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#### ***Office***

*Panjab University Research Journal (Arts)* Aruna Ranjit Chandra Hall, First Floor, Panjab University, Chandigarh  
-160014

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## **An Analysis of the Sociocultural Languages and the Artificial Intelligence**

SURAQUA FAHAD, BHUPENDRA PRATAP SINGH

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### **Abstract**

*The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has recognized the role of Artificial Intelligence in promoting the development of socio-cultural languages in India. While AI can be a useful tool for language preservation and promotion, it is important to recognize the limitations of technology in addressing broader socio-cultural issues. From a social work perspective, it is important to ensure that AI is harnessed in a way that promotes inclusivity, diversity, and participatory decision-making. It is important to prioritize community-based approaches that involve the active participation of linguistic and cultural communities in the development and implementation of language policies. Moreover, it is crucial to address the digital divide and ensure that technological interventions do not exacerbate existing inequalities. The prime objective of this paper is to comprehend the role of Artificial Intelligence in the promotion of socio-cultural languages through a Social Work perspective. Furthermore, the study highlights that AI improved language translation, computational analysis of language, and increased efficiency in language processing but AI is unable in context and subjectivity to understand language, potential job displacement and biased algorithms. AI has the potential to play an important role in promoting socio-cultural languages, but its implementation needs to be guided by social work principles. Community-based approaches that prioritize inclusivity and diversity are key to ensuring that AI interventions promote language preservation and development holistically and equitably.*

**Keywords:** Adaptive Learning, Artificial Intelligence, Biased Algorithms, Cross-culture Communication, Translational Technologies, Socio-cultural Languages and Social work Intervention.

## INTRODUCTION

Artificial intelligence (AI) can play a significant role in promoting socio-cultural languages by enabling more effective language learning and preservation. For example, AI-powered chatbots and virtual assistants can be designed to converse in multiple languages, providing learners with a more immersive learning experience. These technologies can personalize learning based on individual learner needs, identifying weaknesses and strengths, and providing targeted feedback, and additional learning resources.

AI can also be used to preserve endangered languages, which are at risk of extinction due to the rapid pace of globalization and the dominance of larger, more widely spoken languages (Colas *et.al.*, 2022). By utilizing machine learning algorithms, AI can analyze and categorize different languages based on their linguistic features such as phonetics, intonation, and speech patterns. This data can be used to create digital libraries of endangered languages, facilitating their preservation and study.

AI-powered tools are transforming language learning and preservation through innovative applications. For instance, Duolingo, with courses in over 40 languages, uses AI to personalize learning and offer tailored feedback, even for less common languages like Welsh and Navajo (Rungta, 2020). Similarly, Babbel, a language learning app with over 10 million users, leverages AI to customize lessons and provide instant feedback for its 14 language courses (Wiesen, 2023). The Endangered Languages Project employs machine learning to preserve endangered languages by analyzing linguistic features and creating a comprehensive digital resource library.

For translation, Google Translate uses AI to provide real-time translations across 100+ languages, enhancing speed and accuracy. Moreover, Waverly Labs' AI-powered translation earpiece facilitates real-time speech translation, breaking linguistic barriers and enabling seamless communication. These advancements highlight the transformative role of AI in enhancing language accessibility and preservation.



This demonstrates the diverse range of applications of AI in promoting socio-cultural languages, from personalized language learning to real-time translation and preservation of endangered languages. Moreover, AI-powered language translation tools can facilitate cross-cultural communication (Bennett, 2023), helping people to connect across linguistic and cultural barriers. These tools can translate between languages in real-time, making it easier for people to communicate and collaborate on a global scale, irrespective of their linguistic backgrounds.

Inclusively, AI has the potential to revolutionize language learning and preservation, as well as cross-cultural communication, thereby promoting socio-cultural diversity and awareness. By leveraging the latest advancements in AI and machine learning, we can bridge the linguistic and cultural divides that exist across the globe, promoting understanding, empathy, and positive social change.

### **Socio-Cultural Languages: Importance and Needs**

Languages that are closely associated with the identity, values, and customs of a particular community or culture are known as socio-cultural languages. The distinctive lifestyles, values, and customs of the speakers of these languages are frequently communicated through them. For instance, *Quechua*, which is spoken by indigenous communities in the Andes, preserves the customs and history of the Andean cultures, whereas *Māori* in New Zealand represents the culture and heritage of the *Māori* people. Similar to this, Punjabi is more than just a language; it is a vital component of the Sikh and *Punjabi* communities' cultural identities, representing their music, history, and religious customs. These languages play a crucial role in promoting cultural diversity and social cohesion, helping to preserve the unique cultural heritage of different communities around the world.

India is a prime example of the rich diversity of socio-cultural languages. With over 19,500 languages and dialects spoken across the country (Basak, 2022), India is home to a vast array of linguistic and cultural diversity. These

languages include Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Bengali, Punjabi, and many more, each with its unique dialects, nuances, and cultural expressions. Socio-cultural languages in India have been used for centuries to preserve the unique cultural heritage of different communities. For example, *Hindustani*, a hybrid language of Hindi and Urdu, has played a crucial role in promoting national unity and identity, while regional languages such as Tamil, Telugu, and Bengali have helped to promote regional pride and identity.

As a means of expressing the distinctive cultural traditions and inventiveness of various communities, socio-cultural languages in India are closely related to literature, music, and the arts. For example, *Bengali* plays a major part in Bengali music and art and is not only a spoken language but also has a rich literary heritage that includes classic works by writers like Rabindranath Tagore. One of the oldest languages in India, Tamil is essential to the tradition of Carnatic music and Tamil cinema, and it is closely associated with classical Tamil literature, including *Sangam* poetry. In addition to being the language of many regional folk art forms, such as Rajasthani folk music, Hindi forms the basis of the thriving tradition of Bollywood music, movies, and literature. The rich cultural heritage of the area is also reflected in the Kashmiri language, which reflects the distinct cultural identity of the Kashmiri people through poetry, music, and traditional arts. Indian literature, for example, is renowned for its rich diversity of languages, including Hindi, Bengali, Tamil, and Telugu. These languages have contributed to the development of a diverse body of literature, music, and art that represents the cultural diversity of the country.

Socio-cultural languages play a critical role in promoting cultural diversity and social cohesion in India and around the world. By preserving and promoting these languages, we can celebrate and embrace the rich diversity of human culture and promote cross-cultural understanding and empathy. Socio-cultural languages play a critical role in promoting cultural diversity, identity, and social cohesion. Comprehensively, socio-cultural languages in India and worldwide are one of the needed aspects to enrich the different dimensions.

Socio-cultural languages, which reflect a society's distinct history, customs, and values, are essential to the preservation of cultural heritage. With over 19,500 languages and dialects spoken in India (Basak, 2022), many of these languages are in danger of going extinct as a result of the swift forces of urbanization and globalization. These languages must be preserved to preserve cultural diversity and to promote a better understanding of the customs and worldviews of diverse communities. The necessity for coordinated efforts to preserve these languages for future generations is highlighted by the fact that their extinction would result in the loss of historical understanding and cultural knowledge.

Moreover, socio-cultural languages are essential for fostering social cohesiveness within communities in addition to being preserved. According to Rutagand (2024), they give people a way to express themselves and communicate with one another, which strengthens the ties that bind a society together. For instance, Hindi acts as a unifying language in India, fostering a feeling of solidarity and national identity. By emphasizing the value of cultural and regional diversity within the nation, regional languages like Tamil, Telugu, and Bengali also contribute to the larger social fabric by fostering a sense of pride and belonging among speakers.

Understanding sociocultural languages also improves intercultural communication, especially in light of the world's growing interconnectedness (Hossain, 2024). People frequently have to interact with people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds in such a globalized setting. For example, it is now crucial to learn languages like *Mandarin* or Spanish to do business and build relationships with Chinese or Hispanic communities. Sociocultural languages help people communicate with each other, bridging cultural gaps and promoting understanding, which in turn helps people from all over the world work together and interact peacefully.

Furthermore, there are a lot of chances for personal development when learning a sociocultural language. It improves cognitive skills like memory,

problem-solving, and critical thinking in addition to broadening one's perspective and encouraging empathy and respect for diverse cultures (Golden, 2023). Since bilingualism or multilingualism is becoming more valued in many fields, learning a new language can also lead to opportunities in the classroom and the workplace. Learning a language allows people to acquire skills that they can use in a range of personal and professional situations in addition to learning about another culture.

Moreover, socio-cultural languages make significant contributions to the domains of literature and art by offering a distinctive perspective for expressing a society's history and legacy. Languages such as Hindi, Bengali, Tamil, and Telugu have been essential to the growth of India's varied literary, musical, and visual arts traditions. These languages provide deep insights into the beliefs, hardships, and victories of communities by encapsulating their lived experiences. The writings of Rabindranath Tagore, one of India's most renowned poets and Nobel laureates, are a noteworthy example of Bengali literature. His poetry frequently captures individual and group struggles and victories, reflecting the sociocultural and philosophical subtleties of Bengali society. Tagore's well-known poem "*Where the Mind is Without Fear*" conveys his intense longing for an India free from ignorance and oppression. This poem captures India's larger fight for independence and self-realization as well as Bengal's cultural ambitions.

চিত্ত যেখানে ভয়হীন, মাথা যেখানে উঁচু,  
এখানে মন যেখানে মুক্ত, প্রেম বয়ে যাচ্ছে,  
কোথাও কোথাও আমরা মুক্ত হয়ে উঠেছি।

"Chitto jetha bhoysunno, uddho jetha shôrôbôbô,  
Ekhane mon jetha shôbujhô, morom bôhônâ,  
Kôthao kôthao amra shôbujhegiyechhi"

Translation: "Where the mind is without fear, and the head is held high,

Where knowledge is free, and the world has not been broken into fragments

by narrow domestic walls,

Where words come out from the depth of truth (Tagore, 1910)."

India's multilingualism has produced a thriving cultural landscape in which literature and the arts both reflect and stimulate cultural identity and expression. In this sense, socio-cultural languages help to shape a community's future while also preserving its past.

Overall, socio-cultural languages play a crucial role in promoting cultural diversity, identity, and social cohesion. By preserving and promoting these languages, we can celebrate and embrace the rich diversity of human culture and promote cross-cultural understanding and empathy.

### **Promotion of Socio-cultural Languages under National Education Policy, 2020**

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 in India is a comprehensive policy that aims to transform the education system in the country. One of the key objectives of the policy is to promote socio-cultural languages by recognizing the importance of multilingualism and promoting the use of mother tongue or regional language as the medium of instruction until at least Grade 5 (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2020). The NEP, 2020 promote socio-cultural languages from different perspectives as mentioned below:

#### **a) The Importance of Socio-Cultural Languages in India**

India is a diverse country with a rich cultural heritage. The country is home to over 1.3 billion people, and there are over 19,500 languages or dialects spoken in the country. However, only 121 languages are spoken by more than 10,000 people (Kidwai, 2019). The diversity of languages in India is a reflection of the country's rich cultural heritage and history.

Language is an essential aspect of culture and identity, and it is crucial to preserve and promote the diversity of languages in India. The NEP 2020 recognizes the importance of socio-cultural languages and aims to promote

their use in the education system.

### **b) Promoting the Use of Mother Tongue or Regional Language as the Medium of Instruction**

The NEP 2020 recognizes that language is a critical factor in learning and aims to promote the use of mother tongue or regional language as the medium of instruction until at least Grade 5. This policy recognizes that children learn best in their mother tongue or regional language, and it is essential to provide them with a strong foundation in their language.

Annual Status of Education Report Centre mentioned in its Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) (2018) that only 32.5% of children in Grade 3 could read a Grade 2 level text in their mother tongue. This highlights the need to promote the use of the mother tongue or regional language as the medium of instruction to improve learning outcomes.

### **c) Promoting the Teaching and Learning of Classical Languages**

The NEP 2020 recognizes the importance of classical languages and aims to promote their teaching and learning (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2020). The policy aims to promote the teaching and learning of classical languages such as Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, and Odia, among others.

According to the 2011 Census of India, there are over 19,500 languages or dialects spoken in the country. However, only 121 languages are spoken by more than 10,000 people (Benedikter, 2013). The promotion of classical languages will help preserve and promote the diversity of languages in India.

The policy also aims to develop proficiency in at least two languages, including one classical language, for all students. This will help students develop a deeper understanding of their culture and heritage and promote multilingualism.

### **d) Recognizing the Importance of Sign Language**

The NEP 2020 recognizes the importance of sign language as a means of communication for the hearing-impaired. The policy aims to promote the use of sign language in schools and educational institutions to ensure that all students have access to education.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), there are over 5% of the world's population, or 466 million people, who have disabling hearing loss (Schmucker, Kapp, Motschall, & Meerpohl, 2019). In India, there are over 5 million people with hearing disabilities. The promotion of sign language will help ensure that these students have access to education and can participate fully in society.

The NEP 2020 in India aim to preserve and promote the diversity of languages in India and ensure that practitioners, students, and other stakeholders develop proficiency in at least two languages. The promotion of socio-cultural languages will help them to develop a deeper understanding of their culture and heritage and promote multilingualism, which is essential in a diverse country like India.

## **CHANGING TREND IN SOCIO-CULTURAL LANGUAGES: ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is revolutionizing the world; its impact is being felt across all industries, including socio-cultural languages. AI is transforming the way people communicate, interact and learn different languages. The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in academics has grown rapidly in recent years in India and worldwide. AI has been integrated into various aspects of education, from teaching and learning to assessment and research. According to a report by Research and Markets, the global AI in education market size is expected to grow from \$0.76 billion in 2018 to \$3.68 billion by 2023, at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 37.1% during the forecast period (Saxena, 2022). The report highlights that the adoption of AI in education is driven by factors such as the increasing demand for personalized learning and the need to reduce the cost of teaching

and learning. In India, there have been several initiatives to integrate AI into academics, including the National Educational Policy (NEP) 2020 which recognizes the potential of AI in enhancing the quality and accessibility of education. According to a report by Technavio, the AI in the education market in India is expected to grow by \$3.57 billion during 2020-2024, at a CAGR of over 39% (Saxena, 2022).

Overall, the use of AI in academics is on the rise, with growing interest and investment in its potential to transform education. However, it is important to ensure that AI is used in a way that promotes inclusivity, diversity, and equity, and that addresses any potential biases or ethical concerns that may arise. Some of the new trends in socio-cultural languages about Artificial Intelligence are:

### **Use of AI-powered Chatbots for Language Learning**

One of the emerging trends in socio-cultural languages is the use of AI-powered chatbots for language learning. Chatbots are computer programs that can simulate human conversation by text or voice. These chatbots use Natural Language Processing (NLP), which is a subset of AI, and machine learning algorithms to understand and respond to human queries. Chatbots have become popular in the language learning industry because they offer a personalized learning experience and are available every single second (Huang, Hew & Fryer, 2022). For example, Duolingo, a language learning app, uses a chatbot called "Duo" to help learners practice their language skills. The chatbot provides feedback on pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary, and users can practice their speaking and listening skills by conversing with the chatbot.

### **Use of AI for Real-time Translation**

Another trend in socio-cultural languages is the use of AI for real-time translation. Translation is essential in enabling people to communicate across different languages and cultures. With the help of AI, real-time translation is becoming more accurate and efficient. For example, Google Translate uses



AI-powered machine translation models to provide real-time translation for over 100 languages. The system uses NLP algorithms to understand the context of the text and provide accurate translations. AI is also being used to preserve and revitalize endangered languages.

According to UNESCO, there are over 6,000 languages in the world, and more than 40% of them are endangered (United Nations, 2009). With the help of AI, organizations are developing tools to preserve and revitalize these languages. For example, the Endangered Languages Project, a joint initiative of Google and the Alliance for Linguistic Diversity, is using AI to digitize and preserve endangered languages. The project uses machine learning algorithms to analyze audio and text data and identify patterns in the language.

AI is also changing the way people interact with cultural artefacts and heritage sites. With the help of AI, people can interact with cultural artefacts and heritage sites in new and innovative ways. For example, the Louvre Museum in Paris has developed a chatbot called "Mona Lisa" that uses AI to provide visitors with information about the museum and its collection. The chatbot can answer questions about the museum's history, the artists, and the artefacts on display. Similarly, the Acropolis Museum in Athens has developed an AI-powered virtual tour that allows visitors to explore the museum and its collection from anywhere in the world.

### **Creation of New Forms of Art and Literature**

Lastly, AI is contributing to the creation of new forms of art and literature. With the help of AI, artists and writers can produce new and innovative works that challenge traditional forms of expression. For example, Google's Magenta project is exploring the use of AI to create new forms of music (Mishra, n.d.). The project uses machine learning algorithms to analyze existing music and generate new compositions. Similarly, Open AI's GPT-3 and 4 language model is being used to generate new pieces of literature, such as poems and short stories (Grinberg, 2020).

Conclusively, AI is transforming the world of socio-cultural languages in numerous ways. From language learning to heritage preservation, the impact of AI is far-reaching and is changing the way people interact, communicate, and learn about different languages and cultures. As AI continues to evolve, we can expect new and innovative trends to emerge in the field of socio-cultural languages.

## **CHALLENGES IN ADAPTING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**

While Artificial Intelligence (AI) has immense potential in promoting socio-cultural languages, it also presents several challenges that need to be addressed. Some of the major challenges in adapting AI in promoting socio-cultural languages are:

The use of AI for promoting socio-cultural languages presents several challenges. A key issue is bias in AI, as these systems are only as reliable as the data they are trained on. If the training data contains cultural biases, the AI may produce skewed outputs, such as inaccurate translations of culturally specific expressions or idioms (Mehta, 2018). Moreover, the lack of quality data poses a significant hurdle, as many socio-cultural languages and traditions lack sufficient digital documentation to train AI systems effectively. This limitation affects the AI's ability to grasp the nuances of diverse languages and cultures. Another challenge is the limited availability of resources, as developing and deploying AI technology requires substantial financial and technical investment, making it difficult for smaller organisations and marginalised communities to adopt these solutions. Ethical concerns also arise, including issues like privacy risks associated with collecting personal data for language preservation and the potential displacement of human translators through automated systems. Finally, accessibility and inclusion remain critical concerns, as not all communities have equal access to the necessary digital infrastructure or technology. Efforts to utilise AI in promoting socio-cultural languages must prioritise inclusivity to ensure equitable benefits across diverse socioeconomic backgrounds.

AI has immense potential in promoting socio-cultural languages, but several challenges must be addressed to ensure its effective and ethical use. Addressing these challenges will require collaboration and cooperation among stakeholders from different sectors to ensure the responsible and equitable use of AI in promoting socio-cultural languages.

### **AFFIRMATIVE INTERVENTIONS: NEED FOR CHANGE**

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has the potential to promote socio-cultural languages by enabling language recognition, translation, and transcription, among other applications (Ransbotham, *et.al.*, 2021). However, several challenges must be addressed to ensure that AI is used ethically and inclusively. These challenges include bias in AI, lack of quality data, limited availability of resources, ethical concerns, and accessibility and inclusion. There are certain interventions to overcome these challenges:

AI technology faces several challenges in promoting socio-cultural languages, beginning with bias in AI, which arises when algorithms are trained on data that lacks diversity or inclusivity. Such bias can lead to discriminatory outputs, such as racist or sexist responses, which hinder efforts to preserve and promote cultural diversity. To address this, it is essential to use diverse and inclusive training data that reflects different cultures, genders, and ethnicities. Moreover, having diverse teams of developers can help identify and mitigate biases in algorithms and datasets.

Another critical issue is the lack of quality data, particularly for socio-cultural languages with limited digital presence. As per the study done by Sinha and Lee (2024), many languages lack adequate online resources, making it difficult to develop robust AI models. Partnering with local communities to collect and digitise data, create language databases, and leverage crowdsourcing can ensure that training data is accurate and representative.

The limited availability of resources is another significant barrier, as AI development requires substantial computing power, data storage, and expertise, which smaller communities often lack. Open-source frameworks

like TensorFlow and PyTorch offer opportunities for such communities to collaborate with larger organisations and access the necessary resources and expertise (Nguyen *et.al.*, 2019).

Ethical concerns also pose challenges, particularly regarding data ownership, privacy, and the potential misuse of AI technologies (Rodrigues, 2020; Sanchez *et.al.*, 2024)). Clear ethical guidelines covering data privacy, algorithmic transparency, and accountability are essential, along with the active involvement of local communities to ensure cultural relevance. Finally, ensuring accessibility and inclusion is paramount in AI applications. This involves designing technologies that are accessible to people of all abilities and inclusive of diverse cultures and languages, employing principles such as user-friendly interfaces and accessible text and visual content. By addressing these challenges holistically, AI can more effectively support the preservation and promotion of socio-cultural languages.

Moreover, it is important to ensure that AI technology is available in multiple languages and that it is culturally appropriate for different communities. By adopting key interventions, such as using diverse data, collaborating with local communities, adopting open-source technologies, developing ethical guidelines and designing AI technology with accessibility and inclusion in mind, it is possible to overcome these challenges and promote socio-cultural languages responsibly and inclusively.

## **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN SOCIO-CULTURAL LANGUAGES: SOCIAL WORK INTERVENTION**

Social work interventions to promote socio-cultural languages through Artificial Intelligence (AI) can involve a range of activities, including community engagement, capacity building, and advocacy. In the Indian Social Work context, where there is significant linguistic diversity, promoting socio-cultural languages through AI can be a valuable tool for social workers to support marginalized communities.

Community engagement is central to these efforts, as it involves actively

collaborating with local communities to understand their linguistic needs, concerns, and aspirations. This can be achieved through participatory methods such as surveys and focus groups, ensuring that AI applications developed for language preservation are culturally sensitive and aligned with community needs. For instance, in India, social workers can identify languages requiring digitisation and guide the adoption of AI tools tailored to those languages, fostering inclusivity and cultural preservation.

Capacity building is another vital intervention, where social workers empower communities to utilise AI technologies effectively. This includes providing training on using AI-based tools and supporting the collection and digitisation of language data (Abulibdeh, *et.al.*, 2024). By collaborating with schools, for example, social workers can train teachers to use AI-driven language learning applications, promoting the integration of local languages in education and ensuring cultural relevance.

Through advocacy, social workers can raise awareness of the importance of linguistic diversity and the benefits of AI in achieving this goal. Engaging with policymakers, community leaders, and stakeholders allows social workers to advocate for initiatives and policies that prioritise cultural inclusion and the use of local languages in public services like education and healthcare (De Weger *et.al.*, 2022). In India, such advocacy can help mainstream local languages and highlight the broader significance of cultural diversity.

Finally, collaboration is essential, enabling social workers to partner with NGOs, community organisations, and private sector stakeholders to pool resources and expertise. Collaborations with technology companies can lead to the development of AI applications for language preservation, while partnerships with academic institutions can facilitate the creation of language models and training of AI algorithms. Together, these efforts reflect a humanitarian approach to safeguarding linguistic and cultural heritage while empowering communities to thrive in a technology-driven world.

Bove all the mentioned dimensions considered; social work interventions can play a significant role in promoting socio-cultural languages through AI in India. Community engagement, capacity building, advocacy, and collaboration are all critical interventions that can help to promote linguistic diversity and cultural inclusion. Social workers can work with local communities, policymakers, and other stakeholders to identify linguistic needs, build capacity, raise awareness, and collaborate to create appropriate AI technology. By doing so, social workers can help to ensure that AI technology is used ethically and inclusively to promote socio-cultural languages in India.

## **CONCLUSION**

The intersection of sociocultural languages and Artificial Intelligence (AI) presents both opportunities and challenges. On the one hand, AI has the potential to promote linguistic diversity and cultural inclusion by enabling language recognition, translation, and transcription, among other applications. On the other hand, there are significant challenges to ensuring that AI is used ethically and inclusively in promoting socio-cultural languages.

One of the most significant challenges in AI is bias. AI algorithms are only as good as the data they are trained on. If the data is biased, the algorithm will reflect that bias. This can have a significant negative impact on the promotion of socio-cultural languages. Moreover, there is a lack of quality data and limited availability of resources, which can make it challenging to develop AI-based applications that promote linguistic diversity and cultural inclusion. Ethical concerns also arise in the intersection of socio-cultural languages and AI. AI raises significant ethical concerns around ownership and control of language data and the potential misuse of AI technology. Furthermore, there is a risk that AI technology may perpetuate biases and discrimination, particularly if the technology is not developed ethically or with diversity and inclusion in mind.

Despite these challenges, there are opportunities for the use of AI in promoting socio-cultural languages. The social work profession can play a critical role in ensuring that AI is developed and used ethically and inclusively to promote linguistic diversity and cultural inclusion. Social work interventions such as community engagement, capacity building, advocacy, and collaboration can help to address the challenges and opportunities in this area.

Another important aspect discussed in this study is social work intervention in promoting AI in socio-cultural languages. It is concluded that social work intervention in promoting artificial intelligence in socio-cultural languages can have many benefits, it is important to approach this with caution and critical thinking. On the one hand, AI can help to preserve and promote socio-cultural languages, which are an important part of cultural identity and heritage. It can also improve access to information and resources for marginalized communities.

However, AI can also perpetuate biases and reinforce existing power structures, which can have negative consequences for minority communities. Therefore, social work interventions must be guided by an awareness of the potential risks and benefits of AI, and a commitment to promoting ethical and inclusive practices in its development and implementation.

In conclusion, A Critique of socio-cultural languages and artificial intelligence presents both challenges and opportunities. Ensuring AI is used ethically and inclusively to promote linguistic diversity and cultural inclusion requires addressing challenges such as bias, lack of quality data, limited availability of resources, ethical concerns, and accessibility and inclusion. By adopting social work interventions and engaging with local communities, policymakers, and other stakeholders, it is possible to promote linguistic diversity and cultural inclusion through the responsible and inclusive use of AI.

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## **Fantasy Sports In India: Governing Regulations And Legal Implications**

BHARAT, GARGI

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### **Abstract**

*People all over the world enjoy playing games, whether they are indoor or outdoor; real or virtual. However, the game in specific they choose to play depends on their preferences and tastes, which are largely influenced by the environment including the popularity of the game in that geographical area or nation. Since the inception of fantasy sports, from incubation to the actual working prototype, a platform supported by a solid futuristic technology related to a specific sport on which the fantasy game is operated, has greatly increased its popularity among all segments and age groups worldwide. The most significant and pertinent feature of the Online Fantasy Sports Platform is that users are more inclined to profit financially from these games through various types of legally regulated betting or gambling. The present research paper aims to analyse the constitutional and governing regulatory framework of fantasy sport platforms in India besides the legal implications arising thereof. To attain this objective, secondary sources have been used by adopting doctrinal method of research. The research paper concludes that the Indian gaming industry urgently needs a complete legal regulatory overhaul, positing that the numerous regulatory laws governing it have outlived their life.*

**Keywords:** Betting, Fantasy Sports, Gambling, Regulations, Virtual Team.

### **INTRODUCTION**

“Fantasy sports industry is making huge economic inroads into India’s overall growth and development in multiple ways – creating highly skilled jobs, attracting foreign direct investment (FDI) and generating significant revenue for the exchequer. Besides, it is also propelling sporting culture and giving a boost to

non-cricket sports as people tend to hone knowledge to participate in fantasy sports contests.”<sup>1</sup>

Sports where a person plays either a virtual game or a virtual season of sport are considered fantasy sports, sometimes known as ‘roisserie sports’ or ‘roto’. In fantasy sports, the fans of the players assume the roles of their team’s general manager and field manager, assembling a squad through trades and draughts; and setting line ups in an effort to maximise statistical output. The two most popular fantasy sports in the United States, where most fantasy sports are played, are fantasy gridiron football and fantasy baseball.<sup>2</sup> In India, although it is in gestation stage, fantasy cricket is the most popular followed by fantasy kabaddi.<sup>3</sup>

### **Meaning of Fantasy Sports**

Fantasy Sports are digital sports engagement platforms that are wholly based on real-life sporting events. Users create virtual teams using proxies of real players who will be taking part in an upcoming match or match-day, compete based on the real-world statistical performances of these players, and all of this is based on a single fully sanctioned sporting event. With the ability to trade, sign, or drop a player of their choice, users can assume the role of a coach or manager of a team. Before a game begins, the teams are finalised and the changes are locked. Some are interested in the competition and strategies involved, while others are more interested in a deeper connection to the sports than just watching them.<sup>4</sup>

### **Structure of Fantasy Sports**

Online prediction games called “Fantasy Sports” let the player assemble a virtual team of actual athletes. Based on actual data that is transformed into fantasy points, the player receives the points. The fantasy points increase in direct proportion to how well the player chosen does in actual play.<sup>5</sup>

The structure of Fantasy sports includes the following:

1. It is a form of game that is frequently played online in which players put

together virtual teams made up of dummies for actual players in a professional sport;

2. The players on these teams compete based on their statistical performance in actual games;
3. The manager of each fantasy team chooses a roster from which points are tallied and this performance is translated into points; and
4. All sports, including football, basketball, rugby, cycling, hockey, tennis, motorsports, golf, athletics, cricket, volleyball, etc. are eligible for fantasy sports.

In fantasy sports, a class of online sport games, sports enthusiasts can create their own virtual teams for well-known sports (including football, cricket, basketball, and kabaddi) based on real-life players. As scheduled matches and games are played out in real-life, the virtual players on a fantasy squad accrue points in accordance with their real-life counterparts. On several fantasy sport platforms, sports enthusiasts have the option of ‘playing for free’ or ‘paying to play’. The older design allows users to take part in competitions for no cost. These competitions often do not offer financial prizes, but some of them do. In the latter model, where there is an entry fee, the top prize is a monetary award made up of the total of all entry fees gathered at the end of the competition.<sup>6</sup>

Fantasy Sports are online simulation games where players assemble a virtual team of real-life athletes from the National Basketball Association (*hereinafter* referred to as the NBA), the English Premier League (*hereinafter* referred to as the EPL), the Indian Premier League (*hereinafter* referred to as the IPL), and other leagues. Gamers who create teams of players in a certain league to earn points based on real-world statistics transformed into fantasy points are known as ‘managers’. Managers are awarded fantasy points based on how well their players do in actual sporting events.<sup>7</sup>

These managers oversee the roster of a team by signing, trading, and offloading players. Mostly, the fantasy sports are divided into two categories *i.e.*, the season-long draughts and the regular fantasy leagues. On Indian fantasy sports websites *like* Dream11 and My11Circle, the daily fantasy edition can be seen frequently. In cricket, among other statistics; points are given based on a batsman's runs, a bowler's wickets, and a fielder's catches/run-outs. The managers are required to select a captain and vice-captain from the group of eleven players.<sup>8</sup>

### **Market of Fantasy Sports in India**

India is the world's biggest Fantasy Sports market with a user base of over 13 crores, which is expected to further grow at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (*hereinafter* referred to as the CAGR) of 32% in the coming years. The country has become a high-growth, in-focus market for Fantasy Sports due to factors like large tech-savvy millennial population, growing affiliation with sports, swift smart-phone penetration, accessibility of low-cost mobile data; and the market size is projected to grow from Rs. 34,600 crores in financial year 2021 to an estimated Rs. 1,65,000 crores by financial year 2025 thereby clocking a CAGR of 38%.<sup>9</sup>

### **HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF FANTASY SPORTS**

Instances of gambling were historically seen as components of human narration as an unrestricted source of income and entertainment and it is referenced in *Atharva-Vedic* songs, *Rig-Vedic* hymns, and *Manu-Smriti* verses; but the related regulations and licensing are relatively recent developments. The text depicts gambling as a source of devastation and financial burden for the gambler's family. Many archaeological studies have shown that gambling was prevalent among the cavemen. The first gambling chip was created in Rome which is another well-known location for gaming. Gambling practices and the regulations governing them have changed significantly.<sup>10</sup>

Also, the game of betting and gambling is perceived as a game of ego and greed where a human can't think prudently and reasonably on how to progress in furtherance of the game. A player when playing with ego and greed can put anything at stake be it his house or last coin or even a family member.<sup>11</sup> The root cause of the epic battle of Mahabharata was betting and gambling only; as loosing at the game of gambling caused maniac destruction of the entire kingdom and loss of unmatched human lives.

The times have changed where the world has become more competitive and the current time of sheer dominance of being rich and powerful has given rise to the occasion of increase in the games of betting and gambling where each and every individual aspires to become one hit wonder boy and make a fortune out of the dime. This risky and duped method of making quick money has become an addiction and a shortcut to live a lavish lifestyle. And once the addiction of betting and gambling is infused in the human veins, it is very hard to separate it, just like cancer; the reason being that humans are greedy until they are enlightened, otherwise such means of earning will become the part of normal lifestyle. A few months may favour the luck but when everything is washed out and one is out of luck, the downfall will directly lead to the pit without any chance of recovering from such loss.<sup>12</sup>

## **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN FANTASY SPORTS**

Artificial Intelligence helps the users to gain insights from the data and accordingly take decisions. It also helps to personalise user experience. By employing Artificial Intelligence in this field, the human bias could be reduced. The key computational challenges encountered in the formation of teams which are about to enter the fantasy sports league, include prediction of player's performance (performance in real-world which will affect the scores obtained on the fantasy platform application) and optimization of team formation.

Researchers from all over the world have immensely contributed to the development of machine learning algorithms to accurately predict/suggest



the team members, analyse the performance of players etc. A popular application in India is Dream 11, developed after the keen interest of people in Cricket. Deep learning allows the researchers to create Deep Neural Networks (*hereinafter* referred to as the DNN), which mimic the activity of human brain. The performance of deep neural networks was compared to the machine learning algorithms<sup>13</sup> where the authors developed a feed-forward DNN to predict the winning contestant in top three positions in the fantasy game. It was proved that the deep networks perform better than the state-of-the-art machine learning algorithms like k-nearest Neighbours, logistic regression, NaiveBayes, Random forest and Support Vector machines. To tackle the issue of multiple account creation by users with intent to abuse the platform, a graph-based machine learning system was proposed.<sup>14</sup> A model to predict the winning 11 team based on their previous performances was proposed by making use of Greedy and Knapsack algorithms.<sup>15</sup>

Machine learning was also employed to construct the optimal teams in National Football League (NFL) and to pick the winning team out of the competitors.<sup>16</sup> An ensemble of generative models was proposed to combine player's fantasy score and the following line-up optimizations.<sup>17</sup> When the approach was tested on the real-world data, a Return on Investment of 34% was obtained over the period of 8 weeks.

Fantasy sports in India are one of the upcoming research areas where Machine learning can be widely used for assessing the player's performances and in team formations while placing bets. Artificial intelligence can also be used in future for predictions of injuries to the players based on their present health condition, location of the match etc.

## **THE FEDERATION OF INDIAN FANTASY SPORTS**

Formed in 2017, the Federation of Indian Fantasy Sport (*hereinafter* referred to as the FIFS), earlier known as the Indian Federation of Sports Gaming (IFSG) is a self-regulatory group, responsible for maintaining

standards of operation and safeguarding the interests of gamers in India in the absence of a governmental regulatory authority. The FIFS reflects the board's desire to concentrate on fantasy and e-sports rather than skill-based games only. India is experiencing the fantasy sport trend for the past decade due to number of gaming applications including FanFight, MyTeam11, and Mobile Primer League. However, with the rise of the application known as Dream11 and its association with the heavily commercialized 'Indian Premier League', the infatuation with this 'dream' has intensified.<sup>18</sup>

Basically, the FIFS is a company incorporated under Section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013. The main purpose of its establishment is to promote moral, ethical and lawful standards of behaviour for all registered and active online fantasy sports platforms in India. It will prevent dishonesty, ensure that their operations are conducted honestly, and ensure that no one suffers losses other than those caused by the Online Fantasy Sports Platforms (*hereinafter* referred to as the OFSPs) *i.e.*, self-regulatory mechanisms.<sup>19</sup>

A Charter for OFSPs is formed and established through the establishment of self-regulation, and it lays out regulations, rules, and guidelines for the various conduct of OFSP in every aspect, from taxation mechanisms to fair play of the OFSP to the fairness to users who have registered. The following are a few significant terms and conditions related to OFSP:<sup>20</sup>

1. Users under the age of eighteen will not be permitted by a member to participate in pay-to-play contest forms;
2. Users will choose their teams manually, which largely determines the contest's skill component. As a result, users won't be given the chance or choice to automatically select or fill out any component of their fantasy sports teams;
3. After a pre-set and pre-declared deadline has passed, all users will be prohibited from drafting or editing their fantasy squad;
4. A user must select a fantasy team for a contest that includes at least the

number of athletes who would start for one team in the actual sporting event, with the caveat that there must always be at least five players on a fantasy team;

5. A user is not permitted to choose more than seventy-five percent of the players who make up his or her fantasy team or squad in a single competition from a single real-world team or squad. The nearest full number must be used to round down any fractional numbers;
6. Each Member shall ensure that no player or athlete other than a real-world player or athlete may be selected for a fantasy sports team.

The Charter guarantees that the game played by its participants is entirely based on skill and does not constitute ‘gambling’. A retired Supreme Court Judge or State High Court Judge will preside over hearings before the FIFS Ombudsman to guarantee that disputes and grievances relating to OFSPs are resolved in a fair and reasonable manner. Currently, Justice A.K. Sikri presides over as the Ombudsman in India.<sup>21</sup> To be eligible for approval by the Board of Governors, the operator must receive and request a review and opinion from the FIFS Innovation Committee on the proposed competition as a ‘game of skill’ for the OFSP.

According to the Charter, Members are required to get a legal licence and permission before using any third-party intellectual property rights, including player images, videos, logos and more, on their website. Before claiming any official relationship with the governing body, a specific person or team, or a specific sporting event, members must first get a licence and approval.<sup>22</sup>

## CONSTITUTIONAL PERSPECTIVE

The Schedules in the Constitution of India (*hereinafter* referred to as the Constitution) are an addendum that the framers of the Constitution added. One of the earliest references to the Schedules was found in the Government of India Act, 1935, which had 10 Schedules. When the Constitution was eventually passed in 1949, it included 8 Schedules. The

Constitution now has 12 Schedules in all.<sup>23</sup> The Schedules of Constitution provide a list and a table that classifies and summarizes the administrative practices and regulations of the Government.

### **Seventh Schedule**

Under Article 246 read with the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution, the Parliament and State legislatures have the authority to enact laws pertaining to any issues falling within their purview. The three lists provided for the areas and subject matter of law as provided under the Seventh Schedule is discussed hereunder:

- **The Union List:** The subjects covered by the Parliament's sole legislative authority are included in the Union List. For instance, atomic energy, international relations, war and peace, citizenship, extradition, the defence of India's navy, military, air forces etc.
- **The State List:** The issues listed in this list are those for which the State Legislature alone has the authority to enact laws. Police, local government, public health and sanitation, alcoholic beverages, agriculture, water, land, fisheries, gas and gas works, markets and fairs, etc. are a few examples of this List.
- **The Concurrent List:** The third list, lists the topics for which both the Parliament and the State Legislature have the authority to enact laws. For instance, criminal law and procedure, the sale of property other than agricultural land, contracts, trusts, wrongdoing that can be brought to court, civil procedure, the admissibility of evidence, oaths, and forests, among other things. As the name suggests, the Concurrent List is subject to concurrent legislative authority held by the Union Parliament and the State Legislatures.

The Constitution gives State governments the authority to enact laws defining what constitutes unlawful gambling practises under Entry 34, read with Entry 64 of List – II of the Seventh Schedule. This suggests that, unless the Parliament uses its authority under Articles 249 or 250, only

State governments may pass legislation governing ‘betting and gambling’. Additionally, Entry 62 gives State governments the authority to pass laws governing the imposition of taxes on entertainments and amusements. The subject matter of gambling widely falls under the Entry 34, List – II of the very Seventh Schedule under the Constitution.<sup>24</sup> In other words, this indicates that the state governments have the authority to regulate betting and gambling within their jurisdictions.

Prior to adoption of the Constitution, betting and gambling related laws were accumulated under the Central government enactment *i.e.*, the Public Gambling Act of 1867 (*hereinafter* referred to as the Public Gambling Act). However, after formal adoption of the Constitution, the subject matter of gambling and betting came into the fortress of the State Legislature and therefore, many states drafted and enacted their own enactments. The state governments can decide whether or not to incorporate the provisions of the Public Gambling Act into their state legislation. Haryana, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Arunachal Pradesh, Chandigarh, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Lakshadweep, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, and Andaman and Nicobar are among the states that have incorporated the provisions of the Public Gambling Act in their State law. Other state governments, including Meghalaya, Nagaland, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, and Sikkim have passed their own gambling laws.<sup>25</sup>

As gambling has been judicially defined to include betting or wagering on games of chance, the State’s legislative authority to create legislation pertaining to ‘betting and gambling’ under the Constitution is limited to games of chance. However, the High Court of Madras in the judgement of *Junglee Games India Pvt. Ltd. & Anr. v. State of Tamil Nadu & Ors.*,<sup>26</sup> noted that:

“there is little doubt that the State has the authority under the Constitution to enact a law pertaining to betting and gambling; just as the State has due authority in this regard, among other things, in

respect to public order; sports, entertainments, and amusements; and, offences against laws with respect to any of the matters in the State List.”<sup>27</sup>

Though, skill games cannot be banned, but they can be regulated by the States under the ‘Trade and Business’ and ‘Entertainments and Amusements’ entries in the State List. While the State may have the authority to regulate skill gaming under the aforementioned Constitutional provisions, the time has come for a national law. However, there are no enabling elements that would allow for the establishment of a strong gaming legislation regime with sufficient teeth. Additionally, the grounds for using the blocking provisions under Section 69A of the Information Technology Act, 2000 (*hereinafter* referred to as the IT Act) are limited, and under Section 79 of the IT Act, blocking is only permitted in accordance with a court order or an order from a governmental entity on particular grounds.<sup>28</sup>

### **Fantasy Sports as Fundamental Freedom**

In *Rahul Nandkumar Bhardwaj v. The Director General of Police*,<sup>29</sup> the Supreme Court observed that fantasy sport is an online game of skill that involves money. In *Avinash Mehrotra v. State of Rajasthan & Ors.*,<sup>30</sup> it was held that Dream11 is entirely a skill-based game. It was also observed that gambling does not qualify as a fantasy sport. Dream11 was also accused of engaging in a commercial activity, which is protected by Article 19(1)(g) of the Constitution.

On February 14, 2022, the Karnataka High Court struck down an amendment to the Karnataka Police Act, 1963 that made running and participating in fantasy games a non-bailable offence. In *Bhavith Sheth v. State of Karnataka*,<sup>31</sup> Justice Krishna S. Dixit of the High Court of Karnataka declared the amendment to be unconstitutional, noting that the decision would allow the state government of Karnataka to pass a new law restricting gambling that excludes online fantasy gaming. It is this

distinction that deemed the Karnataka government's ban as unconstitutional.

It is pertinent to note that the 'games of skill' and 'games of chance' are distinct. When anything is designated as a skill game, it is exempt from the definition of gambling and is protected under Article 19(1)(g) in terms of trade and commerce.

The Constitution grants the States the authority to enact laws governing betting and gambling; as a result, the State laws differ. The majority of Indian States do not apply their gambling restrictions to skill gaming. While Meghalaya, Nagaland, and Sikkim have instituted licensing regimes to regulate internet gambling activity, others such as Goa have authorised legal brick-and-mortar gaming activities.

Offering skill-based games is a protected activity under Article 19(1)(g) of the Constitution, which guarantees the right to practice any profession or to engage in any occupation, trade, or business; as held by the apex court in *RMD Chamarbaugwala v. Union of India & Anr.*,<sup>32</sup> The statute prohibiting skill gaming was first overturned by the High Court of Madras in the landmark judgment of *Junglee Games India Pvt. Ltd. & Anr. v. State of Tamil Nadu & Ors.*,<sup>33</sup> observing that:

“The complete prohibitions on games of skill were unreasonable, excessive, and manifestly arbitrary, thereby falling afoul of Article 19(1)(g) of the Constitution. The court relied upon the case of *KR Lakshmanan v. State of Tamil Nadu & Anr* (1996 SCC (2) 226) in which the Supreme Court had recognized that games of skill were distinct from games of chance, and were business activities protected under Article 19(1)(g).”<sup>34</sup>

According to the Court, skilled players had the right to capitalize on their abilities and earn a living from them, and only justifiable limitations should be placed on this right. Any chance to use these skills in relation to online games played for skills was fully barred by the restriction enacted by the

State. Therefore, the restriction violated Article 19(1)(g) of the Constitution since it was arbitrary and irrational to the point of being absurd, especially in light of the Supreme Court's rulings.

## **FANTASY SPORTS AND GOVERNING REGULATION**

The Public Gambling Act is the prime governing regulation of fantasy sports in India. Section 3, 4 and 5 of the Public Gambling Act provides for penalty related to gaming-house and power to enter and search any gaming-house in India. Section 12 of the Public Gambling Act provides for the exception to apply the provisions of the law for 'any game of mere skill'. So basically, any activity or transaction made in the ambit of betting or gambling can be stated as legal if it involves usage and operation of a particular set of skills used to carry out the transaction.

The penal consequences under the Public Gambling Act are provided to curb the wrongdoers. Under Section 3, a gaming establishment's owner or occupant or manager of the establishment; or anyone who makes investments for these goals can be penalized by a fine up to two hundred rupees or an imprisonment of not more than three months. Under Section 4, in gaming establishments, it is not permissible to use dice, cards, counters, money, or other game tools; otherwise, one would face up to one month imprisonment or a fine of up to one hundred rupees. A violation of Section 7 occurs when a person is discovered within a casino and, upon being detained by a police officer, refuses to give personal information or gives false information then a fine of Rs five hundred or up to one month imprisonment is the maximum penalty. Further, according to Section 13, for using dice, playing cards, or engaging in any activity that is not a game of skill on a public street, for the purpose of profit or value; setting up birds or other animals to battle in front of people; placing a wager on such public bird or animal fights or helping someone place a wager on them; are punishable by a fine of fifty rupees or up to one month imprisonment.

On the legality of the OFSPs, the 276th, Report of the Law Commission of



India<sup>35</sup> recommended that any and all skill-based games in the state should be exempted from the ambit of illegal betting. However, this does not specify in any way that OFSP or fantasy games should qualify as a ‘game of skill’.<sup>36</sup> The OFSP are relatively a very new business model in India primarily due to the authoritarian Public Gambling Act and the state’s indirect response and policy where it provides that gambling of any form is not accepted and highly discouraged. The Courts interpret the laws as and when such questions are posed before them for discussing the legality of the OSFP enterprises. The current standing is that the OSFP are legal in India if they fall under the guidelines issued by the Supreme Court in a few judgements.<sup>37</sup> NITI Aayog, a government-run think tank, considered all judgments and concerns regarding fantasy sports to arrive to three conclusions:

- It is impossible to accurately identify whether a game is one of skill or chance using a general or specialised strategy. Therefore, when developing such platforms, differentiation should be taken into account; therefore, it is the developer’s responsibility and not of the government.
- Platforms are burdened by the divergence in regulatory standards governing fantasy sports among different states becauseand it makes compliance difficult.
- Differential regulation also makes it difficult for consumers to comply with the law, which adds to their burden.<sup>38</sup>

Thus, in order to address these problems, NITI Aayog suggested creating an industry-specific self-regulatory agency that would be subject to independent oversight. In pursuance of this recommendation, the Federation of Indian Fantasy Sports was founded in 2017.

The Telangana Gaming (Amendment) Act, 2017 was introduced to amend the Telangana Gaming Act, 1974. The object of this amendment is to ‘completely eradicate the menace of gambling. Due to its ease of access and

wide solicitation, several people, the youth in particular, are being addicted to online gaming when played for stakes etc., and this addiction is affecting various sections of society including students and women, thereby causing threat to the very public order itself'. The main point of the amendment is that the term 'cyber space' has been added to the definition of 'common gaming house' under Section 2(1)(ii) and its explanation to bring online gaming under the purview of this act. The amended explanation to Section 2(2) clarifies that wagering and betting includes 'any act of risking money on an uncertain event, including on a game of skill'. Online and electronic gambling are included in the description of 'instruments of gaming' under section 2(4), and section 3 of the Telangana Act forbids both the upkeep, operation, and usage of ordinary gaming establishments as well as online gaming. According to Section 5, all violations are 'non-bailable' and 'cognizable'. The act has zero tolerance for any type of gambling that negatively affects the financial situation and general well-being of the populace. The current piece of legislation, however, has been challenged as being violative of Articles 14, 19(1)(g) and 21 of the Constitution of India. The matter is sub-judice before the High Court of Judicature at vide Writ Petition No. 20261 of 2017 and the matter is still sub-judice.<sup>39</sup>

Tamil Nadu revised its Gaming and Police Laws Act, 1930 by passing the Tamil Nadu Gaming and Police Laws (Amendment) Act of 2021 to prohibit all games with bets, stakes, or other stakes (except for a lottery). This prohibition included pure skill games as well as games of chance. This act was invalidated by the Madras High Court in August, 2021. A blanket prohibition on skill games was found to violate Article 19 (1)(g) of the Constitution. According to the Bench, legislation that imposes such a broad ban must be seen as being excessive and disproportionate. On the other hand, it was made clear that the State legislature will be free to pass a new legislation governing online games. The State of Tamil Nadu in pursuance, passed 'Tamil Nadu Prohibition of Online Gambling and Regulation of Online Games Act, 2022' on October 19, 2022 replacing an ordinance

approved by the state cabinet on September 26, 2022 banning games,<sup>40</sup> like poker and rummy that involve wagering or betting online using computers or other communication devices, traditional gaming establishments, or the electronic transfer of monies, award prizes or payout winnings. A two-year prison sentence or a fine of not more than ten thousand rupees may be imposed on bettors under this act. The state government of Tamil Nadu highlighted Justice (Retd.) K Chandru Committee's recommendations which stated that the fastest growing kind of gambling was 'online gaming' which include internet gambling and that it was changing how gamblers engaged in the activity. Adolescents frequently create false identities and use their parents' credit cards in cyberspace, and even if one site blocks them, they could always access another. Gambling has become more and more accessible to a significant portion of the public, making it possible to gamble even during working hours. Additionally, study showed a connection between gambling and suicide attempts as the main justifications for the new law.<sup>41</sup>

Rummy was exempted from the provisions of the Kerala Gaming Act, 1960 after a notification to this effect was issued by the State Government in 1976. However, the government brought 'Online Rummy played for stakes' under the Act by issuing a notification on February 23, 2021. This notification was challenged before the Kerala High Court by four gaming companies, namely Jungle Games India Pvt. Ltd, Play Games 24x7 Pvt. Ltd, Head Digital Works Pvt. Ltd, and Gameskraft Technologies Pvt. Ltd as being violative of Article 19(1)(g) of the Constitution. The court observed that the notification was issued in relation to a game that was already exempt from the Act's provisions under Section 14A of the Kerala Gaming Act, 1930 because the game did not fall under the definition of 'gambling' or 'gaming'. The court therefore, declared the notification to be arbitrary, illegal, and in violation of Articles 14 and 19(1)(g) of the Constitution.<sup>42</sup>

Along with Sikkim, Goa is an Indian state that has legalised casinos, and is hence regarded as the nation's gaming capital. The Goa, Daman, and Diu

Public Gambling Act, 1976, which sets the state's gambling regulations, permits only land-based casinos in Five-Star hotels while including provisions for offshore casinos. The seaside state has a thriving gambling industry that six offshore casinos control.

The Public Gambling (Haryana Amendment) Bill of 2002, which was a crucial component of the second Bill, the Haryana Casino (Licensing and Control) Bill of 2002, which called for authorising casino developments in Haryana, was passed by the Haryana Assembly in 2002. In accordance with Article 200 of the Constitution, the Governor of Haryana reserved the Amendment Bill for the President's consideration. The Public Gambling Act of 1867, which applies to the State of Haryana, was amended to include section 19, with the intention of allowing casino developments as a tool for infrastructural growth, luring foreign investment, fostering tourism, and generating employment opportunities.<sup>43</sup>

The Public Gambling (Haryana Amendment) Bill of 2002 was not given presidential approval in 2005. The President followed the recommendations of numerous Ministries of the Central Government in refusing to give his assent thereto. In view of the national policy of discouraging gambling in all its forms, they are opposed to the Public Gambling (Haryana) Amendment Bill, 2002 as it seeks to defeat the very purpose of the Original law viz. the Public Gambling Act, 1867, the Ministry of Home Affairs (Centre-State Division) stated. They also said that casinos, gambling, and the betting industry, etc., may facilitate organised crime.<sup>44</sup>

The Ministry of Home Affairs distinguished the purpose and object of the Bill with the Goa, Daman and Diu Public Gambling Act, 1976. In contrast to the Haryana Amendment Bill, which would have authorised any public gambling activity as long as a licence is obtained, the Ministry claimed that the Goa Act of 1976 received the President's approval because it was passed to provide penalties for public gambling and the maintenance of common gaming establishments.<sup>45</sup>

The Sikkim Online Gaming (Regulation) Rules, 2009 makes online gambling lawful in Sikkim. Operators wishing to provide online gambling services may apply for licenses from the state government. Apart from Goa, Sikkim is the only other state with operating casinos.

The state of West Bengal offers a simple judicial directive allowing real money gambling. Section 2 (1) (b) of the West Bengal Gambling and Prize Competitions Act, 1957, expressly excludes games like poker, rummy, bridge, and sleep from the definition of gambling, serves as the legal foundation for real money games.<sup>46</sup>

## **FANTASY SPORTS AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

After highlighting the significance and appeal of OFSP in India, it is important to note that the entire fantasy sports business is subject to regulatory uncertainty. Regarding its legality, limitations on gambling and betting, or taxation, there is no specific legislation in place. Due to abrupt and enormous growth of fantasy sports, there is now more interest in its legality, specifically whether it falls within the legal definition of ‘game of skill’ or constitutes ‘betting or gambling’. Due to the fact that most fantasy sports games involve real and legal currency transactions and those are sometimes seen as being similar to gambling, there is a legal question surrounding them.

Here is an illustration. Let’s say that five participants pool their Rs.100 each to compete in a quiz based game. Will the competition be considered unlawful? No, as it is a skill-based game. Only the person with the greatest number of solutions wins. On the other hand, some card and dice games are solely dependent on chance. The law forbids using money to play these games. It has been discovered that fantasy sports games combine both skill and luck and due to the skill factor involved, betting money in these games is permitted. Applications like Dream11 contend that because cricket, or any sport, is a game of skill, making predictions or choosing a side also requires a high degree of expertise. They claim that a person cannot choose

the proper team if they are unaware of the game or the player's performance. They have a strong case, and courts have decided against such bans. The legality of Dream11 has been confirmed by the high courts of Rajasthan and Bombay.

Only a few apps have had their legality upheld by courts. There are hundreds of these apps that have not been put to the test of law. There is a chance that some of them would be breaking the law. Both the service providers and the players will be held accountable if it is determined that these games are illegal. This can be deduced on the analogy that everyone inside a physical site that is found to be hosting gambling is arrested and held accountable, and not only the property owners.

### **FANTASY SPORTS: THE WAY AHEAD**

The laws governing betting and gambling, as well as related Fantasy Sports, were derived from the antiquated Public Gambling Act, which came into effect way back in 1857. At that time, no one could have imagined that betting and gambling could exist on a national or international scale; instead, it was thought to only occur in homes, clubs, and casinos. This was not what the states or the Constitution intended. The Seventh Schedule of the Constitution, however, has matured with the introduction of internet and the rapid growth of technology.<sup>47</sup> The Schedule does not specify what happens when a state subject and a residual topic that is governed by Union legislation, such as information technology, combine. The subject of online fantasy gaming, gambling, and betting should be left to the Centre because there is not any government regulation over it in this situation.

Authentication is a major issue in the fantasy sports arena. Today, it is simple to enter the wrong address when signing up for the platform in order to participate in contests on Dream11 while residing in a state where it is prohibited like Orissa and Andhra Pradesh. Even registering for one of the gambling websites is straightforward, and there are no restrictions on it under any state law.<sup>48</sup>

On the other hand, these wildly successful online fantasy sports sites, some of which even operate internationally, face huge compliance issues due to severe disparity in state rules. Numerous courts around the country have advised state governments to investigate the issue of internet gambling and possible regulatory options. Additionally, the efficacy of various state laws to accomplish this has been questioned.<sup>49</sup>

According to an Inter-Ministerial Task Force (*hereinafter* referred to as the IMTF) established to investigate new regulations for online gaming, the Public Gambling Act, which presently regulates fantasy sports, is unable to deal with digital-based activities and the related evolving technology. In its report titled “Realising AVCG-XR Sector Potential in India- 2022” the IMTF stated that *“Since we are in the process of replacing all obsolete laws, it becomes all the more important to replace the existing laws with new legislation that will not only cover the entire gamut of technology and internet-based gaming but would also provide coverage for extraterritorial jurisdiction which is completely lacking at present.”*<sup>50</sup> The report also stated that an online gaming platform including the OFSP must not let or enable transactions made using unauthorised payment methods, as well as encourage or facilitate any money-laundering, financing for terrorism, or other illegal acts. In light of the rise in stakes, the Union Home Ministry has requested that the states and union territories take action to repeal the Public Gambling Act of 1867 and create a new law.

### **Fantasy Sports and Changing Global Stance**

Evidently, several countries like UK, Spain, France, Australia have changed their stance on gambling from being against it to enforcing gambling laws around the globe. Similar to this, recent legislations in most nations have placed more emphasis on gambling regulation than on its outright ban. A country may benefit from legalising gambling in the following ways:<sup>51</sup>

#### ***Curb Money Laundering***

One of major sources of money for evils like terrorism is gambling. When

governments outlaw gambling, the games are played covertly, and the cash traded during this transaction is known as black money. This is one of the main causes for which nations all over the world are making laws to license and regulate gambling. The authorities have the ability to monitor the agencies' gaming activities and create laws and regulations to stop any unlawful acts carried out in the name of gambling.<sup>52</sup>

### ***Employment***

A suitable management system is necessary for the operation of gaming activities. There are specialised clubs in India that employ a large number of knowledgeable individuals. By attracting young people, who use their creativity to create game applications and make money, online gaming has accelerated this trend. As a result, the gambling sector has demonstrated its great ability to provide employment possibilities.<sup>53</sup>

In many wealthy nations like China, France, etc., gambling is a lucrative industry. However, a lot of wealthy nations, including Singapore, have completely or partially banned gambling. Gambling is clearly a bad habit, but if gambling were to become legal in India, it would need to be well regulated to avoid the numerous negative impacts it has on society. Otherwise, India's socio-economic situation may suffer.

### **CONCLUSION**

“The ‘Make in India’ vision will further get a boost with a focus on “Make AI in India and Make AI work for India”. Online gaming companies can develop new AI-based advancements that can provide a first-of-its-kind experience to users.”<sup>54</sup>

As things are, there is a lot of litigation, legislation, and discussion surrounding the topic, and courts from throughout the nation are routinely involved in disputes involving the fantasy sports sector. A regulated online gambling market would result in higher state government taxes, which would be a concern for such platforms. However, such a legal framework would enable these platforms to advise and help the state government's draft legislation that regulates the gambling business. The state



government's decisions should therefore be based on consultation, debates, and interaction with the stakeholders. Evidently, the judicial approach to regulating the online gambling industry has changed significantly. Previously, courts had been pressuring state governments to regulate the virtual gaming industry, but now, the state governments have themselves been encouraged by a number of High Courts to perhaps regulate online gaming. Additionally, some states have introduced legislations to prohibit or control internet gambling.

The long-standing Public Gambling Act should be declared ineffective, as per the 276th Law Commission Report. The study makes clear that legislative intervention in the matter is necessary. Also, the centre government has urged the states and union territories to take immediate steps to repeal the Public Gambling Act and enact a new law in its place. Innovation in the sector is severely constrained in the absence of clear definitions of what counts as a game of skill or a game of chance. Even though they are becoming more powerful, unicorns like Dream11 remain at the whim of court interpretation due to the lack of well-established precedents.

If not regulated properly, young people can develop an addiction from gambling. It is extremely risky for sports enthusiasts because bets are placed on sporting events by those who believe they have an advantage because to their understanding of the activity. As a result, many people lose everything on sports gambling. It could cause widespread bankruptcy and debt among people.

In the past, self-regulation has proven to be quite effective for a variety of industries, and until a law is in place, the same may be said for Fantasy Sports. It guarantees the industry's ongoing expansion and fosters an atmosphere that is both safe and fair for both producers and consumers. The fantasy sports market online is expanding and changing every second. Self-regulation can also assist in overcoming market failure and averting negative effects on the consumer, the environment, businesses, and other industry stakeholders.

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## Whispers of Defiance: Amritsar's Tumultuous 1919

NARINDER PAL

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### Abstract

*"Whispers of Defiance: Amritsar's Tumultuous 1919" delves into the critical events surrounding the 1919 unrest in Amritsar, focusing on the Jallianwala Bagh massacre and its broader implications for India's independence movement. It examines the socio-political climate leading up to the massacre, including the impact of the Rowlatt Act and the subsequent Satyagraha protests, particularly in Punjab, where local leaders and ordinary citizens played key roles in resisting colonial rule. By analyzing historical documents, eyewitness accounts, and contemporary analyses, the paper highlights how the massacre, which resulted in hundreds of civilian deaths, sparked nationwide outrage and galvanized the independence movement. The study also explores the repressive measures that followed, including Martial Law, and the long-term impact of these events on the Indian struggle for freedom, offering a comprehensive view of the resistance spirit that fueled the eventual dismantling of British rule in India.*

**Keywords:** Jallianwala Bagh Massacre, Amritsar 1919, Indian Independence Movement, Colonial Resistance, British Colonial Rule, Indian Nationalism, Civil Disobedience.

### Research Methodology

This study employs a historical research methodology, utilizing primary and secondary sources, including scholarly articles, books, and contemporary analyses. The research involves qualitative analysis to understand the socio-political context, the events of the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, and its aftermath. Additionally, the paper integrates narrative analysis to highlight the voices of resistance and their impact on the Indian independence movement.

## **Objectives**

The objective of this paper is to analyze the socio-political and economic conditions that led to the Jallianwala Bagh massacre in 1919, focusing on the impact of the Rowlatt Act, the Satyagraha protests, and the broader discontent in Punjab under British colonial rule. It seeks to examine the immediate and long-term consequences of the massacre, including the imposition of martial law, the repressive measures like the "Crawling Order," and their psychological and social impact on the Indian population. Additionally, the study aims to explore how these events galvanized the Indian independence movement, transforming it into a mass struggle against colonial rule and reshaping the Anglo-Indian relationship.

## **Introduction**

The year 1919 stands as a pivotal moment in India's fight for independence, with Amritsar serving as its focal point. The Jallianwala Bagh massacre on April 13, 1919, became a defining event that dramatically altered the nature of British rule in India. The massacre, which followed the introduction of the oppressive Rowlatt Act, ignited widespread outrage and stirred a massive wave of resistance throughout the nation. The Rowlatt Act, which extended emergency wartime measures into peacetime, allowed the British to imprison anyone suspected of sedition without trial, severely limiting civil rights and inflaming nationalist sentiment. Against this backdrop, the mass execution at Jallianwala Bagh emerged as a symbol of British tyranny and injustice.

On that tragic day, thousands of unarmed Indians had gathered at Jallianwala Bagh to peacefully protest the Rowlatt Act and demand the release of their leaders. Without warning, General Reginald Dyer ordered his troops to open fire on the crowd, resulting in the deaths of hundreds of men, women, and children. This brutal action sent shockwaves around the world and exposed the violent realities of British colonial rule. This paper examines the immediate and long-term consequences of the massacre,

highlighting the resistance movements that emerged in its wake.

### **Punjab in Rowlatt Satyagraha**

Gandhi, after returning to India, toured the nation but was unable to visit Punjab. Although he wanted to meet Dr. Satyapal, circumstances prevented this. He was arrested at Palwal and sent back to Bombay. However, Gandhi did not lose hope and sent a message to Punjabis through Swami Shraddhanand to remain tolerant. Gandhi shared a short report in *Satyagrahi*: II after his release, commenting, "Serious disturbances have occurred at Lahore and Amritsar owing to the deportation of Drs. Kitchlew and Satyapal" (Gandhi, 1919).

In the capital itself, active opposition to the Rowlatt Bills had started early after their publication in the *Gazette of India* on January 18, 1919. The Bills were sent to a Select Committee on February 10, but a meeting had already taken place on February 4 at the Bradlaugh Hall, organized by the local "Indian Association," with Mr. Duni Chand serving as the Secretary. On March 1, Mr. Gandhi issued the terms of the Satyagraha vow to the press and inaugurated his campaign of "civil disobedience to laws." On March 9, another protest meeting took place at the Bradlaugh Hall, where Dr. Kitchlew from Amritsar and several others, including Pandit Rambhraj of Lahore, spoke. The meeting was chaired by the Honourable Mr. Fazl-i-Husain, who testified that the principle of passive resistance was not well received by the majority of the educated classes in Lahore. He also mentioned that, to the best of his knowledge, no one in Lahore had ever taken the Satyagraha vow. The resolution passed at this meeting was drawn "with the object of not taking Gandhi's vow of passive resistance." Its terms were "that in the event of these Bills being passed into law, in spite of the unanimous opposition afforded by communities of all shades of opinion, the Indian public will be justified in having resort to such forms of passive resistance as they can eventually decide upon" (Hunter Commission Report, 1920).

The Civil and Military Gazette also reported on the reactions of the masses to Gandhi's call for Satyagraha. The agitation followed a double line of action: direct criticism of the Act by means of public speeches and publications and the initiation of the threatened movement of passive resistance. The latter movement was ushered in by a demonstration consisting of the observance of a day of fasting and the closing of shops and places of business. Such a demonstration was not in itself illegal, but there is ample evidence to prove that in more than one place, those locally responsible for its organization overstepped the limits of lawful persuasion and resorted to direct interference with the business of many who were not interested in the movement and to forcible obstruction of traffic in the public streets (Civil and Military Gazette, 1919).

### **Amritsar: The Epicenter of Unrest**

In 1919, Amritsar was the second-most important city in Punjab after Lahore, not only as a major religious center but also as a thriving commercial hub. It was the economic heart of northern India, its prosperity derived from trade rather than agriculture. By the second decade of the twentieth century, political awareness had begun to grow among the people of Punjab. The Indian National Congress had decided to hold its next session in Amritsar in 1919, which heightened the city's prominence in the nationalist struggle. The city's central role in both agitation and unrest had unique causes. Amritsar was a key distribution point for piece goods in northern India, and traders in this sector, particularly those with Marwari connections, had suffered due to wartime disruptions. Additionally, Amritsar was home to a sizable community of Kashmiri Muslims, who had migrated to the city in the early 19th century due to famine and economic hardships in Kashmir (Datta, 1967).

Amritsar's civil lines area was inhabited by the European elite, who had established banks, schools, hospitals, and other institutions, contributing to the colonial infrastructure. The oppressive Defense of India Act (1915), which allowed the British to suppress civil liberties, had created a climate



of fear and resentment. In late 1917, Justice Sidney A.T. Rowlatt was appointed to investigate unrest in India and recommend new legislation, culminating in the passage of the controversial Rowlatt Act. The act was seen as a direct attack on Indian freedoms and led to widespread protests and unrest, further exacerbating tensions between the Indian populace and the colonial authorities (Draper, 1981).

In response to the Rowlatt Act, Mahatma Gandhi called for a non-violent Satyagraha (civil disobedience) movement, which was embraced by local leaders in Amritsar. However, the British authorities, alarmed by the rising tide of nationalist sentiment, banned key leaders like Dr. Satyapal and Dr. Kitchlew from delivering public speeches. The Satyagraha campaign, initially planned for March 30, was later postponed to April 6. On that day, a general strike (hartal) was observed across Punjab, with people of all communities—Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs—coming together in a unified protest against the British. The show of solidarity among the various religious and ethnic groups alarmed the colonial authorities, who feared the potential for a large-scale uprising. On April 9, Hindu and Muslim groups organized a joint Ram Navami procession as part of the protests, further escalating tensions. The local press, like *The Tribune*, noted the unity among the communities and warned of growing unrest (Ralhan, 1994).

### **The Jallianwala Bagh Massacre**

On April 10, the news that Gandhi had been banned from entering Punjab further stoked the already volatile situation. Tensions reached a boiling point when the British authorities deported Dr. Satyapal and Dr. Kitchlew. This action triggered a wave of protests throughout Amritsar, with crowds gathering at Aitchison Park and marching towards the Deputy Commissioner's house with a demand to free the leaders. The crowd's defiance led to clashes with the police, resulting in the first fatalities of the day. Riots broke out in the city, with mobs attacking government property, including the National Bank, and sabotaging infrastructure like telegraph lines and railway stations. European targets were specifically singled out,

with several foreign nationals being attacked, and bank buildings were set alight (Bakshi, 1998).

By the evening of April 10, the city descended into chaos. The destruction continued overnight, and British officials, including the Deputy Commissioner, feared the situation was spiraling out of control. In response, the authorities called in military reinforcements, and General Reginald Dyer arrived in Amritsar on April 11 to restore order. He assumed command and quickly took control of the city's administration, using harsh measures to suppress the unrest. On April 12, Dyer's troops began arresting individuals they deemed suspicious, while the population was subjected to a regime of terror (Malaviya, 1920).

On April 13, General Dyer ordered a brutal crackdown on a gathering at Jallianwala Bagh, where thousands had assembled for a peaceful protest. Without prior warning or any attempt to disperse the crowd peacefully, Dyer and his troops opened fire on the unarmed men, women, and children. The massacre lasted for hardly ten minutes, during which over 1,650 rounds of ammunition were fired. Officially, 379 people were reported dead, with over a thousand others wounded, though many believe the actual number of victims was much higher. The crowd was trapped in the enclosed space of Jallianwala Bagh, and many were killed or injured as they attempted to flee through the narrow exits, unable to escape the relentless gunfire. The massacre became a defining moment in India's fight for independence, symbolizing the brutal lengths to which the British colonial authorities were willing to go to maintain control over their empire (Wagner, 2019).

### **Martial Law in Amritsar**

After the tragic events of the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, the British authorities swiftly implemented martial law in the disturbed areas of Punjab. Initially, martial law was enforced in Amritsar on April 15, 1919, with other areas following shortly after. By April 16, Gujranwala was also under martial law, Gujrat on April 19, and Lyallpur by April 24 (Tariq Ali,

2019). These measures were part of the colonial government's response to quell unrest and assert control over the region.

However, before the formal declaration of martial law, on April 13, Amritsar was subjected to the Prevention of Seditious Meetings Act. While martial law had not yet been formally confirmed, this act laid the groundwork for further repression. On that day, an armored car followed by another vehicle carrying police officers, led by a duggiwalla (a person who made public announcements), was sent to the city. They declared Amritsar a "proclaimed area" under the Seditious Meetings Act, signaling the beginning of intense state repression. Authorities were determined not only to quash any remaining resistance but to humiliate the Indian population into submission (Wagner, 2019).

The British were not satisfied with merely imposing martial law. Their objective was to demoralize the Indian population through a series of harsh and degrading orders that aimed to instill fear of retribution for any anti-government activities. One of the most notorious of these measures was the "Crawling Order," issued in Amritsar. This order required Indian men to crawl on all fours in certain streets as a form of punishment and humiliation. Anyone who did not obey faced physical punishment. Other punitive measures included forcing individuals to perform menial tasks such as sweeping the streets and confiscating goods and resources from the local population. These measures were meant to break the spirit of the people and reinforce British control through fear (Wagner, 2019).

The "Crawling Order" became infamous, particularly in areas like Kacha Kaurianwala Khu in Amritsar, where the public was forced to crawl on their bellies. Soldiers enforced the order strictly, and even those attempting to stand or lift their knees were met with blows from rifle butts. The order was enforced with such severity that even a blind beggar was reportedly beaten for failing to crawl properly. This act of cruelty, along with the widespread punishment of civilians, reflected the vindictive and dehumanizing nature of colonial rule (Wagner, 2019).

The orders were not only physically but psychologically disturbing, as entire communities in Amritsar were subjected to terror. The city was under a constant state of fear. Women, who were often confined to their homes due to the presence of soldiers, faced significant hardships as well. One account described the ordeal of a woman who was forced to remove her purdah (veil) and reveal her face to soldiers. She was threatened with sexual violence if she did not comply. This was one of many instances of women being violated and humiliated during the martial law period, further compounding the trauma that the population endured (O'Dwyer, 1920).

The social fabric of Amritsar disintegrated under the strain of martial law. The normal functioning of the city was paralyzed. Basic services, such as waste collection and sanitation, were suspended, causing widespread filth and a deteriorating public health situation. Soldiers used wells as latrines, further polluting essential water sources. The once vibrant city had turned into a dark, oppressive environment where people lived in constant fear of arrest, torture, and humiliation. Those who were caught by the authorities and imprisoned faced horrific conditions. Prisoners were often tortured, starved, and chained, with some subjected to cruel forms of physical abuse such as being tied to trees or forced to endure excruciating physical positions (Verghese, 1967).

One of the most chilling accounts of torture involved a man who was forced to confess to a crime he did not commit. He was subjected to physical abuse and humiliation until he admitted guilt, under duress, for a crime he had not committed. These methods of torture were not isolated incidents but part of a broader strategy to instill fear and control the population. The British authorities used martial law not just as a means to restore order but as a tool for asserting absolute power over the Indian people through brutality (Nehru, 1946).

The repercussions of these actions were felt far beyond the immediate aftermath of the massacre and martial law. Many of the British officers involved in the repression, including General Dyer, demonstrated an utter

disregard for the humanity of the Indian people. The repressive measures, including public humiliation and physical violence, became emblematic of the long history of colonial oppression. These actions only deepened the resentment and anger among the Indian population, fueling the nationalist movement and further alienating the colonial government from the people of India.

As martial law continued until June 6, 1919, it left an indelible mark on the psyche of the Indian populace. Jawaharlal Nehru, in his autobiography, describes this period as one of "long horror and terrible indignity," highlighting the extensive suffering endured by ordinary Indians (Nehru, 1946). The legacy of the Jallianwala Bagh massacre and the subsequent repression became a turning point in India's struggle for independence, galvanizing the population and intensifying the call for self-rule.

### **Conclusion and Key Findings**

The Jallianwala Bagh massacre in Amritsar cannot be called a sudden occurrence. Something of the kind was bound to happen as the socio-economic and political circumstances for such an outbreak had existed for a long time. At least in the four years of the First World War, it had been made clear that the Indians and the British were at opposite ends of the spectrum, and even though the Indians had suffered a lot during the war, the British were still not ready to give the Indians their due. For many years, Punjab had been a disenchanted province of the British imperial power. The disenchantment had grown since World War I when the whole of India, but most especially Punjab, suffered drastically during wartime. The majority of the men and material that went into the war effort from India were from Punjab. When the whole of the British civil and military machinery was engaged in the war effort, there was no thought given to the sufferings of the Indians or the Punjabis who were involved in a war that was not their own. Due to this indifference of the civil and military British establishment, people suffered economically. This later impacted the political condition of the country. In this too, most notably, Punjab was subjected to years of

political unrest. Amritsar, where the crisis occurred, is one of the principal cities of Punjab. The British brutality in Amritsar marks an acceleration of the struggle against the ruling country, and it is not to be disputed that the massacre is a turning point in modern Indian history.

The massacre changed the course of the anti-imperialist struggle in India and criticized the British government's policies, governance, and rule openly for the first time. The incident affected the minds of the people very deeply. Their psychology was changed, and their attitudes and perceptions regarding the rule of the British Empire were changed forever. Earlier, Punjab, which was crushed under the yoke of the British, was now awakened fully and was ready to openly challenge the rule and authority of the foreigners in their own way under nationalist leadership. The people challenged the authority and rule of the powerful British Empire. Later, revolutionary movements also started in Punjab and received massive support from the people. The Babbar Akali Movement and later the Nau Jawan Sabha, under the leadership of Bhagat Singh and Sukhdev, turned to revolutionary terrorism as a political method of protest. The Jallianwala Bagh massacre transformed the Anglo-Indian relationship and forever shattered the tradition of loyalty and respect that Indians felt for the British. Even after facing so many tortures, the people did not give up, and the whole event of 1919 brought a new turn in the history of Indian politics. As Nigel Collett says, the stain on the British government from the Jallianwala Bagh massacre did not allow them to leave India with honor in 1947 (Collett, 2005).

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## Urban Growth in Haryana: An Overview

KULDEEP, SMITA BHUTANI

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### Abstract

*In recent decades, Haryana has witnessed significant urban growth, driven by a confluence of factors such as economic development, industrialization, infrastructural improvements, and increasing rural-to-urban migration. These factors have contributed to urban concentration, expansion of large cities, changes in land use, and a shift in organizational and governance patterns from rural to metropolitan models. From 1971 to 2011, the proportion of urban residents in Haryana increased substantially, from 17.66% in 1971 to 34.88% in 2011. This growth is not solely attributable to the increase in the urban population; it also reflects a rise in the number of towns and an expansion of their territorial boundaries. The urban growth comprises of three basic components: Natural increase (addition made by excess of births over deaths), net in migration, and reclassification. Reclassification refers to changes in the urban population resulting from the creation of new towns or adjustments in the territorial boundaries of existing towns. This paper highlights the pattern of urbanization at tehsil level and dynamics of urban growth in Haryana by focusing on the role of various components of urban growth.*

**Keywords:** Urban, urban growth, territorial jurisdiction, spatial pattern, Tehsil

### Introduction

Urban growth refers to the rise in the population of urban areas over a specific period. This growth is driven by social, economic, and political factors that contribute to urban concentration, the expansion of large cities, changes in land use, and the shift from rural to metropolitan patterns of organization and governance. The urban growth comprises of three basic components: Natural



increase (addition made by excess of births over deaths), net in migration, and reclassification. Reclassification refers to changes in the urban population resulting from the creation of new towns or adjustments in the territorial boundaries of existing towns (Bhagat, 2004).

In developing countries, urban population growth is primarily driven by natural increase rather than migration. At the early stages of development, when urbanization levels are low and both rural and urban natural increase rates are moderately high, net migration plays a more significant role in urban population growth compared to natural increase. As urbanization progresses to an intermediate stage, natural increase becomes the dominant factor. However, at later stages, when urbanization is high and natural increase rates are low, the balance may shift, with net migration becoming the primary contributor to urban population growth (Bhagat, R. 2004).

### **Aims and Objectives**

To analysis the spatial pattern of urbanization at tehsil level in Haryana and assess the relative contributions of components of urban growth.

**Table-1**  
**Trends in Urbanization in Haryana**

<b>Census year</b>	<b>Total No. of UAs/Towns</b>	<b>Total Urban Population</b>	<b>Percentage of Urban Population</b>	<b>Decennial Growth Percent</b>
1971	61	1772959	17.67	----
1981	77	2827387	22.0	59.47
1991	94	4054744	24.6	43.41
2001	106	6115304	28.9	50.82
2011	154	8842103	34.79	44.25

**Source-** Census of India, General Population Tables, Haryana 2011

## Methodology

The growth rate of urban population during a census decade was calculated by subtracting the urban population of the earlier census year from that of the later census year, dividing the difference by the urban population of the earlier census year, and then multiplying by 100. This formula provided the growth rate of the urban population as a percentage. To analyze the trends in urban population growth, the urban increment was broken down into various components: net migration, the addition of new towns, natural increase and changes in the territorial jurisdiction of existing towns.

The contribution of new towns to the urban increase was calculated by adding the populations of all towns that had been designated as urban areas during the previous decade.

The contribution to urban increment due to changes in territorial jurisdiction was calculated by first determining the increase in urban area. This was done by subtracting the municipal area of common towns (which includes all towns except the newly designated and declassified towns) from the municipal area of the previous census decade. The resulting increase in urban area due to territorial change was then multiplied by the state's urban density to determine the increase in urban population from the change in territorial jurisdiction.

The contribution of natural increase to the urban increase was determined by subtracting the average death rate of the decade from the average birth rate of the same period (National Institute of Urban Affairs, 1988). To calculate the average death and birth rates for a given decade, such as 2001-2011, three-year moving averages were computed for the years 2001- 2003 through to 2010-2012. The annual urban birth and death rates were obtained from the Sample Registration Bulletin.

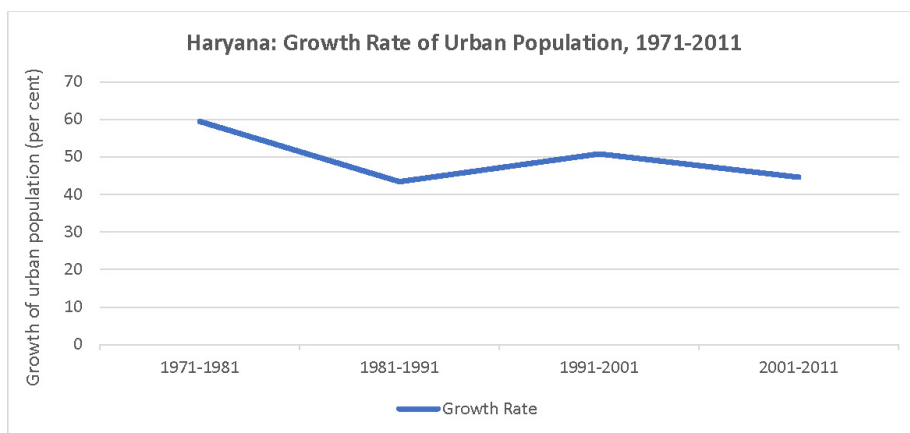
The contributions of the components mentioned above were summed up and subtracted from the total urban population increment to calculate the contribution from net migration. Finally, the absolute increase of the various components were expressed as percentages by dividing each by the total

increment and multiplying by 100. This gives a detailed understandings of dynamic nature of urban development in towns.

### **Trends of Urban Growth and Its Components: 1971-2011**

From the various components of urban growth between 1971-1981, the highest share, 36.63%, came from the addition of new towns. Total of sixteen new towns were added during this period. The contribution of net migration was 31.13% in the urban population increase, and it was second major contribution in this decade. The crude birth rate was 31.4 per thousand, while the crude death rate was 7.2 per thousand, resulting in a natural growth rate of 24.2 per thousand. This natural increase accounted for 21.78% of the total growth in the urban population. Territorial expansion of existing towns contributed 10.46% to the growth and this came after the expansion of twenty-eight existing towns, which incorporated adjacent rural areas.

**Fig.1**



**Source:** Computed from Census of India, Series 4, General Population Tables, TableA-4,2011; Census of India, Series 4 Haryana. Part XII-B District Census Handbook, 2011

Haryana experienced a notable shift in the composition of its urban growth during the decade of 1981-1991. Again, highest contribution was recorded by new towns in the growth of urban population. A total of thirteen new towns emerged in 1991, which contributed 49.1 per cent to the urban growth, which was 36.63 in 1971-1981. Between 1981 and 1991, the crude birth rate in Haryana decreased from 31.4 per thousand to 27.5 per thousand. Similarly,

the crude death rate saw a reduction from 7.2 per thousand to 6.9 per thousand. As a result, the natural growth rate of the population declined from 24.2 per thousand to 20.6 per thousand during this period. (Table 1.4). Thus, the contribution of natural increase to urban growth was 23.09%, which showed an increase from the previous decade. This increase occurred despite the decline in the natural growth rate, as it was counterbalance by the decrease in other relative components of urban growth during the same period. The share of net migration in the urban population decreased during the 1981-1991 period, reducing to 18.75% from 31.13% in the previous decade and this stands as a third major contributor to the growth. Between 1981 and 1991, twenty-two towns experienced an extension of their territorial boundaries, contributing 9.6 per cent to the urban population increase. The number of towns which experienced territorial expansion was smaller compared to the previous decade, and as a result, their contribution to urban growth also decreased slightly during this period.

**Table 2**

**Haryana: Components of Incremental Urban Population, 1971-2011**

S. No.	Component of Urban Growth	1971-1981	1981-1991	1991-2001	2001-2011
1	Natural Increase	21.78	23.09	17.65	15.07
2	New Towns	36.63	49.1	36.44	55.29
3	Territorial Expansion of Existing Towns	10.46	9.06	9.04	9.22
4	Net Migration	31.13	18.75	36.87	20.42

**Source:** Computed from Registrar General of India, SRS Bulletin, Various Volumes; Census of India, Town Directory, Haryana, 1971, 1981, 1991, 2001, 2011; Census of India, Series 4, General Population Tables, Table A-4, 2011; Census of India, Series 4 Haryana. Part XII-B District Census Handbook, 2011.

Haryana witnessed a completely different scenario in terms of, the relative contribution of various components to the growth of urban population in 1991-2001. The contribution of net migration in urban growth was highest among all the components in this decade. Contribution of net-migration got almost doubled from 18.75 per cent in 1991 to 36.87 percent in 2001. On the other hand, the contribution of natural increase decreased to 17.65% due to a decline in the natural growth rate of the population, which dropped from 20.6 per thousand to 17.4 per thousand. This decline in the natural growth rate was primarily attributed to a reduction in the birthrate, which fell from 27.5 per thousand to 23 per thousand, alongwith as light decrease in the crude death rate, which dropped from 6.9 per thousand to 6.2 per thousand during the 1991-2001 period. (Table 2). The addition of twelve new towns contributed to 36.44% to the urban population increase during this period. There were thirty-one towns which witnessed a territorial extension as well and contributed 9.04 per cent to the urban growth.

**Table 3**

**Haryana: Rate of Natural Increase of Urban Population 1971-2011**

Sr. No.	Decade	Crude Birth Rate	Crude Death Rate	Rate of Natural Increase
1	1971-1981	31.4	7.2	24.2
2	1981-1991	27.5	6.9	20.6
3	1991-2001	23	6.2	17.4
4	2001-2011	19.8	5.6	14.2

**Source:** Computed from Registrar General of India, SRS Bulletin, Various Volumes

The contribution of various components of urban growth in the last decade of 2001- 2011, revealed that, the share of urban growth due to the addition of

new towns was 55.29%, the highest among all contributors. This increase was attributed by the incorporation of forty-eight new towns into the urban area during this period. The rate of natural growth during this period was the lowest among all four decades, leading to the lowest relative contribution of natural increase. The crude birth rate dropped from 23 per thousand to 19.8 per thousand, while the crude death rate fell from 6.2 per thousand to 5.6 per thousand. As a result, the natural growth rate decreased from 17.4 per thousand to 14.2 per thousand. The contributions from net migration and the territorial expansion of existing towns also declined. The contributions from migration and territorial changes to urban growth were 20.42% and 9.22%, respectively (Table 3).

### **Spatial Patterns of Urbanization in Haryana 2011 (Tehsil Level)**

The spatial patterns of urbanization in Haryana at the Tehsil level in 2011 reveal a complex and diversified urban landscape influenced by various socio-economic factors and infrastructural developments. In 2011, urbanization was unevenly distributed across the state, with certain tehsils exhibiting high levels of urban concentration while others remained predominantly rural. On the one hand Gurugram had 93.11% urban population on the other side Ballabhgarh had only 1.99% urban population. Out of total of 74 tehsils, 7 tehsils had more than 50 percent urban population. Major urban centers like Gurugram (93.11%), Faridabad, (89.95%), Ambala (67.14%) and Panipat (65.10) emerged as significant urban agglomerations, driven by their proximity to the National Capital Region (NCR) and their prime location on important ancient route (NH 44) and strong industrial and service sectors. These areas attracted substantial investments and experienced rapid population growth, transforming them into key economic hubs.

Conversely, tehsils in the western and southern parts of Haryana, such as Sirsa, Fatehabad, and Mahendragarh, showed lower levels of urbanization. These areas remained more reliant on agriculture and less integrated into the industrial and commercial networks that spurred urban growth in other parts

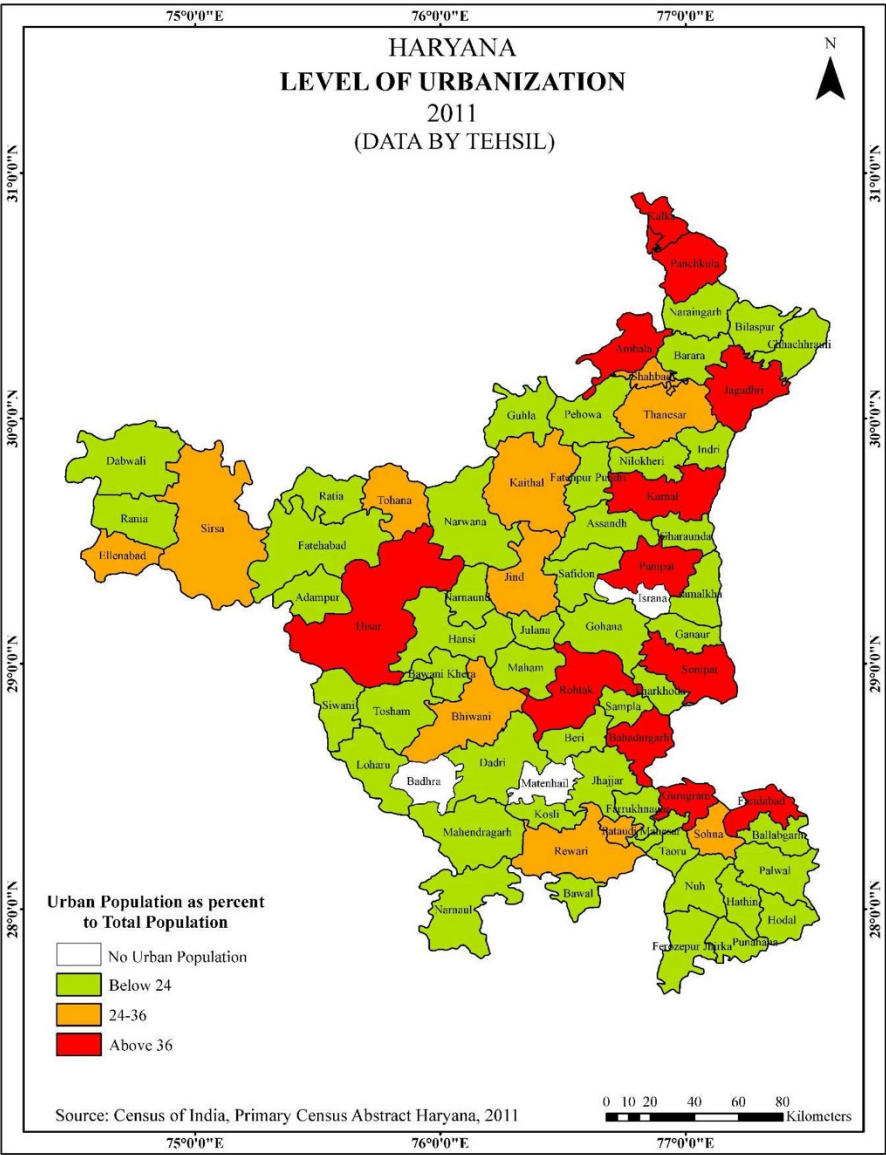
of the state. The disparity in urbanization levels can be attributed to differences in economic opportunities, infrastructure development, and connectivity. Tehsils with better access to major highways, railways, and other transportation networks were more likely to experience urban growth, as these infrastructural elements facilitated the movement of goods, services, and people.

Tehsil level data will be grouped in these Four categories

- i. Areas with high level of Urbanization (More than 36 percent)
- ii. Areas with Moderate level of Urbanization (Between 24 and 36 percent)
- iii. Areas with Low level of Urbanization (less than 24 percent)
- iv. Areas with No Urban Population

#### **Areas with High Levels of Urbanization:**

Tahsils with high degree of urbanization are categorized those areas where the urban population was more than 36 percent of the total population. It included twelve tehsils out of seventy-four. These tehsils have a significant proportion of their population living in urban areas, reflecting extensive urban development and infrastructure. Leading this category is Gurgaon with a remarkable 93.11%, followed by Faridabad at 89.95%. Ambala (67.14%), Panipat (65.10%), Panchkula (60.86%), Rohtak (55.17%), Jagadhri (51.05%), having high degree of urbanization. Other tehsils in this group include Sonipat (46.04%), Karnal (45.99%), Bahadurgarh (44.01%), Kalka (43.98%), and Hisar (39.65%) had more than 36% urban population. Tehsils of Gurugram, Faridabad and Bahadurgarh experienced very high degree of urbanization because they are part of NCR and very close proximity to Delhi and their higher level of industrial and commercial development.



Panchkula have high urbanization due to its development as an administrative town, in some last decades after establishing various state department’s offices and its nearness to the State’s Capital, Chandigarh. Ambala, Panipat, Sonipat, Karnal, also showing high degree of urbanization due to located along national highway 44 has played the most dominant role in providing an impetus to industrial and commercial activities. High level of urbanization in



tahsil Panipat is due to it is an Historic town and also an industrial planned city which is famous by the names “City of Weavers” And “Textile City”. These areas are likely major economic and administrative centers, benefiting from substantial investments in industrial and service sectors, enhanced connectivity, and comprehensive urban amenities.

#### **Areas with Moderate Levels of Urbanization (Between 24% and 36%):**

Tahsils with 24 to 36 percent of the population lived in urban areas were classified as having a moderate level of urbanization. Among the 74 tahsils in the state, only twelve exhibited a moderate degree of urbanization. Tehsils in this category exhibit a balanced mix of urban and rural characteristics, indicating a transition phase in urban development. This group includes Bhiwani (35.41%), Jind (35.15%), Pataudi (34.43%), Shahbad (32.73%), Sohna (32.58%), Rewari (32.15%), Thanesar (31.78%), Palwal (31.69%), Sirsa (28.53%), Ellenabad (27.69%), Tohana (27.17%), and Kaithal (25.48%). Bhiwani, Jind, Rewari, Thanesar, Sirsa, Kaithal these tehsils are experiencing growth because they are the district headquarters which performed administrative functions and some of them are ancient urban centres. Urban growth of Ellenabad is moderate because it is an historic and mandi town. Sohna, Pataudi and Palwal are part of NCR and improved infrastructure and gradual urbanization, making them emerging centers of economic activity. Some of these areas are essentially expanded villages, with only a few having organized mandis. However, they largely remained unaffected by the town- forming processes that involve the influx of labor and capital into urban areas.

#### **Areas with Low Levels of Urbanization (Less than 24%):**

Tahsils where the urban population accounted for less than 24 percent of the total population were classified as having a low degree of urbanization. A total of forty-seven tahsils fell into this category, and these low-urbanization areas were distributed across the entire state. They include Hodal (23.08%), Hansi (22.43%), Nilokheri (21.19%), Ratia (20.69%), Pehowa (20.59%),

Manesar (20.11%), Gharaunda (20.10%), Guhla (19.95%), Dabwali (19.59%), Jhajjar (19.23%), Siwani (19.11%), Gohana (17.66%), Narnaul (17.53%), Adampur (17.37%), Ganaur (17.21%), Taoru (17.15%), Sampla (16.61%), Narwana (16.29%), Bawani Khera (15.97%), Safidon (15.90%), Julana (15.71%), Kharkhoda (15.57%), Dadri (14.66%), Rania (14.30%), Bilaspur (14.24%), Fatehabad (14.19%), Fatehpur Pundri (14.12%), Naraingarh (13.54%), Samalkha (12.99%), Bawal (12.90%), Punahana (12.79%), Narnaund (12.24%), Barara (12.15%), Assandh (11.63%), Indri (10.76%), Ferozepur Jhirka (10.53%), Mahendragarh (10.42%), Beri (10.23%), Maham (10.09%), Farrukhnagar (10.02%), Loharu (8.72%), Tosham (8.13%), Kosli (7.83%), Nuh (7.66%), Chhachhrauli (6.05%), and Hathin (5.36%), Ballabgarh (1.99%). These tehsils have a predominantly rural character with limited urban development. These areas might face challenges such as lesser access to urban amenities and slower economic development. As a part of NCR some towns (big industrial and commercial hub) in the surrounding hinterland experienced a shadow effect, leading to low urbanization levels in the neighboring tahsils. Many towns in these low urbanized tahsils were small towns, with populations below 20,000, and their economies were primarily based on local market and mandis. The growth potential of these towns was constrained by the absence of diversification in industry and economic activities.

### **Areas with Nourban Population**

There are three tehsils with no urban population in Haryana and these tehsils are entirely rural with no urban characteristics. They include, Israna, Badhra, and Matenhail. These areas are characterized by agricultural dominance and lack of significant urban infrastructure. It also highlights the necessity for targeted development initiatives to foster balanced regional growth.

### **Conclusion**

The detailed analysis of relative contribution of various components to urban growth in Haryana from 1971 to 2011 indicates that the percentage share of

new towns in the increase of urban population was consistently the highest contributor in each decade (Table 3). Net migration was the second major important factor driving urban increase between 1971 and 2001, although its contribution to urban growth declined during the 1981-1991 period. The share of urban growth due to the territorial extension of existing towns remained relatively stable around 9 per cent, except during 1971-1981, when it accounted for 10.46 per cent. The contribution of natural increase to urban growth decreased over all the decades since 1971, with the only exception being during the 1981-1991 decade it was increased by 1.31 per cent.

It was observed that, new towns emerged as the largest contributor to the increase in urban population, followed by net migration. It was only during the decade 1981-1991 that the contribution made by natural increase to the urban increase was exceeded by the share of net migration. Between 1971 and 2011, the role of territorial extension has been consistent.

The map of Haryana's level of urbanization in 2011, categorized by tehsil, reveals distinct patterns of urban development across the state. This map highlights the varied urban landscape and the focus areas for balanced regional growth in Haryana. The variations in urbanization patterns at the tahsil level reflect the influence of numerous factors. **Locational Factors:** Proximity to national highways, National Capital region (NCR), state and national capitals headquarter, and highly urbanized urban centres, plays a significant role in shaping urban growth. **Developmental factors:** Agro-industrialization, the growth of mandi towns, and the expansion of industrial, commercial, and infrastructural developments contribute to spatial differences in urbanization levels. **Economic and Administrative Characteristics:** The dominant economic activities and the civic or administrative status of urban areas are crucial in determining their level of urbanization. **Government Policies:** public investments in infrastructure in industrially backward districts, and the establishment of large-scale industries have a considerable impact on urban development and growth. Together, these factors create distinct urbanization patterns across different tahsils.

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# Comparative Politics in a Changing World: Key Issues and Critical Debates

KESHAB CHANDRA RATHA

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## Abstract

*Comparative politics is a dynamic field that examines the interplay of politics, economics, society, and culture in a rapidly changing world. It provides insights into how political systems evolve and adapt in the 21st century, focusing on challenges like globalization, populism, and state capacity. Comparative politics is vital for understanding the evolution of political systems, addressing common challenges, and providing insights into governance and public life dynamics across countries. Global trade, capital flows, and digital economy have heightened interconnectedness, necessitating comparative politics to consider how economic decisions in one country impact others. In recent years, social movements advocating for gender equality, racial justice, LGBTQ+ rights, and indigenous rights have transformed political discourse around the world. These movements have raised questions about representation, inclusion, and the intersection of politics and identity. The global democracy landscape is a significant global political issue, with recent democratic backsliding in countries like Hungary, Poland, Turkey, and Brazil. By offering a comprehensive exploration of the key issues and critical debates in the field, this paper aims to provide students, scholars, and practitioners with a deeper understanding of the forces shaping the political world today and in the future.*

**Key Words:** Comparison, Politics, Methodological Integration, Global Dynamics, and Democratic Governance

## Introduction

Comparative Politics is a subdiscipline of political science that analyses the

political systems, structures, processes, and behaviours of other countries and regions. In a progressively interconnected world, the subject has developed to encompass not only conventional studies of governance and statecraft but also the complications arising from globalisation, technological advancements, and changing power relations. As global political institutions encounter novel problems and opportunities, scholars and politicians are engaging in pivotal discussions that redefine our comprehension of political existence.

The study of Comparative Politics has evolved to be more dynamic, interdisciplinary, and globally focused. Critical themes include the rise of populism, the regression of democracies, the effects of globalisation on state sovereignty, the influence of non-state actors, and the ramifications of climate change on governance are central to current study. The proliferation of authoritarianism, the conflict between nationalism and regional integration, and the swift progression of technology affecting political decision-making are topics of vigorous debate.

This evolving environment prompts essential discussions regarding the essence of political authority, citizenship, identity, and the future of democracy. Academics must interrogate established paradigms while formulating new theoretical frameworks that more accurately reflect the changing political dynamics of the 21st century. Comparative Politics functions as both a framework for comprehending political systems and a method for tackling pressing global issues, including inequality, migration, environmental sustainability, and human rights protection.

Comparative Politics offers unique insights into how states and societies adapt, resist, and innovate in response to change by analysing significant political phenomena throughout many regions of the world. The evolution of political systems renders the study of Comparative Politics a vital subject for comprehending the factors that influence the contemporary and future world.

### **From Institutional Analysis to Methodological Integration**

Prior to the 1950s, scholarly research concentrated on the comparison of European and American constitutions and formal institutions. Behavioralism resulted in extensive surveys, aggregate data analysis, and structural-functionalism. These paradigms emphasised socio-economic elements affecting electoral results, bourgeois/materialist and post-bourgeois perspectives, and universal objectives applicable to all political systems, encompassing both non-European and American politics. Academics, especially in the US integrated components into comparative method dissertations, such as explicit justification for case selection, establishing independence between independent and dependent variables, acknowledging the challenges of relying exclusively on dependent variables, and comprehending the constraints of external validity. The "class warfare" between quantitative and qualitative political scientists lessened due to increased methodological awareness, with the selection of methodologies primarily reliant on interpretation rather than scientific supremacy (Schmitter, 2016).

### **Post-Behavioralism, Postcolonialism, and the Challenge of Eurocentrism in Comparative Politics**

The post-behavioural approach aimed to fill the gap left by the behaviorist revolution by emphasising the interaction between institutions and political actors. The research largely investigated the interactions between the state and society, concentrating on formal political institutions and political behaviour. It emphasised the importance of state theories and recognised the state's significant influence in shaping societies, particularly in Asian countries. Post-behavioralists underscored the significance of including social, cultural, and institutional settings in political research. They contended that comprehending the dynamics of political power necessitates an awareness of historical legacies, societal disparities, and institutional roles. They underscored the ethical obligation of political scientists to confront issues such as oppression, injustice, and inequality.



Postcolonial literature originated in the 1950s, integrating the viewpoints of Western scholars on colonialism with those of the colonised, hence contesting the traditional comparative politics paradigm. This transition redirected attention from perversions to specific societies, becoming the field more open and receptive to multiple interpretations. Postcolonial researchers contend that political science and comparative politics have been historically influenced by a Eurocentric perspective, which regards Western models of democracy, government, and modernity as universal standards. Scholars advocate for acknowledging the significance of indigenous knowledge systems and non-Western political traditions to decolonise the discipline. This also entails challenging the hegemony of Western-centric theories and methodologies.

Klaus Von Beyme examines how postmodern theories, notably those of Michel Foucault, Herbert Marcuse, Jacques Derrida, and Richard Rorty, contested grand theories and metanarratives, resulting in discourse analysis and an emphasis on power dynamics and meanings. This transition redirected attention from universal theories to fluid truths, impacting comparative politics and the Western perspective in comparative theory, necessitating a disciplinary framework to accommodate new dimensions.

Eurocentrism, a concept in comparative politics, has posed a challenge since the conventional approach. Academics contest the Eurocentric prejudice by acknowledging the negation of agency and historical narrative for non-Western states. Eurocentrism emerges when European ideals are deemed better, undermining the significance of the social, political, and cultural contexts of non-Western nations in comprehending development and values. Comparative politics transitioned from an emphasis on Western experiences to the inclusion of non-Western perspectives, postcolonial societies, and the examination of social, political, and economic disparities within the contexts of postmodernism and globalisation. Comparative politics scholars contested Eurocentrism by analysing global political systems, incorporating indigenous

knowledge, postcolonial experiences, and the contributions of the global South to political frameworks.

### **Methodological Challenges, Global Dynamics, and the Need for Contextual Analysis**

There has never been a time in the history of the sub-discipline that has been more extensive and comprehensive as the current crisis. Methodological ambiguity is a contributing factor that makes the crisis in comparative politics even worse. The field of comparative politics attempts to resolve the conflict that exists between general theory and its application in a variety of different places around the world. The practice of putting an emphasis on statistical tools and abstract observational methods has been criticised for its tendency to concentrate on testable hypotheses while ignoring information that yields fruitful results. There have been criticisms levelled against the use of statistical methods because they simplify complicated political realities into variables that can be tested, which may lead to the neglect of the numerous contextual factors that play a role in shaping political life. The humanist dimension of politics, which includes the subjective, cultural, historical, and philosophical factors that affect political behaviour and institutions, is ignored as a result of this concentration on empiricism, which runs the risk of limiting politics to measurable consequences. Inspiration is more important than technique, and it is necessary for comparativists to be humanists when it comes to proposing attractive research topics, and scientists when it comes to verifying or rejecting theories (Bernhard, 2009). In 1970, Peter Winch voiced his disapproval of cross-national comparative analysis, stating that it had a limited relevance and had destroyed the foundations of comparative politics by applying political and social standards that were based on global categories. Roy Macridis argued that the traditional comparative political analysis was narrow-minded, descriptive, formalistic, and legalistic, and that it concentrated primarily on the experiences of Western Europe. He argued that this approach was problematic. In comparison to political philosophy, comparative political analysis is less

foundational because it is strongly dependent on political theory and other subfields for its methodologies and notions. Because it does not have a central body of literature or principles that are based on consensus, it is a field that is more complicated and widely debated. The lack of autonomous standing that comparative politics possesses hinders its capacity to stand on its own two feet and to locate itself in relation to other sub-disciplines that fall under the umbrella of political science. Comparative politics is plagued by imperialistic prejudices and ethnocentrism, which causes academics to be sceptical of their own knowledge and reluctant to compare different civilisations. A general crisis in political institutions and the nation-state itself is the root cause of the catastrophe that we are currently experiencing. Global flows of capital, technological advancements, cultural practices, commercial seductions, cross-country labour migrations, breaches of human rights, military interventions, and deep-rooted challenges to the concept of a culturally homogenous nation-state are all in a state of crisis. Comparative analysis has been called into question as a result of this (Chandhoke, 1996).

Comparative analysis encompasses a variety of topics, including the history, cultures, traditions, peasant consciousness, mythologies, and resistance to colonisation of a particular people. It can be a lifelong endeavour and acquire significance. In order to prevent oversimplified generalisations, it is imperative to conduct a comparative analysis of specific situations, such as localised peasant resistance, regional cultures, worker, environmental, and gender struggles, rather than grand comparisons of state nature, revolutions, development strategies, or agrarian strategies. Comparative politics is confronted with the challenge of either adopting a contextualised approach that takes into account the historical, social, and cultural distinctiveness of regional contexts or devising universal theories across a variety of political contexts.

Comparative politics seeks to discern differences rather than similarities in localised, issue-specific contexts. It pursues uniqueness in each event, rather

than identifying commonalities or evaluating society based on a singular axis. The sovereignty of nation-states is being undermined by global challenges such as climate change, human rights abuses, and financial markets, impacting conventional comparative politics frameworks. Postcolonial countries encounter difficulties stemming from ethnic variety, indigenous cultures, and historical conflicts, requiring a novel framework for comprehending governance, identity, and political legitimacy. Comparative analysis in Indian academic institutions is frequently associated with international relations and foreign policy; nevertheless, these disciplines are encountering difficulties due to anti-theoretical tendencies. Comparative politics must synchronise with political philosophy and address these discussions. Comparative politics must incorporate political theory to resolve fragmentation and empirical methodologies, tackling normative enquiries regarding justice, democracy, equality, and governance within particular political contexts. Developmentalism, however contested in epistemology and political philosophy, warrants re-evaluation. Comparative politics ought to be regarded as an applied theory (Chandhoke, 1996). A more normatively engaged and practically orientated discipline is necessary. It promotes comparative political study not merely to juxtapose systems or evaluate theories, but to implement theoretical insights on contemporary real-world challenges encountered by nations. Through the integration of theory and practice, comparative politics can enhance political systems, facilitate democratisation, promote good governance, and advance social justice. This renders the area not only pertinent to contemporary difficulties but also essential for addressing political issues and directing political reforms worldwide.

### **Role of Non-State Actors and Social Movements**

Non-State Actors, including international organisations, NGOs, multinational enterprises, religious groups, and civil society organisations, may exert influence on political processes without formal affiliation to the state machinery. They exert considerable impact on public policy concerning

human rights, healthcare, environmental policy, and poverty reduction. They promote causes, coordinate campaigns, and offer specialised information, impacting governmental policy and shaping humanitarian responses. In recent years, global politics has transformed due to globalisation, necessitating that comparative politics account for non-state players. The 1990s witnessed the emergence of new organisations, including the United Nations, amid political transformations such as decolonisation and democratisation. Transnational firms such as Microsoft, McDonald's, and Shell have emerged as influential non-state actors, impacting domestic politics. Regional organisations such as the European Union, North American Free Trade Agreement, South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) have also developed, alongside the emergence of transnational civil society.

Globalisation has resulted in heightened trade in commodities and services, enhanced living standards, and increased interdependence among nations. Governments currently confront intricate challenges, including the accommodation of multiple identities, the provision of citizenship rights, economic development, and the allocation of natural resources. A north-south gap exists among countries concerning climate change, diseases, epidemics, and terrorism. Global organisations such as Greenpeace and the National Rifle Association, together with social movements including feminism, LGBT advocacy, and anti-nuclear activism, have arisen. Social movements confront identity-related issues such as ethnicity, race, gender, and nationalism, contesting prevailing narratives and advocating for the acknowledgement of marginalised groups. Comparative political analysis examines their impact on political culture and ethnic relations. In the evolving environment of state-society relations, comparative politics ought to examine subordinate subjects such as public opinion, electoral behaviour, and electoral strategy (Anusha & Manhas, 2019). As global political dynamics evolve, the significance of non-state players will increasingly be

pivotal in comprehending the factors that influence politics, governance, and society in the 21st century.

### **Global Events and Their Impact on Comparative Political Analysis**

Comparative politics encounters difficulties in formal modelling, which is predicated on individualistic, rational choice assumptions. American political scientists want to replicate the achievements of economics by creating a theoretical and methodological orthodoxy. This method necessitates the restriction of starting assumptions, dependence on individual actors' assessments, deductive inferences, and simplified facts or mathematical demonstrations. This approach disregards the variability of politics based on circumstances. Comparative researchers usually concur that institutions are significant, however they possess divergent perspectives regarding their nature, importance, and implications. Some contend that communal identities, citizen attitudes, cultural values, popular memories, external influences, economic interdependence, and instinctual habits also influence political results (Schmitter, 2016).

Comparative politics is essential for objectively analysing the processes and occurrences of foreign nations, offering reliable information to policymakers and administrators. The Cold War and the disintegration of the Soviet Empire have resulted in an increase in political entities, whereas globalisation has established interconnected networks. The extensive incorporation of ICT has rendered global events accessible to a broader audience, necessitating comparative study to comprehend similarities and differences in political behaviour and to deduce consistent patterns. Comparative political analysis needs to adjust to the contemporary situation and revise assumptions to preserve explanatory effectiveness. It must recognise the context of "special" or "unique" elements and possess certain competencies to effectively use the patterns influencing global governmental institutions (Schmitter, 2016).

Two primary factors influence the structure and conduct of comparative research: increased interdependence and complexity. Joseph Nye and Robert

Keohane have recognised a multifaceted interdependence between these two trends. While reducing internal complexity through specialisation, a polity can either establish increasingly interdependent relations with others or become more complex without increasing interdependence. To comprehend intricate relationships between individuals and institutions, it is necessary to employ a "nomothetic" vocabulary that employs distinctive concepts from a particular approach or theory when comparing units across time or across various units (Schmitter, 2016).

Citizens are advocating for democratic governance and freedom, as the nation is currently experiencing financial constraints. Internet technology and sociocultural divisions are exerting pressure on national unity. Global vulnerability is increasing because of events such as the 2008 Great Recession, terrorism, and the collapse of the Berlin Wall, as political innovation cycles are on the rise. The political landscape is in a state of perpetual flux, as unforeseen events result in substantial transformations. 2011 is a critical juncture in the current political era, which is defined by optimism, anxiety, and disaster. A surge in political engagement was initiated by the youth of Tunisia and Egypt, which subsequently inspired pro-democratic movements in Algeria, Bahrain, Libya, Syria, and Yemen.

A triple shock event was triggered by a significant earthquake in Japan in 2011, which resulted in the fatalities of tens of thousands of individuals. This event was a significant development in the ongoing conflict between nations, despite the ongoing conflicts between authoritarian regimes and protestors. Japan's economy, social structure, and political institutions were significantly affected by the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear catastrophe, which is considered one of the most catastrophic in history. In 2011, the United States assassinated Osama bin Laden, which prompted introspection and renewed anguish for the families and lives that were impacted. Due to the evolving regional emphasis on democratic governance and economic opportunity, experts suggest that bin Laden's terrorist tactics may have a diminished influence

(Kesselman et al, 2012). Comparative Politics investigates the manner in which nations engage with the global system, as influenced by historical events such as 1989, 2001, 2008, and 2011, emphasising critical crossroads and transitional events. The debate regarding the susceptibility of democracies to terrorist attacks is essential for comprehending the responses to terrorism in mature democracies.

The expansion of comparative methods and the development of information and communication technology have led to an increase in the number of research topics that are suitable for systematic comparative analysis. This has resulted in a burgeoning network of shared knowledge and a more robust comparative-research community. In order to effectively address issues such as international terrorism, it is imperative that scholars engage in a thorough and systematic comparative analysis and dialogue using a variety of methodologies.

Comparative politics calls for the meticulous selection and validity of findings across a variety of political contexts, utilising a variety of research methodologies such as case studies, statistical analysis, and qualitative research. Comparative politics is responsible for the capture and analysis of the dynamic nature of political systems, ensuring that research remains pertinent and current. The process of selecting which countries to include in a comparative study may be a complex endeavour. Researchers may introduce bias by either selecting cases that substantiate their hypotheses or omitting pertinent ones that do not correspond with their narrative. Comparative politics investigates a variety of cultural systems, which may result in cultural bias, as researchers may unintentionally favour their own perspectives or misinterpret the intricacies of other societies. The unique circumstances of each country present a challenge in the establishment of universal theories or generalisations, as political systems are influenced by historical, cultural, and social contexts. The definition and measurement of political concepts such as democracy, corruption, and stability can be contentious due to the varying interpretations that exist across different



countries. The necessity of conducting research in foreign languages and the loss of "relationship" in translation, even with agreed-upon exchange-currency terms, present challenges in translation and cross-cultural research (Roberts, 1972). The veracity of comparative studies across countries may be influenced by data that is incomplete, outdated, or subject to manipulation, which is a necessary component of comparative analysis. In research that involves a variety of countries and political systems, ethical considerations are essential. This entails the management of sensitive or repressive political situations, the preservation of participant confidentiality, and the consideration of cultural sensitivity. Comparative politics is a multifaceted discipline that is characterised by a variety of theories and approaches, which presents a challenge in achieving a comprehensive understanding of political phenomena in various countries.

Comparative political analysis has emerged as a sub-discipline fraught with crises due to transformations in the political and knowledge realms. The fragmentation signifies societal uncertainty. The situation necessitates thorough examination of multiple issues in comparative research. Self-reflection and critical thinking are essential, and a comprehensive synthesis is no longer required (Chandhoke, 1996). Embracing many perspectives can produce innovative methodologies in comparative political analysis. A lack of adequate understanding of this specific issue has resulted in research that frequently mirrors Western academic methodologies in a formulaic fashion. The study of comparative politics could be improved by critically analysing the assumptions of theoretical frameworks about revolutionary transformations in the Third World (Bhambhri, 1975). Critics contend that universal concepts are indicative of Western industrialised society, proposing that enhancement can be realised through an awareness of cultural subtleties and an expansion of comparative research examples, thereby rendering configuration studies, area studies, and investigations of developing regions particularly significant (Roberts, 1972). Reintegrating Area Studies with

mainstream political science departments and promoting a novel approach in Comparative Politics may effectively tackle the ongoing crises in the Third World (Pai, 1998).

### **Way Ahead**

Contemporary practitioners of comparative politics must be multidisciplinary, encompassing political scientists, logicians, methodologists, sociologists, anthropologists, social psychologists, and general systems theorists. Their expertise should encompass the entire spectrum of political phenomena, rather than being limited to particular countries or regions. Additionally, they should be universal historians, capable of comprehending political behaviour in the context of social relationships and all nation-states. They must also comprehend informal politics, its setting (ecological, social, and economic), attitudes, motivations, culture, and socialisation processes. These requirements are indeed difficult to satisfy; however, a rational division of labour in the industry could prove advantageous. Specialists frequently encounter difficulty in understanding the broader contexts within which their work is conducted, necessitating that all individuals adhere to their own perspective. (Eckstein, 1963).

Economic development, improved living standards, human rights, and democratisation have been the result of significant social, economic, and political changes that have occurred in the past few decades, thereby ensuring that billions of individuals have the opportunity to live better lives. Social, economic, and political issues persist despite progress, with economic development occasionally resulting in ethnic strife, political instability, and social disruption, and many fundamental human needs remain unmet (Almond et al., 2009). Addressing environmental quality, altering lifestyles, globalisation, and multiculturalism presents challenges for Western democracies. The effectiveness of political parties, interest groups, parliaments, and executives may be limited by an increasingly affluent and information-savvy populace. Enhancing global living conditions, reducing international conflicts, and aligning with human ideals can be achieved by

addressing both old and new challenges. It is imperative to investigate the strategies that governments, policymakers, and citizens will employ to address current policy challenges, emphasising their contributions to the advancement of past successes and the development of political futures. The future of comparative politics is expected to be influenced by the ongoing transformation of the global political landscape, technological advancements, and the evolution of societal dynamics. Comparative politics may investigate innovative governance models, such as experiments with participatory democracy, deliberative procedures, and alternative political systems. Examining the triumphs and failures of these models can facilitate discussions regarding effective governance. Researchers and academicians are instrumental in determining the future trajectory of comparative politics, which is on the brink of continuous evolution.

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## Threads of Feudalism: Understanding the Social Dynamics of Harsha's Times

SACHIN CHAHAL, G.C. CHAUHAN

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### Abstract

*This paper sheds light on how society was organized during the reign of Harsha Vardhana, a significant figure in early medieval northern India. It delves into the concept of feudalism, which was a complex system involving politics, military affairs, and economics, particularly focused on agriculture. During Harsha Vardhana's time, feudal elements became increasingly prominent in northern India. This was marked by a trend where the king would reward his officers with land grants. Consequently, a new class of nobles emerged, serving as intermediaries between the monarch and the peasants. In this societal framework, land ownership equated to power. Those who possessed land wielded significant influence, not only in terms of economic control but also in matters of governance. They managed tasks such as tax collection, land administration, labour oversight, law enforcement, and even judicial proceedings. Essentially, the control and distribution of land were central to the organization and functioning of society during this period.*

**Keywords:** Harsha Vardhana, Feudal formation, Society, Land-grants, *Brāhmaṇas*, *Agrāhara*, *Damees*, *Dharmaśāstras*.

### Introduction

Harsha was the most prominent and privileged ruler of the Vardhana dynasty. From the rank of a King of Thaneswar (Sthānv-īśvara), he rose to the status of *sakal-ottarā- patha-nātha*. (Devahuti, 1970, p. 129) (Majumdar, 1954, p. 311) (Tripathi, 1964, pp. 113- 114) Harsha gradually bestowed political and administrative unity, although not oneness, on this vast region,

through its long and monolithic career which lasted for more than four decades.

The present paper highlights the social dimension of feudal formation in Harsha Vardhana period. The concept of feudalism refers to a politico-military, socio-economic and to be specific an agrarian phenomenon. The feudal elements might have gained importance in early medieval northern India, with the growing tendency to reward the officers in form of assignments of land. Feudalism therefore stands for an arrangement of land holding based upon military and other services. It was neither a system nor a scheme but was a development out of necessity when great empires collapsed and infant nations remained weak. It gave rise to a new class of nobles who worked as intermediaries between the king and the peasants. The political organization and the administrative structure were based on land tenure. In such type of society, land was the source of power. Their span of power would also encompass areas such as the collection of taxes, administration of land and labour, ensuring general law and order and even judicial functions. The ownership of land conferred as such, often became hereditary.

Land-grants played very important and crucial role in socio-economy formation of early northern medieval India society. The copperplates of Harsha's times clearly depict that the peasants, villagers, and other inhabitants of the donated villages invariably carried out the orders of the beneficiaries, due to the growing claim of greater rights over land by feudal lords and intermediaries, as followed:-

Banskhera Copperplate of Harsha (628-629 A.D.) was found in September 1894 in the village of Banskhera, about 25 miles from Shahjahanpur, and was presented to the Lucknow Museum by Lalla Kishore Lal, banker and Honorary Magistrate of Shahjahanpur. (Thapliyal, 1985, pp. 178-179) (Sircer, 1966, pp. 224-226)

The genealogical portion of the Banskhera plate teaches us nothing new, as

it agrees literally with the text of the Madhuban plate. It states that the donees are two brāhmaṇas of the Bharadvajagotra, viz., Balachandra, a *Rgvedin*, and Bhadrāsavin, a Samavedin. The village granted Markstasagara situated in the Bhukti of Ahichchhatra (Ramnagar) and in the western pathaka of the Angadiyavishaya. (Sircar, 1983, pp. 222-223) (Chauhan, 2003, p. 70) The Bansakhera copperplate inscription of King Harsha records the donation of the *agrāhara* named Markatasagra to two *Brāhmaṇas* of *bhāradwāja gotra*. They were exempted from paying all dues with all immunities. The *agrāhara* was donated to the donees with full right of inheritance by King Harshavardhana. This land grant clearly depicts that donation was made in favour of donees as rent- freeholding in acceptance with the custom governing the donees. The villagers were asked by the donor to be obedient to the donees and to pay all dues (*pratyāya*) including *tulyā*, *meyābhoga*, *bhoga*, *Kara*, *Hiraṇya*, etc. to the donee.

A Copper Plate of Grant of Harsha, (629 A.D.) was discovered from a place called Thanesar, the capital of Harsha in Kurukshetra. (Goyal, 1993, p. 193) It was published by R.C. Sharma along with the text, translation and photographs of the copperplate. K.K. Thaplyal, T. P. Verma and Devendra Handa examined this copperplate to ensure its authenticity. This land charter is written in Sanskrit and incised in the post-Gupta Brahmi characters. The King issued this land charter in the presence of the state officials, such as *Mahāsāmanta*, *Mahārāja Dussadhasadhanika*, *Pramātara*, *Rōjasthāniya*, *Kumaramātya*, *Uparika*, *Viśayapati*, *chātas*, *chātas*, servants and other domestic workers as well as the inhabitants who had assembled at the donated village named Pandarratgaka situated in the Jayarata Bhukti. (Thapliyal, 1985, p. 197)

The Madhuban Copperplate of Harsha (631-632 A.D.) was discovered in January 1888 by a cultivator whose ploughshare struck against it in a field near Madhuban, a village in *Parganā* Nathupur of Tehsil Sagri, in the Azamgarh district, in the North-Western provinces. (Thapliyal, 1985, pp. 183-184) (Sircar, 1983, pp. 67-74) It was obtained by A. Fuhrer from the

Collector of Azamgarh district and is now in the Lucknow Museum. (Epigraphia Indica, p. 67) *Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājadhirāja* Harsha donated a village named Somakundika to two *Brāhmaṇas*, i.e., Bhatta Vatasvamin and Bhatta Sivadevasvamin. The donees were allowed to enjoy *udraṅga* and all income that might be claimed on the king's behalf were exempted from all obligations. The residents of the donated village were asked to make over to the donees *tulyāmeyā*, the share of the produce and the payment in cash and other kinds of income, as they might be due, and to render service to them. (Epigraphia Indica, p. 74) (Sircar, 1983, p. 224)

Ancient Indian literary traditions, such as works of a few of the *Yajñañvalkyā Smṛiti*, (Pandey, 1967, p.143) *Harṣacharita* (Cowall & Thomas, 1968, p.203) and *Kādambari* (Kale, 1974, p. 99) give some idea about the *rāja-Śāsana*s or land charters recorded the land donation to the *brāhmaṇas* and religious establishments. Bana Bhatta also endorses the land grants made by Harsha to the *brāhmaṇas* and religious establishments. The *Harṣacharita* refers to the donation of one hundred villages with one thousand *Halas* (as much land as can be ploughed by a thousand ploughs), which is roughly equal to ten thousand acres donated to the *brāhmaṇas* by Harsha on the eve of setting out on a military expedition. (Sharma, 1980, pp. 35-36) Thus, during the time of Harsha, the area of land in the occupation of the *brāhmaṇas* was considerable.

Interestingly, an early Indian literary tradition expects the donors of land grants to record all the information regarding the donation of land to the donees on copperplates and furnish the names and regional year of the donors. The information regarding the law of land donation as reflected in literary sources may be summed up as follows: (1) after making a grant of land, etc., the donor prepared a document for the guidance of the donees. (2) The information regarding the land donation was engraved on copperplates. (3) The land charter contained a description of the king and three of his immediate predecessors and of the land granted together with its boundaries and measurement. In addition, it was also endowed with the king's seal,



signature and date. (4) There is no explicit statement regarding the donee in literary sources, although it is supposed that the donee's name should be engraved in the land charter. (5) A higher official was entrusted with the drafting of the document.

After the examination of available sources, we can assume that the custom of land donation played a significant role in social and economic formation of Harsha's time and witnessed the rise and growth of agrarian class formation, and reflected the bitter feudal conflict between peasants, artisans and feudal lords. The Indian society during the times of Harsha Vardhana was fragmented into groups, such as landlord, *brāhmaṇa* landed intermediaries and *Sāmanta* and dependent peasantry. In such a feudal system, all sections of primary producers used to live in the villages, where the coins were not used, which restricted the growth of money economy. The declining process of money economy gave rise to exchange of services and barter system. (Chauhan, 2003, p. 139) Feudalism once again might be an age old phenomenon, but the quantum of exploitation effect in early medieval period is one of the points that we should think about it. Some charters record that the donees were authorised to enjoy the land and to get it cultivated. Thus, with the increase in the number of intermediaries, peasants seem to be forced to pay additional taxes.

The practice of granting lands by the state or the authority concerned eventually created an objective condition for the rise of a surplus appropriating class in the rural areas. This is a significant development at the village level as it provides ample scope for a series of developments such as the growth of private farming and a servile labour force. Improvements in the technique of agriculture, increase in crop production have the cumulative effects on the ultimate growth of a market - economy of towns during early medieval period. The emerged social forces were the chief architects of this transition and the state also could not prevent these powerful people from developing their exclusive domains as the focal points of agricultural expansion. That's way the system of land grants played a crucial role not

only in the agricultural expansion but also paved the way for the formation of dominant social groups in the social structure of the period under study.

The society of the period under study strongly believed that by gifting away one's property, movable or immovable, to gods and learned *Brahmanas*, one could attain heaven by virtue of there religious merit accruing out of such gifts. Of all gifts, land was considered the best. In this connection, land contains jewels, corns, water, therefore, by making a gift of land, one becomes the giver of all these. Moreover, the person to whom a gift of land was made also welcomed land, because the possession of land gave the donee a status in society and enabled him to meet all wants of medieval household economy directly or indirectly.

Land, thus, was the chief source of economic wealth. It was also true that persons serving the state, as well as other institutions such as temples, etc, in various capacities, were generally paid by assignments of land or land revenue instead of money, in lieu of their salary or remuneration. The abundance of land and the relative scarcity of money, coupled with the circumstance that the population was not generally mobile, made this form of payment for services suitable to the times. Land also served as a means of exchange, i.e., as a means of clearing some obligations.

Another major factor, which was emerged from the feudal system that the transformation of Śūdras into peasant. It seems that in the older settled regions Śūdras were provided with the land rights in the remote parts of the tribal areas and the peasantry was annexed to the feudal system through the issuance of land grants. These sources clearly show that the peasants, villagers, and other inhabitants of the donated villages invariably carried out the orders of the donees. Due to the growing claim of greater rights over land by feudal lords and intermediaries, peasants also suffered a curtailment of their land rights. Many were reduced to the position of tenant, facing ever-growing threat of eviction. Numbers of peasants were only *ardhikās* (sharecroppers). The strain on the peasantry was also caused by the burden of taxation, coercion and increase in their indebtedness. The villagers were

therefore dependent on their new masters (beneficiaries), who imposed manifold duties on them.

In early medieval India with the significant and noticeable events taking place, coming under the watchful eye of scholars and other seemingly not so important were in the offing. These were the social and cultural transformations within the framework of predominant four *Varṇa*, giving rise to a series of events altogether different to projected trends. The literary sources like *Dharmaśāstras* and others like Inscription bear testimony to those. In traditional *Varṇa* set up, the Śūdra were flanged to the lowest rung of society preceded by *vaīśya*, *ksatriya* and *brāhmaṇa* consecutively. But quite apparently, in the middle of first millennium, the period coinciding with the maximum frequency in land grants, a considerable section of Śūdras were rising in social and economic status after being associated with the agriculture and a section of *vaīśyas*, particularly the ones economically less sound, were descending to the level of Śūdras.

In the context of early medieval India, G.C. Chauhan cites the inevitability of employing Śūdras as agricultural labourers in a period when the economy is primarily centred on the agriculture and the extraction of surplus is the most vivid obsession of the overlord. (Chauhan, 2003, p. 185) In yet another paper on the socio-economic position of artisans, he proposes that the Śūdras were regarded as the collective property of upper three *Varṇas* and they were at the mercy of their masters for the maximum exploitation of labour. By the 7<sup>th</sup> century hsuan-tsang calls the peasants simply Śūdras. (Waters, 1980, p. 168) With the propagation of the system of land grants, numerous tribals were annexed to the *Brahmanical* system and the new peasants came to be considered as Śūdras. Śūdras who had long served as slaves and domestic servants, artisans and agricultural labourers in early period came to be recognised as peasants in contemporary texts as well as in the accounts of foreigners. Attempts were even made to give it a religious sanction and to give it a permanent shape.

R.S. Sharma states that what distinguished early medieval period was the

proliferation of caste system, particularly the Śūdra peasant castes proved to be numerous and based on regions, clans and tribes. They were arranged in ritualistic gradation and this phenomenon gave rise to the theory of mixed castes which attributed the origin of numerous peasant castes to the union of existing castes in the reverse order. This was popularised as *pratilomā* order and it was advocated that each mixed caste was either inferior or superior to the other caste. Sharma argues that though the peasants were exploited more or less in the same manner, they were the victims of the endless divisions caused by the castes based on ritualistic distinctions. The solidarity against the dominant class of landlords was still a far cry for the newly created class of peasants. (Sharma, 2003, p. 14)

B.N.S. Yadava opines that Śūdras comprised the hardcore of peasantry from 600-1200 A. D., though some of them opted for the allied vocations of artisans and craftsmanship. In the light of advent of feudalism, the transformation of Śūdra into peasant class was a very significant process which was accompanied by the degradation of the status of *vaisyas*, who lost an important position in the prevalent social structure. (Yadava, 1973, pp. 330-331)

Thus, it can be said that largest segment of Śūdras population was engaged in agrarian operations in early medieval northern India and worked as agricultural labourer paid or unpaid. The large number of peasants worked on the fields of big landlords. These peasants had contributed a lot to the prosperity of the country through the ages. It appears that there were a large number of temporary peasants to whom the land was leased out by the owners. It shows that the landless peasants were assigned a subordinate status and seems to be attached to the soil and required to work as per the wishes of the landlords.

Exploitation was associated with peasantry as is the privilege with the landlordism. For centuries together, peasants have suffered at the cost of their overlords, taking into account the financial or other aspects. Their hardship has been a continuous phenomenon and it has gone despotic for a

considerable period. The copperplates and other literary sources of Harsha Vardhana times not only throw light on ignorance, religious fanaticism and feudal brutality but also on agrarian aspects of Harsha's feudal system and the transformation of state-controlled economy into a feudal economy through the issuance of land grants.

Yadava says: 'In the Indian context the framework of this relationship may be found to have included within its considerable space of variations in the level of peasant subsection, conditioned inter-alia by local circumstances the highest level being represented, though only to a state approaching serfdom involving the obligation to render labour service and to stick to locality. Then a gain the relatives of dependents here were, on the whole, meditated through the caste division of the society. The feudal mode of production was not so strong in India as in medieval Europe. In the Indian context it is found to have been inter locked and to have co- existed with the non-feudal elements. The sources noticed above throw some further light on how as primary producers, the artisans and craftsmen also began to be brought in to the orbit of the relations of dependence.' (Yadava, 1980)

The result of feudalism in social phenomenon was the establishment of a new class, which was responsible for paying taxes and mostly scholars, defines this class with peasantry. Studies have been undertaken by historians, sociologists, economists, anthropologists and other scholars in various fields and various eras, all of whom use various types of definitions and concepts. The precise definition of a peasant is practically not feasible because with the variation in the geographical boundaries, the vocabulary is different in its essence. But most scholars and reference books from around the world will mainly relate it to land in one way or another.

The identification of peasants in India, especially in the early medieval period, is the most vulnerable and sensitive issue, due to the continuous tradition of land grants, it is a big bang for new social formation; such a tendency is at its high level. In fact, we feel that if such a definition prepared by any criteria of social or economic type will apply equally to the early

medieval Indian peasants. The transference of land control either with the superior hands of the elite or the poor peasant who till now was on land with the mandatory obligation to procure minimum virtual rights over land, is typical of its absence in early medieval north India.

R.S. Sharma in his impressive style puts forth that the kind of social structure that existed in early medieval India with a class of landlords claiming the rights to collect the rent on the ground of their self-proclaimed ownership or sanctioned by the even bigger sovereign, with a class of peasantry working as producers and paying the fair share of their production as rent and the vicious object of the promoting production or economic growth not for the welfare of society as a whole but to quench their obsession for profit. Basically, the identity of the peasantry was the most important determinants, the nature of land control and the pattern of exploitative relationship shaped by the nature of structured peasant formation.

Despite exploitation, oppression and suppression, peasant revolts in India are negligibly numbered. Violent struggles for the possession and control over the means of production are rarely heard. The rarity of rebellion in India could also be attributed to the presence of caste system wherein the rights, duties and privileges of an individual were internalized in to his personality and a violation was frowned upon socially. The Indian social structure, more so the rural, was characterized by caste-oriented feudalism. Therefore, the poverty in India cannot be explained by simple economic attributes but to other factors such as caste, untouchability, customs, joint family, lack of capital, resistance to scientific farming, the money lenders and above all her enormous population. The situation threatens to get explosive due to growing inequality as the result of feudal system established in India. The poorer tenants who are deprived of their tenure security, operate on shrinking pieces of land which transforms them increasingly into marginal peasants, backdoor tenants and bonded slaves.

## Conclusion

After, the in-depth survey of literature and other contemporary sources of Harsha's time we can deduce that feudal system was strongly established and society was influenced by this institution in that period. Early Indian feudal society was dominated by a vast network of mutual feudal relationship and obligations based almost entirely on personal loyalty, faith and service. The principle of security and protection was kept in mind which was the basic ingredients of feudal relationship and obligation between the overlords and feudal lord. The king made every effort to acquire as many feudal fashions to have more and more under him. It was very difficult to maintain the huge army, or what was provided by the Royal household, alone, or to support them by payments. The donated land was inhabited by the peasants, and the food grain that they produce, the feudal lord with his men of support at the cost of poor helpless peasants. This network of mutual feudal relations and obligation, which together constituted was called feudal society, and was closely related with the agrarian aspect.

The largest segment of society in early medieval northern India was exploited and their economic condition worsened miserably. The peasants were required to work as per the whims of the landlords. The peasants under the donees were subjected to reckless servility, while the free peasant lost his status because of the imposition of several new taxes in early medieval northern India. The rural and agrarian phenomenon, Political organization and administration structure was based on land tenure. Land was the source of power, the administration provided for creation of powerful intermediaries between the king and the peasants, Powers of the overlords were absolute, the all-pervasive powers of landlords lead to exploitation. The surplus (after subsistence) was taken away by the powerful. The poor were subjected to economic, political, social and cultural oppression. Even the personal lives of serfs were controlled by their lords and the institution of serfdom existed. So, during Harsha's times society was much influenced by the feudal rigidity and its structure.

**Notes:**

1. 'Harsha's dominions were bounded by the Himalayas, the western Punjab, Rajutana, Central India and Bengal.', 'The sovereignty of Harsha consisted of only the portions of Eastern Punjab, United province (excepting Mathura and Matipura), Bihar, Bengal and Orissa, including Kongoda or the Ganjam region.'
2. The donation was made to the donees with full right of inheritance by HarshaVardhana. The grant was taken away from the Vamarathya who had been enjoying in on the strength of a forged document.
3. It has been cited by Irfan Habib, that a young son of peasant like the village headman and official he has access to village woman as they render forced labour, work in his field as also in his house, On taking away cotton and other fibrous material from him bring him yarn in return. He says that this is a rare picture of exploitation of peasant by a peasant in ancient Indian countryside. "The peasant in Indian History", in B. P. Sahu, ed. LSRSEI, op cit, p-222.

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## **Exploring Teachers' Perceptions of Service Quality and Teaching Quality in Technical and Professional Education Services Across Demographic Variables in State Universities of Punjab**

MANISHA KHOSLA, GURDEEP SINGH BATRA & SULAKSHNA DWIVEDI

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### **Abstract**

*This study explores faculty perceptions of service and teaching quality across demographic variables in Punjab's state universities. A total of 240 faculty members from five universities, spanning disciplines like Management, Engineering, Pharmacy, and Hotel Management, participated. Using the 22-item SERVQUAL scale, the research assessed Assurance, Tangibility, Empathy, Responsiveness, and Reliability, alongside an 8-item teaching quality scale. Findings revealed consistent perceptions of most service quality dimensions, with faculty members across various years of experience sharing similar views on Assurance, Empathy, Responsiveness, and Teaching Quality. While minor trends were noticed in Tangibility and Reliability, no significant differences were found, indicating that teaching quality, empathy, and service quality are valued similarly across faculty members regardless of their teaching experience. Faculty in Hotel Management reported higher Empathy and teaching quality than those in Engineering. University-level differences showed Guru Nanak Dev University excelling in Assurance and Panjab University in Empathy. While infrastructure and professional development were well-rated, personalized support and faculty development need enhancement, especially in lower-scoring departments. The study recommends tailored strategies to improve faculty satisfaction and institutional support, ultimately enhancing both the faculty experience and educational outcomes.*

**Key words:** Service Quality, Teaching Quality, Demographic Variables, SERVQUAL, Punjab

## INTRODUCTION

The concepts of service quality and teaching quality are pivotal in determining the effectiveness of educational institutions in fulfilling their core mission—delivering meaningful learning outcomes and preparing students for real-world challenges. Service quality in education encompasses both academic and non-academic aspects of institutional functioning, including infrastructure, administrative support, faculty competence, and resource availability (Parasuraman et al., 1985; Sandhu & Bala, 2011). Widely used models such as SERVQUAL (Parasuraman et al., 1985), SERVPERF (Cronin & Taylor, 1992), and HEDPERF (Abdullah, 2006) have been instrumental in assessing and improving service delivery in educational settings.

Teaching quality, on the other hand, refers to the effectiveness of instructional strategies employed by educators and their impact on student learning (Bandiera et al., 2010). Factors influencing teaching quality include faculty training, class size, use of instructional technologies, and teaching methodologies (Desimone et al., 2002; Byungura et al., 2018). Research suggests that a supportive academic environment, facilitated through strong service quality, enhances instructional delivery, promotes active student engagement, and improves overall learning outcomes (Biggs, 2001; Blatchford, 2003; Yao, 2023).

In today's fast-evolving knowledge economy, the need for quality in technical and professional education has become increasingly critical. As global industries shift towards technology-driven processes, the demand for a highly skilled and adaptable workforce continues to rise. This demand places a renewed emphasis on the quality of technical education, which directly contributes to the production of competent professionals across sectors like engineering, IT, healthcare, and hospitality (Kaur & Kumar, 2013; Veeranna et al., 2011). Ensuring high teaching and service quality is thus essential for bridging the gap between academic preparation and industrial expectations.

The state of Punjab, a region with a historically uneven distribution of technical education resources, has witnessed significant growth in technical and professional institutions over recent years. Earlier, students from Punjab often had to migrate to other states for pursuing technical education due to a shortage of institutions (Gaur et al., 2009). However, the expansion of engineering colleges and university departments has helped cater to the increasing demand for skilled labor within the region (Chatterjee et al., 2018). Despite this progress, questions remain about whether these institutions are adequately meeting quality standards in both service provision and pedagogy.

Given the increasing industrialization in Punjab and the parallel rise in technical education, understanding how faculty members perceive service and teaching quality is essential. These perceptions are often influenced by demographic variables such as age, gender, department affiliation, teaching experience, and digital literacy (Zafiropoulos et al., 2008; Koc & Çelik, 2015). Additionally, the integration of digital tools in teaching and the digital readiness of both faculty and students play a significant role in shaping educational outcomes in the current era of blended and virtual learning (Inan & Karaca, 2021; Byungura et al., 2018).

The present study investigates faculty perceptions of service quality and teaching quality across five major state universities in Punjab: Punjabi University, Patiala; Panjab University, Chandigarh; Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar; Maharaja Ranjit Singh Punjab Technical University, Bathinda; and I.K. Gujral Punjab Technical University, Kapurthala. Focusing on departments such as Management, Computer Science, Engineering, Pharmacy, and Hotel Management, the study draws on responses from 240 faculty members. It specifically examines the influence of demographic variables on faculty perceptions, aiming to generate actionable insights that can inform institutional strategies for quality enhancement.

Ultimately, this study seeks to contribute to the ongoing discourse on educational quality by highlighting how demographic diversity among

faculty can influence perceptions and expectations. These insights are vital for ensuring that technical and professional institutions in Punjab are well-equipped to produce a workforce that meets contemporary economic and industrial needs.

The findings of this study are expected to provide valuable insights into the relationship between service quality, teaching quality, and demographic variables, particularly in the context of technical education in Punjab. Understanding how these factors interact can inform strategies for improving teaching practices, faculty development, and institutional support. By addressing the unique needs of faculty members across various demographic groups, educational institutions can enhance the quality of both services and instruction, ultimately contributing to the growth of a skilled and capable workforce in Punjab.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Service Quality and Teaching Quality**

The quality of services provided by educational institutions significantly influences teaching effectiveness and student learning outcomes. Parasuraman et al. (1985) pioneered the SERVQUAL model, which identifies gaps in service expectations and perceptions, shaping institutional service quality. In contrast, Cronin and Taylor (1992) introduced the SERPERF scale, which measures service quality based solely on performance, reducing redundancy in data collection. Abdullah (2006) further refined service quality assessment in education through the HEDPERF scale, focusing specifically on academic and non-academic institutional services.

Biggs (2001) emphasized the importance of quality assurance in teaching, outlining retrospective and prospective approaches to improving learning outcomes. Desimone et al. (2002) found that professional development positively impacts teaching effectiveness, particularly when educators are actively engaged in training. Similarly, Blatchford (2003) studied the effect

of class size on teaching quality, revealing that smaller classes facilitate better learning experiences. However, Bandiera et al. (2010) noted that class size effects are only significant at extreme ends, with negligible differences in intermediate ranges. Barber and King (2016) explored problem-based learning, demonstrating its effectiveness in fostering student engagement and self-directed learning, while Politis and Politis (2016) highlighted the role of virtual blackboards in enhancing interactive teaching. More recently, Yao (2023) used computational modeling to quantify key instructional attributes affecting teaching quality, identifying factors such as teacher communication skills, instructional methods, and class size.

These studies collectively suggest that institutional service quality, professional development, technological integration, and teaching methodologies play a crucial role in shaping educational outcomes.

### **Service Quality and Demographic Variables**

Learning outcomes, engagement, and service quality in education are significantly influenced by student demographics and characteristics. The HEDPERF scale was developed specifically for higher education by Abdullah (2006) measures both academic and non-academic aspects of service quality and emphasises how student demographics influence service expectations. Students' expectations and experiences are greatly influenced by demographic factors including age and background, according to Zafiroopoulos et al. (2008), who looked at teacher and student evaluations of educational quality. According to Kintu and Zhu (2016), a student's performance in blended learning is greatly influenced by elements including age, attitude, and family support. Ng and Wong (2020) investigated mobile learning, which is impacted by learner demographics and social factors. They evaluated the efficacy of mobile learning among Chinese students using the FRAME model. Inan and Karaca (2021) further examined the effect of digital literacy on the efficacy of virtual classes and discovered that access to technology and ICT skills, which are frequently influenced by demographic

factors, had a substantial impact on online learning engagement (Wolverton et al., 2020; Ansari et al., 2020). When taken as a whole, these studies highlight how critical it is to address demographic differences in order to improve educational experiences and service quality.

These research studies underscore the significant role of faculty demographics in shaping educational experiences, engagement, and service quality. By considering factors such as age, background, attitude, and digital literacy, institutions can better tailor their services to meet diverse student needs. Understanding these demographic influences allows for more effective implementation of learning models, ultimately enhancing student satisfaction and academic success.

### **Teaching Quality and demographic variables**

Several studies have explored the relationship between teaching quality and demographic variables, emphasizing how faculty characteristics, institutional support, and student diversity impact educational effectiveness. Zafiroopoulos et al. (2008) examined faculty and student perceptions of educational service quality and found that demographic variables significantly influenced how both groups assessed teaching effectiveness. Faculty members tended to have higher expectations of educational service quality compared to students, which suggests that differences in roles, experience levels, and professional backgrounds shape perceptions of teaching quality. Similarly, Koc and Çelik (2015) investigated the impact of student-teacher ratios on teaching effectiveness, concluding that a lower student-to-teacher ratio improves learning quality by allowing for more personalized instruction. They emphasized that institutions must allocate resources to ensure that faculty can effectively engage with students, particularly in diverse classroom settings. Diette and Raghav (2015) and Ake-Little et al. (2020) examined how class size influences teaching quality and found that larger class sizes negatively impact instructional effectiveness, particularly for first-year students and those with lower academic performance. However, Ake-Little et al. (2020) also suggested that strategic modifications in course design and instructional



methods could mitigate the challenges posed by increased class sizes, ensuring that students of different demographic backgrounds receive equitable learning opportunities. Nakayama et al. (2017) analyzed how institutional support for note-taking in online courses improved teaching effectiveness. The study revealed that structured support systems positively influenced student engagement and self-efficacy, highlighting the importance of tailored instructional strategies for diverse learners.

Byungura et al. (2018) and Patra et al. (2021) addressed how faculty digital literacy and technological accessibility impact teaching quality, particularly in online and blended learning environments. Collectively, these studies indicate that teaching quality is influenced by various demographic factors, including faculty expectations, student-teacher ratios, technological proficiency, and instructional design, all of which play a critical role in shaping effective teaching practices (Zafiropoulos et al., 2008; Diette & Raghav, 2015; Koc & Çelik, 2015; Nakayama et al., 2017; Byungura et al., 2018; Ake-Little et al., 2020; Patra et al., 2021).

## **METHODS**

### **Participants and Procedures**

The study sample consists of faculty members from five state universities, with each university contributing 50 faculty members. These universities include Punjabi University, Patiala; Panjab University, Chandigarh; Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar; Maharaja Ranjit Singh Punjab Technical University, Bathinda; and I.K. Gujral Punjab Technical University, Kapurthala. Faculty members represent five departments: Management, Computer Science, Engineering and Technical Courses, Pharmacy, and Hotel Management and Catering, with 10 faculty members from each department in each university. This results in a total faculty sample size of 240 (due to the absence of a Pharmacy department in I.K. Gujral Punjab Technical University, Kapurthala.), providing a comprehensive and diverse representation across various disciplines in technical education.

## Measures

### Service Quality

The 22-item Service Quality scale is broken down into five smaller subscales. Respondents' opinions on various aspects of service quality, teaching quality were divided upon a scale of 7.

"P<E" (service performance is below expectations), "P=E" (service performance is on par with expectations), and "P>E" (service performance surpasses expectations) are the three categories into which the scores are divided.

The SERVQUAL scale, adapted for evaluating service quality in higher education, categorized into five key dimensions: Assurance, Tangibility, Empathy, Responsiveness, and Reliability.

**Assurance:** This dimension assesses institutional support for faculty, including management-driven reward systems, structured change management plans for e-learning adoption, and the approachability of higher management. The Cronbach's alpha for this scale was 0.841.

**Tangibility:** Focuses on the availability of modern educational resources such as updated computer labs, projectors, problem-based learning methods, and peer assessment practices to enhance formative feedback. Reliability estimation of Learning Quality was 0.911

**Empathy:** Evaluates how institutions consider faculty needs, encourage interdisciplinary collaboration, respect teachers' opinions in decision-making, and ensure flexible working conditions. Reliability estimation of Learning Quality was 0.837

**Responsiveness:** Measures the provision of professional development opportunities, including workshops, qualification programs, institutional visits, research support, mentoring, and institutional backing for continuous educational improvements. The Cronbach's alpha for this scale was 0.829.

**Reliability:** Examines the consistency and accuracy of institutional services,

ensuring teaching modes align with both institutional frameworks and subject-specific requirements, alongside the timely provision of faculty support. The Cronbach's alpha for this scale was 0.794.

### **Teaching Quality**

Teaching quality is assessed through eight key items: providing relevant content in subject fields, fostering advanced ICT skills, promoting research aptitude, and setting clear learning objectives. It also includes offering student induction programs, allowing faculty autonomy in designing industry-oriented curricula, adapting lecture formats to improve clarity, and offering add-on or certification courses to enhance students' practical and technical knowledge. Sample items includes, "Better content in my subject field (s)", "Advanced ICT skills for teaching", "Promotion of research aptitude in students" etc. The Cronbach's alpha for this scale was 0.764.

### **The demographic profile of faculty members**

The demographic profile of faculty members in technical education programmes reflects a diverse range of personal and professional characteristics. The age distribution indicates that the majority (55%) are between 31 and 40 years old, with an average age of 38.48 years, suggesting a workforce largely in mid-career. Faculty members are drawn from five universities, with a fairly balanced representation, except for IKGPTU, which has a slightly lower share (16.7%) due to the absence of a Pharmacy department. The faculty is evenly distributed across Management Studies, Computer Sciences, Engineering and Technical courses, and Hotel Management, while Pharmacy has a slightly lower representation (16.8%). In terms of experience, 25.42% of faculty members have 11-15 years of service, while 21.25% have 3-5 years, reflecting a mix of experienced and early-career educators. These demographic factors play a crucial role in shaping instructional methods, adaptability to new pedagogical techniques, and perceptions of educational technology.

## ANALYSIS

The examination of the relationship between demographic variables and the Dimensions of service and teaching quality offers important new perspectives on the ways in which various demographic factors shape faculty members' experiences and perceptions within the educational setting. The purpose of this study is to investigate differences in service and teaching quality characteristics among various demographic groups, including years of work experience, department, and university affiliation. Educational institutions can customise their strategies and interventions to address particular needs and preferences based on the diverse characteristics of their faculty members by comprehending these variations.

### Analysis with Respect to Age

The age-adjusted ANOVA results as revealed in Table 1 offer a thorough understanding of how faculty members in various age groups perceive the aspects of teaching and service quality. A number of Dimensions are included in the analysis: Assurance, Empathy, Tangibility, Responsiveness, Reliability, and Teaching Quality.

Regarding Assurance, no statistically significant variation was noted among the age groups ( $F = 0.331$ ,  $p = 0.803$ ), suggesting that faculty members' opinions regarding the organization's dedication to quality and financial incentives remain unchanged regardless of their age. In a similar vein, there is no discernible variation in the perception of tangible resources and facilities offered by the university across faculty members of various age groups ( $F = 0.817$ ,  $p = 0.486$ ).

Additionally, Empathy does not differ significantly ( $F = 1.035$ ,  $p = 0.378$ ) among age groups, suggesting that faculty members' unique teaching needs are consistently understood by the institution. Even, Responsiveness did not show a significant difference ( $F = 2.108$ ,  $p = 0.100$ ) between age groups, suggesting that faculty members have almost same opinions about how responsive the institution is to their needs.

Similarly, there is no discernible variation in the perception of the institution's

dependability in providing services to faculty members across age groups ( $F = 1.048$ ,  $p = 0.372$ ), suggesting a consistent view of reliability. Faculty members of various age groups also do not significantly differ in their perceptions of teaching quality ( $F = 0.553$ ,  $p = 0.646$ ), indicating that teaching quality is consistently valued across age groups.

**Table 1**  
**ANOVA Results with Respect to Age**

Variable	Up to 30 years	31 to 40 years	41 to 50 years	Above 50 years	Total (N)	F Value	Sig.
Assurance	3.1544 (1.40542) N=26	3.0148 (1.34605) N=132	3.0070 (1.23170) N=74	2.6250 (1.30247) N=8	3.0145 (1.31289) N=240	0.331	0.803
Tangibility	3.6885 (0.89992) N=26	3.9711 (1.25634) N=132	3.7784 (1.05626) N=74	3.6250 (1.59351) N=8	3.8736 (1.17782) N=240	0.817	0.486
Empathy	3.9346 (1.46122) N=26	3.9155 (1.33975) N=132	3.5811 (1.40310) N=74	3.7375 (1.57293) N=8	3.8128 (1.37884) N=240	1.035	0.378
Responsiveness	3.6923 (1.25121) N=26	3.6662 (1.33586) N=132	3.7622 (1.54642) N=74	2.4625 (1.32658) N=8	3.6588 (1.40270) N=240	2.108	0.100
Reliability	4.1385 (1.45439) N=26	4.1669 (1.40479) N=132	4.0919 (1.41960) N=74	3.2625 (1.24090) N=8	4.1128 (1.41034) N=240	1.048	0.372
Teaching Quality	3.9808 (0.89845) N=26	4.0106 (0.88780) N=132	4.0649 (0.86665) N=74	3.6500 (0.72111) N=8	4.0120 (0.87597) N=240	0.553	0.646

### Analysis with Respect to Department

The ANOVA results in Table 2 examine the differences in perceptions of various service quality Dimensions and overall teaching quality across different departments. The mean Assurance scores ranged from 2.71 (Computer Sciences) to 3.19 (Hotel Management and Catering). The ANOVA results showed no significant differences among the departments ( $F = 1.19$ ,  $p = 0.316$ ), indicating that perceptions of Assurance, which involve trust and confidence in the institution's actions and policies, were relatively consistent across departments.

Tangibility scores, reflecting the physical aspects of the educational environment, ranged from 3.54 (Computer Sciences) to 4.00 (Pharmacy). The ANOVA results showed no significant differences among departments ( $F = 1.20, p = 0.311$ ), suggesting a general agreement on the adequacy of tangible resources such as computer labs and facilities.

Empathy, which measures the degree of care and individual attention provided by the institution, showed mean scores ranging from 3.43 (Computer Sciences) to 4.30 (Hotel Management and Catering). The ANOVA results indicated significant differences among departments ( $F = 2.52, p = 0.042$ ), highlighting that Hotel Management and Catering teachers felt the most Empathy, while Computer Sciences students felt the least.

**Table 2**  
**ANOVA results with Respect to Department**

Variable	Management Studies	Computer Sciences	Engineering and Technical Course	Pharmacy	Hotel Management and Catering	Total (N)	F Value	Sig.
Assurance	3.11 (1.06) N=50	2.71(1.30) N=50	3.09 (1.52) N=50	2.77(1.26) N=40	3.19 (1.46) N=50	3.01(1.31) N=240	1.19	0.316
Tangibility	3.91 (1.12) N=50	3.54(1.22) N=50	3.99 (1.25) N=50	4.00(1.09) N=40	3.96 (1.19) N=50	3.87(1.18) N=240	1.20	0.311
Empathy	3.72 (1.29) N=50	3.43(1.24) N=50	3.81 (1.55) N=50	3.88(1.32) N=40	4.30 (1.39) N=50	3.81(1.38) N=240	2.52	0.042
Responsiveness	3.46 (1.51) N=50	3.54(1.10) N=50	3.92 (1.35) N=50	3.13(1.54) N=40	4.06 (1.36) N=50	3.66(1.40) N=240	2.88	0.123
Reliability	4.16 (1.39) N=50	3.85(1.21) N=50	4.10 (1.48) N=50	3.71(1.33) N=40	4.51 (1.52) N=50	4.11(1.41) N=240	1.91	0.109
Teaching Quality	4.02 (0.77) N=50	3.89(0.98) N=50	3.82 (0.79) N=50	4.02(0.87) N=40	4.33 (0.96) N=50	4.01(0.88) N=240	2.46	0.046

The ANOVA results for Responsiveness did not show significant differences ( $F = 2.88, p = 0.123$ ), suggesting a general agreement on this.

Reliability (measuring the consistency and dependability of the institution's services) had mean scores from 3.71 (Pharmacy) to 4.51 (Hotel Management and Catering). The ANOVA results showed no significant differences among departments ( $F = 1.91, p = 0.109$ ), suggesting overall reliable service delivery across departments. Teaching quality scores ranged from 3.82 (Engineering and Technical courses) to 4.33 (Hotel Management and Catering). The ANOVA results indicated significant differences ( $F = 2.46, p = 0.046$ ), with Hotel Management and Catering having the highest perceived teaching quality, suggesting better content, ICT skills, and promotion of research aptitude in this department.

These results suggest that while some Dimensions of service quality, such as Assurance, Tangibility, Reliability and Responsiveness are perceived uniformly across departments, others like Empathy and Teaching Quality vary significantly. Departments like Hotel Management and Catering tend to score higher on these Dimensions, indicating potentially better support systems, resources, and teaching practices. Conversely, departments like Computer Sciences and Pharmacy may need to improve their Empathy and Responsiveness to better meet teachers' expectations. Addressing these disparities could lead to a more balanced and high-quality educational experience across all departments.

Table 3

Post hoc Analysis with respect to Department (Tukey HSD)

Dependent Variable	Comparison	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval (Lower - Upper)
Empathy	Management Studies - Computer Sciences	0.29244	0.25155	0.773	-0.3989 to 0.9837
	Management Studies - Engineering and Technical course	-0.08885	0.24250	0.996	-0.7553 to 0.5776

Dependent Variable	Comparison	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval (Lower - Upper)
	Management Studies - Pharmacy	-0.15481	0.31799	0.989	-1.0287 to 0.7191
	Management Studies - Hotel Management and Catering	-0.57147	0.24991	0.153	-1.2583 to 0.1153
	Computer Sciences - Management Studies	-0.29244	0.25155	0.773	-0.9837 to 0.3989
	Computer Sciences - Engineering and Technical course	-0.38129	0.27295	0.630	-1.1314 to 0.3688
	Computer Sciences - Pharmacy	-0.44725	0.34177	0.686	-1.3865 to 0.4920
	Computer Sciences - Hotel Management and Catering	-0.86392*	0.27955	0.019	-1.6322 to -0.0957
	Engineering and Technical course - Management Studies	0.08885	0.24250	0.996	-0.5776 to 0.7553
	Engineering and Technical course - Computer Sciences	0.38129	0.27295	0.630	-0.3688 to 1.1314
	Engineering and Technical course - Pharmacy	-0.06596	0.33517	1.000	-0.9871 to 0.8552
	Engineering and Technical course - Hotel Management and Catering	-0.48263	0.27143	0.389	-1.2286 to 0.2633
	Pharmacy - Management Studies	0.15481	0.31799	0.989	-0.7191 to 1.0287
	Pharmacy - Computer Sciences	0.44725	0.34177	0.686	-0.4920 to 1.3865
	Pharmacy - Engineering and Technical course	0.06596	0.33517	1.000	-0.8552 to 0.9871
	Pharmacy - Hotel Management and Catering	-0.41667	0.34057	0.738	-1.3526 to 0.5193
	Hotel Management and Catering - Management Studies	0.57147	0.24991	0.153	-0.1153 to 1.2583
	Hotel Management and Catering - Computer Sciences	0.86392*	0.27955	0.019	0.0957 to 1.6322
	Hotel Management and Catering - Engineering and Technical course	0.48263	0.27143	0.389	-0.2633 to 1.2286
	Hotel Management and Catering - Pharmacy	0.41667	0.34057	0.738	-0.5193 to 1.3526
Teaching Qual	Management Studies - Computer Sciences	0.13200	0.15989	0.923	-0.3074 to 0.5714
	Management Studies - Engineering and Technical course	0.19470	0.15414	0.714	-0.2289 to 0.6183
	Management Studies - Pharmacy	0.00256	0.20212	1.000	-0.5529 to 0.5580
	Management Studies - Hotel Management and Catering	-0.30785	0.15885	0.300	-0.7444 to 0.1287
	Computer Sciences - Management Studies	-0.13200	0.15989	0.923	-0.5714 to 0.3074
	Computer Sciences - Engineering and Technical course	0.06271	0.17349	0.996	-0.4141 to 0.5395



Dependent Variable	Comparison	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval (Lower - Upper)
	Computer Sciences - Pharmacy	-0.12943	0.21724	0.976	-0.7265 to 0.4676
	Computer Sciences - Hotel Management and Catering	-0.43985	0.17769	0.100	-0.9282 to 0.0485
	Engineering and Technical course - Management Studies	-0.19470	0.15414	0.714	-0.6183 to 0.2289
	Engineering and Technical course - Computer Sciences	-0.06271	0.17349	0.996	-0.5395 to 0.4141
	Engineering and Technical course - Pharmacy	-0.19214	0.21305	0.896	-0.7776 to 0.3934
	Engineering and Technical course - Hotel Management and Catering	-0.50256*	0.17253	0.032	-0.9767 to -0.0284
	Pharmacy - Management Studies	-0.00256	0.20212	1.000	-0.5580 to 0.5529
	Pharmacy - Computer Sciences	0.12943	0.21724	0.976	-0.4676 to 0.7265
	Pharmacy - Engineering and Technical course	0.19214	0.21305	0.896	-0.3934 to 0.7776
	Pharmacy - Hotel Management and Catering	-0.31042	0.21648	0.606	-0.9053 to 0.2845
	Hotel Management and Catering - Management Studies	0.30785	0.15885	0.300	-0.1287 to 0.7444
	Hotel Management and Catering - Computer Sciences	0.43985	0.17769	0.100	-0.0485 to 0.9282
	Hotel Management and Catering - Engineering and Technical course	0.50256*	0.17253	0.032	0.0284 to 0.9767
	Hotel Management and Catering - Pharmacy	0.31042	0.21648	0.606	-0.2845 to 0.9053

- The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The findings of the post hoc analysis (Tukey Honestly Significant Difference, or HSD) performed for various Dimensions and departments are shown in Table 3. The mean Empathy score for Hotel Management and Catering is significantly higher than that for Computer Sciences (mean difference = 0.86392,  $p = 0.019$ ). This indicates that teachers in Hotel Management and Catering perceive a significantly higher level of Empathy from their institutions compared to teachers in Computer Sciences. None of the other comparisons showed significant differences. This suggests that the levels of Empathy perceived by teachers in Management Studies, Engineering and Technical courses, and Pharmacy are not significantly different from each

other or from Computer Sciences. The significantly higher Empathy in Hotel Management and Catering suggests that faculty in this department may be more attuned to students' individual needs and more supportive. Other departments, especially Computer Sciences, might benefit from adopting some of these practices to improve their Empathy scores.

The mean teaching quality score for Hotel Management and Catering is significantly higher than that for Engineering and Technical courses (mean difference = 0.50256,  $p = 0.032$ ). This suggests that teachers in Hotel Management and Catering perceive a significantly higher quality of teaching compared to those in Engineering and Technical courses. There were no other significant differences in teaching quality among the other departments, indicating that the perceived teaching quality is relatively consistent across Management Studies, Computer Sciences, and Pharmacy. The significantly higher teaching quality perceived in Hotel Management and Catering compared to Engineering and Technical courses suggests that the former might have better teaching practices, course content, or student engagement strategies. Engineering and Technical courses could investigate the specific practices used in Hotel Management and Catering to enhance their teaching quality.

### **Analysis with Respect to University**

Table 4 presents the results of the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) conducted with respect to different universities for various Dimensions.

There is a significant difference in Assurance scores among different universities ( $F = 4.594$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ). There is a significant difference in Tangibility scores among different universities ( $F = 6.306$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). There is a significant difference in Empathy scores among different universities ( $F = 5.083$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ). There is no significant difference in Responsiveness scores among different universities ( $F = 2.561$ ,  $p = 0.139$ ).

**Table 4**  
**ANOVA results with respect to university**

Attribute	PUP (Mean, Std. Deviation) N=50	PUC (Mean, Std. Deviation) N=50	GNDU (Mean, Std. Deviation) N=50	MRSPTU (Mean, Std. Deviation) N=50	IKGPTU (Mean, Std. Deviation) N=40	Total (Mean, Std. Deviation) N=240	F Value	Sig.
Assurance	2.7500 (0.8978)	2.7609 (1.6087)	3.4675 (1.1540)	2.6217 (1.0242)	2.7968 (1.4744)	3.0145 (1.3129)	4.594	0.001
Tangibility	3.5067 (1.0164)	3.5261 (1.4626)	4.1231 (0.9451)	3.0640 (0.9032)	4.0778 (1.3048)	3.8736 (1.1778)	6.306	0.000
Reliability	3.5233 (1.3312)	4.1130 (1.5461)	4.1758 (1.1328)	2.9520 (1.0038)	3.6926 (1.5551)	3.8128 (1.3788)	5.083	0.001
Empathy	3.3700 (1.4549)	3.6696 (1.6092)	4.0110 (1.3023)	3.3000 (0.7979)	3.4778 (1.5165)	3.6588 (1.4027)	2.561	0.139
Responsiveness	4.1133 (1.0689)	3.9783 (1.4576)	4.1813 (1.4141)	3.7520 (1.6833)	4.1852 (1.4271)	4.1128 (1.4103)	0.564	0.689
Teaching Quality	3.8467 (0.7802)	4.0696 (0.7754)	3.9824 (0.8147)	3.9160 (0.8882)	4.1198 (0.9960)	4.0120 (0.8760)	0.696	0.595

In fact, no significant difference was found in Reliability scores among different universities ( $F = 0.564$ ,  $p = 0.689$ ). The overall mean scores for reliability are not significantly different across universities. No significant difference was found in Teaching Quality scores among different universities ( $F = 0.696$ ,  $p = 0.595$ ). There are no appreciable differences in the mean overall scores for teaching quality between universities. To put it briefly, there may be differences in how these Dimensions are perceived by universities based on the notable differences in Assurance, Tangibility and Empathy scores.

Further, Tukey HSD Post Hoc analysis was employed and the results are depicted in Table 5 show that for Assurance, GNDU, Amritsar has a significantly higher Assurance score compared to MRSPTU, Bathinda (mean

difference = 0.84577,  $p = 0.030$ ). This suggests that teachers at GNDU, Amritsar perceive a higher level of confidence and credibility in their institution compared to those at MRSPTU, Bathinda. GNDU, Amritsar also has a significantly higher Assurance score compared to IKGPTU, Kapurthala (mean difference = 0.67068,  $p = 0.006$ ). This indicates a similar perception of higher confidence and credibility among teachers at GNDU, Amritsar.

In case of Tangibility, GNDU, Amritsar has a significantly higher Tangibility score compared to MRSPTU, Bathinda (mean difference = 1.05908,  $p = 0.000$ ). This implies that teachers at GNDU, Amritsar perceive better physical facilities and equipment compared to those at MRSPTU, Bathinda. IKGPTU, Kapurthala has a significantly higher Tangibility score compared to MRSPTU, Bathinda (mean difference = 1.01378,  $p = 0.001$ ). This suggests that IKGPTU, Kapurthala is perceived to have better physical facilities and equipment than MRSPTU, Bathinda.

**Table 5**  
**Post hoc Analysis with Respect to University (Tukey HSD)**

Dependent Variable	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Assurance	PUP - PUC	-0.01087	0.35380	1.000	-0.9832	0.9614
	PUP - GNDU	-0.71751	0.26875	0.061	-1.4561	0.0211
	PUP - MRSPTU	0.12826	0.34569	0.996	-0.8218	1.0783
	PUP - IKGPTU	-0.04683	0.27283	1.000	-0.7966	0.7030
	PUC - PUP	0.01087	0.35380	1.000	-0.9614	0.9832
	PUC - GNDU	-0.70664	0.29793	0.127	-1.5254	0.1121
	PUC - MRSPTU	0.13913	0.36883	0.996	-0.8745	1.1528
	PUC - IKGPTU	-0.03596	0.30161	1.000	-0.8649	0.7929
	GNDU - PUP	0.71751	0.26875	0.061	-0.0211	1.4561
	GNDU - PUC	0.70664	0.29793	0.127	-0.1121	1.5254
	GNDU - MRSPTU	0.84577*	0.28826	0.030	0.0536	1.6380
	GNDU - IKGPTU	0.67068*	0.19500	0.006	0.1348	1.2066
	MRSPTU - PUP	-0.12826	0.34569	0.996	-1.0783	0.8218
	MRSPTU - PUC	-0.13913	0.36883	0.996	-1.1528	0.8745

Dependent Variable	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
	MRSPTU - GNDU	-0.84577*	0.28826	0.030	-1.6380	-0.0536
	MRSPTU - IKGPTU	-0.17509	0.29207	0.975	-0.9777	0.6276
	IKGPTU - PUP	0.04683	0.27283	1.000	-0.7030	0.7966
	IKGPTU - PUC	0.03596	0.30161	1.000	-0.7929	0.8649
	IKGPTU - GNDU	-0.67068*	0.19500	0.006	-1.2066	-0.1348
	IKGPTU - MRSPTU	0.17509	0.29207	0.975	-0.6276	0.9777
<b>Tangibility</b>	PUP - PUC	-0.01942	0.31335	1.000	-0.8806	0.8417
	PUP - GNDU	-0.61641	0.23803	0.075	-1.2706	0.0377
	PUP - MRSPTU	0.44267	0.30617	0.599	-0.3988	1.2841
	PUP - IKGPTU	-0.57111	0.24164	0.129	-1.2352	0.0930
	PUC - PUP	0.01942	0.31335	1.000	-0.8417	0.8806
	PUC - GNDU	-0.59699	0.26387	0.161	-1.3221	0.1282
	PUC - MRSPTU	0.46209	0.32666	0.619	-0.4357	1.3598
	PUC - IKGPTU	-0.55169	0.26713	0.239	-1.2858	0.1824
	GNDU - PUP	0.61641	0.23803	0.075	-0.0377	1.2706
	GNDU - PUC	0.59699	0.26387	0.161	-0.1282	1.3221
	GNDU - MRSPTU	1.05908*	0.25530	0.000	0.3575	1.7607
	GNDU - IKGPTU	0.04530	0.17271	0.999	-0.4293	0.5199
	MRSPTU - PUP	-0.44267	0.30617	0.599	-1.2841	0.3988
	MRSPTU - PUC	-0.46209	0.32666	0.619	-1.3598	0.4357
	MRSPTU - GNDU	-1.05908*	0.25530	0.000	-1.7607	-0.3575
	MRSPTU - IKGPTU	-1.01378*	0.25868	0.001	-1.7247	-0.3029
	IKGPTU - PUP	0.57111	0.24164	0.129	-0.0930	1.2352
	IKGPTU - PUC	0.55169	0.26713	0.239	-0.1824	1.2858
	IKGPTU - GNDU	-0.04530	0.17271	0.999	-0.5199	0.4293
	IKGPTU - MRSPTU	1.01378*	0.25868	0.001	0.3029	1.7247
<b>Empathy</b>	PUP - PUC	-0.58971	0.37020	0.503	-1.6071	0.4277
	PUP - GNDU	-0.65249	0.28121	0.142	-1.4253	0.1203
	PUP - MRSPTU	0.57133	0.36172	0.512	-0.4227	1.5654
	PUP - IKGPTU	-0.16926	0.28548	0.976	-0.9538	0.6153

Dependent Variable	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
	PUC - PUP	0.58971	0.37020	0.503	-0.4277	1.6071
	PUC - GNDU	-0.06278	0.31174	1.000	-0.9195	0.7939
	PUC - MRSPTU	1.16104*	0.38593	0.024	0.1004	2.2217
	PUC - IKGPTU	0.42045	0.31559	0.671	-0.4469	1.2878
	GNDU - PUP	0.65249	0.28121	0.142	-0.1203	1.4253
	GNDU - PUC	0.06278	0.31174	1.000	-0.7939	0.9195
	GNDU - MRSPTU	1.22382*	0.30162	0.001	0.3949	2.0527
	GNDU - IKGPTU	0.48323	0.20404	0.128	-0.0775	1.0440
	MRSPTU - PUP	-0.57133				

For Empathy, Panjab University, Chandigarh has a significantly higher Empathy score compared to MRSPTU, Bathinda (mean difference = 1.16104,  $p = 0.024$ ). This indicates that teachers at Panjab University, Chandigarh perceive a higher level of Empathy and personal care from their institution compared to those at MRSPTU, Bathinda. GNDU, Amritsar also has a significantly higher Empathy score compared to MRSPTU, Bathinda (mean difference = 1.22382,  $p = 0.001$ ), further reinforcing the lower perception of Empathy at MRSPTU, Bathinda.

The higher Assurance scores at GNDU, Amritsar suggest that this university could serve as a model for building teachers’ confidence and credibility, particularly for MRSPTU, Bathinda and IKGPTU, Kapurthala. The significantly higher Tangibility scores for GNDU, Amritsar and IKGPTU, Kapurthala compared to MRSPTU, Bathinda indicate that improvements in physical facilities and equipment at MRSPTU, Bathinda could enhance teachers’ perceptions. The significantly higher Empathy scores at Panjab University, Chandigarh and GNDU, Amritsar suggest that MRSPTU, Bathinda could benefit from adopting practices that foster a more empathetic and caring environment for teachers.

**Analysis with Respect to Experience in Years**

The ANOVA results in Table 6 highlight the consistent perceptions of faculty

members across various years of experience regarding teaching and service quality dimensions, including Assurance, Tangibility, Empathy, Responsiveness, Reliability, and Teaching Quality.

No significant variation was found in perceptions of **Assurance** ( $F = 1.495$ ,  $p = 0.180$ ), indicating that faculty members, regardless of experience, share similar views on the institution's commitment to quality and financial incentives. Similarly, **Empathy** showed no significant differences ( $F = 1.051$ ,  $p = 0.393$ ), suggesting that faculty feel the institution understands their unique teaching needs regardless of tenure. The **Responsiveness** dimension also exhibited no significant variation ( $F = 0.759$ ,  $p = 0.603$ ), reflecting a consistent view across experience levels on how responsive the institution is to faculty needs.

**Table 6**  
**ANOVA results with respect to Experience in Years**

Variable	1st year (N=6)	1-2 years (N=10)	3-5 years (N=56)	6-10 years (N=54)	11-15 years (N=61)	16-20 years (N=28)	More than 20 years (N=25)	Total (N=240)	F Value	Sig.
<b>Assurance</b>	3.4191 (1.2407)	2.6000 (1.1499)	3.1082 (1.3541)	3.0280 (1.3154)	2.8283 (1.4257)	3.5536 (1.1332)	2.7861 (1.1524)	3.0145 (1.3129)	1.495	0.180
<b>Tangibility</b>	3.1167 (0.7521)	3.2700 (1.3242)	3.9786 (1.2092)	3.9870 (1.1694)	3.8984 (1.3052)	4.2250 (1.0676)	3.5086 (0.8469)	3.8736 (1.1778)	2.038	0.061
<b>Empathy</b>	3.7667 (1.5002)	3.5400 (1.2825)	4.0107 (1.3650)	3.9833 (1.3439)	3.6541 (1.4490)	4.0071 (1.5001)	3.4400 (1.2181)	3.8128 (1.3788)	1.051	0.393
<b>Responsiveness</b>	3.8000 (0.2191)	2.9700 (1.4900)	3.6946 (1.2413)	3.5648 (1.4313)	3.8885 (1.3647)	3.5821 (1.7864)	3.5800 (1.4293)	3.6588 (1.4027)	0.759	0.603
<b>Reliability</b>	3.9833 (1.2782)	4.0300 (1.7945)	4.3482 (1.1767)	3.6796 (1.5114)	4.3459 (1.4378)	4.4679 (1.4982)	3.7600 (1.2327)	4.1128 (1.4103)	2.117	0.052
<b>Teaching Quality</b>	4.1333 (0.6623)	3.5800 (0.7084)	4.1446 (0.8792)	3.8574 (0.8637)	4.1393 (0.9477)	4.0393 (0.9219)	3.8971 (0.7625)	4.0120 (0.8760)	1.246	0.284

While **Tangibility** showed a marginal trend towards variation ( $F = 2.038$ ,  $p = 0.061$ ), with those in the 16-20 years category rating it highest, it was not statistically significant. **Reliability** was also nearly significant ( $F = 2.117$ ,  $p = 0.052$ ), with long-serving faculty members (16-20 years) reporting higher reliability scores. Finally, **Teaching Quality** did not differ significantly across experience groups ( $F = 1.246$ ,  $p = 0.284$ ), suggesting a uniform perception of teaching quality regardless of faculty tenure. Overall, these results suggest that faculty members, irrespective of their years of service, perceive the institution's quality in a similar manner.

## DISCUSSION

This study explored the perceptions of faculty members regarding service quality and teaching quality across demographic variables in the state universities of Punjab. The findings provide valuable insights into the faculty's views on institutional practices, highlighting significant differences in perceptions based on factors such as department, university affiliation, and, to a lesser extent, age. By examining the various dimensions of service quality and teaching quality, the study aims to contribute to enhancing the academic environment for both faculty and students in Punjab's higher education institutions.

The analysis revealed no significant variations in perceptions of Assurance, indicating that faculty members across different age groups, departments, and universities felt equally confident about the institution's commitment to providing support and reward systems. This suggests that institutional policies surrounding teacher incentives, management structures, and communication strategies are largely viewed as consistent by faculty members, irrespective of their demographic backgrounds. Similarly, Tangibility, which reflects physical resources and infrastructure, was perceived similarly by faculty members, suggesting that most institutions have a fairly uniform distribution of resources, such as updated computer labs, projectors, and classroom technologies.

However, important differences emerged in Empathy and Teaching Quality. Faculty members in departments like Hotel Management and Catering



reported higher levels of Empathy, indicating that their specific needs were better understood by the institution compared to those in fields like Computer Science and Engineering. This highlights the need for institutions to tailor strategies to improve Empathy in departments where faculty may feel less understood. Teaching Quality also varied significantly across departments, with Hotel Management faculty rating it higher than their counterparts in Engineering and Technical courses. This difference could be attributed to the nature of the curriculum, teaching methods, or student engagement in these departments, emphasizing the need for Engineering and Technical faculties to enhance their teaching practices.

Furthermore, differences were observed in Assurance, Tangibility, and Empathy across universities, with some institutions, such as Guru Nanak Dev University (GNDU), Amritsar, receiving higher ratings for these dimensions compared to others like Maharaja Ranjit Singh Punjab Technical University (MRSPTU), Bathinda. This suggests that GNDU is perceived as providing better support and resources, while MRSPTU may need to improve its physical infrastructure to enhance faculty perceptions.

The faculty members across various years of experience seem to share similar perceptions about the various quality dimensions, such as Assurance, Empathy, Responsiveness, and Teaching Quality. While minor trends were noticed in Tangibility and Reliability, no significant differences were found, indicating that teaching quality, empathy, and organizational commitment are valued similarly across faculty members, regardless of their teaching experience. These results emphasize the consistency of perceptions within the faculty, which can be interpreted as an indication of a stable institutional environment.

## **Conclusion**

This study provides important insights into faculty perceptions of service and teaching quality across various state universities in Punjab. It highlights that while most dimensions of service quality and teaching quality are perceived

similarly across demographic factors such as experience and department, certain areas—like Empathy and Teaching Quality—warrant attention for improvement. Faculty in different departments and universities perceive varying levels of institutional support, and addressing these differences through targeted strategies can improve faculty satisfaction and performance.

In conclusion, the study suggests that although faculty members generally share similar perceptions of institutional quality, there are opportunities for improvement, particularly in tailoring support systems for faculty in specialized fields. Universities can benefit from focusing on enhancing Empathy and Teaching Quality through professional development, personalized support strategies, and improved communication, especially in departments with differing perceptions. A more comprehensive approach to service quality, addressing both tangible and emotional support, can further strengthen the academic environment, benefiting both faculty and students.

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## **Variants of Gentle Parenting: An Approach Embraced by Working Mothers**

AISHANYA TRIPATHI MISHRA, PRITAM RAJAK

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### **Abstract**

*Parenting does not involve a universal or standard procedure but encompasses different narratives for different individuals. The idea of parenting is usually to nurture and nourish individuals towards wholesome development. Raising a child on strict disciplinary grounds can be quite taxing. Gentle parenting can be a game changer where a collaborative relationship can be established between a parent and a child by adopting a positive approach towards learning. The present study aimed at focusing on understanding awareness level regarding gentle parenting among the working mothers and the prevalent parenting style accepted by them. A quantitative descriptive method has been employed for collection and interpretation of the data. This paper will contribute to the emotional awareness of both the parents and the children towards upliftment of independent and empathetic individuals.*

**Keywords:** Gentle Parenting, Parenting Style, Working Women, Parenting Approaches

### **Introduction**

The present era regarding parenting is considered to be like acquiring mastery and gaining refinement over perfection of the skill. The early years of the child or rather the presence of child in its mother's womb is considered to be most the vital as this leads to foundational learning throughout his/her life. The Indian traditional texts have given emphasis to such learning. It is mentioned in our scriptures that *Prahlada* acquired supreme bhakti when sage Narada taught to his mother *Kayadhu*. Even so rishi Aurobindo has

mentioned that parenting is transfer of those values, cultures, norms, and traditions from one generation to the other. The role of parents is considered to be quite pivotal in every stage of a child's life. Parenting is a dual responsibility for fostering and offering a conducive environment to the child's wholesome development of personality. Parenting encompasses not just giving birth to a child but by raising and them who turn to be a well-balanced individual. Motherhood is beautiful yet a challenging journey in a women's life. Whether she is homemaker or not she is always being judged in terms of handling the home and child single handedly. Our Manu Smriti has mentioned that "Janamana Jayetey Shudraha, Sanskaraat Dwij Uchyatey", which means that human being after born are ignorant and become wise only after getting the knowledge of the Vedic literature. Children become well versed in their character once they are disciplined through punishment while acquiring teaching. Pannini Muni's Vedic grammar states "*Samritaihee pannibhirghnanti gurvo na vishokshitehey, Laalanaashrayinno doshaastaadanashrayinno gunnaha.*" This statement suggests that parents and Acharyas (Teachers) who discipline their children for their mistakes believe that they are offering a high standard of living to them. Conversely, parents who excessively indulge their children with emotional affection and cater to their endless demands are effectively pampering their children, which can have a detrimental impact on their character (Dhanya & Sukumaran, 2013; Baumrid, 1991). Education should be that which will allow them to serve their parents as well the nation with love and respect. Children are expected to obey their parents and teachers without questioning and doubting them. The rules and regulations serve as borderlines and crossing them would lead to severe consequences. It was the duty or Dharma to protect the law and maintain proper social order by the authorities, parents at large where if strict punishment not given would not lead to the purification of soul and waver the personality of the individual. Parents followed strict and authoritarian styles to discipline their child which could range from mild to severe forms of punishment. The milder punishment

would include scolding, debarring them from food and other privileges whereas the severe form of punishment would go to any level.

The child may show indiscipline behaviour in the presence or absence of parents and to control such indiscipline behaviour is more important in front of others without validating the child's feelings. India being a country with different languages, regions, religions, and cultures parenting styles may differ and alter. There have been few studies conducted in India that show a clear picture of the disciplinary practices employed by the parents with significant differences between mothers and fathers (Dhanya & Sukumaran, 2013). According to Hunter (2000), Indian mothers belonging to rural areas have used several verbal as well as physical disciplines. Parenting styles change with the demands and needs of the society which clearly impact on the behaviour of child in the later stages of their life. Modern parenting affects the health and mental wellbeing of the individual and is a determining factor in child development. The temperament of both the parent and the children has an impact on the parenting style, and there may also be differences in parenting style between the mother and father (Belsky, 2005).

### **Different variants in Parenting:**

#### **Authoritarian Parenting:**

As the name suggests this style of parenting is inclined more towards demandingness than responsiveness. Parents opt for more strict, controlled and harsh punishments more often quite arbitrarily. Children succumb to this pattern often show aggression, lack of confidence, low self-esteem, inefficient time management skills, quite often characterized with submissive and self-harming behaviours. Parents offering more disciplinary and strict measures would make their ward a bit more anti-social and dependent individuals. By adhering to the family's set rules and regulations, the child learns not to question authority and learns to believe in the authoritarian approach as a means of survival. Alloy et al. (2006) also noted that certain parenting styles characterized by a lack of warmth and care towards youth



and children might elevate the risk of developing depression. Authoritarian parenting is associated with a feeling of hopelessness and various other intrapersonal problems. Open communication and positive talk are keenly not encouraged fearing of losing their control and dictate on their children.

### **Authoritative Parenting**

Another term to describe this form of parenting is gentle parenting where responsiveness and building connections is given prior emphasis. This form of parenting has similarities with Montessori method where the child leads and parents are mere spectators. The child is nurtured well and is provided the right kind of environment to blossom. In education, this form of parenting is child centric where despite having high expectations from them the sheer role of providing guidance and giving encouragement is pinned. Disciplining the child also is unique and consistent where parents opt for all ears approach. Their views and opinions are marked leading to healthy discussions and negotiations. There is room for constant assimilation and accommodation of ideas and reinforcement of desirable set of behaviours. Baumrind (1971) conceptualized the '*authoritative parenting style*' as a controlling and demanding style, attempting to "direct the child's activities but in a rational, issue-oriented manner. The parents encourage verbal give and take and share with the child the reasoning behind their policy". The role of the parents is to provide that positive command and support which will play a significant mark in a child's life. A parenting approach which is regarded to be the best in terms of understanding the child's psyche which would lead them to a happy, independent, self-reliant, self-controlled and capable individuals.

### **Permissive Parenting Style**

A form of parenting which is also known as indulgent or laissez-faire. Parents following this style are usually warm and cordial with their children and they are also reluctant to impose any form of strict discipline on them. The children are not in control of their parents for which a strict boundary isn't maintained. Children are not expected or rather imposed to behave like

adults resulting in regulation by the children themselves. Parents don't want the credit of being role models nor being an authoritarian figure, nor look for approval of help in household chores, obedience, or orderly behaviour which in turn makes the children less self-reliant, explorative and self-controlled.

### **Uninvolved Parents**

This is somewhat a parenting style where parents tend to become neglectful of the various needs and demands of the child, just keeping to the basic needs of food, clothing and shelter. Children are given the power to take decisions. A minimal level of guidance and nurturing is given to them. The prime reason why this form of parenting has acquired new trend is that both the parents are usually stressed and overworked. The parents fail to connect emotionally or develop a bond of emotions with their child. As long as the behaviour of the child is not bothering them, they do not plunge into conclusions. Children develop the art of independence and being self-reliant at an early age which is again a positive sign but on a negative note there is presence of low self-esteem which occurs due to less or no attention. Social skills don't get refined along with various other skills with children of uninvolved parents.

### **Misconceptions about Gentle Parenting**

Gentle parenting being a trendsetter in today's time is seen to be wrongly interpreted. One of the biggest drawbacks is that in gentle parenting we mean we are always 'gentle' with our children. In reality, as human beings we can muddle up sometimes or rather many times, but the focus should always be on repair and reconstruct. The behaviour that we face from our children will not always be convenient but understanding every behaviour has story and message to convey. As parents we do not mean to encourage hurtful behaviour rather drawing healthy boundaries and holding them firmly. The role parents are to first love themselves and then impart that love and respect to the child as well. Gentle parenting does not mean that you are already a gentle parent but as parents we are constantly working on ourselves every day to identify our triggers and healing ourselves actively. Most importantly in gentle parenting positive discipline is encouraged instead of shaming and putting the child in isolation.

## **Gentle Parenting and Discipline**

Children flourish when they have close, dependable relationships that offer love, nurturance, security, responsiveness, and encouragement to explore. Development can be disrupted without at least one such relationship (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). The aim of discipline is not to ensure that every infraction is instantly met with a consequence. The real goal to disciplining a child should not be based on a particular consequence but should be aligned with teaching. Spanking alters children's brain response in ways similar to severe maltreatment (Curtas, 2021). No study is found that physical punishment would enhance developmental health. Our prime concern should be to focus on the reason behind inappropriate behaviour rather than just the behaviour itself.

## **Review of Related Literature**

Hurlock (2001) has explained that mothers who are working undertakes permissive parenting style to give their students the required supervision providing little discipline to the child rather no discipline at all they don't give desired boundary and they are brought up at their own free will. Baumrind (2005) has stated that mothers who follow a permissive parenting style likely to show high parental control, usually allow whatever they want to give minimalistic punishment to them. Alizadeh (2011) has explained that strict parenting practices may affect the psychological wellbeing of children negatively. Santrock (2014) has explained that each stage of child's life requires different parenting styles like parenting at the early childhood stage wavers with that of the later childhood stages. Sunita et al. (2012) has mentioned that authoritative parenting style is related to provide a rise in self-esteem and give the desired life satisfaction. Moreover, Baumrind's (1971) study has viewed that authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive parenting style are used currently to cater to provide discipline to the child. Anil, et al. (2021) has mentioned that the quality of mother child relationship is extremely pivotal for their all-round development which includes providing them the right attention and guidance.

## **Need and Significance of the Study**

Children are inherently good but when they come into the clutches of society reformation takes place. For a child to grow and develop in their innate potentialities a desired boundary is maintained from the parent's end. Children will nurture and grow when the parents are able to build a strong emotional connection. When the parents become mindful of their words and intentions a positive relationship can be developed between the parent and child. There is a positive emotional regulation which reduces anxiety to a certain level.

## **Objectives of the study**

1. To find out the level of awareness towards Gentle Parenting among working mothers.
2. To find out the significant difference between the mothers who belong to Joint Family and the mothers who belong to Nuclear Family regarding Gentle Parenting.
3. To find out the significant difference between the mothers who belong to different Family Groups regarding Gentle Parenting.
4. To develop awareness regarding Gentle parenting among the Parents.

## **Hypotheses**

- $H_{01}$ : There is no significant difference between the mothers who belong to Joint Family and the mothers who belong to Nuclear Family regarding Gentle Parenting.
- $H_{02}$ : There is no significant difference between the mothers whose child stays with nanny and the mothers whose child stays with other family members regarding Gentle Parenting.

## **Methodology**

Descriptive survey design is employed for this study. The study was conducted among 21 working mothers at Bhawanipur Education Society College, Kolkata, to assess their level of awareness regarding gentle parenting. The Bhawanipur Education Society College is a private co-

educational, linguistic minority institution, run under the ‘Bhawanipur Gujrati Education Society’. The purposive sampling technique was used to collect the relevant data from the respondents. Data were collected through a questionnaire, consisting of 21 items, prepared based on the work of Robinson, Mandleco, Olsen, and Hart (1995) along with interviews. The Mann-Whitney test was used to analyze the hypotheses and interpret the results.

### Research Tool

A questionnaire based on Robinson, Mandleco, Olsen, and Hart (1995) was developed for this study. It consists of 21 items and follows a five-point scale: “Strongly Agree”, “Agree”, “Agree to Some Extent”, “Disagree”, and “Strongly Disagree”.

### Analysis and Interpretation:

Assessing the awareness level, the study found that the maximum number (80.95%) of working mothers have an average attitude towards gentle parenting. Moreover, it is also observed that 9.52% of working mothers possess a slightly high attitude towards gentle parenting and only 4.76% of working mothers have a very high attitude towards gentle parenting.

**Table 1**  
**Level of Awareness about Gentle Parenting among the Working Mothers**

Sl. No.	Degree of Attitude	Range	No of Students	Percentage of students %
1	Low level of Attitude	16.5 – 25.16	0	0%
2	Slight Attitude	25.16 – 33.82	1	4.76%
3	Average Attitude	33.82 – 51.14	17	80.95%
4	Slight High Attitude	51.14 – 59.8	2	9.52%
5	High Attitude	59.8 – 68.46	1	4.76%

Hence, the result signifies that most of the working mothers (17 out of 21) possess average level gentle parenting attitudes, and some of the working mothers (3 out of 21) tend towards high attitudes towards gentle parenting.

Analysis of H<sub>01</sub>

Table 2

**Difference between the mothers who belong to Joint Family and the mothers who belong to Nuclear Family regarding Gentle Parenting**

Test	Significance	Remarks
Mann-Whiteney Test	0.659	Retain the Null Hypothesis

Mann-Whiteney Test have been performed on the data to check if there is any significant difference between the working mothers who belong to Joint Family and Nuclear Family regarding the level of gentle parenting the above table demonstrates the significance value is 0.659. Hence, the Null Hypothesis is accepted and there is no significant difference found between the mothers who belong to Joint Family and the mothers who belong to Nuclear Family regarding gentle parenting.

Analysis of H<sub>02</sub>

Table 3

**Difference between the mothers whose child stays with nanny and the mothers whose child stays with other family members regarding Gentle Parenting.**

Test	Significance	Remarks
Mann-Whiteney Test	0.635	Retain the Null Hypothesis

Mann-Whiteney Test have been performed on the data to check if there is any significant difference between the mothers whose child stays with nanny and the mothers whose child stays with other family members regarding the level

of gentle parenting the above table demonstrates the significance value is 0.635. Hence, the Null Hypothesis is accepted and there is no significant difference found between mothers whose child stays with nanny and the mothers whose child stays with other family members regarding gentle parenting.

### **Development of Awareness among the Parents regarding Gentle Parenting**

In the present time parenting has become a task and a challenge. It really takes a toll on the parents to raise a disciplined and well-groomed child. What the parents are not aware of is that it is not hard as it seems. Working mothers can educate themselves of pros and cons of parenting through the books available to them. A community of like-minded mothers can be built where everyone has their own shares and views about gentle parenting. Advice can be taken from parenting experts and counselors for leading parents in the right direction. Lastly, it is the mother who knows her child the best hence going with her intuition and instinct to discipline the child is definitely noteworthy.

### **Conclusion**

Parents have this incredible responsibility of nurturing their children. They play a promising role in shaping their hearts, personality, their character and most importantly structure their brain. Children don't learn through instructions; they pick and grasp through observation. As Maria Montessori rightly mentions that the role of parents is to create the unconditional bond of love which would lead them to independence. In gentle parenting a bond of love, respect and trust is created. Being gentle with the children leads them to an inner voice that will become their own soon. A parenting voice can be created within us that is supportive, fiercely loving, accepting, and ultimately realizing that all love and healing is within us. The present study needs awareness and more knowledge about gentle parenting. So, before we correct the child it is important for us to realize whether we have developed a

connection with them or not. As parents we cannot choose how our child behaves, but we can choose how we respond to them.

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## **A Systematic Review on Adulterants Present in School Items of Canteens: Safety, Consumer Awareness and Health Risk**

PRAPTI GUPTA, RICHA MEHTA, MANI BHASIN KALRA

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### **Abstract**

*Schools are pivotal in child's life. They are responsible for the overall grooming of the child. Food adulteration is a prevalent issue in school canteens and it interferes with the quality of food causing harm to the health of the consumer. This review paper is aimed to evaluate the common adulterants present in food items. Food products are usually target of adulteration that could be harmful to the consumers. Adulteration can be done intentionally or unintentionally for profit margins in school canteens, to improve taste, shelf-life of snacks and many other reasons. Food safety related concerns occur when adulteration is done due to variety of reasons such as inclusion of expired ingredients, misleading food labels, the addition of harmful compounds to food and more. Simple tests and techniques can be performed to test adulteration in food samples and ensure food safety. It is necessary to participate in sessions creating knowledge and awareness related to adulterants present in food items to secure our future. The review on Adulterants present in commonly used food items/ snacks available in corporate organizations or school canteens will be very useful in understanding the health implications posed by the adulterants and thereby minimizing the usage of adulterants which is crucial aspect of food safety. Also it will help to measure education and awareness regarding food safety among the consumers and what more steps can be taken to reduce adulteration in food items.*

**Keywords:** Organization, canteen, health, adulterants, food items, food safety

## **INTRODUCTION**

Indian private and public schools face number of issues in providing healthy food environment and adulterant free food items in school canteens. Challenges are posed by availability of junk foods, absence of healthy food policies, lack of healthy foods in school canteens. Nutrition Curriculum has become outdated and nutrition inclusion as a subject with other school subjects like science, maths is the need of the hour. Students suffer from macro and micro nutrient deficiencies while overweight and obesity is also on the rise. The reason behind increasing prevalence of overweight in students related to the consumption of ultra processed, unhealthy, adulterated food items that are sold in canteens (Ruge et al., 2022).

### **Food**

Eating healthy and safe food is basic need for human to survive. Healthy and balanced food eaten is absorbed by our body to run metabolic processes and thereby sustain life. Food has several functions in our body such growth, maintenance, repair, wound healing and sustenance. Grains, cereals, pulses, legumes, oil seeds, fruits, vegetables, milk, dairy products, tea, coffee, beverages and spices are some of the major constitutes and items of food. During processing the chances of mixing of low quality materials is high which makes the food adulterated. Such as, milk adulterated with water or surf excel, white tiny stones mixed with rice, black pebbles in raw pulses and so on.

### **Food Adulterant**

“The components or substances that hamper the quality of a particular food when added are commonly termed as adulterants.” Adulterants reduce the nutritional value of food even if it is not harmful. Canteen is one of the integral services of any organization to the community. The main aim of the school canteens is to provide healthy nutritious and safe hygienic food at reasonable cost and which can reinforce classroom learning. “Conscious

or inadvertent contamination of such food places consumers at risk of suffering from food borne illnesses'' (Anila, 2015). There is need for basic science training related to food quality and safety issues at school level to make consumers understand technical specifications and also media tools like radio, television can be used effectively for the quality education related to food safety (Daniel et al., 2000). According to studies it was reported that school food environment and awareness plays key role in influencing eating behavior of school children and they have less control over food environment in or around school canteens. Together with above parameters lack of human availability for monitoring is also one of the issues (Babashahi, 2021).

### **Adulterants in Different Food Items**

#### **Milk**

Study revealed that the milk in canteens is mixed with adulterants such as sugar, formalin, water etc from the point of milking and till it reaches the end consumer (Lateef et al., 2009). When milk is extracted from the udder, it is pure. But it is contaminated by pathogens and chemicals, adulterants leading to unsanitary activities (Singuluri and Sukumaran, 2014). Water was found to be the most common adulterant in milk followed by detergent in a survey conducted by FSSAI in 2011 (Nirwal et al., 2013). Starch is added in milk to increase solid-not-fat content. Hydrogen peroxide is added along the supply chain to increase its freshness. Nitrogen rich compounds like melamine and urea are nitrogen rich and are added to milk to increase its protein content. Addition of urea to milk improves consistency, provides whiteness and helps to standardize SNF to the desired level and to give false positive measurements of protein content in milk. (Poonia et al., 2016, Singuluri et al., 2014).

#### **Spices**

Food fraud is becoming more common as the market for ground spices and herbs grows. Spices stand among the top five adulterated food types. They

are expensive in nature, and consumed widely and frequently and are processed prior to sale thus providing a strong incentive to adulterate (Mohiuddin, 2020). Adulteration in spices can be done with non-functional parts of the plant (e.g. intentional addition of sticks and stems in ground black pepper) during grinding.

### **Oils and fats**

Adulteration of oils and fats is easily done but its detection is not simple. Most of the time ghee is adulterated by mixing it with hydrogenated oils or fats of animal origin. Synthetic colors are added as a result of which it appears similar in appearance to ghee (Choudhary, 2020).

**Table1**

**Common adulterants in oils**

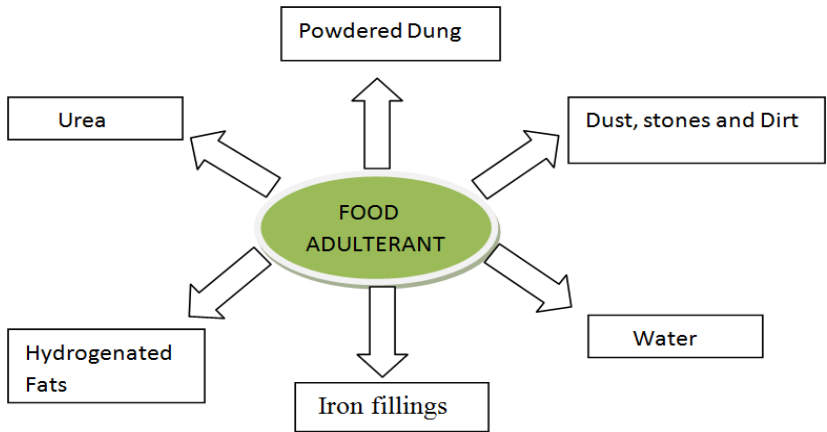
<b>Ingredients</b>	<b>Adulterants</b>
Edible oils	BHA or BHT
Mustard oil	Papaya seed
Vanaspati	Argemone
Groundnut oil	Palmolein, palm oil

### **Coffee and Tea**

Chicory, cereals, caramel, additional parchment, starch, malt, and figs are all added to instant coffee. Tea is one of the most popular beverages, although it is sometimes tainted with saw dust, sand, iron fillings, and dyes, and is sold in loose form.

### **Pulses**

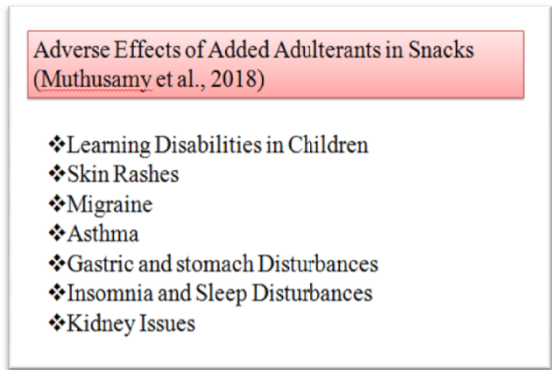
Dal, whole and split pulses contain adulterants such as khesari dal, dust particles, stones, sand and gravel in them. Non -permitted colors are also added which can be toxic and cause irreversible paralysis, cancer, anemia and epilepsy.



**Figure1: Common Food Adulterants**

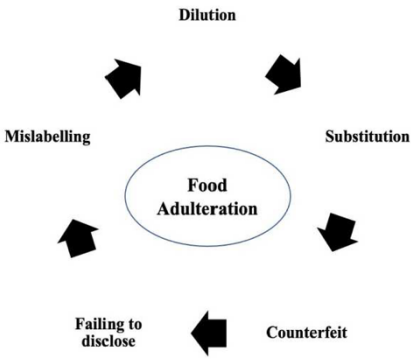
**Adverse Effects of Adulterants**

Addition of adulterants makes food unsafe and unfit for consumption. Adulteration in food causes many health related disorders. “Health problems such as skin rashes, migraine , anaemia, abortion, paralysis, and increase in the incidence of tumours, pathological lesions in vital organs, abnormalities of skin and eyes are a result of adulteration done in food items” (Agarwal et al., 2019)



**Figure 2**

**Health Effects of Adulterants**

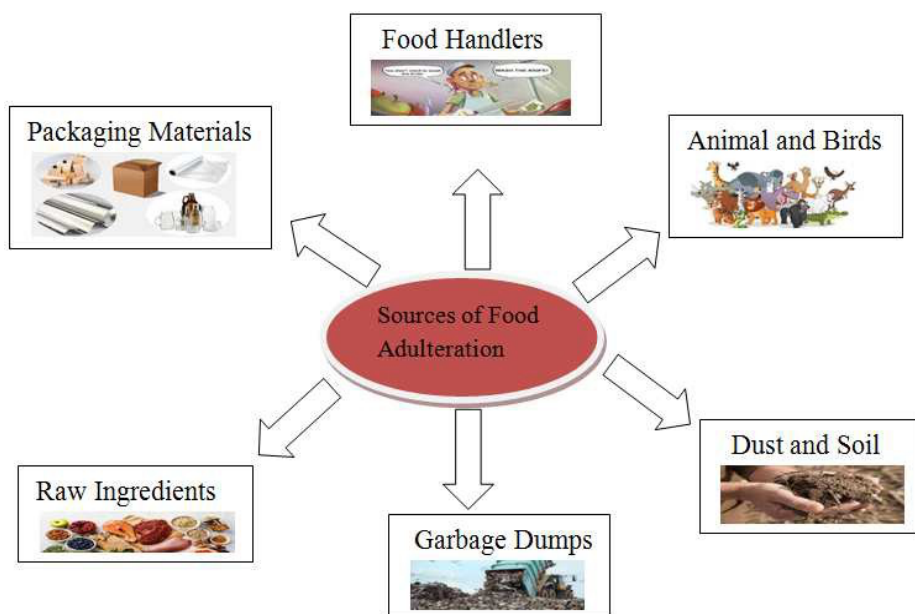


**Figure 3**

**Components of Adulteration**






## Sources of Food Adulteration

Adulteration can be categorized into various categories such as Intentional Adulteration and Unintentional Adulteration. Unintentional adulteration can sometimes act as a source of food adulteration due to ignorance, carelessness, mishandling practices of food handlers improper and unhygienic processing of food. It can be in the form of contamination of foods by microbes and pathogens, open garbage dumps, harmful and toxic packaging material used for food items. Incidental Adulteration such as toxic varieties of pulses and other vegetables can also act as a source of adulteration (Bansal et al., 2017)








**Figure 4: Various Sources of Food Adulteration**

**Table2****Adulterants present in Commonly Available Food Items/ Ingredients in Canteens**

<b>Commonly available Food Items in Canteens</b>	<b>Adulterant Present</b>	<b>Health Effect</b>	<b>Image of Food Item/ Ingredient</b>
Milk	Water, skim milk, urea, hydrogen peroxide	Stomach disturbances, cancer, nausea, heart problems, food poisoning	
Pulses	Metanil yellow, Kesari dal (Lathyrus Sativus) in chana dal	Stomach disorders	
Ghee	Vanaspati, anatta & oleomargarine, animal fats, hydrogenated oils	Stomach disorders, Anemia, enlargement of heart	
Butter	Vegetable oil and anatta	Stomach	
Oil	Rancid oil, Argemone seeds	Glaucoma, Epidemic dropsy	



Common salt	Chalk powder, White powdered stone	Gall bladder stones, gout, arthritis.	
Chilli powder	Brick powder	Stomach issues, cancer	
Coriander powder	Cow dung powder	Metal toxicity, Cancer, blood pressure and other stomach related disorders	
Tea	Tea colored leaves, iron flakes, cashew husk	Liver disorders.	
Coffee	Tamarind seed and chicory powder	Diarrhoea.	

## CONCLUSION

Food adulteration can be said as adding of low quality substances compared to the one superior or subtraction of valuable substances from food items which might be hazardous to health. The comprehensive review on studies indicated that adulteration interfere with the health of the consumers and school students. Kitchen food handlers did not have much

knowledge about food safety and adulteration. It was reported that unhealthy, ultra processed, adulterated foods were present in school canteens. Despite the presence of unhealthy foods being sold, not many studies have been conducted on the type and nature of adulterants present in the food items of school canteens. Knowledge and Awareness sessions about food safety can be organized in the schools for the food handlers and regulations by the school authorities should be made related to the sale and availability of healthy foods in the school premises. Curriculum should include topics which can educate students to make healthy and nutritious food choices.

## **SUGGESTIONS**

Healthy attitudes should be followed in the food processing and kitchen premises of the canteen. Although many policies related to healthy canteen environment are previously made, but poor implementation could be seen based on previous studies. Intervention programs needs to be planned and conducted in the different areas of food safety to prevent bacterial and chemical contamination of foods. Only visual examination cannot guarantee the absence of adulterants because harmful pollutants are present at extremely low levels but, it can still ensure the absence of insects, fungus, and other foreign elements prior to purchase. Adulteration can be avoided if society takes a few proactive steps and has knowledge about safe eating practices. It is vital to choose nutritious and unadulterated food to minimize the risk of adulterants present in school canteens which pose great health concerns.

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## **‘Echoes in the Hills’: Eco-Critical Subalternity in Temsula Ao’s *These Hills Called Home***

YASHVEER

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### ***Abstract***

*This paper explores the intersection of environmental memory, political violence, and marginal identity in Temsula Ao’s short story collection *These Hills Called Home*. Using the theoretical lens of eco-critical subalternity—which brings together insights from environmental humanities and Subaltern Studies—the study argues that Ao’s fiction portrays land not as passive scenery, but as a living witness to trauma and a repository of cultural memory. The stories center on tribal lives in Nagaland, particularly women, who continue to endure, remember, and reclaim space despite conflict and displacement. Drawing on theories of slow violence, lived space, and indigenous ecological consciousness, the paper reveals how Ao’s characters resist erasure not through confrontation, but through care, memory, and rootedness. Her work challenges us to see survival itself as a political act, grounded in the emotional geographies of ‘home.’*

**Keywords:** Space, place, margins, home, memory, eco-critical Subalternity

### **Introduction**

In recent decades, Indian tribal literature has increasingly been recognized as a powerful counter-narrative to dominant accounts of history, development, and national identity. Written from the margins, these stories often speak from the perspective of those who have long endured exclusion—culturally, economically, and politically. Among these voices, Temsula Ao’s writing stands out not only for its literary depth, but also for its quiet insistence on bearing witness. In her short story collection *These Hills Called Home: Stories from a War Zone* (2006), Ao gives voice to the often-silenced

experiences of Naga communities whose lives have been shaped by decades of conflict, fear, and displacement. Yet beyond the overt political context, what emerges most powerfully in these stories is a deep attachment to land, memory, and the rhythms of everyday life—an attachment that persists even in the face of overwhelming loss. This paper proposes to read Ao's work through the lens of eco-critical subalternity: a critical framework that brings together environmental humanities and subaltern theory to explore how land, voice, and resistance are interwoven in the lives of marginalized tribal communities.

This paper engages with what may be called *eco-critical subalternity*—a conceptual approach that brings together the environmental dimension of marginalisation with the cultural, political, and historical subjugation of tribal communities. While Subaltern Studies traditionally focused on political agency and silencing in colonial and postcolonial histories, eco-critical subalternity pays attention to how land, ecology, and indigenous memory are erased or transformed under state control, militarization, and capitalist development. In tribal narratives, especially from Northeast India, forests, hills, and rivers are not mere backdrops but hold ancestral, spiritual, and cultural meanings. The loss or distortion of these landscapes under modern regimes often leads to the erosion of entire worldviews. Thus, eco-critical subalternity examines the relationship between dispossession and environmental violence—not just in terms of resource exploitation but also in the vanishing of knowledge systems, oral histories, and spiritual geographies.

Eco-critical subalternity, thus, foregrounds the environmental dimensions of dispossession and silencing. Drawing from Rob Nixon's concept of "slow violence," the framework recognizes that many forms of harm—especially ecological ones—unfold gradually, invisibly, and across generations. These harms are not often captured in state reports or mainstream narratives, but they are deeply felt by communities who live close to the land. At the same time, the subaltern perspective, as theorized by scholars like Ranajit Guha

and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, asks us to consider whose voices are heard, whose stories are recorded, and who remains unheard even in histories of resistance. When these frameworks are brought together, they help us attend to the lived realities of those who endure both environmental destruction and political neglect—not as separate issues, but as deeply connected conditions.

In *These Hills Called Home*, the hills of Nagaland are not mere settings. They are memory-bearing landscapes that carry the traces of violence and the residues of belonging. Whether it is the forest path where a mother searches for her disappeared son, or the abandoned airfield that once promised development but now lies forgotten, each space in Ao's stories is layered with grief and endurance. The hills are not simply geographical markers—they are witnesses to stories that have gone untold and lives that have been disrupted by a conflict that is both internal and imposed. In portraying these landscapes, Ao does not rely on the language of protest or rebellion. Instead, her fiction is grounded in quiet acts of survival: women who stay behind to tend to broken homes, elders who remember the old songs, children who grow up humming the tunes of those lost.

What makes Ao's work particularly significant for a study in eco-critical subalternity is her ability to weave environmental memory into cultural and emotional life. In stories such as "The Last Song," and "Soaba," we see how trauma is registered not only in bodies but also in the earth itself—in hills that once echoed with laughter but now lie silent, in forests that were once safe but now feel watchful and strange. The women in these stories, in particular, carry the burden of remembering. They preserve the memory of the land not through grand gestures, but through everyday acts: fetching water, preparing meals, walking the same paths day after day. Their endurance is quiet, but it is also fierce. As Vandana Shiva notes, in many indigenous societies, women are the primary keepers of ecological knowledge and cultural continuity. In Ao's fiction, this knowledge is never abstract. It is embedded in the soil, the seasons, and the songs that continue to be sung even in mourning.

Although Temsula Ao's poetry has received critical attention, her fiction—particularly *These Hills Called Home*—remains comparatively underexplored, especially through eco-critical frameworks. Most existing studies read her stories through postcolonial, gender, or conflict-focused lenses, often emphasizing the sociopolitical dimensions of Naga identity and insurgency. While these readings are important, they do not fully address the environmental undercurrents that run throughout her work: the ways in which land is remembered, mourned, and silently reclaimed. This paper addresses that gap by reading Ao's stories as quiet ecologies of resistance—narratives in which the land becomes a participant in grief, and memory itself becomes a form of ecological resilience.

Through a close reading of selected stories from the collection, this paper argues that *These Hills Called Home* offers a sustained meditation on how people live through loss—not only the loss of life, but the loss of home, trust, and familiarity with the very land that raised them. It shows how memory becomes a form of resistance, and how storytelling itself becomes a way of keeping alive what history and violence threaten to erase. By doing so, Ao's fiction provides an alternative environmental imagination—one that is rooted not in policy or protest, but in the deeply human need to remember, to belong, and to continue.

### **Eco-Critical Subalternity and the Narrative of Endurance**

The theoretical grounding for this study draws primarily from postcolonial subaltern theory and ecocriticism, particularly where they intersect in the context of indigenous narratives<sup>i</sup>. Spivak's seminal essay *Can the Subaltern Speak?* offers a framework for understanding the silencing of voices that lie outside dominant discourses—not only in politics and historiography but also in environmental narratives<sup>ii</sup>. Nixon's concept of "slow violence" is particularly relevant in tribal contexts where environmental harm unfolds over generations, often unnoticed<sup>iii</sup>. Scholars like Rob Nixon argue that such violence is "neither spectacular nor instantaneous" but gradual, dispersed, and deeply rooted in the lives of marginalized people. Here, space becomes

not only a site of habitation but a contested zone of meaning, memory, and resistance<sup>iv</sup>. By engaging with tribal literature, this study seeks to explore how space and ecology shape and are shaped by historical trauma, gendered memory<sup>v</sup>, and erasures by the state or dominant cultures. Rather than applying these theories rigidly, the paper uses them as entry points into the literary texture of Ao's work.

While eco-critical subalternity remains a relatively new area of inquiry, a few scholars have attempted to explore its contours. Bina Agarwal (2010) in her work on gender and environment discusses how indigenous women often form the first line of defense against ecological disruption. Ghosh (2014) has attempted to link postcolonial ecocriticism with subaltern concerns, arguing that environmental narratives from the global South must be read through their social histories of exclusion. Although these approaches have opened up useful pathways, they tend to focus on agrarian or activist literature rather than tribal storytelling rooted in myth, oral history, and conflict. This paper departs from those trajectories by focusing specifically on Northeast Indian tribal literature and the ways in which land is not only materially contested but spiritually encoded and emotionally lived.

### **Land as Witness and Memory**

In *These Hills Called Home*, the land is never merely a backdrop. It is a presence—often silent, sometimes injured, but always attentive. Temsula Ao's stories present the natural landscape of Nagaland as a witness to suffering and a repository of memory. Hills, forests, village paths, and abandoned homes carry within them the traces of both everyday life and extraordinary trauma. These spaces are deeply humanized—not just as sites of habitation, but as emotional landscapes marked by fear, loss, and resilience. The land, in Ao's fiction, is not only remembered; it remembers.

This idea resonates strongly with Henri Lefebvre's concept of *lived space*, which he defines as space infused with meaning through use, memory, and experience. In Lefebvre's framework, lived space is shaped by the people who inhabit it—not just physically, but emotionally and symbolically. In



Ao's stories, this lived space becomes fragile under the pressure of conflict, yet it persists as a silent testimony to what has been endured.

In "The Curfew Man," a story set in a small town under military control, Ao introduces a character whose job is to announce the nightly curfew—a figure who becomes both absurd and ominous. The story is set in a landscape that is never directly violent but suffused with dread. "The hills around the town stood silent, watching," Ao writes. "They had seen more than any man had spoken of" (p. 34). This sentence reflects Ao's narrative strategy: the land becomes an observer of events that the people themselves are too afraid—or too exhausted—to recount. The hills absorb what cannot be voiced. Through this subtle characterization of the environment, Ao enacts what Edward Soja calls *Thirdspace*—a blend of real and imagined geographies that store both physical presence and emotional weight. In this story, space is not neutral; it is watchful.

Across the collection, Ao returns to this theme: that the land bears witness to histories too painful or complicated for human characters to articulate. In "The Night," a mother whose son has been taken by unidentified men walks into the forest each evening, calling his name. "She had never feared the forest," Ao writes, "but that night, the darkness felt like a stranger" (p. 45). This transformation of space—from a place of familiarity to one of alienation—shows how trauma remakes our relationship to the environment. The forest, which once gave shelter and solace, now holds the memory of loss. Yet the mother keeps returning. Her repeated presence becomes a kind of ritual, a way of keeping the memory alive, not only in her heart but in the space itself.

Here, Soja's idea of *Thirdspace* is again useful. The forest is no longer just a location; it has become a layered site where past events continue to live on in memory and imagination. It is part real, part symbolic, and entirely shaped by emotional history. As Soja notes, *Thirdspace* is a "space of lived experience, simultaneously material and imagined, shaped by both history and hope" (*Thirdspace*, p. 11). In this sense, Ao's characters do not simply

live in places—they inhabit them with their grief, their hope, and their need to remember. The act of returning to a forest, walking an abandoned path, or even standing still in silence becomes a way of reclaiming space from oblivion.

Ao's fiction also engages with what might be called the "emotional geography" of conflict. In many of her stories, characters do not flee from violence; they remain rooted in spaces that have been changed by it. This rootedness is not passive. It is an act of quiet defiance. In "The Last Song," the young boy Ato watches his father, a folk singer, killed by rebels who see music as dangerous. For years, Ato cannot bring himself to sing. But eventually, in solitude, he begins to hum again—not for others, but for himself and the hills. "He sang softly, as if the trees were listening," Ao writes (p. 30). Here, land becomes not only a witness to suffering, but also a listener in healing. It is a subtle transformation, but a powerful one. Singing into the forest becomes a way to plant memory into the landscape, to let the earth itself hold the grief.

The idea that land can remember—that it can carry the imprints of loss, silence, and love—challenges dominant conceptions of space as something static, passive, or neutral. It also pushes back against official versions of history that reduce tribal regions to zones of conflict, or that view natural spaces merely as resources to be exploited. Through her portrayal of land as a participant in human experience, Ao articulates what eco-critical subalternity seeks to reveal: that the environment is not separate from the lives of the marginalized, but bound to them through cycles of memory, loss, and care.

What emerges from Ao's stories is a landscape of endurance. The hills, forests, and fields are not heroic in any traditional sense, but they persist. They remember. They hold the stories that others forget. In a world that often demands forgetting as a condition of moving forward, Ao's fiction insists that remembering—especially remembering through place—is a way of living forward, not just back. Her land is marked, but not erased. It remains.

## **Gendered Ecology and the Burden of Memory**

In *These Hills Called Home*, Temsula Ao pays particular attention to the inner lives of women who live through political unrest and ecological rupture. These women are not framed as exceptional figures, nor are they heroic in the traditional sense. Instead, they appear as ordinary individuals—mothers, daughters, widows—whose everyday endurance becomes a quiet but powerful form of resistance. Through their relationship with home, memory, and the land itself, Ao shows how women often carry the heaviest burdens during times of collective trauma. Their stories reveal how ecological loss and social dislocation are not abstract political conditions, but lived, gendered experiences.

The story “Soaba” offers a powerful illustration of this dynamic. The titular character is a young tribal woman whose life is upended by the arrival of both underground militants and state forces in her village. The story opens in a landscape shaped by natural rhythms and communal stability, but these are quickly disrupted by suspicion, militarization, and violence. When her brother is suspected of aiding the underground, Soaba’s family becomes a target. Her father is taken away, and the home that once offered safety becomes a site of surveillance and fear. Ao writes, “The silence of the trees no longer comforted her. Now, it felt like something was hiding in them” (p. 19). This sentence marks a crucial shift: the environment, once familiar and protective, becomes estranged. Soaba’s emotional dislocation is mirrored in the landscape, which no longer responds with warmth but with threat.

This narrative transformation of the natural world speaks directly to Vandana Shiva’s eco-feminist theory. Shiva argues that in many indigenous and agrarian societies, women are the first to experience ecological distress because they are the ones most closely tied to the land through practices like food gathering, seed preservation, and caregiving. They are also the first to notice when the balance is disrupted. As Shiva writes, “Women produce and reproduce life not just biologically but through their social roles and

ecological knowledge" (*Staying Alive*, 1989, p. 38). Soaba's sensitivity to the forest's silence and her altered relationship with it exemplify this embodied ecological awareness. Her discomfort is not simply fear—it is a kind of intuitive grief, a recognition that something sacred and stable has been broken.

Across the collection, Ao presents women as bearers of memory—both personal and collective. In "The Night," a mother continues to walk into the forest each evening after her son is taken. Though she knows he is unlikely to return, she walks the same path, repeating the same gestures, whispering his name into the trees. The forest becomes her mourning space, her chapel, her archive of memory. Ao writes, "She had begun to feel that the trees remembered too—that they held his name somewhere in their branches" (p. 52). Here, memory is not only carried in the mind, but planted into the earth. The mother's grief becomes a ritual practice, one that reshapes space through repetition.

This intimate layering of memory into the land echoes Soja's concept of *Third space*—a spatial reality that combines the physical, the mental, and the emotional. Soja describes Third space as "both real and imagined, both concrete and symbolic, both political and poetic" (p. 11). The mother's walks through the forest are not acts of denial, but of spatial re-creation. She transforms the forest from a site of disappearance into a space of remembrance. Her presence, her ritual, and her refusal to forget ensure that the land itself becomes part of the mourning process.

Therefore, the female characters in *These Hills Called Home* are not foregrounded as overtly political figures. They are not portrayed as leaders of resistance. Yet through their memories, their routines, and their ongoing relationships with the land, they preserve something essential: a way of being that refuses to be broken by conflict. Their emotional knowledge of space—of forests, homes, hills, and even trees—allows them to carry forward the past even when the present feels empty. This emotional labor is not simply a

response to loss. It is a form of care that sustains identity, community, and ecological connection in the aftermath of rupture.

### **Home, Displacement, and the Reconstruction of Place**

In *These Hills Called Home*, the idea of "home" is anything but stable. Temsula Ao's stories explore how homes are transformed—physically, emotionally, and symbolically—by fear, loss, and the enduring presence of violence. For the characters in these stories, home is more than a structure. It is an emotional and cultural space, shaped by memory, rituals, relationships, and familiarity with the land. When violence enters, home is not simply destroyed or abandoned; it is gradually emptied of its meaning. Yet even in this disintegration, Ao's narratives reveal a quiet but persistent effort to reclaim and reconstruct the idea of home—not by rebuilding, but by remembering, by remaining, and by reimagining what it means to belong.

The most direct confrontation with this theme occurs in the story "The Jungle Major," where an official arrives in a remote village with a mandate to impose order during an ongoing conflict. His perspective is marked by detachment: he sees the village as a problem to be managed, not a space of lived meaning. Yet over time, he becomes increasingly unsettled by what he cannot understand—the villagers' silence, their mistrust, and the sense that he is an intruder in a place whose meaning eludes him. Ao describes his unease vividly: "The hills were not hostile... but they were watching. And what they saw, he feared, was a man out of place" (2006, p. 4). This line suggests that space itself is not neutral. The environment contains memory, and the outsider—however well-meaning—cannot belong to it unless he understands its emotional history.

The villagers, by contrast, do not speak openly or resist dramatically, but their continued presence is a form of silent endurance. They remain in their homes not because they feel safe, but because leaving would mean losing not just land, but lineage, identity, and meaning. Lefebvre reminds us that space is not merely a physical entity, but one that is produced through lived

experiences, attachments, and symbolic acts. Ao's characters produce and reproduce their sense of home through what they continue to do: cooking, planting, walking familiar paths, even when the space around them no longer offers the comfort it once did.

This emotional labor of staying is further explored in "The Night," where a mother returns each evening to the forest's edge after her son is taken. She continues to call his name, whisper into the trees, and retrace the path they once walked together. The home she returns to is quiet, haunted by absence, but she refuses to leave it. Her repetitive movement becomes a ritual through which she tries to restore a lost connection. The forest, once a place of safety, now holds grief—but through her return, it also becomes a space of memory and longing. Her refusal to forget reclaims the forest as a place not only of disappearance but of presence.

Here, Soja's concept of *Third space* becomes particularly useful. Soja writes that Third space is a space where physical reality, memory, and imagination coexist—a layered geography where people continue to attach meaning even in the aftermath of disruption. The mother in "The Night" creates such a space through her daily walks. Though her son may never return, her actions keep him alive in that place, shaping the land through emotional presence. This is not resistance in any conventional political sense, but it is a form of spatial persistence. By refusing to let the forest become merely a site of loss, she transforms it into a space of remembrance.

In "The Last Song," another kind of home is remade—not through space, but through song. Ato, the young boy who witnesses his father's murder, loses his voice for many years. His home becomes filled with silence, an absence of the music that once gave it character. But over time, he begins to hum the songs he once heard. He does not perform them publicly; instead, he sings alone, to himself and to the hills. Ao writes, "He sang softly, as if the trees were listening" (p. 32). In this moment, home is not restored through material rebuilding, but through a small act of emotional continuity. The return of

song does not undo the trauma, but it helps reshape the space that trauma left behind.

This idea—that home can be reconstructed not through return to a previous state but through subtle acts of care and presence—echoes Arjun Appadurai’s theory of the “production of locality.” Appadurai argues that locality is not a static thing we inherit, but something we make through social practices, repeated behaviors, and shared narratives. In Ao’s stories, this production often takes place through acts that appear mundane—planting a tree, staying in a family house, walking a path. These are not grand gestures, but they are meaningful. They show how displaced or wounded people continue to anchor themselves, shaping a sense of place through endurance.

The stories Ao tells challenge the notion that home must be defended, rebuilt, or possessed. Instead, they suggest that home is something made and remade through memory, feeling, and gesture. In a world of ongoing dislocation—whether through war, development, or cultural erasure—this perspective matters. It allows for a deeper understanding of how people reclaim meaning even when they cannot reclaim land. Nixon’s theory of *slow violence* helps us see that this dislocation does not happen in one dramatic moment. It unfolds slowly, as forests grow quieter, paths become unfamiliar, and children forget the names of their ancestors. But just as slow violence accumulates harm, slow care—rituals, songs, presence—accumulates meaning.

In this way, Ao’s characters are not passive victims of displacement. They are active participants in reconstructing place, even if their tools are limited to memory, repetition, and care. Through their actions, home becomes more than a roof—it becomes a landscape of remembrance and a space for healing. In *These Hills Called Home*, we see that home does not survive through permanence. It survives through those who continue to live, remember, and quietly shape the land with love, even after loss.

### **Conclusion: Memory, Survival, and the Poetics of Endurance**

Temsula Ao's *These Hills Called Home* offers a literary landscape where grief, memory, land, and survival are deeply intertwined. This is not a collection of stories centered on confrontation, rebellion, or dramatic resistance. Rather, it is a quiet, measured exploration of what it means to continue living when the world has changed in ways that cannot be undone. In these stories, survival is not heroic in the traditional sense. It is expressed through ordinary lives—through women who remain in damaged homes, through children who carry broken songs, through elders who walk paths marked by absence. What unites these characters is not their ability to change their circumstances, but their commitment to remembering what has been lost, and to living in relationship with the land that holds their history.

This paper has framed Ao's fiction through the lens of eco-critical subalternity and has shown how Ao's characters are situated in spaces marked by slow violence. In Ao's stories, this slow violence takes many forms: the militarization of villages, the silent withdrawal of government care, the erosion of trust between neighbors, and the emotional dislocation from once-familiar spaces. Yet amid this quiet devastation, Ao's characters do not surrender their sense of place. They reclaim it—not by rebuilding in a physical sense, but by remembering, by caring, and by remaining.

Spivak's notion of the subaltern as one who is structurally unheard also resonates throughout Ao's work. The characters in the selected stories do not often speak in public spaces or political registers. Their stories are passed down quietly, through gestures, silences, and acts of mourning. But through Ao's narrative voice—attuned to rhythm, restraint, and memory—their lives are made visible. Her storytelling creates a space where the subaltern is not only heard but understood on their own terms, through their own temporalities and emotional vocabularies.

At the same time, this paper has shown that Ao's work resists any attempt to separate the political from the environmental, or the social from the spatial.



The land in her stories is not simply affected by conflict; it participates in it. Forests, hills, rivers, and homes are not just locations—they are witnesses, and sometimes victims, of disruption. In stories like “The Curfew Man” the environment carries the traces of what has been done to people, and in turn, what people remember through the environment. These spaces are not passive. They are marked, charged, and enduring. Lefebvre’s concept of *lived space* and Soja’s idea of *Third space* both help us understand how emotional and symbolic meaning accumulates in physical landscapes, even when those landscapes are altered or scarred.

Perhaps most significantly, Ao’s stories present a gendered dimension to this relationship with land and memory. As Vandana Shiva’s ecofeminist framework reminds us, women in tribal and rural communities are often the ones most connected to the cycles of nature and the rituals of care. In Ao’s fiction, women preserve the memory of place through routine: drawing water from a familiar stream, planting a tree in a home garden, returning daily to the forest edge in search of a lost son. These acts are not merely domestic. They are deeply political gestures of continuity. They signal a refusal to let the land—or the memories rooted in it—be abandoned.

Ao’s work challenges the dominant narrative that sees tribal communities either as subjects of development or victims of insurgency. Instead, her stories reveal the subtle, enduring labor of those who are neither celebrated nor recorded in history. They are not the ones who speak loudly, but they are the ones who carry the past. Their resistance is in their remembering. Their power is in their ability to continue—to sing softly, to plant, to remain. Moreover, this study has shown that Ao’s stories do not separate nature from community, or land from life. They present an indigenous ecological consciousness that is inseparable from personal memory and social survival. Her fiction reminds us that literature can recover not just silenced voices, but silenced landscapes—those that have been stripped of meaning by power, political conflict, or modernization, yet continue to hold stories within them.

Thus, *These Hills Called Home* offers a narrative ecology of endurance. It indicates that to live through violence is not only to survive it physically, but to find ways to keep memory alive in the very places where it has been threatened. Through this lens, the act of walking through a forest, of singing an old tune, of returning to the same hill—even after trauma—becomes an act of reclamation. Ao's characters do not aim to restore a lost world, but they insist on carrying its memory forward. And in doing so, they show us that remembering—especially remembering through place—is itself a form of survival.

## Endnotes

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- i This study brings together three major strands of theory—eco-criticism, Subaltern Studies, and spatial theory—to develop the concept of eco-critical subalternity, a framework for understanding how Temsula Ao's *These Hills Called Home* represents land not just as a setting for conflict, but as a living space shaped by memory, violence, and survival. These stories ask us to pay attention to voices that have often been ignored in dominant histories—voices that do not speak through protest or institutional resistance, but through daily life, oral storytelling, and an unyielding connection to the land.
  - ii Alongside environmental thought, this paper draws on Subaltern Studies, particularly the work of Spivak, who asks, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" Spivak argues that subaltern voices—those belonging to people who are socially, politically, and economically marginalized—are often either unheard or misrepresented in dominant discourse. When these individuals do speak, their words are filtered through structures of power that shape how they are received or ignored. Temsula Ao's stories are filled with characters who rarely speak in public forums. They are not political leaders or activists. They are mothers, widows, children, and elders whose daily lives have been disrupted by violence they neither chose nor provoked. Yet through Ao's storytelling, their experiences gain visibility. In a way, the stories themselves become spaces where the subaltern can speak—not through overt resistance, but through memory, gesture, and the act of continuing. Spivak notes that the question is not only whether the subaltern can speak, but whether there is "a space that will hear them." Ao creates that space in fiction. Moreover, Ao's use of oral storytelling traditions—stories that carry the rhythms of speech, pause, and silence—adds another layer to the question of voice. These are not voices trained in the rhetoric of protest; they are voices that emerge from kitchen conversations, forest paths, and funeral songs. Their power lies in their endurance, their emotional clarity, and their insistence on remembering.

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- iii At the core of eco-critical thought is the belief that literature can reveal how human lives are shaped by environmental conditions and how ecological loss is experienced not just physically but emotionally, socially, and spiritually. In the context of Ao's stories, the environment is not just part of the narrative—it is deeply tied to the emotional and cultural life of her characters. To understand this layered presence of the land, Rob Nixon's concept of 'slow violence' is particularly useful. Nixon defines slow violence as "a violence that occurs gradually and out of sight, a violence of delayed destruction dispersed across time and space, an attritional violence that is typically not viewed as violence at all" (*Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*, 2011, p. 2). In *These Hills Called Home*, the forest, the hills, and the village roads carry the marks of this slow violence. These are spaces where families have disappeared, where homes have been raided, and where people walk in silence, afraid to trust. The landscape itself is changed—not through immediate catastrophe, but through years of fear, occupation, and abandonment. Nixon argues that literature must make such invisible suffering visible. Ao's short stories do exactly that. They do not dramatize violence through spectacle; instead, they focus on how it settles into people's lives slowly—into their routines, memories, and relationships with the land.
- iv To further understand how place and memory function in Ao's fiction, this study turns to Henri Lefebvre's concept of 'lived space' and Edward Soja's idea of 'Thirdspace'. Lefebvre distinguishes between conceived space (the space planned by authorities), perceived space (the physical reality), and lived space (the emotional and symbolic experience of space). In *These Hills Called Home*, lived space is central. The same village road that once led to school now leads past abandoned houses. The forest that once offered safety now holds the echo of loss. The meaning of these spaces changes not through design, but through experience. Similarly, Soja's notion of 'Thirdspace'—a fusion of real and imagined spaces—helps describe how Ao's characters continue to inhabit places that are physically altered but emotionally charged. A mother returning each day to the forest's edge where her son disappeared is not simply retracing her steps. She is creating a 'Thirdspace' where loss, memory, and hope coexist. Soja writes that 'Thirdspace' is "both an embracing and open site of critical exchange" (*Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places*, 1996, p. 11). In Ao's fiction, these "critical exchanges" happen not through confrontation, but through gestures—walking, planting, waiting, singing.
- v The stories in Ao's collection cannot be fully understood without acknowledging the specific roles women play in preserving ecological and cultural memory. Vandana Shiva's ecofeminist theory emphasizes how women, especially in indigenous communities, are often the first to feel the effects of ecological and social breakdown because of their close relationship with land-based practices like farming, gathering, and caregiving. Shiva writes, "Women produce and

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reproduce life not just biologically but through their social roles and ecological knowledge" (*Staying Alive*, 1989, p. 38). In Ao's work, it is often women who remain in the village when others flee, who care for dying elders, and who remember not only the dead but the way things used to be. Their connection to land is not symbolic—it is rooted in real labor and care. When they continue to live in houses marked by violence or plant trees in memory of lost loved ones, they are not simply mourning; they are reasserting a relationship with a place that others have tried to erase. Their actions form a quiet but persistent resistance, grounded in knowledge, presence, and emotional resilience.

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## **AUTHORS FOR THIS ISSUE**

Aishanya Tripathi Mishra, College Whole Time Teacher, The Bhawanipur Education Society College, West Bengal.

Bharat, Professor of Law, University Institute of Legal Studies, Panjab University, Chandigarh.

Bhupendra Pratap Singh, Research Scholar, Department of Social Work, Delhi School of Social Work, University of Delhi, Delhi.

Gargi, Research Scholar, West Bengal National University of Juridical Sciences (NUJS), Kolkata, West Bengal.

G.C. Chauhan, Professor, DES MDRC , Panjab University, Chandigarh.

Gurdeep Singh Batra, Former Professor, School of Management Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala, Punjab.

Keshab Chandra Ratha, Assistant Professor, School of Political Science, Gangadhar Meher University, Amruta Vihar, Sambalpur, Odisha.

Kuldeep, Research Scholar, Department of Geography, Panjab University, Chandigarh.

Manisha Khosla, Research Scholar, University School of Applied Management, Punjabi University, Patiala, Punjab.

Mani Bhasin, Professor , Department of Education, Lady Irwin College, University of Delhi, Delhi.

Narinder Pal, Assistant Professor, Department of History, National Law University, Shimla, Himachal Pradesh.

Prapti Gupta, Research Scholar, Department of Food & Nutrition & Food Technology, Lady Irwin College, University of Delhi, Delhi.

Pritam Rajak, Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Cooch Behar Panchanan Barma University, West Bengal.

Richa Mehta, Professor, Department of Education, Lady Irwin College, University of Delhi, Delhi.

Sachin Chahal, Assistant Professor, Department of History, Panjab University Constituent College, Balachaur, Punjab.

Smita Bhutani, Professor, Department of Geography, Panjab University, Chandigarh.

Sulakshna Dwivedi, Associate Professor, School of Business Management and Commerce, Jagat Guru Nanak Dev Punjab State Open University, Patiala, Punjab.

Suraqua Fahad, Research. Scholar, Department of Social Work, Delhi School of Social Work, University of Delhi, Delhi.

Yashveer, Assistant Professor, Department of English, Smt. Aruna Asaf Ali Post Graduate Government College, Kalka, Haryana.

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