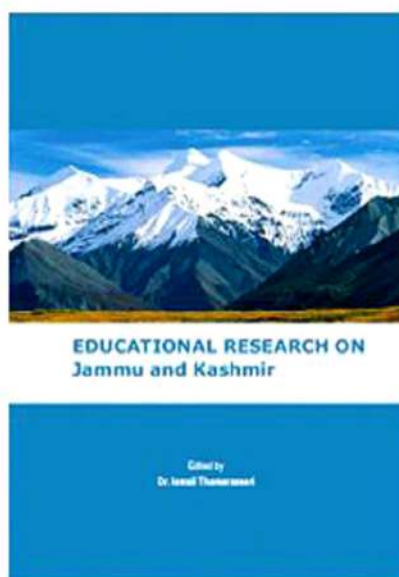
Dr. Stuti Deka
ISBN : 978-81-930928-1-1



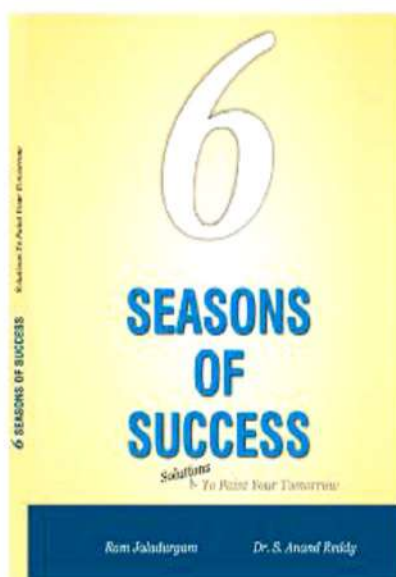
Dr. Tazyn Rahman
ISBN : 978-81-930928-0-4



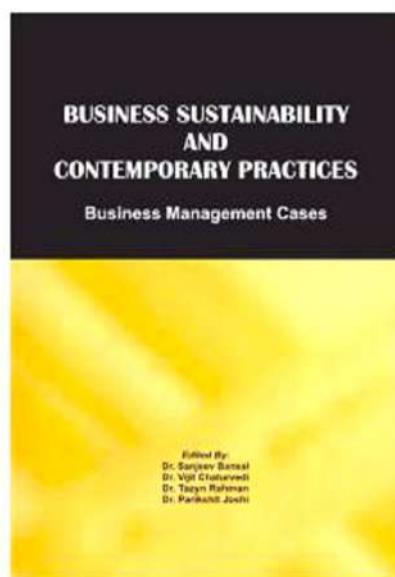
Mr. Dinbandhu Singh
ISBN : 978-81-930928-3-5



Dr. Ismail Thamarasseri
ISBN : 978-81-930928-2-8



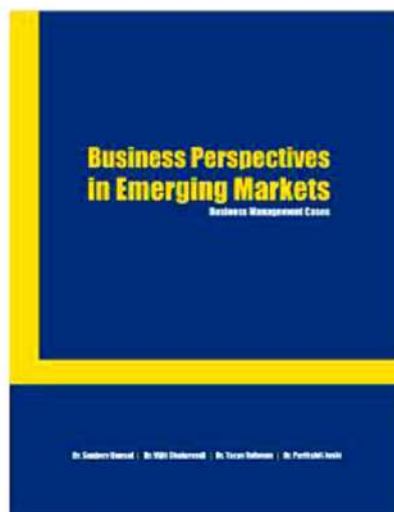
Ram Jaladurgam
Dr. S. Anand Reddy
ISBN : 978-81-930928-5-9



Dr. Sanjeev Bansal, Dr. Vijit Chaturvedi
Dr. Tazyn Rahman, Dr. Parikshit Joshi
ISBN : 978-81-930928-6-6



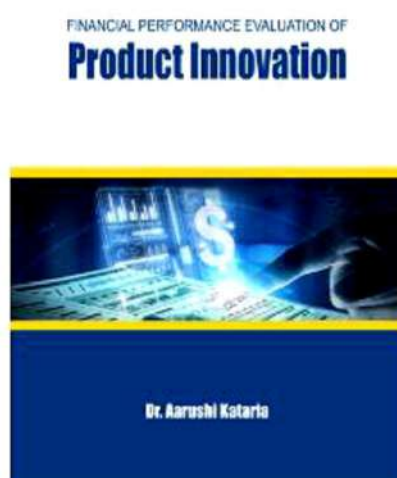
Ashish Kumar Sinha, Dr. Soubhik Chakraborty
Dr. Amritanjali
ISBN : 978-81-930928-8-0



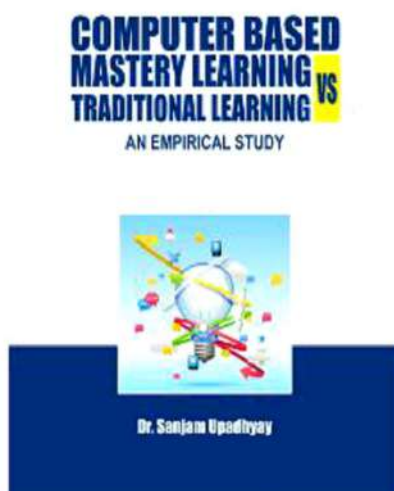
Dr. Sanjeev Bansal, Dr. Vijit Chaturvedi
Dr. Tazyn Rahman, Dr. Parikshit Joshi
ISBN : 978-81-936264-0-5



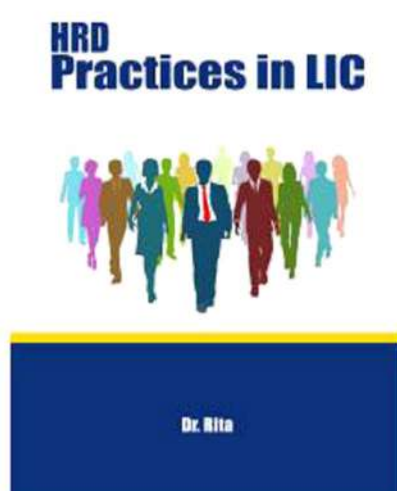
Dr. Jyotsna Golhar
Dr. Sujit Metre
ISBN : 978-81-936264-6-7



Dr. Aarushi Kataria
ISBN : 978-81-936264-3-6



Dr. Sanjam Upadhyay
ISBN : 978-81-936264-5-0



Dr. Rita
ISBN : 978-81-930928-7-3



Dr. Manas Ranjan Panda, Dr. Prabodha Kr. Hota
ISBN : 978-81-930928-4-2



Poomima University
ISBN : 978-8193-6264-74



Institute of Public Enterprise
ISBN : 978-8193-6264-4-3

Vitamin D Supplementation in SGA Babies



Dr. Jyothi Naik
Prof. Dr. Syed Manazir Ali
Dr. Uzma Firdaus
Prof. Dr. Jamal Ahmed

Dr. Jyothi Naik, Prof. Dr. Syed Manazir Ali
Dr. Uzma Firdaus, Prof. Dr. Jamal Ahmed
ISBN : 978-81-939070-9-8



Gold Nanoparticles: Plasmonic Aspects And Applications

Dr. Abhishosh Kedia
Dr. Pandian Senthil Kumar

Dr. Abhishosh Kedia
Dr. Pandian Senthil Kumar
ISBN : 978-81-939070-0-9

Social Media Marketing and Consumer Behavior



Dr. Vinod S. Chandwani

Dr. Vinod
S. Chandwani
ISBN : 978-81-939070-2-3

Select Research Papers of

Prof. Dr. Dhananjay Awasarwar



Prof. Dr. Dhananjay Awasarwar

Prof. Dr. Dhananjay
Awasarwar
ISBN : 978-81-939070-1-6

Recent ReseaRch Trends in ManageMent



Dr. C. Samudhra Rajakumar
Dr. M. Ramesh
Dr. C. Kathiravan
Dr. Rincy V. Mathew

Dr. C. Samudhra Rajakumar, Dr. M. Ramesh
Dr. C. Kathiravan, Dr. Rincy V. Mathew
ISBN : 978-81-939070-4-7

Recent ReseaRch Trends in Social Science



Dr. C. Samudhra Rajakumar
Dr. M. Ramesh
Dr. C. Kathiravan
Dr. Rincy V. Mathew

Dr. C. Samudhra Rajakumar, Dr. M. Ramesh
Dr. C. Kathiravan, Dr. Rincy V. Mathew
ISBN : 978-81-939070-6-1

Recent Research Trend in Business Administration



Dr. C. Samudhra Rajakumar
Dr. M. Ramesh
Dr. C. Kathiravan
Dr. Rincy V. Mathew

Dr. C. Samudhra Rajakumar, Dr. M. Ramesh
Dr. C. Kathiravan, Dr. Rincy V. Mathew
ISBN : 978-81-939070-7-8

Recent Innovations in Biosustainability and Environmental Research II



Dr. V. I. Paul
Dr. M. Muthulingam
Dr. A. Elangovan
Dr. J. Nelson Samuel Jebastin

Dr. V. I. Paul, Dr. M. Muthulingam
Dr. A. Elangovan, Dr. J. Nelson Samuel Jebastin
ISBN : 978-81-939070-9-2

Teacher Education: Challenges Ahead



Sajid Jamal
Mohd Shakir

Sajid Jamal
Mohd Shakir
ISBN : 978-81-939070-8-5

Project Management



Dr. R. Emmaniel

ISBN : 978-81-939070-3-0

The *théâtre engagé* American Drama from the '29 Crash to World War II

Dr. Sarala Barnabas

Dr. Sarala Barnabas

ISBN : 978-81-941253-3-4



AUTHORS
Dr. M. Banumathi
Dr. C. Samudhra Rajakumar

Dr. M. Banumathi

Dr. C. Samudhra Rajakumar

ISBN : 978-81-939070-5-4

VIJANAN COMMERCE AND MANAGEMENT



Dr. Rahim Kulkar

Dr. (Mrs.) Rohini Kelkar

ISBN : 978-81-941253-0-3

Recent Research Trends in Management and Social Science



Dr. Tazyn Rahman

Dr. Tazyn Rahman

ISBN : 978-81-941253-2-7

VIJANAN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



N. Lakshmi Kavitha
Mithila Satam

Dr. N. Lakshmi Kavitha

Mithila Satam

ISBN : 978-81-941253-1-0

Emerging Research Trends in Management and Social Science



Dr. Hresh Lohar
Prof. Arti Sharma

Dr. Hresh Lohar
Prof. Arti Sharma

ISBN : 978-81-941253-4-1

Life of Slum Occupants & Saving Pattern



Dr. Hresh S. Lohar
Dr. Ashok S. Lohar

Dr. Hresh S. Lohar
Dr. Ashok S. Lohar

ISBN : 978-81-941253-5-8

Computerised Information System: Concepts & Applications



Babita Kanojia
Dr. Arvind S. Lohar

Dr. Babita Kanojia
Dr. Arvind S. Lohar

ISBN : 978-81-941253-7-2

SKILLS FOR SUCCESS



SK Nathan
SW Rajamonaharane

Dr. Sw Rajamonaharane
SK Nathan
ISBN : 978-81-942475-0-0

Witness Protection Regime An Indian Perspective



Aditi Sharma

Aditi Sharma
ISBN : 978-81-941253-8-9

Self-Finance Courses: Popularity & Financial Viability



Dr. Ashok S. Luhar
Dr. Hitesh S. Luhar

Dr. Ashok S. Luhar
Dr. Hitesh S. Luhar
ISBN : 978-81-941253-6-5

SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES MANAGEMENT Issues, Challenges and Opportunities



Dr. B. Augustine Arockiaraj

Dr. B. Augustine Arockiaraj
ISBN : 978-81-941253-9-6



SPOILAGE OF VALUABLE SPICES BY MICROBES

Dr. Kuljinder Kaur

Dr. Kuljinder Kaur
ISBN : 978-81-942475-4-8

Financial Capability of Students: An Increasing Challenge in Indian Economy

Dr. Priyanka Malik



Dr. Priyanka Malik
ISBN : 978-81-942475-1-7

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORGANIZATION CULTURE AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE: HOSPITALITY SECTOR



Dr. Rekha P. Khosla

Dr. Rekha P. Khosla
ISBN : 978-81-942475-2-4

A GUIDE TO

TWIN LOBE BLOWER AND ROOT BLOWER TECHNIQUE



Dilip Pandurang Deshmukh

Dilip Pandurang Deshmukh
ISBN : 978-81-942475-3-1



SILVER JUBILEE COMMEMORATIVE LECTURE SERIES 2019-SNGC

Dr. D. Kalpana
Dr. M. Thangavel

Dr. D. Kalpana, Dr. M. Thangavel
ISBN : 978-81-942475-5-5



Indian Commodity Futures and Spot Markets

Dr. Aloysius Edward J.

Dr. Aloysius Edward J.
ISBN : 978-81-942475-7-9



Correlates of Burnout Syndrome Among Servicemen

Dr. Binomay Ohiagueri Ekechukwu

Dr. R. O. Ekechukwu
ISBN : 978-81-942475-8-6

Advances in Mathematical Sciences

(A Collection of Survey Research Articles)

Edited By
Dr. Zakir Ahmed



Dr. Zakir Ahmed
ISBN : 978-81-942475-9-3

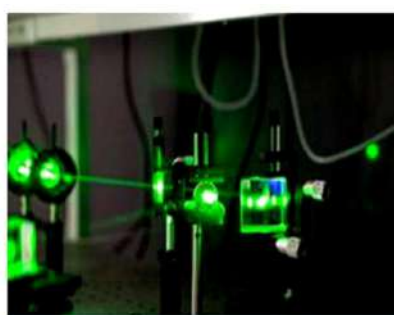


Fair Value Measurement

Challenges and Perceptions

Dr. (CA) Ajit S. Joshi
Dr. Arvind S. Luhar

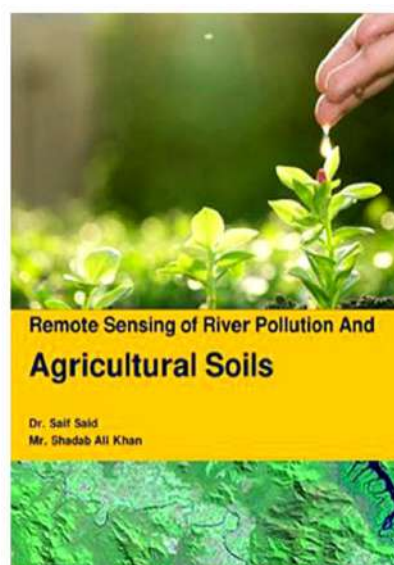
Dr. (CA) Ajit S. Joshi
Dr. Arvind S. Luhar
ISBN : 978-81-942475-6-2



NONLINEAR OPTICAL CRYSTALS FOR LASER Growth and Analysis Techniques

Madhav N Rode
Dilipkumar V Mehraam

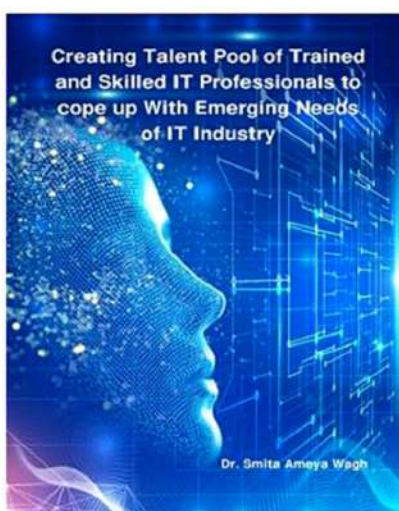
Madhav N Rode
Dilip Kumar V Mehraam
ISBN : 978-81-943209-6-8



Remote Sensing of River Pollution And Agricultural Soils

Dr. Saif Said
Mr. Shadab Ali Khan

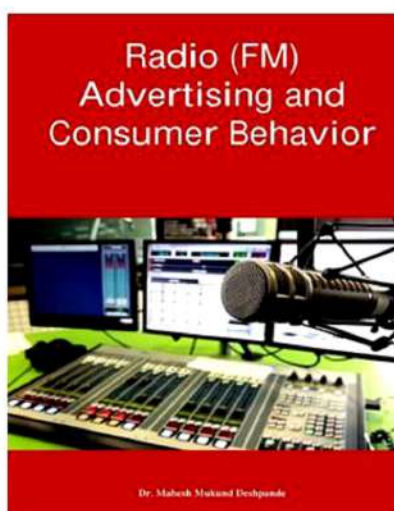
Dr. Saif Said
Shadab Ali Khan
ISBN : 978-81-943209-1-3



Creating Talent Pool of Trained and Skilled IT Professionals to cope up With Emerging Needs of IT Industry

Dr. Smita Ameya Wagh

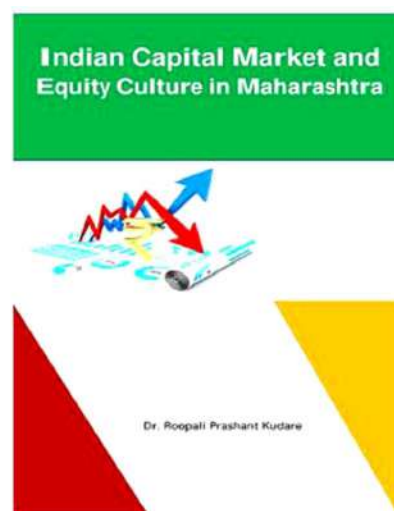
Dr. Smita Ameya Wagh
ISBN : 978-81-943209-9-9



Radio (FM) Advertising and Consumer Behavior

Dr. Mahesh Mukund Deshpande

Dr. Mahesh Mukund Deshpande
ISBN : 978-81-943209-7-5



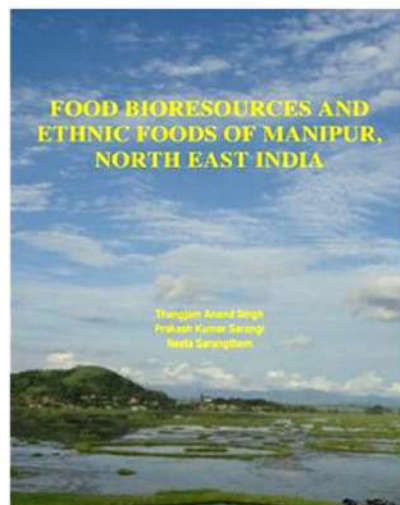
Indian Capital Market and Equity Culture in Maharashtra

Dr. Roopali Prashant Kudare

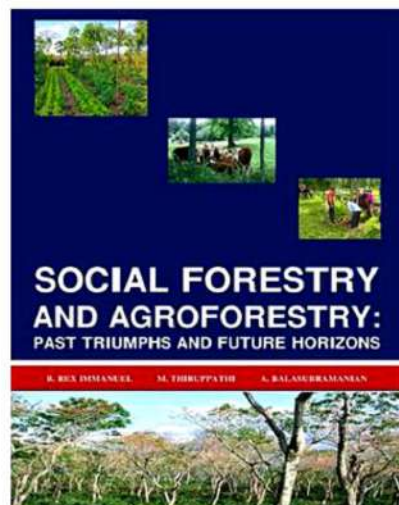
Dr. Roopali Prashant Kudare
ISBN : 978-81-943209-3-7



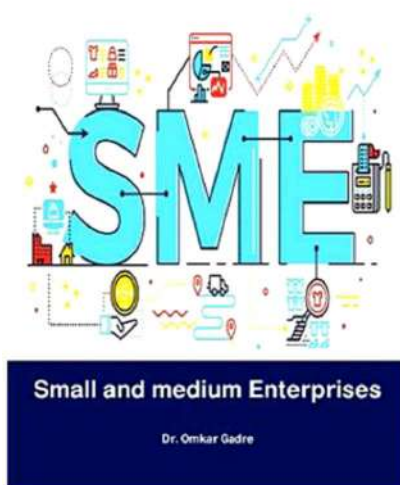
M. Thiruppathi
R. Rex Immanuel
K. Arivukkaran
ISBN : 978-81-930928-9-7



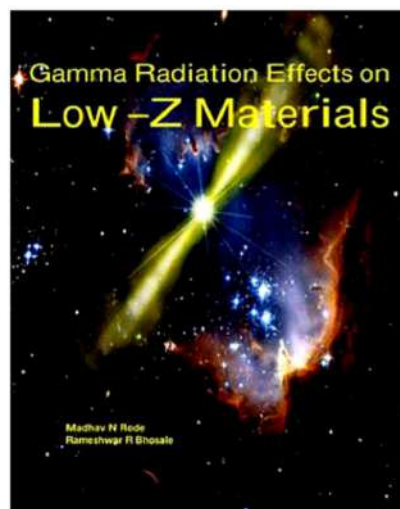
Thanglin Anand Singh
Prakash Kumar Sarangi
Neeta Sarangthem
ISBN : 978-81-944069-0-7



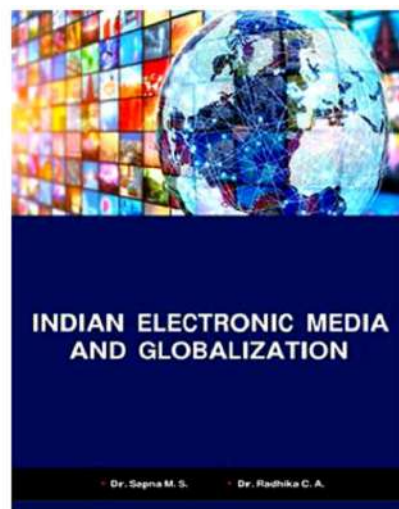
R. Rex Immanuel
M. Thiruppathi
A. Balasubramanian
ISBN : 978-81-943209-4-4



Dr. Omkar V. Gadre
ISBN : 978-81-943209-8-2



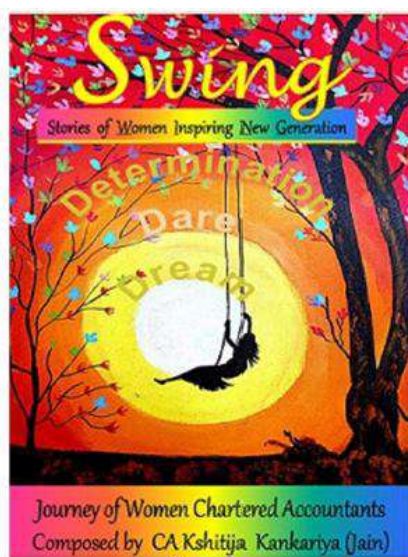
Madhav N Rode
Rameshwar R. Bhosale
ISBN : 978-81-943209-5-1



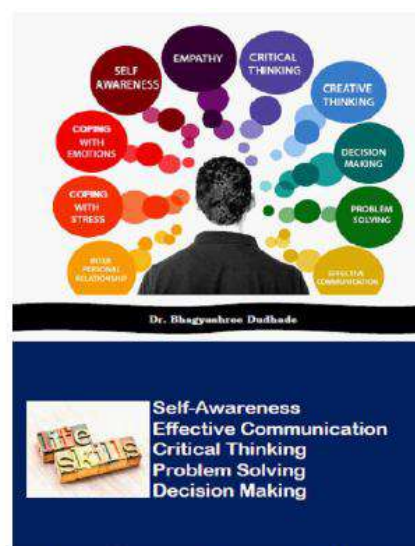
Dr. Sapna M S
Dr. Radhika C A
ISBN : 978-81-943209-0-6



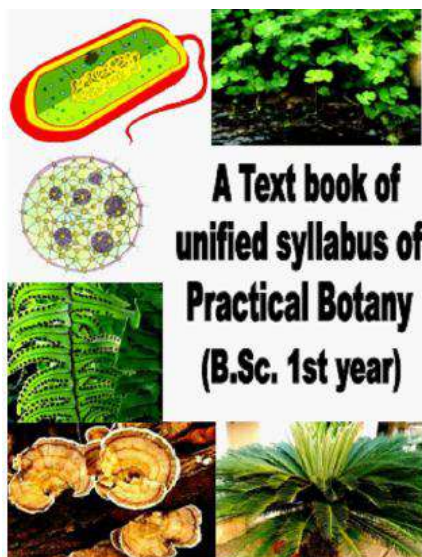
Hindusthan College
ISBN : 978-81-944813-8-6



Swing
ISSN: 978-81-944813-9-3



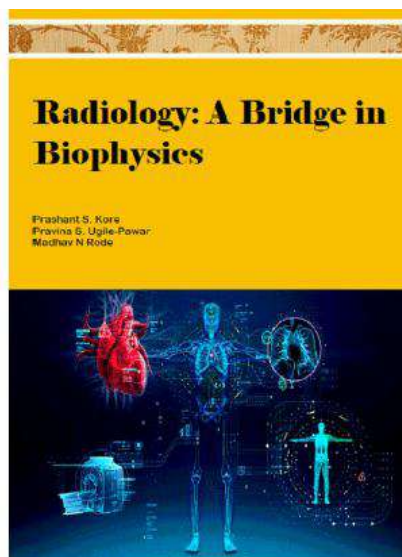
Dr. Bhagyashree Dudhade
ISBN : 978-81-944069-5-2



S. Saad, S. Bushra, A.A. Khan

S. Saad, S. Bushra, A. A. Khan

ISBN: 978-81-944069-9-0



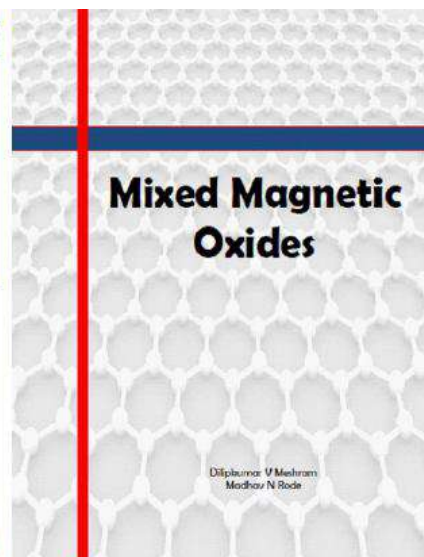
Prashant S. Kore
Pravina S. Ugile-Pawar
Madhav N Rode

Prashant S. Kore

Pravina S. Ugile-Pawar

Madhav N Rode

ISSN: 978-81-944069-7-6

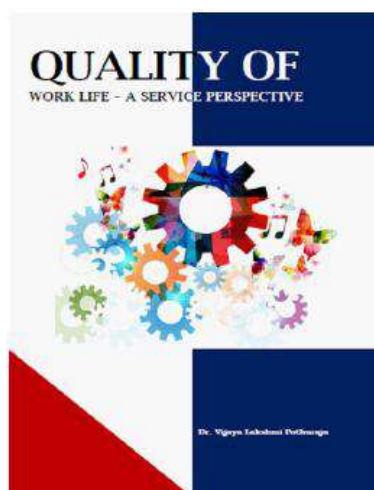


Mixed Magnetic Oxides

Dilipkumar V Meshram
Madhav N Rode

Dilipkumar V Meshram and
Madhav N Rode

ISSN: 978-81-944069-6-9



Dr. Vijaya Lakshmi Pothuraju

Dr. Vijaya Lakshmi Pothuraju

ISBN : 978-81-943209-2-0



National Level Seminar

'E-Business: A Paradigm Shift in the 21st Century'
January 30th & 31st 2020

Organized by
Department of Commerce & Management



Sponsored by

Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune
(under Quality Improvement Programme)

Kamala Education Society's
Pratibha College of Commerce and Computer Studies,
Accredited by NAAC with "B" Grade (CGPA 2.68)

PROCEEDINGS

Pratibha College

ISBN : 978-81-944813-2-4



STATE LEVEL SEMINAR

'Emerging Environmental Challenges
&
Its Sustainable Approaches'

7th & 8th, February 2020

Sponsored by

Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune
(under Quality Improvement Programme)

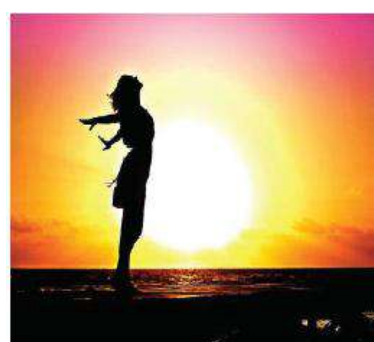
PROCEEDINGS

Organized by
Department of Environmental Science
Kamala Education Society's
Pratibha College of Commerce and Computer Studies,
(Accredited with NAAC "B" Grade)

Tel. (Off.) : 8800100942/45, 020-65111411
www.pccos.org.in

Pratibha College

ISBN : 978-81-944813-3-1

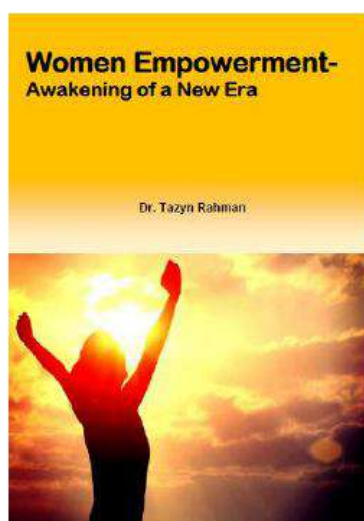


Women Empowerment

Dr. Tazyn Rahman

Dr. Tazyn Rahman

ISBN : 978-81-936264-1-2

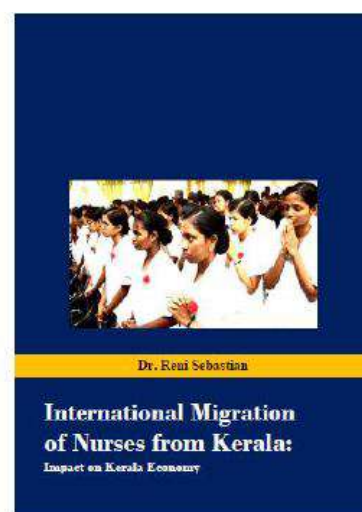


Women Empowerment- Awakening of a New Era

Dr. Tazyn Rahman

Dr. Tazyn Rahman

ISBN : 978-81-944813-5-5

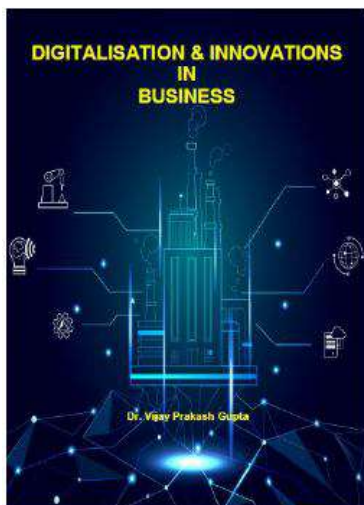


Dr. Reni Sebastian

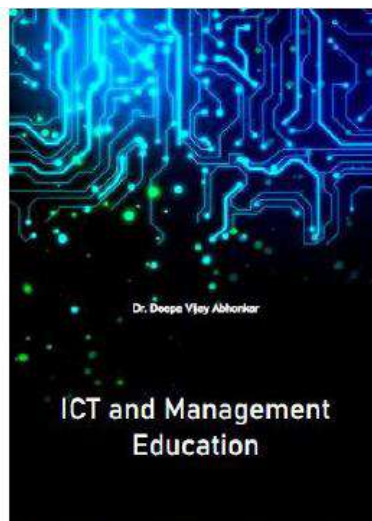
International Migration of Nurses from Kerala: Impact on Kerala Economy

Dr. Reni Sebastian

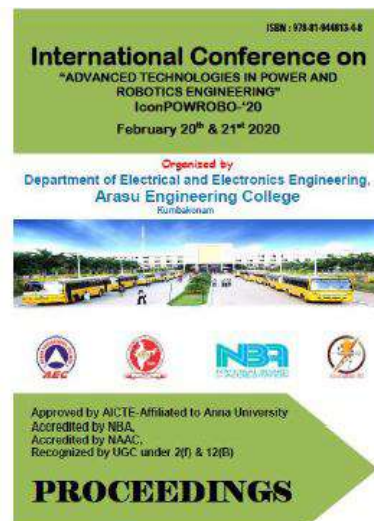
ISBN : 978-81-944069-2-1



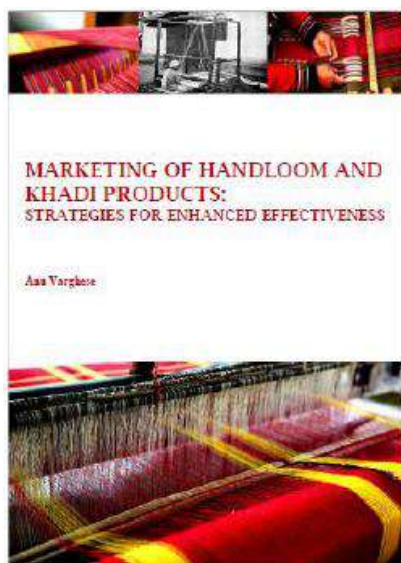
Dr. Vijay Prakash Gupta
ISBN : 978-81-944813-1-7



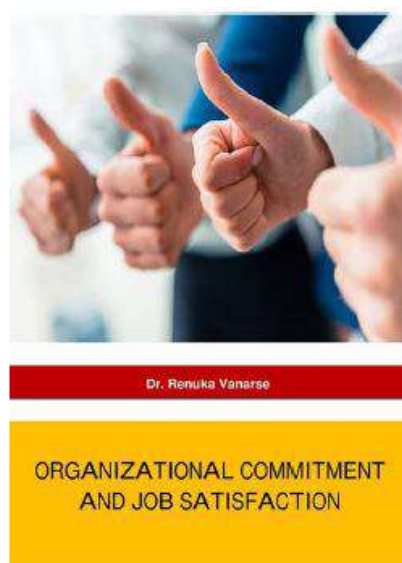
Dr. Deepa Vijay Abhonkar
ISBN : 978-81-944813-6-2



Arasu Engineering College
ISSN: 978-81-944813-4-8



Dr. Ann Varghese
ISBN : 978-81-944069-4-5



Dr. Renuka Vanarse
ISBN : 978-81-944069-1-4



INDIAN ACADEMICIANS & RESEARCHERS ASSOCIATION

Major Objectives

- To encourage scholarly work in research
- To provide a forum for discussion of problems related to educational research
- To conduct workshops, seminars, conferences etc. on educational research
- To provide financial assistance to the research scholars
- To encourage Researcher to become involved in systematic research activities
- To foster the exchange of ideas and knowledge across the globe

Services Offered

- Free Membership with certificate
- Publication of Conference Proceeding
- Organize Joint Conference / FDP
- Outsource Survey for Research Project
- Outsource Journal Publication for Institute
- Information on job vacancies

Indian Academicians and Researchers Association

Shanti Path ,Opp. Darwin Campus II, Zoo Road Tiniali, Guwahati, Assam

Mobile : +919999817591, email : info@iaraedu.com www.iaraedu.com



EMPYREAL PUBLISHING HOUSE

- Assistant in Synopsis & Thesis writing
- Assistant in Research paper writing
- Publish Thesis into Book with ISBN
- Publish Edited Book with ISBN
- Outsource Journal Publication with ISSN for Institute and private universities.
- Publish Conference Proceeding with ISBN
- Booking of ISBN
- Outsource Survey for Research Project

Publish Your Thesis into Book with ISBN “Become An Author”

EMPYREAL PUBLISHING HOUSE

Zoo Road Tiniali, Guwahati, Assam

Mobile : +919999817591, email : info@editedbook.in, www.editedbook.in



Empyreal Institute of Higher Education
Guwahati
www.empyreal.co.in